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NOTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Yohanes Sulaiman
Universitas Jenderal Achmad Yani

Dear readers:

As the executive editor, I would like to thank our readers, authors, reviewers, and our editorial staff for your continuous interest and support to Journal of Global Strategic Studies. With all of your support and prayers, we are able to achieve a new milestone of continuous publications of excellent scholarly works for the past two years. I am hoping that as we are approaching the end of 2022, the new year will bring more positive changes and developments to our journal.

Now the nitty gritty. This issue's lead article is written by Randall L Schweller, one of the most distinguished scholars in international relations. We are honored and thankful that he chose our journal as a place to publish his tribute to the late Kenneth N. Waltz, a giant in international relations, in honor of Waltz's 100th birthday. In his tribute, Schweller extolled the brilliance and lucidity of Waltz's arguments, showing how Waltz's insights on international order are still relevant even to present day. Waltz was calling for a smart use of power: the need for great powers to exhibit prudence and restraint. Therefore, the United States' support for the enlargement of NATO was a bad idea, as it at least provided justifications that Russia needed to treat the United States and its European allies as the aggressors and threats.

While this does not excuse Russia, and especially Vladimir Putin's disastrous and misguided invasion on Ukraine, this provides a food for thought: could a policy of restraint have changed Russia's behavior so much that it ended up also pursuing a policy of restraint?

Our second article comes from Vibhanshu Shekhar, an Adjunct Professorial Lecturer at the American University, Washington, D.C. In his article, Professor Shekhar has discussed the rise of Quad, a grouping of Australia, India, Japan and the United States. He then goes on to explain how the grouping emerged from a coordinated delivery of humanitarian assistance and disaster reliefs to the victims of a tsunami that struck Indonesian province of Aceh in December 2004. After its abrupt demise in 2007, the Quad reemerged in 2017 as China kept pursuing belligerent policies. Since then, the Quad has emerged as an important forum that aims to not only balance China but also act as a deliverer of regional good. Finally, this article ends with a caution that the Quad may not be able to offer much if it does not get its own house in order and develop a shared strategy to achieve its goals.

Gregory V. Raymond, a lecturer from the Australian National University, wrote our third chapter on how collective memories from the United States' colonial period in the Philippines, especially during the Philippines-America war of 1900-1902, affect Philippines' military alliance with the United States. While many among Filipino's elite embraced and supported the United States, those outside the elite, such as former

Filipino President Rodrigo Duterte, readily invoked the bitter memories of the United States' brutality during its colonial period, to the detriment of the relationship between the Philippines and the United States. In contrast, memories of cooperation between Thailand and the United States are lacking. Thailand's domestic politics constrained commemorations of the US-Thai military partnership. This caused very few people, even within the military, to be aware of the importance and benefits of the partnership, leaving the alliance with weaker public support.

Our fourth article is written by Musa Maliki and Dini Putri Saraswati, lecturers in international relations from Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jakarta. Maliki and Saraswati wrote a very strong criticism of the dominance of realism, especially Mearsheimer's *offensive realism*, on Indonesians' foreign policy thinking. They described how the *ideological* dominance of *offensive realism* in Indonesia turns Indonesian academics and foreign policy experts to unquestioningly accept the dominance of great powers.

Last but not least is a brief research note written by Richard Arnold, an Associate Professor at Muskingum University. This commentary explores the United States and its European allies' justifications for spending so much resources on Ukrainians, which is to contain a major threat to liberal international order. The Ukrainian President, Volodymyr Zelensky, fully aware of their intents, skillfully manipulated his and his country's image as defenders of the liberal values, and thus, managed to garner more support and military assistance to his beleaguered country. This is an interesting and promising exploratory essay that we are hoping that Professor Arnold could submit a full-length article for our future issue.

Finally, allow me to thank you for your time and willingness to read this note, and I hope that you will enjoy reading those excellent works.

Cimahi and Bandung, December 2022

Yohanes Sulaiman
Executive Editor

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Neorealism's Power and Restraint: A Tribute to Waltz on his 100th Birthday

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Kenneth Waltz constructed a pure theory of international politics by isolating structural from unit-level causes. Today's return of great-power politics signals the persistent relevance of Waltz's notion of patterns and regularities driven by structural-systemic forces. We have entered an unbalanced bipolar world, in which America still exceeds China in every important category of national power but the gap is narrowing. The relative-power trajectories of the two sides now frames the structural dynamics of their relationship, and how others perceive and calculate their strategic competition. No longer occupying a position of "primacy" either globally or in the Asian Pacific region, the United States now tends to exaggerate, not underestimate, the perceived threat from China in the economic and security realms. More broadly, the world is transitioning from hegemonic order to global disharmony and a restored balance of power—what I refer to as a "Dissent" phase of history. In this phase, disruption of global stability comes not only from the emergence of a counter-hegemonic alliance, which begins to voice its dissatisfaction with the status-quo order and underlying social purpose. It also comes from the hegemon itself, which behaves in ways that undermine its own order—an order that it now sees as not only unprofitable but a drain on its wasting assets through sponging allies and the exorbitant costs of delivering global public goods.

Transformation is the watchword of contemporary world politics. The system is moving from unipolarity to bipolarity. Such fundamental structural change is historically rare—the original multipolar system of 1648 shifted to bipolarity in 1945, and then to unipolarity in 1991. A mere two changes over roughly 350 years. Structural change is fundamental change, and so it carries momentous implications for state behavior and the dynamics of the international system. We know this to be true because Waltz's systems theory of international politics tells us so (Waltz, 1979). Before 1979, readers—even specialists in the field of international relations—would have responded: "A theory of international politics?"

Waltz succeeded where no one before him had in defining international politics as an autonomous field of study—as a domain in its own right about which one could

develop a theory disconnected from everything else. Guided by his core interests in political theory and the philosophy of science, Waltz achieved this foundational element of theory design by offering a purely structural conception of international politics—one that excluded unit attributes. Now it was possible to distinguish structural causes from unit-level ones; it was possible to think about constructing a theory of international politics. Here, it is worth remembering that Hans Morgenthau and Raymond Aron deemed it impossible to so isolate the study of international politics from all that it was interconnected with, whether economics., sociology, domestic politics and so on (Morgenthau, 1970, p. 78).[1] Waltz showed us how to do it. No small trick.

And he did "it" with incomparably graceful, elegant, even memorable prose. At times, his sentences—indeed, whole paragraphs—strike the reader as almost lyrical, more poetry than dreary social-science speak. To make the point, I randomly open *Theory of International Politics* to page 109 and find these gems: "With each country constrained to take care of itself, no one can take care of the system." "A strong sense of peril and doom may lead to a clear definition of ends that must be achieved. Their achievement is not thereby made possible." "Great tasks can be accomplished only by agents of great capability" (Waltz, 1979, p. 109). A pathbreaking and profound book of enormous scale written with poetic charm. What more can one ask from a work of social science?

Return is another watchword of contemporary international politics. Waltz not only showed us what a grand theory of international politics would look like, he told us what a theory is and what it can tell us. A theory "cannot explain the accidental or account for unexpected events; it deals in regularities and repetitions and is possible only if these can be identified" (Waltz, 1988, p. 39). Waltz's theory is not one of change but of enduring realities, principles, and behaviors. "The texture of international politics remains highly constant, patterns recur, and events repeat themselves endlessly. The relations that prevail internationally seldom shift rapidly in type or in quality. They are marked instead by dismaying persistence," Waltz observed (Waltz, 1979, p. 66). These persistent realities, which until recently struck many contemporary observers as archaic, have ferociously returned, like atavistic episodes. For decades, neorealists have been in the wilderness, driven out of the mainstream by a liberal teleological view of history that has, in recent years, proved an illusion. The modern world has not progressed along an inevitable and inexorable road to peace, human rights, globalization, and

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[1] Morgenthau insisted on the "autonomy of politics," but did not apply this rule to international politics.

market democracies. It can and has reverted to familiar patterns. While progressives would like to believe otherwise, "in geopolitics, as in biology, mankind remains susceptible to new strains of old maladies" (Serchuk, 2020, p. A15). And so a world that had grown accustomed to thinking of progress as inevitable and irreversible is now being rocked by old toxic patterns previously thought crushed by the march of progress—the outbreak of a global pandemic, the rise of authoritarian alternatives to democracy, the global reign of Middle East oil producers, and the return of inflation, nationalism, and, most important, great-power competition and war (Serchuk, 2020; Sitaraman, 2020). The comeback of these old system disturbances conforms with Waltz's notion of patterns and regularities driven by structural-systemic forces, with the twenty-first 21st-century's wider theme of "back to the future" (Mearsheimer, 1990).[2] History is accelerating, not ending.

"The game between major powers is becoming more and more fierce," Chinese President Xi Jinping observed at China's annual legislative sessions in March 2022 (Wei, 2022, p. A14). A month earlier, Mr. Xi and Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a declaration that their countries' friendship has "no limits." The formation of this united front heralded what, from Washington to Brussels, is now being called a new Sino-Russian "axis of autocracy"—one that actively rejects the existing economic and political order that the U.S. and its allies created in 1945 and extended after the Cold War (See, for instance, Galston, 2022, p. A15). Challenging the U.S.-led world order has become the centerpieces of Xi's and Putin's foreign policies. China and Russia are revanchist powers, determined to regain territories and lost prestige after lengthy periods of national humiliations inflicted on them by the West. Waltz predicted that these humiliations—which he called overextensions of power, the "vice to which great powers easily succumb…in a unipolar world"—would trigger the aggressive backlash we see today (Waltz, 2000, p. 13). Large imbalances of power, he argued, "by feeding the ambition of some states to extend their control, may tempt them to dangerously adventurous activity" (Waltz, 1979, p. 132). After the Cold War, he preached restraint in victory, but no one in the halls of power was listening—a point to which I will return in the conclusion.

In response to the Sino-Russian threat, the United States has bolstered the Quad security arrangement involving Japan, India, the U.S., and Australia. Yet Waltz tells us that, in a dangerous and uncertain self-help world, states should seek to rely as much

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[2] A term first used to describe international politics by John J. Mearsheimer, his prediction proved several decades too early, but ultimately correct.

as possible "on their own capabilities rather than on the capabilities of allies. Internal balancing is more reliable and precise than external balancing" (Waltz, 1979, p. 168). And we see this today as well. In Japan, the power elite are "openly discussing nuclear weapons even as Beijing reflects on the lessons of Mr. Putin's war for Xi Jinping" (Mead, 2022, p. A21). Meanwhile, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, awakened by Russian aggression to power realities and power politics, shocked the world by reversing three decades of German military-averse shirking and naïve-pacifist diplomacy. On February 27, 2022, the chancellor announced that Germany would not only end its foot-dragging on providing arms to Ukraine but would also: (1) create a $113 billion special defense budget to fund equipment purchases and upgrades; (2) exceed NATO's target of 2% of gross domestic product spent on defense each year; and (3) treat energy as a national security issue, vowing to wean Germany off Russian natural gas in favor of fossil fuels and maybe even nuclear power (Eddy, 2022). This revolution in Berlin's conduct of foreign and military affairs signals the arrival of Germany as a major power and leader of Europe.

More generally, the West has countered Putin's war against Ukraine by waging an economic war—facilitated by asymmetric economic interdependence—to isolate the Russian economy and pressure President Vladimir Putin. Almost immediately after Ukraine was invaded, the Western-led global financial system unplugged Russia from the global economy, severing practically every artery of money between Russian and the rest of the world (Hoffman, 2022, pp. A1,A7). Waltz correctly saw interdependence as a weapon that could be used by less dependent countries against more dependent ones. Thus, he wrote: "Countries that are dependent on others in important respects work to limit or lessen their dependence if they can reasonably hope to do so" (Waltz, 1979, pp. 154-155). He also saw globalization trends as reversible because interdependence "is more a dependent than an independent variable" (Waltz, 2000, p. 15). Peace causes interdependence, not the other way around. Under conditions of global crises and war, interdependence quickly unravels. Thus, he concluded: "Not only are the effects of close interdependence problematic, but so also is its durability" (Waltz, 2000, p. 18). Since 2010, the amount of trade covered by tariffs and other trade barriers has climbed to $1.5 trillion from $126 billion (Zumbrun, 2022, p. A1). The 2008 global financial crisis, the U.S.-China trade war, the coronavirus pandemic, and, most recently, the Russian invasion of Ukraine have fractured the "free-trade, liberal order" vision that has guided American foreign economic policy for the past thirty years. The future appears to be one of protectionism, economic regionalism, and

trading blocs among like-minded countries. Is anything of importance happening today that does not conform with Waltz's regularities and repetitions, that does not support his predictions or enduring patterns of state behavior and system dynamics?

Structure and the Context of Action

Since its publication in 1979, Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* has sparked debates over whether his deductively rigorous, structural-systemic version of realist theory offered much-needed refinements that strengthen classical realism or a poor substitute for the original (Specter, 2022, p. 2; Kirshner, 2015). After more than four decades of discussion, disagreement remains over the questions: Is neorealism a progressive or degenerative scientific research program? Is it more systematic and logically coherent than its classical realist predecessors? Is its parsimony worth the price paid for the elegance? Is it a fruitful paradigm for puzzle-solving and interpreting contemporary international politics?

Most everyone agrees, however, that structural-systemic theory is vital because "we must understand the context of action before we can understand the action itself" (Keohane, 1986, p. 193).[3] For Waltz, system structure constrains the units by encouraging certain actions and discouraging others and by thwarting their ability to achieve their objectives by means of straightforward purposive action. Regarding the latter, systems generate unintended consequences and perverse effects. The unanticipated consequences of purposive action result from the interplay of the action (at the level of the units) and the objective situation or conditions of action (constraints at the level of the system) (See Merton, 1936). Emphasizing these system effects, Waltz did not and could not accept the widely held and accepted ideas about the concept of power. Let me explain.

Power and Systems Theories

Consistent with his beliefs about the value of holistic thinking and systems theory, Waltz did not accept Robert Dahl's definition of power as a relational concept, such that A has power over B to the extent that it can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do (Dahl, 1957). For Waltz, this standard definition of power is both tautological and reductionist; it violates the very essence of systems effects at the core of politics. Waltz notes, "The common relational definition of power omits consideration of how acts and relations are affected by the structure of action. To measure power by

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[3] Waltz also makes this point with respect to unit interactions: "Like the outcome of states' actions, the implications of interactions cannot be known, or intelligently guessed at, without knowledge of the situation within which interactions occur" (Waltz, 1979, p. 66).

compliance rules unintended effects out of consideration, and that takes much of the politics out of politics" (Waltz, 1979, p. 192). His key observation is that, in politics, the powerful do not always get their way; they fail to impress their wills on others in precisely the ways they intend to do so. This is because power "is one cause among others, from which it cannot be isolated" (Waltz, 1979, pp. 191-192). The paradox of power is that states with large advantages in terms of relative capabilities are not always able to make their own preferences about outcomes prevail over the preferences of others.

Within complex systems, outcomes rarely align with the intentions of powerful actors, which is why systems theories are needed. If actors could achieve their aims by means of straightforward actions, consistent with relational power analysis, then there would be no need for systems theories. Rather, such systems can be said to exert only weak effects on the actors within them. Identifying power with control over outcomes is, accordingly, consistent with the essence of the reductionist approach: the whole is known through the study of its parts. It is a logic that wrongly infers actor attributes from outcomes, and so mis-labels as "weak" those whose wills are thwarted—for, by definition, the powerful achieve their desired ends. In response, Waltz said, "Power is a means, the outcome of its use is necessarily uncertain. To be politically pertinent, power has to be defined in terms of the distribution of capabilities; the extent of one's power cannot be inferred from the results one may or may not get."

The semantic, epistemological, and methodological debates over power (essentially, how can we know who is powerful and why?) arose, in Waltz's view, from the discipline's division into two different paradigms: one behavioral, the other systemic. Old realists are behavioralists, he argues, new ones are systemic thinkers: "Old realists see causes as running directly from states to the outcomes their actions produce. New realists see states forming a structure by their interactions and then being strongly affected by the structure their interactions have formed. Old realists account for political outcomes mainly by analyzing differences among states; new realists show why states tend to become like units as they try to coexist in a self-help system, with behaviors and outcomes explained by differences in the positions of states as well as by their internal characteristics" (Waltz, 1997, p. 913).

So how does Waltz define power? He equates power with capabilities. Power is a means by which states attempt to influence others and shape their environments in ways that advance their interests. We know who is powerful because they are the actors who affect others more than others affect them (Waltz, 1979, p. 192). It is view of

power oddly consonant with Susan Strange's definition of power as "the ability of a person or group of persons so to affect outcomes that their preferences take precedence over the preferences of others" (Strange, 1996, p. 17).[4] Waltz's conception of power as capabilities is consistent with the "elephant in your bed" metaphor. What the powerful do has significant consequences for everyone else. They may be well intentioned or not. But their intentions are beside the point—what they intend to do with their power and how they want others to perceive their actions are mostly beyond their control. Indeed, their actions often move them further away from, not closer to, their intended purposes.

Neorealism largely rests on this simple and straightforward conception of power as capabilities. Polarity is measured by counting the number of great powers in the system—the handful of "consequential" states that stand apart from the rest. His neorealist view of international politics is, accordingly, a study of small-numbered systems: the politics of the powerful (Waltz, 1979, p. 131). Simply put, an actor is powerful to the extent that s/he affects others more than they affect it.

National power expresses itself in many varied ways. For example, neorealists view international regimes less as the product of a coming together of equals than as the manifest expression of the power and interests of the dominant state or group of states. They are instruments—tools to project power—of national governments for the pursuit of their national interests. In Waltz's words, "international institutions serve primarily national rather than international interests….[They] are created by the more powerful states, and the institutions survive in their original form as long as they serve the major interests of their creators, or are thought to do so" (Waltz, 2000, pp. 21,26).[5] He, therefore, would accept the view of the US-China contest as a competition over various forms of control (coercive capability, consensual inducements, and legitimacy) that sustain regional and global order, as articulated by Rush Doshi, Biden's current director for China at the National Security Council (Doshi, 2021). He would further agree with Doshi's zero-sum claims that China, like rising powers before it, "has pursued a grand strategy to displace American order first at the regional and now at the global level[…]through strategies of blunting, building, and expansion"; and that the United States cannot preserve its dominant position unless it checks China's worldwide military, economic, and political order-building and reinvests in the foundations of American order (Doshi, 2021, p. 10). But these terms would most likely not be those that Waltz would privilege. Instead, he would emphasize: (1) the self-serving nature of

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[4] I say "oddly" because Strange argues that capabilities or resources are a "poor way of judging relative power" (Strange, 1996, p. 25).
[5] See also (Krasner, 1985, p. 263; Krasner, 1991, p. 356)

orders, whether built by China or America; and (2) the tendency of the two poles within a bipolar system to adopt a zero-sum perspective, for in a "two-power competition a loss for one appears as a gain for the other" (Waltz, 1979, p. 171). Simply put, Waltz would discuss U.S.-China relations within a realist framework of balance of power.

Balance of Power as an Unintended Order

In the international arena, "objective rights and duties are non-existent, so that no one is entitled to anything, and nothing can be expected of anyone" (James, 1973, p. 65). Yet it would be incorrect to say that international relations and behaviors are entirely unpredictable, uncoordinated, and without pattern. A balance-of-power system, for instance, exhibits order even though it emerges spontaneously through simple, straightforward, and uncoordinated egoistic behavior among its constitutive units.[6] On the other end of the spectrum, collective security is a humanly contrived international order rooted in institutionalized collective behavior, explicit commitments (rights and duties), and formal organizational structures. One might expect more order from the collective security system, given its thickly institutionalized and rule-based nature, than from the relatively primitive balance-of-power system, which asks nothing of states but to act in their selfish short-run national interests. But the logic is not that simple—a point to which I will return at the end of this section.

What do we mean by an international order? A system exhibits order when the set of discrete objects that comprise the system are related to one another according to some pattern; that is, their relationship is not miscellaneous or haphazard but accords with some discernible principle. Order prevails when things display a high degree of predictability, when there are regularities, when there are patterns that follow some understandable and consistent logic. Disorder is a condition of randomness—of unpredictable developments lacking regularities and following no known principle or logic. Some systems are characterized by robust and durable orders. Others are extremely unstable, such that their orders can quickly and without warning collapse into chaos.

International orders vary according to: (1) the amount of order displayed; (2) whether the order is purposive or unintended; (3) and the type of mechanisms that provide order. On one end of the spectrum, there is rule-governed, purposive order, which is explicitly designed and highly institutionalized to fulfill universally accepted

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[6] For classic analyses on the balance of power, see (Vagts, 1948; Wolfers, 1962, pp. 122-124; Haas, 1953; Hinsley, 1963; Sheehan, 1996; Luard, 1992; Claude, 1962; Gulick, 1955; Seabury, 1965) and (Spykman, 1942; Claude, 1989; Levy, 2003; Paul, 2004; Nexon, 2009). See also (Vincent & Wright, 1989).

social ends and values.[7] At the other extreme, international order is an entirely unintended and un-institutionalized recurring pattern (e.g., a balance of power) to which the actors and the system itself exhibit conformity but which serves none of the actors' goals or, at least, which was not deliberately designed to do so. Here, international order is spontaneously generated and self-regulating.

The classic example of this spontaneously generated order is Waltz's notion of the balance of power. Throughout history, balances of power repeatedly form though none of the great powers may seek equality of power. To the contrary, all major actors may seek greater power than everyone else but the concussion of their actions (which aim to maximize their power) produces the unintended consequence of a balance of power.[8] In other words, the actors are constrained by a system that is the unintended product of their coactions (akin to the invisible hand of the market, which is a spontaneously generated order/system).

The basic intuition that drives balance-of-power theory is that states cannot be trusted with inordinate power. The danger is that a predatory great power might gain more than half the total resources of the system and thereby subjugate all the rest. It might even fold up international politics as we know it. The theory assumes that states pursue power, security, and prestige through self-help measures in an anarchical international system. States maximize their security by minimizing the probability that they will be conquered or destroyed by other states. Here, security may be defined as one minus the probability that a state will be conquered or destroyed (Lynn-Jones, 1995, p. 664). Moreover, anarchy pressures states to seek autonomy, not interdependence with others; that is, they prefer to rely on their own efforts (self-help) to maximize their power and security. In international politics, self-help takes the form of unilateral arms buildups and the immediate acquisition of military capabilities by means of alliances with other states. In the competitive international system, states maximize their power, security, and prestige by using their resources efficiently.

It is further assumed that the only truly effective and reliable antidote to power is power. Increases in power (especially a rival's growing strength), therefore, must be

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[7] This is Hedley Bull's definition of social order in (Bull, 1977) Chap 1.
[8] The source of stability in a balance-of-power system (equilibrium) may arise as an unintended consequence either of actors seeking to maximize their power or of the imperative for actors wishing to survive in a competitive self-help system to balance against threatening accumulations of power. See (Waltz, 1979, pp. 88-93) and chap. 6.

checked by countervailing power.[9] Balancing is done by both building arms (internal balancing) and forming alliances (external balancing) to aggregate military power. This simple internal-external balancing scheme accommodates a surprisingly rich set of possible foreign policy behaviors—complexity that Waltz and his followers have overlooked.[10] For instance, a state may internally balance while simultaneously passing the balancing buck to others and bandwagoning with the most dangerous threat to its survival. Josef Stalin accomplished this feat with one stroke: the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of 1939. For Stalin, the Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics had three intended goals: (1) to buck-pass the German threat to France and Britain—fomenting a war in the West that would bleed all parties white and allow Soviet Russia to swoop in afterwards, like a phoenix, and arise from their ashes; (2) to balance (internally) against Germany by buying sorely need time to rebuild the Red Army, which he decapitated in a paranoid rage from 1937 to 1938[11]; and (3) to bandwagon with Germany, the most dangerous threat to the Soviet Union, to gain control over Latvia, Estonia, and Finland, and parts of Poland, while giving Germany control over Lithuania and Danzig, and the rest of Poland.

Let us return to the question of order. There are a dozen or more Realist reasons to believe that collective security would not work when needed, or would work when it should not, or would be awful if it did work.[12] Waltz tells us that states under anarchy seek autonomy in a self-help world. Collective security requires centralization of power and interdependence, which are at odds with the realist principles of independence and freedom of action. As Waltz argues:

> States cannot entrust managerial powers to a central agency unless
> that agency is able to protect its client states. The more powerful

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[9] Assessments of the balance of power usually include: (1) the military capabilities (the means of destruction) each holds and can draw upon; (2) the political capacity to extract and apply those capabilities; (3) the capabilities and reliability of commitments of allies and possible allies; and (4) the basic features of the political geography (viz., the military and political consequences of the relationships between physical geography, state territories, and state power) of the conflict. Regarding specific measures of power, relative national capability assessments typically include combinations of the following measures: land area (territorial size), total population, size of armed forces, defense expenditures, overall and per capita size of the economy (e.g., gross national product), technological development (which includes measures such as steel production and fossil fuel consumption), per capita value of international trade, government revenue, and less easily measured capabilities such as political will and competence, combat efficiency, and the like.

[10] Since Waltz denies that his theory is one of foreign policy, he may be excused for ignoring these variations. Many realists, however, have used his theory to make foreign policy predictions. See the Waltz and Colin Elman debate:

[11] Stalin claimed that he was purging the Red Army of senior officers accused of working for Nazi Germany, coordinating a so-called 'military-fascist plot' to commit sabotage, espionage, and overthrow the Stalinist regime.

[12] See (Betts, 1992; Mearsheimer, 1994/95).

the clients and the more the power of each of them appears as a threat to the others, the greater the power lodged in the center must be. The greater the power of the center, the stronger the incentive for states to engage in a struggle to control it.

States, like people, are insecure in proportion to the extent of their freedom. If freedom is wanted, insecurity must be accepted. Organizations that establish relations of authority and control may increase security as they decrease freedom. If might does not make right, whether among people or states, then some institution or agency has intervened to lift them out of nature's realm.

For Waltz, the problem with institutions is not that they are hard to create and set in motion, but that "once created they may take on something of a life of their own; they may begin to act with a measure of autonomy, becoming less dependent on the wills of their sponsors and members" (Waltz, 2000, p. 19). But this is something that neither he nor his fellow structural realists truly fear. For them, institutions serve not the international community's interests but the national interests of the powerful states that create them; and they survive in their original form as long as they serve the major interests of their creators. International order of any kind is always a product of power.[13]

Unipolarity and the Pressures Against Restraint

"Never since the Roman Empire has power been so concentrated in one state," Waltz observed after the Cold War (Waltz, 2000, p. 17). It was not an observation meant to elicit cheerfulness or optimism, even for Americans, who might have been expected to celebrate their victory over the Soviets and newly exalted position of unipolarity. Waltz set out immediately to rain on their parade. Unbalanced power, he warned, no matter who wields it or how benign their intent, is a potential danger to others. In International politics, overwhelming power repels and leads other to try to counterbalance it. Concentrated power is easily misused by those who possess it, and so invites distrust. It also short-lived. Dominant powers overextend themselves; they take on too many tasks beyond their own borders, thus weakening themselves in the long run. Waltz saw no reason to expect American exceptionalism here. It, too, would foolishly exercise its unbalanced power in capricious and overbearing ways. The United States, he pointed out, had a long history of meddling in the affairs of weak states within its own hemisphere. "American behavior over the past century in Central America provides little evidence of self-restraint in the absence of countervailing power.

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[13] "The nature of institutional arrangements," as Stephen Krasner put it, "is better explained by the distribution of national power capabilities than by efforts to solve problems of market failure" (Krasner, 1991, p. 234).

Contemplating American history and measuring its capabilities, other countries may well wish for ways to fend off our benign ministrations" (Waltz, 2000, p. 3).

For Waltz, the survival and expansion of NATO was a catastrophic overreach on the part of the United States. The reasons for NATO expansion were weak and mostly found at the level of American domestic politics. The reasons for opposing expansion were strong. It drew new lines in Europe, alienated those left out, could find no logical stopping point west of Russia, weakened those in Russian most in support of liberal democracy and capitalism, while strengthening illiberal and anti-West forces in Russia. Most dangerous of all for the United States and its allies, NATO expansion pushed "Russia toward China instead of drawing Russia towards Europe and America" (Waltz, 2000, p. 5). In NATO, Waltz saw, the only force that could overcome the "long history or mutual suspicion and enmity" between Russia and China (Waltz, 2000, p. 5). Unfortunately, reckless overexpansion is an all-too predictable mistake made by a preponderant power. All the powerful reasons against enlarging NATO and in favor of U.S. grand strategic restraint were not powerful enough to overcome the structural vice to which great powers easily succumb in a unipolar world, overextention (Waltz, 2000, p. 13).

The end of Unipolarity: A Balance Almost Restored

Waltz spoke of a unipolar moment of sorts. He did not predict nearly thirty years of a global balance disrupted but not restored. Better late than never for Waltz's theory. It finally appears that America's unchallenged primacy has faded. China is emerging as a peer competitor seeking to overtake the reigning hegemon.[14] To be sure, the United States still accounts for roughly 29.93 per cent of global wealth (China only 17.7%),35 per cent of world innovation, and 40 per cent of global military spending (Credit Suisse Research Institute, 2019).

But, according to World Bank statistics, China's GDP has soared from 20 percent of the U.S. level in 1991, to 120 percent today measured by purchasing power parity (PPP)—the metric that both the CIA and the International Monetary Fund use to compare national economies. In 2014, the U.S. fell to second place behind China, for the first time since the 1870s (MacDonald & Parent, 2018, p. 21). That said, it is a rather misleading, though oft-cited statistic. With four times as many citizens as the

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[14] For two important recent works that adopt the logic of "power transition" theory, see (Allison, 2017; Friedberg, 2011). The classic statements of power transition are (Organski, 1958; Organski & Kugler, 1980) and. See also (Tammen, et al., 2000; DiCicco & Levy, 2003; Kugler & Lemke, 1996; Kim & Morrow, 1992) and (Lemke & Reed, 1996).

United States, China has only one-third the GDP PPP per capita ($21,084) of the United States ($67,082) (MGM Research, 2018).[15]

In 2012, China surpassed the U.S. to become the world's biggest trading country measured by the sum of exports and imports of goods according to official figures from both countries.[16] And prior to this milestone, China had already become the world's largest exporter of goods in 2009 (Monaghan, 2014). The economic balance of power has shifted most dramatically in Asia, where China is the number one trading partner of every East Asian country, including U.S. allies (Allison, 2020, p. 34). China has "overtaken the United States in total foreign investment, renewable energy production, number of Internet users, and back-end research and development (R&D) spending" (MacDonald & Parent, 2018, p. 21). According to *Bloomberg*, China will dethrone the United States as the world's largest economy as measured by GDP by 2030 (Scott & Sam, 2019).

The remarkable shift in China's economic fortunes—twenty-five years ago, its economy was smaller than Italy's; it is now twenty-four times the size it was then—has fueled the growth and improved quality of its military forces. Meanwhile, America's qualitative edge over China has narrowed after nearly a decade of gradual decline in the U.S. military budget's topline. During the celebration parade for the seventieth birthday of the People's Republic of China, for instance, President Xi unveiled the Dongfeng-41, a state-of-the-art missile that can travel at twenty-five times the speed of sound toward targets more than nine thousand miles away, farther than any comparable missile in the U.S. arsenal (Osnos, 2020, pp. 32,34).

More important still are the national security implications of China's great leap forward in the cutting-edge sector of artificial intelligence (**AI**). Back in 2016, President Xi Jinping set national targets to put China on a path to global supremacy in **AI** technology and related applications by 2030. So far, his plan is succeeding. Led by his designated national champions—Baidu, Alibaba, Tencent, iFlytek, and SenseTime, China is not just a near-peer competitor but already a full-spectrum peer competitor of the United States in commercial and national security applications of **AI**—from facial recognition to fintech to drones and 5G (Allison & 'Y, 2020, p. 11). Unlike the U.S.-Soviet competition in developing and deploying nuclear weapons, the **AI** race between

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[15] The comparison of GDP per capita for 2020 is even more lopsided in the U.S.'s favor: China ($10,971) compared with the US ($67,082). In 2020, China's GDP per capita is less than that of the US in 1980. See (MGM Research, 2018).

[16] In 2012, U.S. exports and imports of goods totaled $3.82 trillion, while China's amounted to $3.87 trillion. See (Bloomberg News, 2013).

the United States and China will dictate battlefield superiority. "Advances in **AI** have the potential to change the character of warfare for generations to come. Whichever nation harnesses **AI** first will have a decisive advantage on the battlefield for many, many years," predicts Secretary of Defense Mark Esper.[17] The inescapable fact is that future warfare will be **AI**-driven. More generally, the outcome of the **AI** contest will decisively impact the power trajectories of both countries.

As the gap in relative power between the United States and China shrinks, unipolarity will eventually give way to a more bipolar system. The key words are "eventually" and "more." Most observers want to jump the gun and to see more change than is warranted. The *Economist*, for instance, recently declared that the "Chinese century is well under way," calling China a "new hegemon" that "has already replaced [America] as the driver of global change" (The Economist, 2018). This is premature. The United States still holds a huge lead over everyone else—it has four times as much wealth as China and more than five times the military capabilities. Most important, the United States exerts enormous control over the international financial system. "U.S. sanctions are based on monopoly power over a global commons: the world's reserve currency and medium of exchange" (Stevenson, 2022, p. 25; Mulder, 2022). New York is effectively the organizational headquarters of global capitalism; and the dollar's role in the global payments system means that the U.S. Treasury has the power to impose financial sanctions on targets anywhere in the world. In contrast, the status of China's power resources is inflated by gross indicators (like GDP and military spending) that overstate the power of populous countries (Beckley, Unrivaled: Why America Will Remain the World's Sole Superpower, 2018; Beckley, The Power of Nations: Measuring What Matters, 2018). In addition, China's continued rise faces strong headwinds, including a slowing economy, massive protests in Hong Kong, an election in Taiwan that rebuffed Beijing, a protracted trade war with the United States, and the coronavirus epidemic.

Arguably, the most worrisome internal problem for China is Xi Jinping himself. His push to steer China away from capitalism and the West—tightening controls on private businesses, from tech giants to property developers—has thrown the economy into a state of uncertainty and slow growth. His heavy-handed "lockdown" approach to the Covid crisis has also hurt consumer spending and factory output. The second most worrisome problem is China's worker-to-retiree ratio, largely the result of its disastrous one-child policy. While China now has a 5-to-1 worker-to-retiree ratio, if the birthrate

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[17] As quoted in (Allison & 'Y, 2020, p. 20).

continues as is, the ratio would be only 1.6 to 1 by 2040. Despite these problems, a state-managed capitalist China presents the United States with a dramatically more potent threat than the Soviet Union ever did. But true bipolarity has not quite arrived.

And there is a good geopolitical reason to doubt that Sino-American bipolarity will ever emerge: as land powers become stronger, the more they threaten their neighbors and provoke balancing coalitions against them. This bedrock realist principle tells us that the growth in China's power (particularly its power projection capabilities) will be limited by regional balance-of-power forces. Unlike the Soviet Union before it, China is completely encircled by a formidable array of mostly hostile countries, viz., India, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, and Russia. It is hard to imagine that such a hemmed-in China could ever grow to become a world power capable of competing with the United States on an equal footing (Brooks & Wohlforth, 2008). Beijing's power will be stopped shy not only of global hegemony but, most likely, of superpower (or world-power) status within a symmetric bipolar system.

Still, global power is increasingly more diffuse. This means that alliances can and will form to counterbalance American power. Consistent with this theme, the U.S. Intelligence Community has, for years now, warned of increased threats from tighter Sino-Russian cooperation. A 2019 report on global threats claimed that China and Russia: (1) "are more aligned than at any point since the mid-1950s," (2) "are expanding cooperation with each other and through international bodies to shape global rules and standards to their benefit and present a counterweight to the United States and other Western countries," and (3) are pouring resources into a "race for technological and military superiority" that will define the twenty-first century (Coats, 2019, pp. 4-24). On February 4, 2022, China and Russia declared their friendship with "no limits." A month after, Russia invaded its neighbor, Ukraine, compelling Beijing to adjust its relations with the U.S.-led West and unraveling years of Chinese efforts to paint itself as a responsible world leader.

Putin's main ambition is to restore Russia's rightful place in the global hierarchy as a great power. With only limited and declining material capabilities relative to those of China and the United States, however, Russia can only move up the ladder of prestige by reducing the status and influence of the United States. China plays a special role in this strategy: Putin views the Sino-Russian relationship as a tool to challenge U.S. influence. Cooperation between Russia and China imposes costs on U.S. actions. The very idea of friendly Sino-Russian relations frightens Washington, deterring it from aggressive acts against either of them. Partnering with China also

promises long-term material gains for Russia, in terms of the potential economic benefits that, in theory, will accrue from Chinese loans and investment and the security benefits that would materialize if a genuine Sino-Russian military alliance were to emerge. Most tangible in the short term, it signals to America and its allies—and to audiences within Russia's sphere of influence—that Russia is China's equal, not junior, partner (Elgin, 2019).

At the core of balance of power is an Arab proverb: "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." Assessing the number one threat to their countries' survival, national security analysts in both Russia and China see the specter of the United States—a superpower that continually challenges their interests in Eastern Europe and the South China Sea, and that actively works to undermine, even topple, each leader's control within his own society (Allison G. T., 2019, p. 7). That said, the alliance suffers from both short- and long-term problems. For China, the problem has already manifested itself: by cozying up to Vladimir Putin, Xi Jinping emboldened Russia to invade Ukraine (and possibly its other neighbors), putting enormous pressure on the Chinese leader to talk his closest friend out of the war. For Russia, the alliance poses a long-term problem: Putin sees Beijing as a likely future threat.

Waltz's realism tells us that states in possession of formidable offensive military capability cannot help but threaten the survival of their neighbors. Great powers especially fear states with large populations and rapidly expanding economies—an anxiety that is considerably heightened when they share a long border (Mearsheimer, 2001, pp. 42-46). China has more than eight times as many people and seven times as large a GDP as Russia. Not surprisingly, Moscow has made balancing China's influence in, for instance, Mongolia a priority. The danger is that, if Russia's 2,165-mile border with Mongolia fell under Chinese control, its Siberian underbelly would be exposed (Goodson & Addleton, 2020). Thus, Putin is playing a tricky game—developing Russia's relationship with China as a political weapon against the United States, while guarding against China's potential threat to Russia's own future power and security. That noted, there is little evidence that Putin desires a real military alliance directed against the United States; and even if he did, China would not acquiesce to building one. Beijing is so far reluctant to form long-term alliances, and it surely understands the importance of the United States for Chinese prosperity.

Theft, Emulation, and the Cyber Age

Waltz's theory explains why and how international structure compels states to emulate the successful institutions, technologies, and governing practices of one another.

Because units that exist in anarchic realms are constrained to put a premium on their relative competitive effectiveness, states emulate the military, political, and economic ways of the most powerful and successful in their number.

Thus, Joâo Resende-Santos observed in 1996, "Just as U.S. 'Fordism' had inspired industrial organization for the industrial powers in the early part of the century, Japan served as a model of industrial planning and organization for the South East Asian 'Tigers' and other states in the postwar period, including Japan's advanced industrial partners" (Resende-Santos, 1996, p. 195).[18] Likewise, over the past twenty-five years, American practices in virtually every leading sector technology—from aerospace to biotechnology to robotics—have been adopted by its competitors for the purpose of enhancing their relative competitiveness, precisely as Waltz's theory of international constraints under anarchy predicts.

We see this pressure to emulate and "keep up with the Joneses" most clearly in the U.S.'s sole peer competitor, China. While Waltz's book was published many decades before the use of cyber theft to emulate the most modern successful economic and military practices, and thereby produce "sameness" among the competitors, his theory predicts and explains this kind of behavior. Some estimate that China stole American intellectual property to the tune of $600 billion dollars of value a year between 2008 and 2013. Theft on this massive scale certainly gave a large boost to Beijing's Made in China 2025 (MIC 2025) initiative—a broad industrial plan introduced in 2015, which seeks to boost China's economic competitiveness in areas where the United States has strong comparative advantages. Emphasizing technology and innovation as drivers of national growth and productivity, MIC 2025 will augment China's domestic production of artificial intelligence systems, telecommunications, aerospace products, biotechnology, semiconductors, microelectronics, clean energy technology, and pharmaceuticals. Consistent with neorealist assumptions that state's prefer national autonomy and self-sufficiency over economic interdependence, MIC 2025 promises to advance China position in the global manufacturing value chain, leapfrogging into emerging technologies and reducing reliance on foreign firms.

Critics of China's commercial policies point out that "they steal U.S. technology and then sell their plagiarized equipment at a lower price. Worse, they seek to build an alternative, China-led global telecom infrastructure, positioning Beijing to spy on the users and capture yet more U.S. commerce" (Epstein, 2019, p. A17). In

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[18] For a discussion of military emulation inspired by Waltz's theory, see (Posen, 1993).

February 2020, the Trump administration escalated its pressure campaign against the Chinese telecommunications giant, filing a federal indictment against Huawei for racketeering and conspiracy to steal trade secrets.

We should not be surprised by China's theft operations. This is what all up-and-coming revisionist powers do: they steal commercial secrets; they import and pirate, all while attempting to ride free on the security provided by the existing hegemon. Beijing's tactics today look very much like those of the United States when it was a rising power challenging British hegemony. As Katherine Epstein explains: "In its drive for world status, America routinely pilfered foreign technology well into the 20th century, and it gained considerable strategic advantage from its theft" (Epstein, 2019, p. A17).

In the 19th century, America became a dominant commercial power largely by appropriating technology from imported European innovations and then protecting the stolen technology through patent registration. The historian Doron S. Ben-Atar writes:

> …the statutory requirement of worldwide originality and novelty for American patents did not hinder widespread American appropriation of innovations protected under other nations' patent and intellectual property laws. In fact, once a technology was in the New World, its introducers quickly claimed it as their own, and used the courts to discourage infringements. The Boston Manufacturing Company registered nine patents and obtained the rights to two others. It hired the country's most famous lawyer, Daniel Webster, and sued competitors for patent infringement. Claiming ownership of a pirated innovation was quite easy. Obtaining a patent under the 1793 act involved little more than filing the necessary papers and paying the thirty-dollar registration fee. The poorly staffed Patent Office was in no position to examine the merits of the nearly ten thousand patents it issued from 1793 to 1836. As one critic charged, most American inventions registered with the patent office were at best only slightly different from known and operating existing devices. The mechanics of patent registration not only betrayed the spirit of the original legislation by granting patents to innovations of questionable originality, but also, in effect, it allowed wealthy importers of European technology, such as the Boston Associates, to claim exclusive rights to imported innovations and use the courts to validate their claims and intimidate competitors (Ben-Atar, 2004, p. 204).

Technology transfer accounted not only for the rapid economic growth of the United States in the first half of the nineteenth century but also for the experimental and innovative reputation of the ''American system of manufactures,'' as New World innovators rejected wholesale adoption of imported machinery and processes and

opted, instead, for selective adaptation and tinkering (Ben-Atar, 2004, pp. 213-214). Ben-Atar concludes:

> In the span of seventy years an agricultural republic with some household manufactures that had more in common with the Middle Ages than with the industrial world transformed itself into a world leader of cutting-edge industrial technology. American machines and the 'American system of manufacturing,' as the British press called it, became models for worldwide imitation. Like modern developing nations, early in its history the United States violated intellectual property laws of rivals in order to catch up technologically. Integration into the international community required that the government of the United States distance itself from such rogue operations. In the process the United States had come full circle. The fledgling republic, once committed to technology piracy, had become the primary technology exporter in the world. The years of piracy upon which the new status was founded, however, were erased from the national memory. The intellectual debt to imported and pirated technology did not turn the United States into the champion of free exchange of mechanical know-how. As the technology began to flow eastward across the Atlantic, the United States emerged as the world's foremost advocate of extending intellectual property to the international sphere (Ben-Atar, 2004, p. 214).

These tactics persisted into the first half of the twentieth century, as Katherine Epstein documents: "The 1912 Supreme Court case *Crozier v. Krupp*, which formally extended the power of eminent domain to intellectual property, concerned a German gun-carriage design the U.S. Army had plagiarized. That same year, a U.S. naval officer walked off with the plan for the British navy's super-secret long-range torpedo" (Epstein, 2019, p. A17).[19] Next, Washington officials pushed the limits on the types of policies they would consider in response to a perceived threat to the U.S. economy and national security from German dominance of the synthetic organic chemicals industry after World War I. "Most striking," Kathryn Steen posits, "was the American confiscation of German property, which included German chemical subsidiary plants and German-owned U.S. patents"—confiscations that supplemented U.S. tariffs and other discriminatory trade policies against German manufacturers designed to protect the development of America's infant chemical industry (Steen, 2014, p. 4).

The bottom line is that emerging powers "have compelling strategic incentives to control the sinews of global economic activity as well as to acquire foreign

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[19] Also see (Epstein K. C., Torpedo: Inventing the Military-Industrial Complex in the United States and Great Britain, 2014; Epstein K. C., Scholarship and the Ship of State: Rethinking the Anglo-American Strategic Decline Analogy, 2015)

technology" by hook or by crook (Epstein K. E., 2019, p. A17). In this regard, China is no different than any other rising power in history.

The Prudence of Restraint

"Because power is a means and not an end," Waltz reasoned, states "cannot let power, a possibly useful means, become the end they pursue. The goal the system encourages them to seek is security. Increased power may or may not serve that end." He went on to say: "States can seldom afford to make maximizing power their goal. International politics is too serious a business for that" (Waltz, 1979, pp. 126-127). Little wonder that Waltz became an outspoken critique of NATO expansion and what he viewed as the reckless "overextension" of U.S. power in the post-Cold War age. Thus, as NATO swelled to thirty states, home to nearly one billion people, in multiple rounds of expansion that brought it closer and closer to Russia's borders, Waltz predicted the current Sino-Russian alliance:

> Even while American leaders were assuring Russia that NATO's expansion was not motivated by animosity towards Russia, American and NATO estimates of the costs entailed depended in large measure on speculations about when Russia would once again pose a military threat to Europe. As Boris Yeltsin said in Moscow, with President Jiang Zemin at his side, 'someone is longing for a singlepolar world'. Pressure from the West helps to unite them in opposition to this condition. Both parties now speak of a 'constructive partnership aimed at strategic co-operation in the twenty-first century'. The American rhetoric of globalization turns out to be globaloney: we fail to understand how our policy for one region affects another. Winners of wars, facing few impediments to the exercise of their wills, have often acted in ways that created future enemies (Waltz, 2000, p. 32).

To be sure, he was not the only Realist calling for restraint.[20] George Kennan famously proclaimed NATO enlargement "the most fateful error of American policy in the entire post-cold-war era" (Kennan, 1997, p. A23). Likewise, the French President Jacques Chirac presciently warned at the time: "We have humiliated them too much…the situation in Russia is very dangerous…One day there will be dangerous nationalist backlash."[21]

Fast forward to the current Russian invasion of Ukraine. The extent and ruthlessness of Putin's war has engendered global outrage and shock. Yet, for Realists who watched NATO expand to include nearly every nation in Central and Eastern

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[20] For realist restraint, see (Posen B. R., 2015; Rosato, Sebastian, & Schuessler, 2011; Thrall & Friedman, 2018).

[21] French President Jacques Chirac as quoted in (Kaplan, 2022, p. 28). See also (Sarotte, 2022)

Europe that had been a Kremlin vassal, the attack is hardly a surprise. It was a long-anticipated backlash waiting to happen (Kaplan, 2022, p. 27). It's most powerful cause was the NATO conference in Bucharest in April 2008. There, in a surprise move, President George W. Bush urged letting Ukraine and Georgia embark on a "Membership Action Plan," which aimed for their full membership in the future.[22] The official communique read: "NATO welcomes Ukraine's and Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO. We agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO."[23] As Rajan Menon avers, "President George W. Bush's administration couldn't possibly have believed Moscow would take Ukraine's entry into the alliance lying down" (Menon, 2022). Indeed, the American ambassador to Russia, William J. Burns, had warned in a cable two months earlier:

> Russia's opposition to NATO membership for Ukraine and Georgia is both emotional and based on perceived strategic concerns about the impact on Russia's interests in the region. It is also politically popular to paint the U.S. and NATO as Russia's adversaries and to use NATO's outreach to Ukraine and Georgia as a means of generating support from Russian nationalists. While Russian opposition to the first round of NATO enlargement in the mid-1990's was strong, Russia now feels itself able to respond more forcefully to what it perceives as actions contrary to its national interests.[24]

Would a grand strategy of restraint long advocated by Waltz and other realists have prevented the war? Or as Fred Kaplan asks and answers: "Is NATO enlargement to blame for Putin's revanchism, or has it served as a pretext for fulfilling his obsessive nostalgia for empire? Probably a bit of both" (Kaplan, 2022, p. 28). Yes, but this assumes that Putin would have risen to power even if the U.S. had not enlarged NATO and instead pursued a grand strategy of restraint. Moreover, for the United States and its allies, the benefits of restraint far exceed the prevention of a cruel and misguided war in Eastern Europe waged by a delusional leader who dreams of regaining superpower

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[22] John Mearsheimer, arguably Waltz's most famous disciple, has most forcefully made this case. In a recent *New Yorker* interview, he said: "I think all the trouble in this case really started in April, 2008, at the NATO Summit in Bucharest, where afterward NATO issued a statement that said Ukraine and Georgia would become part of NATO. The Russians made it unequivocally clear at the time that they viewed this as an existential threat, and they drew a line in the sand. Nevertheless, what has happened with the passage of time is that we have moved forward to include Ukraine in the West to make Ukraine a Western bulwark on Russia's border. Of course, this includes more than just NATO expansion. NATO expansion is the heart of the strategy, but it includes E.U. expansion as well, and it includes turning Ukraine into a pro-American liberal democracy, and, from a Russian perspective, this is an existential threat." As quoted in (Chotiner, 2022).

[23] Bucharest Summit Declaration, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Bucharest on 3 April 2008: (NATO, 2008).

[24] Ambassador William J. Burns (2008).

status. Contrary to grand strategic restraint, the "overextension" of power—the vice which Waltz associated with unipolarity and unchecked power—not only needlessly drains the unipole of its resources and energy but also generates avoidable enemies— enemies that might better serve as allies to balance the real threat. Discussing this point, John Mearsheimer recently opined:

> We should be pivoting out of Europe to deal with China in a laser-like fashion, number one. And, number two, we should be working overtime to create friendly relations with the Russians. The Russians are part of our balancing coalition against China. If you live in a world where there are three great powers—China, Russia, and the United States—and one of those great powers, China, is a peer competitor, what you want to do if you're the United States is have Russia on your side of the ledger. Instead, what we have done with our foolish policies in Eastern Europe is drive the Russians into the arms of the Chinese. This is a violation of Balance of Power Politics 101 (Chotiner, 2022).

The problem is that U.S. post-Cold War foreign policy has been captured by liberal internationalism or "liberal hegemony."[25] It is a creed that sees multilateral regimes, democratic institutions, economic interdependence, and the export of American values and norms as the most effective and appropriate means to enhance U.S. security, to increase American prosperity, and to get others to do and want what Washington wants. Fueled by an activist mentality at its core, liberal internationalism views wars intended to create liberal subjects abroad as vital to national security. The goal of recreating the world in America's own image, liberals believe, "will make the world more peaceful and ameliorate the dual problems of nuclear proliferation and terrorism. It will reduce human rights violations and make liberal democracies more secure against internal threats" (Mearsheimer, 2018, p. viii).

In sharp opposition, realists have promoted an alternative U.S. grand strategy of restraint that would shift defense burdens (pass the balancing buck to America's allies) and accept multipolarity. Rooted in structural realist principles, arguments for restraint suggest that the United States is in relative decline and must stop wasting its precious assets on foolish activist foreign policies.[26] As Paul K. MacDonald and Joseph M. Parent show, history suggests that strategies of retrenchment—such as reducing military spending, restructuring military forces, reforming institutions, redeploying forces, defusing flashpoints, and redistributing burdens---can arrest and even reverse the

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[25] For recent realist critiques of liberal hegemony, see (Mearsheimer, 2018; Walt, 2018; Desch, 2008; Kay, 2014).
[26] For a forceful and consistent voice on this issue, see (Ruger, 2020)

relative decline of great powers (MacDonald & Parent, 2018). The key is to bring a state's power and commitments into balance and thereby prevent further overstretch, insolvency, and exhaustion.

Alas, advocates of a new foreign policy based on the principles of structural balance-of-power realism and restraint have been completely shut out of the American foreign policy establishment since the onset of unipolarity (and arguably since 1945). As Sumantra Maitra points out: "The prevalent view is that unipolarity, a unique geopolitical aberration, and American geographic security made primacy the default cost-free option. The American foreign policy establishment prefers meddling around the globe because they can afford to without cost or political price" (Maitra, 2022). Realist restrainers have been on the outside looking in for decades even though most Americans have realist sympathies and regularly vote for the more restrained of the two presidential candidates (Drezner, 2008).

Ironically, a significant problem for restrainers rooted in Waltzian realism is that the main explanations for the dominance of U.S. primacy and Liberal Hegemony reside at the level not of international structure but of domestic politics, that is, within the U.S. foreign policy establishment itself.[27] As Robert Jervis writes, "regime and leadership characteristics are likely to matter more in unipolarity than in other systems because of the weakness of external constraints" (Jervis, 2009, p. 204). Thus, as Justin Logan concludes: "Proponents of sweeping changes to American strategy should recognize the centrality of domestic politics to the foreign policies of a unipole," focusing on unit-level foreign policy inputs—"public opinion, elite preferences, and the institutional desires of the national-security bureaucracy" (Logan, 2010, pp. 16,36).[28] It is high time, as William Ruger maintains, for those opposed to Liberal Hegemony to "seize this moment to establish a new foreign policy—one that is consistent with our character and principles and bolsters the nation's safety and economic well-being" (Ruger, 2020).

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[27] See (Walt, 2018).
[28] See also (Porter, 2018)

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Rise of Quad as a 'Premier Regional Grouping': Harmonizing the Optics of Balancing and Normativism

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The rise of the Biden Administration in the United States has coincided with the rise of Quad as a 'premier regional grouping' in the Indo-Pacific region with a robust agenda of cooperation that spans across strategic, economic, technological, environmental and developmental areas. The Quad's ambitious agenda underpins the member-states' deliberate effort to align its two foundational bases – balancing and normative – in the grouping's outlook. The new Quad aims at achieving three-fold objectives – limiting China's growing influence and assertive behaviour, augmenting new technological capacity of its member-states and projecting the grouping as a provider of regional good. However, the Quad continues to face various challenges, which relate to both the intent and functional capacity of the member-states and limit the grouping's effectiveness in achieving its vastly ambitious agenda. The success of the Quad as an informal regional grouping will depend on the member-states' willingness to overcome differences and navigate across diverse strategic priorities to chart a shared journey.

Introduction

With the rise of the Biden administration in the United States, the Quad, initially known as 'Australia-India-Japan-U.S. Consultation,' has transformed from a low-profile initiative centered around the idea of overtly balancing China to a high-profile regional initiative with robust agenda for cooperation among the member states. During the last two years, the Quad members have met at regular intervals and at various levels, including the summit level meetings in March March 2021, September 2021, March 2022 and May 2022. These meetings have produced various key policy documents, such as the joint statement of the first in-person Quad summit of March

2021, the White House document of Fact Sheet: Quad Leaders' Summit of September 2021, the US Indo-Pacific Strategy of February 2022, the Joint Statement of Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting in February 2022 and the Quad Joint Leaders' Statement in May 2022(The White House 2021a; 2021b; 2022a; 2022b). These policy documents underline that the grouping has become ambitious, and the member-states are willing to be heavily invested in the accomplishment of their roles and expectations. More importantly, the mandates and goals of the Quad reflect the statement that the Biden administration made in February 2022 as a part of its Indo-Pacific strategy – it would make the Quad a 'premier regional grouping' that would 'deliver on issues important to the Indo-Pacific region' (The White House 2022c: 16).' In other words, the Quad is moving towards an informal permanency, and it aims to do much more than merely balancing China. In fact, the robustness of the agendas, and change in the styles and formats of interactions have prompted some experts to frame the Quad during the Biden era as a 'Quad 3.0' (Koga 2022: 24).

The Quad has brought together four strategic heavyweights with a shared purpose of advancing the member states' strategic interests, countering the Chinese assertiveness and influence in the Indo-Pacific region and 'deliver[ing] on issues that matter to the Indo-Pacific' (The White House 2022c: 16). It represents a formidable force-posture with the combined military strength of the US, Japan, India and Australia, overseeing the vast strategic waters of the two oceans. The four member-states of Quad represent four democracies, two nuclear-weapons states, four maritime powers, one-fourth of the global population, two of the three largest countries, one-third of the global GDP in terms of purchasing power parity, three of the four largest economies in PPP (Purchasing Power Parity) terms, three economically and technologically advanced economies, and states heavily invested in the future of the Indo-Pacific region.

Moreover, the Quad as a new diplomatic initiative is anchored on an entrenched network of bilateral and trilateral partnerships through which the member-countries have been aligning their broader strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific region. Australia, Japan and the US are bound by the commitments of alliance partnerships. India has built strategic partnerships and strong defense ties with other Quad members. Though the trilateral strategic dialogue among the three alliance partners (Australia, Japan and the US) have been going on since 2002, India has forged trilateral strategic dialogues with both Japan and the US since 2008, and with Japan and Australia since 2012. New Delhi does not yet have a trilateral dialogue with the US and Australia.

As the Quad moves towards a robust and an informal outlook without a headquarter and secretarial entourage, it underpins three principal trends. First, there are two foundational bases for the rise of Quad – normative posturing and balancing-China posturing. The normative posturing is rooted in the original humanitarian intervention against the Indian Ocean Tsunami of December 2004. The same normativism drove both India and Australia to be soft footed on projecting the Quad as an 'Asian NATO' or an instrument of containing China in 2007. The normativism of the first avatar of the Quad is also manifested in the optics of the Quad 2.0 as a coalition of 'maritime democracies,' seeking to build a 'rules-based order' in 'a free, open and stable Indo-Pacific region.' The balancing-China optics draws its outlook from the adverse nature of China's relationship with the Quad member-states and the experiences of the Quad during the second decade of the 21st century. Second, the Quad as a premier regional grouping combines the strategic objectives of both balancing and normative posturing. It is seeking to align both of its foundational logics in its policy outlook as it embarks on a more permanent and surefooted journey. The new Quad aims at achieving three-fold objectives – limiting China's growing influence and assertive behavior, augmenting new technological capacity of its member-states and projecting the grouping as a provider of regional good. In order the achieve these objectives, the grouping has laid out an ambitious agenda for intra-mural cooperation. Finally, the Quad continues to face various challenges that highlights the grouping's limitations and limit its effectiveness in achieving its vastly ambitious agenda. These challenges relate to both the intent and functional capacity of the member-states to meet the goals of the grouping.

Before beginning to discuss various facets of the Quad, it is imperative to make two clarifications. First, the paper builds on both analytical and descriptive analysis. The descriptive aspect of the paper furnishes details on various aspects of international cooperation under the Quad and documents how the grouping has been expanding its agenda of engagement over time. As the devil lies in detail, it is important to outline the content and scope of the Quad's agenda to substantiate the claim that it is emerging as a regional grouping that too a premier one. On the other hand, the analytical part of the paper highlights the drivers and directions of the grouping and explain what is unstated in the policy documents and governmental pronouncements. Second, though the paper highlights the roles and priorities of the Biden administration in pushing forth the Quad agenda, it aims to underline the broader strategic agenda of all the member-states in the

grouping. The paper's main goal is to provide a general discussion on the Quad's visions, operations, concerns, and challenges involving all the member-states.

Rise of the Quad: Old and New Avatars

The origin of the Quad lies in a successfully coordinated delivery of humanitarian assistance and disaster reliefs to the Tsunami struck Indonesian province of Aceh in December 2004 by the four maritime democracies – Australia, India, Japan and the United States. The close coordination achieved among the foreign affairs officials in the four capital cities opened the possibility of these four countries working together at a strategic and institutional level on a permanent basis. However, it is not clear whether the idea of the Quad came from then Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe or then US Secretary of State, Colin Powell. Some trace the genesis of the Quad to the idea of 'democratic coalition' of the former US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, who called for greater coordination among the four maritime democracies (Saran 2017; Garnaut 2014;). On the other hand, some believe that it was the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe who proposed to convene a meeting of the Quad and steered the idea of the Quad (Rudd 2021; Smith 2021. One might argue that though the idea of democratic coalition may have come from Secretary Powell, it was Prime Minister Abe who championed and concretized the idea of Quad both in 2007 and ten years later in 2017. The Quad held its first meeting, termed as an 'informal meeting,' on the sidelines of the ASEAN-related meetings in Manila in May 2007 (Buchan and Rimland 2020).

The Quad made big waves in 2007 when the four member countries took part in the Malabar exercises that was originally a bilateral India-US naval exercise. Singapore joined the second series of Malabar exercises in the Bay of Bengal in September 2007. Building on their coordination achieved during the Tsunami operations, the four navies took part in various types of maritime maneuvers and sought to take a step further toward augmenting interoperability among the four navies. However, the overtly militaristic waves of the Malabar also produced strong backlash from China that termed the initiative as an expression of 'Asian NATO' and an attempt to contain her (Koga 2022: 24). Both India and Australia found themselves not ready to openly challenge Chinese posture in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean. Unwilling to antagonize Beijing, the then Labor party government of Australia under the leadership of Kevin Rudd, pulled the plug on an infant grouping in 2008. In other words, the Quad was an idea whose time had not come yet.

The grouping resurfaced after a decade with a meeting in Manila on November 11, 2017 (Madan 2017). Much water had flown in the Indian and Pacific Oceans

during the last ten years and China's image and relations with the Quad member-states had plummeted. The two prominent reluctant partners during the first phase of the Quad – India and Australia – had changed leadership and were finding it difficult to keep their relations with the rising and assertive China on an even keel. In addition to the mounting trade deficit, India faced new spate of bilateral tension and a series of cross-border military standoff along the Himalayan border in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2017 (Ollapally 2022). Similarly, Australia-China relations deteriorated during the Turnbull era as issues of foreign influence, interference, espionage and extortion began to dominate the discussion on Australia-China Relations (Medcalf 2019; Garnaut 2018). The Australian White Paper of 2017 expressed concern over the 'unprecedented pace and scale' of China's reclamation and construction activities in the South China Sea, and the potential for the Chinese use of force and coercion in the East China Sea and Taiwan Strait (Australian Government 2017). The bilateral tension increased in 2020 when Australia joined the call for an international inquiry into the outbreak of the COVID-19 (Needham 2020). In other words, Modi's India and Turnbull's Australia were less hesitant in 2017 in reviving the initiative and joining the balancing China rhetoric than they were in 2008. China's relations with the other Quad members – Japan and United States – saw deterioration as well during the late 2010s. The US National Security Strategy of 2017 declared, "China seeks to displace the United States in the Indo-Pacific region, expand the reaches of its state-driven economic model, and reorder the region in its favor" (The White House 2017). It identified Chinese behaviour in the South China Sea as 'endangering the free flow of trade, threatening the sovereignty of other nations and undermining the regional stability' (Ibid.).

The revived Quad's initial gatherings remained somewhat modest, overly cautious and did not go beyond confidence-building exercise among the senior foreign affairs officials. More importantly, during their early meetings. The grouping met on the sidelines of the ASEAN-led summit meetings that generally provided ample opportunities for senior officials and ministers from various countries and dialogue partners to conduct meetings outside the ASEAN-scheduled meetings. This approach continued for nearly two years. It is noteworthy that each member-states produced their own press releases during their early meetings, underlining their own diplomatic language and priorities. While the US press release provided the broadest spectrum of the consultation with specific issues detailed out, the Indian press release did not list any specific agenda and remained the most parsimonious. The Australian and Japanese press releases resonated many of the concerns and agendas raised by the US.

Quad's Balancing China Outlook

The return of the Quad under the Trump administration produced a wide range of debate regarding the intent and scope of the grouping. While some began to view the initiative as an overtly balancing China posture that could, very quickly, metamorphose into an alliance network, critics began to view the grouping as an attempt to create an Asian NATO (Huang 2017). These debates have produced high-octane nicknames for the Quad, such as "democratic security diamond" (Abe 2017), "soft value-based containment of China" (Drysdale 2011), "constellation of democracies" (Chellaney 2017), and a "great game in Asia" (Yarmolinsky 2021). On the other hand, China has termed the Quad as "sea foam," "group politics" and "selective multilateralism" (Sheng 2021)." At the heart of these debates lies the questions of the Chinese assertiveness, growing China-US rivalry and Beijing's inimical equations with the other Quad member-states. In fact, the China factor has remained one of the unstated but foundational objectives of the Quad either in the making of the grouping, as epitomized by the military optics of the Malabar exercises or in the unraveling of the grouping exemplified by the Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's notice of withdrawal.

One can attribute initial thrust on the China-centric outlook of the grouping to the Trump administration's deliberate push to convey the balancing outlook of the grouping and the shared heat of the Chinese assertiveness facing the four member-states. As the China-US tariff war intensified, the Trump administration began to push for a more visible, an overtly balancing and a high-profile outlook for the Quad. Mike Pompeo, the then US Secretary of State, sought to rally other Quad member-states behind the idea of balancing China. A senior US State Department official noted in October 2020, "there's no avoiding the fact that it's China and its actions in the region that make the Quad actually matter and function this time around" (Griffiths 2020). The Trump administration's push for balancing-China-outlook for the Quad found resonance in other capitals which also witnessed continued decline in their ties with China. India that had remained shy of pursuing an overt balancing China approach, felt unencumbered by the Chinese aggression along its Himalayan border. Indian and Chinese troops ended their 40-year-old cross-border peace and trust when they clashed along the Himalayan border in June 2020 that led to the death of 20 Indian soldiers and an unknown number of Chinese troops (Gokhale 2021). Similarly, The Sino-Japanese tensions in the East China Sea over the Senkaku Islands continued unabated (Gale and Tsuneoka 2020).

The balancing China narrative of the Quad has continued to shape the Quad's international outlook under the Biden administration (Thompson 2021). The 2022 U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy identified China's "harmful behavior" as an important challenge to regional peace and stability, noting that China is "combining its economic, diplomatic, military, and technological might" to build "a sphere of influence in the Indo-Pacific" and "become the world's most influential power" through coercion and aggression (The White House 2022c). The Chinese grey-zone warfare in the South China Sea, Taiwan Strait and the Oceania have threatened the security of both the maritime space and the US allies, such as Australia, Taiwan and the Philippines. The fear of Chinese military base in the Solomon Islands has sounded alarm bells both in Canberra and Washington D.C. While the United States declared that it would 'respond accordingly,' Australia viewed it 'a red line' (Burgess 2022a; Burgess 2022b). In addition, Japan and US, during the visit of the US Secretary of Defense, Lloyd Austin, to Japan, agreed 'to closely cooperate in the event of a military clash between China and Taiwan (Nikkei Asia 2021). It is not clear whether it was deliberate or a mere coincidence that the Chinese and Russian bombers, accompanied by surveillance aircraft, flew around Japanese territory on the day of the Quad meeting (Smith 2022).

However, the Quad is not an alliance system, does not promise security guarantee to its members and does not stipulate enhanced military build-up in the region. The security and military agenda of the minilateral grouping has included maritime exercises, development of maritime domain awareness and other activities that aim at interoperability, capacity-building and information sharing. The Quad-based military exercises are different from Australia's nuclear submarine deal under AUKUS since the former aims at improving interoperability and the latter concentrates on augmenting new techno-military capabilities. Moreover, the Quad did not engage in any collective military operation when India was engaged in a deadly border conflict with China in June 2020.

It is unlikely that the grouping will metamorphose into an alliance framework if the China threat intensifies. The scope and extent of the Quad's balancing posture is shaped by the willingness/unwillingness of the member-states, especially India, to overtly balance China and the Chinese behaviour in the Indo-Pacific region. Some have argued that the Quad may metamorphose into an alliance network (Tow 2019) or some form of hard balancing posture if the 'US-China relations deteriorate further or Beijing's behaviour towards regional neighbors becomes even more aggressive' (Grossman 2019).' Given India's position and policy responses both during the Ukraine crisis and

the Chinese incursions along the Himalayan border, one can surmise that nothing sort of war with China will force India to cede its autonomy and agree to the Quad's transformation into an alliance framework. Until then, the Quad will continue to operate as an informal, focused and flexible regional grouping in the Indo-Pacific region.

Quad's Rise as a 'Premier Regional Grouping'

The framing of Quad as a 'premier regional grouping' builds on the Biden administration's three principal claims and understandings. First, the United States should act in concert with regional partners, allies and friends to 'firmly anchor itself in the Indo-Pacific and strengthen the region itself' (The White House, 2022c). To achieve this objective, the US must develop a panoply of meaningful areas of cooperation that would reaffirm its regional credibility and trust that the country lost during the Trump administration. In other words, the US must give back in order to win back friends and partners in the Indo-Pacific region. The explosion of non-military agendas during the last two years highlights the Quad's normative and developmental focus that would improve both the grouping's regional image and the US image in the region. The Trump Administration's 'America-first' policy proved a partisan and controversial policy, with experts identifying it as "an increasingly zero-sum, unilateralist, protectionist, and nativist" approach, laced with a "mix of nationalism, unilateralism, and xenophobia" (Blinken and Kagan 2019; Dollar, Hass and Bader 2019)." Such an optics undermined America's regional standing and credibility in the region.

Second, the non-military posturing of the Quad has also emerged out of the pushback that the United States received from the region's middle and small powers. The overtly 'balancing China' rhetoric during the Trump era created an optics of the United States pursuing a Cold War mindset and pushing the Indo-Pacific region toward great power rivalry. Such a rhetoric pushed small and middle powers in the Indo-Pacific region to avoid buying into the US foreign policy narratives and getting trapped in the great power rivalry. Some have argued that Washington focused too heavily on security relations, and pushed, countries in the region, such as Indonesia, to take positions in the rivalry with China (Kuo 2019).

Similarly, the centrality of the balancing China narrative in the Quad's revival gave the grouping a containment outlook and reinforced exclusive focus on the Quad. Some countries felt that the balancing nature of the Quad was too hot for them to handle in the light of the rising US-China strategic competition. For example, though Indonesia has not taken an official position on the Quad, its Minister for Foreign

Affairs, Retno Marsudi cautioned in 2018 against using the Quad as 'a containment strategy' (Marsudi 2018). This is true not just about the non-allied countries but also some alliance partners. For example, while South Korea has shown hesitancy in coming onboard with the Quad+ forum, Thailand has rallied behind the ASEAN Outlook for the Indo-Pacific, an attempt to find a middle ground between China and the US-led Quad.

Finally, the Quad's rise as a regional grouping is a decoupling strategy of the Biden administration that aims at developing a parallel regional supply chain and gradually weaning the region away from dependency on China-dominated supply chain that amplifies China's regional significance. There is growing realization among the US policy makers that as China is "combining its economic, diplomatic, military, and technological might to become the world's most influential power" (The White House, 2022c), the US must pursue an equally robust and comprehensive agenda of international cooperation to offset China's growing influence in the Indo-Pacific region. The Quad with a varied agenda of cooperation aims to counter Chinese influence in the Indo-Pacific region, position itself as the principal provider of regional good and advance technological, economic and developmental capacity of the member-states.

The Quad, since its return, has developed a comprehensive agenda for cooperation and strategic projection. Their agendas include but are not limited to vaccine diplomacy, development of a system of reliable supply chain, capacity-building of the member-states in the field of critical and emerging technologies, infrastructure development, cyber security, regional maritime security by strengthening maritime domain awareness and transition towards clean and renewable energy. In addition, the Quad has set up various working groups to identify ways to develop robust intra-mural and regional cooperation. The following sub-sections deal with various agendas and achievements of the Quad during the last five years.

Toward Vaccine Diplomacy

An important expression of the Quad's normative posture is its vaccine diplomacy to address the regional shortage of COVID-19 vaccines. The May 2022 Joint Statement of the Quad declared to have 'collectively pledged approximately US$5.2 billion to the COVAX AMC, approximately 40 percent of the total contributions from government donors' (The White House 2022a). In addition, the joint statement also claimed to have 'delivered more than 670 million doses, including at least 265 million doses' to the countries in the Indo-Pacific region. The Quad Joint Statement of February 2022 had 'pledged to donate 1.3 billion vaccine doses globally' (Joint Statement 2021).

The grouping launched a Quad Vaccine Partnership in March 2021 and declared that they would be supplying a billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines to the Indo-Pacific region by the end of 2022. These doses would be supplied by an Indian company Biological E. At the summit, the US agreed to expand the production capacity of the firm, Japan agreed to provide the financial assistance and Australia promised to assist with the supplies (Upadhyay 2021). Following up on its commitments, the Japanese government provided a financial assistance of US$100 million to support the vaccine production in India. By mid-2022, the Quad had supplied 200,000 COVID-19 vaccines, highlighting 'the Quad member's contributions to ensure equitable access to vaccines and to combat COVID-19 in the Indo-Pacific region and the world' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2022). The idea of Quad vaccine production in India came from India's own program of the Vaccine Maitri initiative that aimed at providing COVID-19 vaccines to the developing world.

In addition, Quad member-states have taken individual responsibilities to support regional attempts to vaccinate people and end COVID-19. For example, Australia has agreed to provide financial and technical assistance to ASEAN countries to 'strengthen "last-mile vaccination' (The White House 2021b). Japan will provide financial and technical assistance to the developing countries in purchasing the vaccines and cold-chain support (The White House 2021b).

The Quad's campaign against the COVID-19 has served three-fold objectives – bolstering regional health security, projecting the grouping as an important provider of regional goods and limiting the importance of the Chinese vaccine diplomacy. Both India and the United States suffered considerably due to COVID-19 In the pursuit of these objectives, the Quad member-states have concentrated on providing COVID-19 vaccines, funding the regional campaign against the COVID-19 and supporting the member-state's efforts in developing the necessary medical infrastructure.

Focus on Critical and Emerging Technologies

The Quad members have identified critical and emerging technologies as an important area of cooperation. They set up a Critical and Emerging Technology Working Group during the first ever leader-level summit in March 2021. The Working Group was assigned five key areas of cooperation – development of technology, coordination on technology standards, cooperation in the field of telecommunications, identification of new areas of tech development including biotechnology and the convening of dialogues on critical technology supply chain (Australian Government 2021). By May 2022, the Quad members had launched a 'Common Statement of Principles on Critical

Technology Supply Chains,' Quad Investors Network and Memorandum of Cooperation on 5G tech diversification (The White House 2022b). These initiatives have produced various specific areas of cooperation, such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, cybersecurity, space, geospatial and data handling (Laskar and Bhardwaj 2022).

The Quad focus on emerging and critical technology underlines two principal goals of the grouping. First, the quad members are trying to reduce their dependence on China-led supply chains in the high-end technology sectors, such as semiconductors and microchips by developing an alternate and reliable supply chain both in terms of raw-materials and final products. The Quad discussion on 5G and its support for the Prague proposal on 5G diversifications point towards creating an independent and reliable supply chains. In other words, the Quad focus on emerging technologies is also a decoupling strategy. Second, the Quad members aim to forge ahead in leading the regional discussion on emerging technologies. Their discussion on quantum technologies and Artificial Intelligence are attempts toward setting the standards and rules of the road. On the other hand, the quad members seek to establish a competitive edge against the Chinese advances in quantum computing and cryptography (Shekhar 2021). Finally, the focus on emerging technologies drives the member states' shared goal of developing their technological capabilities.

However, the Quad member-states have differential scale of competence in advanced technologies. Therefore, the effectiveness of cooperation would depend on the ability and willingness of the members to harmonize their work infrastructure and technology sharing that would also require highest level of strategic trust among the partners. Also, the member-states have not yet developed a harmonized policy positions on these technologies.

Development of Regional Infrastructure and Clean Energy

In its efforts to drum up the regional support, the Quad members have identified infrastructure development as an important area of cooperation. The grouping has set up a Quad Infrastructure Coordination Group that would provide high standards infrastructure in various sectors, such as rural development, health infrastructure, renewable energy, and telecommunications. The Quad Fact Sheet released by the US White House in May 2022 noted that the grouping had already invested nearly US$48 billion in the development of infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific region since 2015. These projects involved various essential sectors, such as road transport, water supply,

renewable energy, rural development and health infrastructure (The White House 2022b).

The Quad members have also agreed to invest an additional US$50 billion for the development of regional infrastructure during the next five years. More importantly, the grouping aims to counter the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative by strengthening the capacity of the countries that are 'in need to cope with debt issues' and promoting those infrastructure projects which promise debt sustainability and transparency (The White House 2022a). The member-states have launched a 'Quad Debt Management Resource Portal' that consists of various bilateral and multilateral capacity-building assistance. It is noteworthy that some of the smaller countries in the Indo-Pacific region, such as Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Maldives have come under severe financial pressure after incurring heavy debt burden from the international infrastructure projects (Ammar et al. 2021; Rana and Xianbai 2020).

As a part of its infrastructure program, the Quad is putting in place a series of initiatives to facilitate the transition of both its member-states and countries in the region towards clean energy. Such an approach serves the Biden administration's climate agenda and frames the grouping in a non-China-balancing context. Working along their decarbonization goals for 2030, the grouping has launched two initiatives – green shipping network and clean hydrogen partnership. As a part of the green shipping network, the Quad is planning to set up a Quad Shipping Task Force that will facilitate decarbonization of major shipping value chains and the setting up of 'two to three Quad low-emission or zero-emission shipping corridors by 2030' (The White House 2021a).

Toward Maritime Interoperability and Policing

The origin of the Quad lies in the celebration of the member-states' successful execution of maritime cooperation against an overwhelming natural disaster in 2004 and the grouping has continued to strengthen their maritime agendas. Two areas have gained prominence during the last seven years – improving the member-states' naval interoperability through joint exercises and strengthening the member-states' maritime domain awareness. The two initiatives aim at building the maritime capacity of the member-states and develop a powerful coalition of maritime democracies that could act as a deterrence against the Chinese grey-zone warfare in the Indo-Pacific region (Center on Irregular Warfare and Armed Groups 2018: 15-19).

The Quad has sought to achieve the first objective through what is known as the Malabar exercises that started off as a bilateral naval exercise between India and the United States three decades ago in 1992. Japan and Australia joined the exercise in 2015 and 2020 respectively. The US navy defines the Malabar exercise as 'an India-led multinational exercise designed to enhance cooperation between Indian Navy (IN), Royal Australian Navy (RAN), Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) and U.S. maritime forces' (Commander 2020). Since 2020, the Quad member-states have conducted the Malabar exercise every year in different maritime space of the Indo-Pacific region, such as the Bay of Bengal, East China Sea, off the coast of Guam and Arabian Sea. These exercises have seen high-end naval operations, involved highly sophisticated naval fleet and entailed intense maneuvering and training at sea. The Quad member-states conducted their latest Malabar exercise in November 2022 that included 'a variety of high-end tactical training events, submarine integration, anti-submarine warfare training, air defense exercises, multinational replenishment-at-sea operations, communications drills, joint warfighting planning scenarios, gunnery exercise, and maritime interdiction operations' (Commander 2022). A senior Japanese maritime official noted, "Through this high-end tactical exercise, we were able to improve our tactical capabilities and strengthen cooperation with the U.S., India, and Australian navies, thereby contributing to the creation of a desirable security environment for Japan" (Ibid.).

The Quad has sought to achieve the second goal by setting up an Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness Partnership (IPMDA) in May 2022 during the Quad summit in Tokyo. The IPMDA targets strengthening 'the ability of partners in the Pacific Islands, Southeast Asia, and the Indian Ocean region to fully monitor the waters on their shores' (The White House 2022b). The IPMDA will facilitate real-time information-sharing among the Quad member-states harnessing commercially available data through four information fusion centers located in India, Singapore, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The Biden administration aims to keep IPMDA 'a cutting-edge partnership' as the Quad will keep abreast of new technologies (The White House 2022b). Some believe that the IPMDA is one of the most promising Quad initiatives till date that will enable the Indo-Pacific littoral partners to transition from legacy technologies, such as coastal radars, aerial and surface patrols, and AIS broadcasts to more relevant and up-to-date technologies (Cooper and Poling 2022). The Indo-Pacific region remains prone to illegal fishing operations by a large number of unidentifiable ships and therefore unaccountable to international maritime rules and norms. As per a

news report, fishing ships remain unlocatable for nearly 80% of their maritime operations (Sidel 2022). Moreover, they are 'under no obligation' to stay locatable (Cooper and Poling 2022).

The IPMDA gains strategic significance for its unstated objective of countering China's dark shipping networks in the Indo-Pacific waters. China not only owns both the largest fishing fleet and the largest Distant Water Fleet (DWF) in the world but also has remained the biggest violator of fishing norms since 2019 with its first ranking in the IUU Fishing Index (Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime 2021: 10)). Many Chinese ships engage in what is referred to as dark shipping operations whereby they turn off their automatic identification system while operating in the seas (Vaughn and Dolven 2022). These unlocatable ships then engage in illegal fishing activities in other countries' Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ). In an attempt to shame China, the United States has claimed that China is responsible for the 95% of illegal fishing operations in the Indo-Pacific region (Sevastopulo 2022).

Committing to the ASEAN Centrality

The significance of Quad members comes not only from their size and material power but also the depth of their engagements in the Indo-Pacific region. The Quad member-states have been historically engaged in the regional affairs and are deeply embedded in the region's current security and cooperative architecture. They are strategic partners of the region's most-representative regional grouping – Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and members of various ASEAN-led forums, such as East Asia Summit, ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN Plus Defense Ministerial Meetings (ADMM Plus). Barring India, the Quad members are also members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

In order to assuage the fear of the smaller ASEAN countries that the Quad would undermine the efforts of ASEAN, the Quad member-states have declared their commitment to ASEAN centrality. The February 2022 Joint Statement of the Quad declared that they were "unwavering supporters of ASEAN unity and centrality, and the ASEAN-led architecture," and expressed faith that the ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific (AOIP) "will be key to guiding the region's economic and political future" (Joint Statement 2022). The Quad Joint Leaders' Statement of May 2022 reiterated this promise and reaffirmed their 'support for ASEAN-led efforts to seek a solution in Myanmar and called 'for the urgent implementation of the ASEAN Five Point Consensus' (The White House 2022a).

The Quad's shared commitment stems from the individual member-state's own commitment to the principle of ASEAN centrality. The Biden administration in the United States has sought to reengage the ASEAN forum and recenter its ASEAN policy. The United States convened a special summit, inviting all the ten ASEAN member-states to Washington D.C in May 2022. The special summit aimed to rebuild the Obama-era chemistry with ASEAN and reinforce the agency of ASEAN as a regional actor (Campbell 2022). Similarly, India, Japan and Australia have long affirmed the principle of ASEAN centrality.

There is a general sense of apprehension in the ASEAN region that the Quad can adversely affect ASEAN's centrality in the region (Dermawan 2021; Sulaiman 2019: 19; Laksamana 2020: 107). The same concerns were also reflected in the two surveys conducted by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) and ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute (Thu 2018, Mun et al. 2020: 33). Echoing similar sentiments of competitiveness between ASEAN and the Quad, a prominent Southeast Asian expert argues that 'ASEAN will live competitively with Quad and AUKUS' (Chongkittavorn 2021).

Challenges before the Quad

While moving forward as a premier regional grouping, the Quad has exhibited various challenges. These challenges relate to historical baggage, divergent strategic philosophy and concerns that the member states bring to the grouping. These burdens of the past have imposed both structural and behavioral limitations on the discussions within the Quad. For example, though it has been argued that the fate of the Quad has always hung on India (Grossman 2022), one needs to consider not just India's strategic choices but also the dynamic of India's equations with the West, especially, with the US. In addition, the Quad members have also shown differential capacity and levels of development that are likely to inhibit the grouping from achieving its goals.

The US Primacy in the Quad and Fiercely Autonomous India

The Quad is today largely an US-led initiative and, therefore, prone to be pushed to follow the US strategic choices and directions. Such a situation may not always be comfortable for other Quad members, especially India that is not a treaty ally of the US and takes pride in its long-standing autonomous strategic thinking. The Ukraine War has exposed this weakness of the grouping. While the US wanted to rally the Quad against Russia during the Ukraine War, India wanted to keep Quad focused to the Indo-Pacific region. Insisting on maintaining agency and autonomy in exercising its

foreign policy, India refused to sanction Russia, continued to import Russian oil and abstained from voting on the UN resolutions for censuring Russia.

On the other hand, the Indian position on Russia has not gone down well in the United States. The US policymakers have found India's Russia policy 'maddening' and 'frustrating' (Ibid.). A recent US Congressional Research Service report has termed India an 'outlier,' a 'weak link' in the Quad, skeptical about the US strategic intent in Asia and with 'questionable commitment to the core Quad values' (Chanlett-Avery, Kronstadt, Vaughn 2022) During his visit to India in March 2022, the US Deputy National Security Advisor (NSA), Daleep Singh, to India in March 2022. The Deputy NSA cautioned India against relying on trade with Russia and remarked that 'there are consequences to countries that actively attempt to circumvent or backfill the sanctions' (Haider 2022). His remarks invited strong reactions both within and outside the Modi government. India's Minister for Finance, Nirmala Sitharaman, declared that the country's interest came first, and it would buy products from the cheapest source (Lakshaman 2022).

The experts have attributed Indian hesitancy in a public reprimand of Russia to its long-term partnership with Russia, payback moments for the past Russian vetoes at the United Nations, or to the country's dependence on Russia for defense equipment ().However, these explanations only partially explain India's behaviour on the Ukraine crisis. India's refusal has more to do with its emphasis on strategic autonomy, its unwillingness to get involved in other countries' wars and maintain agency in the conduct of foreign policy while navigating the great power politics in the regional and global arena. What went somewhat unnoticed was the bipartisan manner, in which India debated the issue and the Modi government known for its anti-communist sentiments, continued to abstain from public and harsh criticism of Russian attack.

In addition to the Ukraine crisis, India has also exhibited an autonomous position while dealing with the China challenge. Though New Delhi has shown an alignment of interest in balancing China, it has avoided the Quad involvement in its dispute with China. It is argued that India, driven by its own logic of security and vulnerability, has sought to 'minimize perceptions of the Quad as a U.S.-led containment coalition, both to limit the damage to China-India relations and to enhance the Quad's broader regionwide appeal' (Smith 2021). India's request to keep under wraps the US military assistance during the Galwan border conflict in May 2020 underlines the country's policy to prevent the great power politics from dominating its bilateral conflict with China. The principal takeaway here is that India is likely to weigh

its foreign policy choices before it gets involved in the US-led foreign policy initiatives even within the Indo-Pacific region.

Is India the weakest link in the Quad? Though some experts have sought to argue and identify India as the weakest link in the Quad, it is important to note that every member-state has proven that they hold the key to the survival and growth of the grouping. India brings significant material and strategic value to the grouping as without India, the Quad is merely another trilateral mechanism among the three long-standing alliance partners. Australia proved in 2008 by pulling the plug on Quad that it can also be the weakest link in the Quad. Japan's conceptualization of the Quad both in 2007 and 2017 imply that the grouping will have no future without Japan. Similarly, the United States has shown that it can be both a shaky and solid partner in shouldering the responsibility of addressing the regional security and developmental challenges. The US commitment to the regional security remains a troubling question even for its Asian allies. In other words, the Quad, standing on four legs, will struggle to survive if a single member decides to opt out.

Differential Capacity of Quad Members: Challenge of Accomplishing the Ambition

It is argued that the Quad initiatives build upon the member-states' complementary strengths as evident in the grouping's vaccine diplomacy that involved 'US technology, Japanese financing, Indian production capacity and Australian logistics' (Jaishankar and Madan 2021). However, the Quad vaccine diplomacy has shown marginal results as India has lagged far behind in delivering a billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines by the end of 2022 (Nagar and Imparato 2022). It is not clear whether the failure of the Quad in delivering the vaccines in time is largely India's fault or the failure of the grouping in coordinating the multiple parts of collaboration.

The differential capacity of the Quad members is likely to be more problematic in the areas of emerging technologies, supply chains, cyber security and infrastructure development. They will require deeper and sustained coordination among the members along multiple moving parts whether in terms of conceptualizing designs, developing and assembling the necessary parts, or passing the enabling laws and regulatory frameworks. In fact, the challenge of differential capacity and level of sophistication in these areas is further complicated by divergent policy positions and regulatory frameworks of the Quad member-states on various issues, such as data localization and cybersecurity. It is argued that 'regulatory barriers such as differences on national data sharing laws can hinder the implementation of joint initiatives' (Luong and Chahal

2022). Interestingly, it is argued that each Quad member has more research partnerships with China than they do with one another (Chahal et al.: 2)

Moreover, the Quad cooperation in the high-end tech areas would require a high-level of trust and confidentiality while working. It is not clear as to what level of information, technology and intelligence the Quad members will be comfortable sharing with each other. While Australia is a member of Five Eyes and shares a very high level of trust with the US, India is neither a member of Five Eyes nor an alliance partner. Also, India shares a different worldview when it comes to data sharing with its emphasis on data localization.

Conclusion

The Quad is here to stay and is likely to carry on with both the balancing and normative posturing as the member-countries continue to gauge each other's priorities and strategic environment in the future consultations. There is a general recognition among the Quad member-states that the balancing of China, though a foundational logic of Quad's origin, is likely to be a somewhat narrow and partial expression of their strategic standing in the Indo-Pacific region. The grouping must retain its original normative character in order to validate the claim that it aims to develop a 'rules-based regional order.' More importantly, the grouping must reflect the roles that these four member-states have already been playing in the region as markets, investors, security providers, development facilitators and important players for regional cooperation. The Quad has amassed a vast agenda of cooperation and accomplishing them is likely to be an uphill task. The member-states will have to grapple with strategic, conceptual, financial, logistical and other challenges that will require ingenuity, deeper trust and broader commitment while they keep working to achieve the grouping's objectives in line with their own strategic interests.

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Olive Oil and Basketball: Collective Memory and America's Troubled Alliances with the Philippines and Thailand

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United States' alliances in Southeast Asia are troubled. This paper argues that dominant frameworks for understanding alliance dynamics, which assume that rational calculation and bargaining are the primary sources of alliance dynamics, are inadequate for explaining the fragility of US alliances with Thailand and the Philippines. It proposes that a constructivist perspective, emphasising identity, emotion, and collective memory, offers a useful supplementary lens for explaining why some alliances experience turbulence. The paper sets out the theoretical case for examining collective memory in an alliance context, together with a methodology for practical application. The paper finds that in the US-Thai alliance, the domestic politics of collective memory has constrained commemoration of highpoints in the longstanding US-Thai military partnership, leaving the alliance with weaker public support and more vulnerable to strains than would otherwise have been the case. In the Philippines, state sanctioned narratives recognising shared sacrifice during the Second World War are counterbalanced by traumatic memories of the United States-Philippines colonial war, producing a deep ambivalence. These results point to the need for more systematic analysis of collective memory as an important variable in international politics.

That all is not well with America's treaty alliances in Southeast Asia in the twenty-first century has been clear for some time. When Filipino President Rodrigo Duterte declared he had broken with America in 2016 it made for powerful theatre (McCoy 2016). Thailand's disgruntlement has been less flamboyant but just as intense– our 2015-2017 surveys found that Thai military officers saw the United States as more likely to be a military threat than China (Raymond and Blaxland, 2021). Conventional

alliance theory struggles to explain these faltering alliances because they assume a unitary state employing a strategic calculus that is rational and material. Accordingly, they predict that Thailand and the Philippines should draw closer to the United States as China, a revisionist and increasingly assertive power, gains in military power. This article argues that a constructivist perspective emphasising, identity, collective memory, and emotion is better placed to explain the cracks in these alliances than methods which assume rational bargaining processes as the key modality.

That alliances are constrained by fundamental dynamics found in any bilateral international relationship, such as whether the actors perceive their identity and values to be compatible with those of their alliance partner, is not entirely novel. Where two states of fundamentally different governing ideologies put aside their differences temporarily because of a shared threat perception, the union is unlikely to be long-lasting. The brief alliance between the United States and Saddam Hussein's Iraq, for example, was an inherently weak 'alliance of convenience' (Resnick 2010). Sensitivity over hierarchy, status and identity can also erode trust, as the souring of China's Cold War alliance with the Soviet Union shows (Garthoff 1970). Surrounding the security bargain of any alliance is a deeper relationship between two states, that may engender genuine warmth and trust, or alternatively, perfunctory display. Alliances in the latter category have in the past, and will again in the future, dwindle away.

How do we calibrate these alliance identity dynamics? This article will argue the importance of collective memory as a variable capable of influencing the emotional content of the broader bilateral relationships within which any alliance exists. Using the US-Thai and US-Philippines alliances as cases, I will show that collective memory linked to domestic politics have been of significance in causing the recent fragility that has manifested in both relationships. The article proceeds in four parts. First, I present a brief overview of the origins and development of the US-Thai and US-Philippines alliances. Second, I consider conventional alliance theory, and argue that is less well suited to predicting alliance behaviour in the post-Cold War era than in the Cold War era in which it emerged. Third, I turn to explaining the role of identity, emotion, and memory in international relations, and set out a methodology for assessing collective memory. In the final section, I use this methodology to explain how collective memory has played a part in weakening the United States' two Southeast Asian alliances.

US alliances in Southeast Asia

Although Thailand and the United States fought together in the Korean War 1950-1953, it was the Manila Pact establishing the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) that marked the beginning of the formal US-Thai alliance. Seeking to deter further communist aggression following the communist Vietminh driving French forces from northern Vietnam, in particular through their 1954 victory at Dien Bien Phu, the United States signed the pact with the United Kingdom, France, Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines and Thailand in Manila on 8 September 1954. Thailand was one of the most eager proponents and the first to ratify the treaty, on 2 December 1954. Under Prime Minister Phibun Songkram, the Thai government had sought a bilateral security guarantee from the United States against the possibility of Chinese or Vietminh advances into Thai territory via Laos, and saw the Pact primarily in those terms. Whilst SEATO was defunct by 1977, the US-Thai alliance was buttressed by the 1962 Thanat-Rusk Communique, which stipulated that the US commitment to Thai security existed regardless of the status of the Manila Pact.

In the case of the Philippines, an imperial relationship predated the establishment of defence ties as sovereign equals. The United States gained the Philippines as a colonial possession after its victory in the 1898 Spanish American war. The US-Philippines alliance developed following the Second World War and after the United States granted the Philippines formal independence in 1946. First, President Manul Roxas signed a Military Basing Agreement (MBA) permitting the basing of US forces on 14 March 1947. The agreement gave the United States access to twenty-three military bases across the country, facilitating the projection of US military power and providing for US defence of the Philippines (Riddle, 1988 p. 11). Second, the United States and the Philippines established their formal alliance, the US-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty in 1951. Driving the signing of the treaty were mutual concerns about rising communist aggression, especially after the victory of the Chinese communists in 1949 and the Huk insurgency in the Philippines.

Both allies supported the United States during its war in Vietnam 1955-1975. Clark airbase in the Philippines and Udon Thani and Utapao airbases in Thailand facilitated US air operations against North Vietnam. Both states hosted large numbers of American service personnel and contributed their own ground forces to the Vietnam War.

After the US defeat in Vietnam, however, both alliances experienced turbulence, in which issues of sovereignty and national pride loomed large. In the mid-

1970s, United States and Thai governments conducted acrimonious and unsuccessful negotiations regarding a post-war presence of US forces in Thailand. A decade and a half later, the US-Philippines alliance foundered when in 1991 the Philippines refused to renew the Military Basing Agreement and ordered the closure of Clark and Subic Bay bases.

In the post-Cold War period, both alliances have experienced further significant peaks and troughs. The US rewarded Thailand for its contribution of peacekeepers after the 2003 Iraq invasion, making it a Major Non-NATO ally in 2005. But angry exchanges and the cutting of US military assistance programs followed Thai military coups in 2006 and 2014. The centrepiece of the alliance, multilateral exercise Cobra Gold, dwindled in scale and Thailand rejected US access requests (Raymond, forthcoming; Walton 2015). Similarly, the US and Philippines alliance reached a highpoint in 2014 with the establishing of a significant new agreement, the Enhanced Defence Cooperation Agreement under which the Philippines obtained more assistance with its defence modernisation whilst allowing US forces greater access to bases. Only two years later, however, the newly elected President Duterte announced he was ending the alliance and turning to China. He also threatened to abrogate the Visiting Forces Agreement providing the legal underpinning for US defence cooperation with the Philippines armed forces (Lema et al, 2020).

There are, therefore, some parallels in the histories of the Thai and Philippines alliances with the United States, including their origins in the Cold War and their post-Cold War turbulence. The question for this paper is, however, whether conventional alliance theory provides a sufficient means for explaining the instability both relationships have encountered in their more recent phases, a question to which we now turn.

Alliances and alliance theory

The International Encyclopaedia of Political Science (Badie, Berg-Schlosser and Morlino 2011, pp.61-62) defines an alliance as "a formal agreement among independent states in the international system to cooperate militarily in the event of militarized conflict with outside parties." Alliances are therefore binding commitments to another state's security that encompasses joint military operations. They are a very significant feature of international relations, and are the subject of considerable scholarship in the field of strategic studies.

Within alliance research, bargaining and rational utility maximisation has remained the dominant theoretical framework. This framework assumes the primary motive for states entering alliances is capability aggregation: a bigger force bringing higher chances of victory. Analysing alliances in this way means measuring costs, risks, benefits and assurances. For example, Wilkins (2019), in assessing the ANZUS alliance between Australia and the United States, identified what each partner might offer and obtain in terms of tangible and intangible assets such as loyalty, military contributions, purchase of arms, capacity to further US goals with third countries, and congruent threat perceptions.

Nonetheless, for three reasons this article contends that relying on bargaining frameworks for alliance analysis is insufficient. First, the decline in frequency of military conflict is reducing the applicability of models developed during the Cold War. When Diesing and Snyder first compiled their classic *Conflict Among Nations* in 1977, the Cold War was in full swing. They based their analysis of international behaviour on the concept of crisis bargaining, in which coercion has a high degree of prominence. They tested three models of crisis decision-making- utility maximisation, bounded rationality and bureaucratic politics and studied 13 cases, from the Fashoda crisis of 1898 to the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 (Snyder and Diesing 1977, pp. xii- 28). Seven of these crises were in the post-Second World War period, an era with two large drivers of conflict, colonialism and the bipolar Cold War competition between the United States and the Soviet Union.

In the post-Cold War period both these drivers have disappeared. Interstate warfare has become rare. In fact, the post-Cold War period coincides with what some scholars have called the East Asian Peace (Tonnesson 2017). The last major military conflict in East Asia was over four decades ago, when in 1979 China decided to teach Vietnam a lesson and attacked it, following Vietnam's own invasion of Cambodia in 1978. But it was also harbinger of the final decade of the Cold War, after which Southeast Asia no less than other part of East Asia, sought energetically to turn battlefields into marketplaces. The reasons for this peace are not agreed. Realists like White (2013, p. 11) credit United States primacy. Others credit Japan as important to this *Pax Mercator*, as it provides a model of a state focussed above all on industrialisation, trade and technological modernisation, with the converse rejection of nationalism and expansionism (Tonnesson, 2015). Others view the absorption, and indigenisation of Western political concepts of norms such as sovereignty, and the

development of localised forms of shared identity and modes of diplomatic practice, most prominently displayed in 'the ASEAN way' as equally important (Acharya 2018).

Regardless of the antecedents of the East Asia peace, many scholars agree that this perception reduces the importance of military conflict for understanding international politics (Baldwin 1995, p. 118.) If states rarely confront a crisis with a potential for serious military conflict, then the habits of thought employed for military crises, and alliance management might, if they ever existed, atrophy. Moreover, if alliance bargaining, which as Diesing and Snyder (p. 430) point out, is mainly a matter of each ally's military power, the power of the adversary, and alternatives for alignment, what happens to the analytical efficacy of this model when there is no clear adversary? This article will argue that other factors like emotion and identity intrude, consistent with Liska's (1968, p. 37) observation that once "overt formalized alliances between unequal states fail visibly to foster military security and stability… their intangible effects assume inordinate importance"

A second problem of alliance theory is its tendency to view decision-making international politics as primarily a matter of rational utility maximisation. Influenced by neoclassical economics, this approach tends to downplay the role of emotion, seeing it as erroneous and aberrant (Mercer 2005). In the last two decades, IR scholars have sought to roll back the dominance of rational choice theory, leading to new ways of conceptualising the way states think, 'feel' and act. One of these posits that states need ontological security, a consistent sense of self.   Drawing on this more holistic conception, Subotic (2016) for example argues that Serbia's decision to launch its war on Kosovo in defiance of international pressure was not a materially rational decision. Only by understanding the meaning of Kosovo for Serbia's sense of self-identity, one marked by a belief that Serbia was destined to become a victim despite its pursuit of righteous causes, could one understand what drove Serbia to embark on its futile and expensive war. In essence, this theoretical standpoint argues that emotion shapes how actions in the present are interpreted. As Crawford (2000, pp. 134-135) puts it:

> A pre-existing feeling that a relationship is warm, or one that is characterized by empathetic understanding with the other, may help actors frame ambiguous behaviour as neutral, positive, or motivated by circumstances rather than hostile intentions. Conversely, fear and antipathy may promote negative evaluations and make a neutral or positive reception of ambiguous behaviours and events less likely.

Economists are also expanding their understanding of how decision-making occurs, to encompass processes beyond value-maximising within constraints. Informed by neuroscience, economists state that for individuals, "emotions and rational decision-making are not orthogonal" and in fact emotional engagement during risk-taking is part of 'reasoned' decision-making (Bossaerts and Murawski, 2015, p. 40). In this, they are in agreement with psychologists of international politics, who have long argued against restricting analysis of decision-making to rational factors. Volkan (1997, p.117), for example, contends that the rational components of the Turkish-Greek relationship – the economic, legal, military, and political factors – were highly

> contaminated with shared perceptions, thoughts, fantasies and emotions (both conscious and unconscious) pertaining to past historical glories and traumas: losses, humiliations, mourning difficulties, feelings of entitlement to revenge, and resistance to accepting changed realities.

The third key reason why traditional bargaining approaches to understanding alliances are insufficient is that these models do not sufficiently incorporate domestic politics. As a product of the Cold War period, most of the alliance literature is squarely within the realist paradigm. Realism, as a paradigmatic school of international relations, is inclined to view states as unitary, security-maximising actors and discount domestic politics as important in international politics. But is it realistic to ignore domestic politics as a factor impinging on alliance politics? There is considerable reason to think that Japan and South Korea have a natural commonality of interests that could drive greater cooperation and commitment to each other's security. Both are US allies and both are increasing subject to pressure from a more powerful and assertive China, leading to their shared negative views of the PRC (Silber, Huang and Clancy 2022). But efforts to foster a United-States-South Korea security axis have foundered, even on small initiatives like a proposed information sharing agreement (Jo, p. 122). The reasons are less Japan's alleged impenitence for its colonial projects in Korea than the enmeshment of the issue in Korea's domestic politics (Jo, 2022). In the contests over the memory of the Japanese occupation, Korean willingness to collaborate with or forgive Japan has increasingly been associated with conservativism and authoritarianism, making any moves to improve relations or adopt a pragmatic approach a sure path to electoral defeat in Korea's robust democracy.

Bringing identity, emotion and memory into alliance theory

While conventional alliance theory dwells mainly on rational bargaining processes, some key realist texts do not in fact preclude the possibility that identity and emotion might be important in alliance dynamics. For example, it is well established that the *reputation* of allies can shape alliance decision-making (see for example, Miller 2011). Moreover, one of the foremost writers on alliances, Walt (2013), analyses alliances in a way that leaves room for emotion, identity and memory. Walt argued that states form alliances to balance against *threat*, challenging Kenneth Waltz's position that states form alliances to balance against *power*. In substituting threat for power, Walt implicitly introduces the question of how states determine threat. States must decide which states pose a threat based on a reading of the "Other's" actions and intentions. Given that these are fundamentally unknowable, states bring *prior belief* to the question of intent, illuminated by the state's own history, culture, values and identity. The argument here is that considering memory and identity can compensate for some of limitations of the rational utility and bargaining rubrics that tend to dominate alliance theory.

Identity has been extensively addressed in constructivist international relations (IR) research, but there is considerable variation of opinion on how it is formed (see for example Zehfuss 2001; Brubaker and Cooper 2000). Wendt (1992) argued that state identities form as states interact with one another. Cooperative encounters could lead to perception of the world as benign, while conflictual episodes could foster a perception of a 'self-help world' (a core tenet of neo-realist IR theory). Mercer (1995) sees the designation of a hostile and inimical 'Other' as inherent to defining the 'Self'. Berenskoetter (2007) points out that states can find identity through group membership. He argues (pp.663-666) that friendship is yet another kind of Self-Other encounter, a special type in which the Self feels able to be authentic, and yet still accorded recognition by the Other. The literature, then, strongly implies that the sum of 'Self-Other' perceptions will lead to a designation of the 'Other' as friend, enemy, or something else.

The argument made here is that memory enters the equation because it is constitutive of identity. This is easy to see in the case of individuals. The English philosopher John Locke wrote that for individual human beings, memory and identity were deeply interlinked:

> in this alone consists personal Identity, i.e. the sameness of a
> rational Being: And as far as this consciousness can be extended
> backwards to any past Action or Thought, so far reaches the

Identity of that Person; it is the same self now it was then; and 'tis

by the same self with this present one that now reflects on it, that

that Action was done (quoted in Yaffe 2007 p. 215).

Contemporary scholarship, however, suggests the same co-constitutive relationship applies for groups. Just as beliefs are a kind of societal glue, so does collective memory offer an epistemic basis for shared identity (Head 2016). National identity also arises from collective memory, whether this is a state-sanctioned narrative or shared myths, stories and memories that give rise to a sense of shared ancestry (Smith 1989 p. 353).

Nonetheless, the formation and invoking of collective memory is subject to factors different to the unique physiological and psychological traits that might influence how a particular individual remembers their life. Collective memory, according to sociologist Halbwachs (1992, p. 38), is different from personal autobiographical memory, because it is reinforced by the interaction of the individual with society. This means it comes from written records, photographs, commemorations, rituals and festivals. Accordingly, it is the writing of history and other practices, such as art and ceremony, that shape collective remembering.

Political and social power structures, especially domestic but also international, surround and shape memory practices. Memory studies research now speaks of the existence of mnemonic hegemonies, in which tensions exist between official master narratives and community-based counter-narratives (Molden 2016 pp. 125–142). Some memory theorists go as far as to contend that for states, it is only by the accretion of political actors invoking memory that collective memory has any existence at all (Jo, 2022).

Collective memory is capable of triggering considerable emotion, especially where the past has involved trauma. Volkan (1997) noted for traumatic events, collective memory can change perceptions of time. After observing the way in which Serbs invoked the memory of the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, while conducting ethnic cleansing in Bosnia after 1992, he coined the term "time collapse" (p. 35). "Time collapse" is where "people may intellectually separate the past event from the present one, but emotionally the two events are merged" (p. 35). It is not uncommon. The persecution of Muslims and especially the Rohingya in contemporary Myanmar, where Baman Burmese invoke their historic sense of victimhood from British colonialism to justify violence against innocents is another example (Herath,2020).

If collective memory, including collective traumas, can affect the emotional content of relationships, it can also affect alliance dynamics. That is to say, we can posit emotional content as an intermediate variable, between the independent variable of collective memory and the dependent variable of alliance dynamics, the latter measured in terms of practical cooperation and trust in the 'Other'. While emotional content normally lies below the surface of formal strategic calculation and alliance management process, pre-existing feelings affect how actions in the present are interpreted. This emotional content may emerge in stressful contexts, such as negotiations, and may turn policy disagreements into a larger alliance rift.

To summarise, the question of how states decide who a threat is, and indeed, who a friend is, opens the door to a constructivist reading of alliances. Constructivists posit that factors such as national identity shape interests, and additionally, factors such as culture and memory, shape policy. In constructing who is a friend and who is a threat, states take memory of past behaviour into account. In constructing who is a friend, and indeed who is an ally, states take formal legal statements such as treaties into account, but they also consider the present circumstances, and the past track record of that friend. In considering the past track record of that friend, states draw on and are influenced by collective memory, extant in both official narratives and civil society. In this article I argue that where the character of threat is unclear, as it is in the post-Cold War era, and where the future source of threat is also unclear, the role of memory may increase as a factor shaping perceptions of friends and allies.

Having established a theoretical argument that collective memory impacts international relationships, including alliances, it becomes necessary to define a working method to allow practical investigation of how, when and where the collective memory in a given polity, society or community might affect alliances. Here it is important that we mine the work already done in the discipline of memory studies. One of the most significant works in memory studies, certainly in terms of scale but also in terms of conceptual innovation and subsequent influence, is Nora's (1992) *Realms of Memory* project on France's national identity.

Nora's undertaking sought to capture French "national feeling" through a systematic analysis of the *places* of *collective memory* (1992, p. xv). This approach assumed that "memory places" - *lieux de memoire* or sites of memory – were the building blocks out of which traditional images of France had been constructed. Nora (p. xxi) sought to identify these "symbolic fragments" of the "symbolic whole" and to "shed light on the construction of representations, the formation of historical objects over

time." These covered sites of memory as diverse as real people (such as Joan of Arc), events (such as the French Revolution and the Tour de France), and geographic concepts (such as Frances territorial boundaries, the "hexagon"). Nora (1992, p. 14) stated that *lieux de memoire* could be material (like an archive), functional (a textbook) or symbolic (a ritual like a minute's silence).

Nora's "sites of memory" recognize that collective memory has *structure* rather than merely *recency*. All things being equal, recency, the elapsed time between an event and its recollection, does appear to apply to human memory of world history. When Liu et al (2009 pp. 667 - 692) assessed social representations of world history amongst university student in 12 countries, asking them to nominate the most important events and figures in history, they found a significant recency effect. Two thirds of the events and people nominated were within the past 100 years. In contrast, Nora's approach to collective memory does not attribute equal weight to all events, figures and all periods; it is *lumpy*, there are periods and phenomena of which there are high levels of collective recollection, while others are forgotten or live only in obscure texts. Zerubavel (2003, p. 26) terms this phenomenon *mnemonic density*. For any community there are mnemonic 'hills' that are remembered well, and also mnemonic valleys, where little is recalled. Varying mnemonic density can be detected in historical texts, such as in a US history book that devotes twenty-four pages to the three year period 1775 to 1777, and the same number of pages to the sixty year interval 1690 to 1749 (Zerubavel, 2003, p. 28). In essence, the social memory of nation states is not simply matter of recalling the most recent events to do with that nation.

In assessing how collective memory affects alliances, the approach proposed here is to look at specific sites or fragments of memory connected with particular themes or events that have an international dimension. For the Thai collective memory of the United States, examples might be memory of Cold War cooperation in joint US-Thai military operations, the circumstances of the US troop withdrawal after the Vietnam war, or US policy during the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997. We can conceive of these memory fragments as being either positive, negative or neutral in the degree of warmth or antipathy that they generate towards the foreign actor. We can also conceive of these sites of memory fragments as being additive. An overabundance of negative events and themes will produce a negative overall site of memory. The converse will produce a negative relationship site. This aggregation allows us to conduct a 'balance of identity' approach to understanding alliance strength. This approach assesses the extent to which accumulated memories and narratives belonging

to Country A deliver to the present a positive, less positive or negative identity of the putative ally, Country B.

To construct the sites of memory triangulation, drawing on a variety of sources, is necessary. Surveys and interviews provide cues for deeper investigation. Historiography is clearly important, as it is important to understand the biases in history-writing, but so are the physical manifestations of memory, such as monuments and commemorative actions. Popular culture, expressed through forms such as cinema is also important.

Fundamental to the process of constructing the sites of memory is recognition of the politics of collective memory. The construction of memory is not a neutral process, and as King (2003, p. 3) writes, "its production is inevitably linked to power". Therefore, in addition to identifying individual sites of memory, broader awareness *of memory regimes* is important (Langenbacher, E. and Shain, Y. 2010). That is, how public memory is controlled and by who, and what contestation exists over memory. As such, it is often, but not always, state-sponsored collective memory that is important. Identifying these gatekeepers is another important aspect of any investigation for how collective memory affects alliances. Building a memory regime is important is because it enables the analysis to incorporate non-verbal manifestations of identity and memory: such things as mnemonic sites (for example, monuments and statues) and commemorative acts and rituals (for example, parades and festivals). Having theorised how collective memory can affect alliances through identity and emotion, and a methodology for analysing collective memory, we can apply these to the United States' Southeast Asian alliances, beginning with the US-Thai alliance.

Collective memory and the Thai-US Alliance

Thailand's two most powerful institutions, the military and the monarchy, collective memory, are powerful gatekeepers. They have shaped a state-sanctioned memory scape that reflects a royalist-nationalist view of Thai history (Raymond and Blaxland 2021). This memoryscape celebrates the deeds of royals, or their loyal servants especially in Thailand's pre-modern history. In 2022, of the country's 26 days of public holiday, nine were for royals and four were for the Buddha (National Holidays 2022). Other than royal birthdays and accessions, there are few commemorations of events from the recent past. That is not to say there is no collective memory outside of state-sanctioned history. Thailand's democracy movement has indeed offered a counter narrative to state-sanctioned royalist-nationalist narratives of Thailand's past. Neither of these agents of collective memory are, however, particularly favourable to a positive

collective memory of the US alliance (Raymond and Blaxland 2021, p. 184). Analysing two sites of memory, firstly that for the World War II cooperation between the United States and Thailand's Seri Thai anti-Japanese resistance movement, and secondly that for the extensive Cold War US-Thai cooperation, show why this is the case.

While the Seri Thai (Free Thai) movement and its collaboration with the United States predates the formal alliance pact signed in 1954 through the Manila Pact, it was a critical moment in Thailand's history. But for this resistance movement, and the US recognition of it, Thailand's fate after the Second World War could have been much worse. Having collaborated with Japan and allowed it to station forces there, Britain in particular wanted harsh reparations that might have included loss of territory and the disestablishment of the Thai military (Raymond 2018, p. 186). Therefore, it might be thought that Thailand would actively commemorate the Seri Thai, and its contribution to Thai independence, and in doing so strengthen public appreciation of the US-Thai alliance.

In fact, while some Thai history books do acknowledge the Seri Thai and its accomplishments, there are no significant commemorations of the Seri Thai, let alone the Seri Thai-United States partnership (Raymond 2018, pp.181-182). Moreover, the Thai state and media routinely overlook ad hoc opportunities to recall the joint effort. The 2015 commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, was one such opportunity. In Thailand, the day was ignored, even in the media (Raymond, 2018, p. 177). When Thai politicians attended China's commemorative events, commentary focussed on economic cooperation and the procurement of submarines. The only event held in Thailand was a gathering of some descendants of the Seri Thai, very much a local affair driven by the Seri Thai veterans themselves (Raymond 2018, p. 181)

Thailand's combative post-Second World War domestic politics explain this significant absence in public consciousness. The Seri Thai movement became powerful in the war's immediate aftermath and humiliated the mainstream military including by excluding it from the victory parades and stripping it of funding (Raymond 2018, p. 187). Eventually the military regained its ascendancy, driving the Seri Thai leader, Pridi Phanomyong into exile and assassinating many of its leaders. Thereafter Pridi and remaining Seri Thai veterans, many in the Thai Navy, attempted several comebacks such as the Palace and Manhattan Rebellions, but none were successful (Raymond 2018, p. 187). The monarchy for its part, had never warmed to Pridi Phanomyong. First, he had been a key architect of the 1932 revolution ending

Thailand's absolute monarchy. Secondly, his ideas for reengineering the Thai economy along socialist lines meant many suspected him of communist leanings. Third, he was wrongly implicated in the tragic shooting death of the young king Ananda Mahidol in 1946. Though later exonerated, he has remained a controversial figure (Raymond 2018, p. 187). Therefore, the domestic politics of the Seri Thai mean the gatekeepers of Thailand's state-sanctioned collective memory marginalise one of the most crucial and positive episodes in the history of Thai-US relations.

The United States-Thai Cold War military cooperation is also, unfortunately for the strength of the US-Thai alliance, a net negative. While hosting up to 48,000 US troops (Kirk 1979, pp. 179, 181), Thailand was a huge beneficiary of US largesse. About $USD 1 billion was spent on economic and military aid between 1946 and 1966 (Lissak, p.94). Designed to give Thailand greater logistics capacity to respond to threats from China or North Vietnam, US military construction included 563km of asphalt road, airfields and the development of Sattahip port (Muscat, 1990, p.65). The support also included education and training. This support, together with Japanese investment, helped Thailand emerge from the Cold War as a tiger economy.

Despite the degree of Thai-United States enmeshment, and their joint military cooperation in wars in Laos, Vietnam and Korea, there is relatively little public awareness or acknowledgement. The reasons for this are twofold. First, Thailand has relatively few military or war monuments, and these are often associated with monarchs, and many from Thailand's pre-colonial history. This is consistent with Thailand's royalist-nationalist perspective on its history. Monuments to significant royals such as Chulalongkorn (monarch during the 1893 confrontation with France) and Taksin (monarch who drove Burmese force out of Thailand after the fall of the old capital of Ayutthaya in 1767) abound (Raymond 2018, p. 180; Raymond and Blaxland, pp.111-112) but monuments to wars of the twentieth century are fewer in number. A monument to Thailand's very significant contribution to the Vietnam War, is located far from the Thailand's capital on a military base in a distant province (Raymond and Blaxland, p. 86). Secondly, in a significant foreign policy reorientation, Thailand's establishment made a conscious decision to disown its participation in wars against its communist neighbours China, Laos and Vietnam following the departure of US forces in 1976. Very aware of the Guam doctrine precluding the involvement of US forces in land wars in Southeast Asia, Thai leaders pursued rapprochement and economic cooperation, and downplayed its Cold War cooperation with the United States (Raymond and Blaxland, pp.114-115).

Consequently, many current Thai military officers are not well informed about of the roots of their alliance. Some 40% of 1800 Thai officers surveyed between 2015 and 2017 had not heard of SEATO, despite its treaty underpinning the formal US-Thai alliance (Raymond and Blaxland 2021, p. 4).

The absence of a state-sanctioned, positive narrative on Thai-US Cold War cooperation means that Cold War collective memory tends to be dominated by community sources of collective memory. One of these, from the democracy movement of Thai politics, is not positive because it sees the close alliance with the United States as responsible for the long tenure of military dictators such as Sarit Thanarat (1957-1963) and Thanom Kittikachorn (1963-1973). Very powerful events in the Thai democracy site of memory, like the 1973 revolution overthrowing Thanom, therefore tend to be negative towards the United States (Raymond and Blaxland, p. 83).Another element of community collective memory is that the Cold War was a significant source of social problems in Thailand. For example, in the 1990s Thailand produced a very popular TV series, *Khao Nork Na* (roughly translated, 'rice outside the fields') about Amerasian children born of relationships between US servicemen stationed in Thailand and local women (Raymond and Blaxland, p. 86).

In sum, the Thai-US site of memory does not buttress the contemporary Thai-US alliance in ways that it might have, had domestic politics not endowed Thai collective memory, both community and state-sanctioned, with the character discussed here. Instead, the positive aspects of past collaboration, such as cooperation against Japan or Communist forces in Korea, occupy quite limited places in Thai collective memory. On the other hand, some of the less positive aspects, such as social problems from troops stationed in Thailand, fill this vacuum. This has meant that state of collective memory for the United States has not been able to cushion the relationship and the alliance, as the two have had less cooperation and especially as the United States has pursued a harder line against Thailand's military coups. The observation of Crawford (2000), that pre-existing feelings shaping the interpretation of current events is hence particularly germane for Thai -US alliance dynamics after the 2014 coup. In a bracing and unexpected result, Thai officers nominated the United States a greater military threat to Thailand than revisionist, communist China (Raymond and Blaxland, p. 4). In doing so they focussed on the post-coup acrimony, informed by a collective memory that overlooks the enmity that existed between Thailand and China during the Cold War, and the brotherhood of wars fought side-by-side their American

counterparts. The condition of the Thai-United States site of memory is summarised in the following table:

Individual site of Memory	Impact on bilateral relationship and alliance
Seri Thai Second World War cooperation	Very weakly positive
Cold War enmeshment	Medium negative
Balance of Identity	Weak negative

Table 1. United States – Thailand Alliance Site of Memory

The Philippines: alliance ambivalence

The Philippines collective memory for its relationship with the United States is similarly both a consequence of top-down and bottom-up memory processes. On the one hand, official state-sanctioned collective (top down) memory emphasises the United States and Philippines as "brothers in arms", drawing on their shared experience of resisting Japan's Second World War invasion and occupation. On the other hand, a collective memory of the Philippines – America war 1899-1902 remains a powerful counter- narrative amongst various Philippines communities, at times erupting into prominence and endangering the alliance.

These two antithetical sites of memory engender a profound – and well-recognised - ambivalence within the Philippines – United States alliance. McCoy (2016, p. 1050) comments on the paradox of Duterte's "break" with the United States, asking "How can a leader enjoy 90 percent approval after lambasting an ally approved by 92 percent of his people?" Kausikan (2017) cites a Filipino joke from the late 1980s, after the U.S. military had left Clark Airbase and Subic Bay: "Yankee go home, and take me with you."

While this ambivalence is recognised, it is rarely critically interrogated. Most accounts of the United States – Philippines alliance employ a traditional bargaining framework. They consider factors such as the benefits of the alliance for the United States in terms of its status as a regional power and the risks for the Philippines, such as entrapment and abandonment. Alliance commentators such as Campbell (2016, p. 224) and Heydarian (2017, p. 574) attribute instability to "outbreaks of nationalism",

but spend little time investigating the collective memory dynamics driving alliance turbulence. The argument here is that these identity dynamics are worthy of study in themselves if any complete understanding of Philippines-US alliance politics is to be achieved. That collective memory offers one means of doing this will now be demonstrated.

The first of two powerful sites of memory for the US-Philippines alliance is that of "brothers in arms". Following their successful invasion in December 1941, Japanese forces forced defeated Filipino and American troops on the Bataan Death March, in which 650 Americans and between five and ten thousand Filipinos died (Blackburn, K. 2010, p.10). Subsequently Philippines governments established a national public holiday called the Day of Valour (Araw ng Kagitingan), commemorating the fall of Bataan to the Japanese in 1942. The Philippines congress signed the holiday into law in 1961 (Official Gazette 1961), calling for all citizens to observe a one-minute silence at 4.30PM and "hold appropriate rites in honor of the heroic defenders of Bataan". Heads of defence services and senior politicians attend ceremonies on this date annually. As an official public holiday, the commemoration supports an official narrative extolling the United States and the Philippines as fraternal warriors. Past presidents such as Manuel Roxas (1946-1948) and Ramon Magsaysay (1953-57) spoke of a 'brotherhood of arms' having formed at Bataan (Blackburn, K. 2010, p.11). American observance has supported this discourse, with the United States awarding Congressional Medals to Philippine veterans and emphasising the way in which Philippines soldiers and civilians "fought side-by-side" to resist the invaders (U.S Embassy in the Philippines, 2019).

As with all state-sanctioned narratives, there are absences or deliberate acts of forgetting, as well as instrumental uses. The Day of Valor and "brotherhood narrative" involves a deliberate forgetting concerning the Filipino elites, such as Roxas, who collaborated with the Japanese. Moreover, Philippines leaders use the Araw ng Kagitingan event to prosecute various foreign policy agendas depending on the security issue of the day. In 2003, President Gloria Arroyo used the occasion to discuss international cooperation against terrorism, topical at that time given the US invasion of Iraq and Philippines support (Jose 2012, p. 149). In 2012, President Benigno Aquino used the Bataan speech to stress the need to defend Philippines offshore territories against China's claims (Jose 2012, p. 149).

The second site of memory with powerful implications for the US-Philippines alliance is, in contrast with the "brothers in arms", one that most Philippines

governments would prefer not to dwell on. But as it is an collective memory residing within the Philippine community that has some characteristics of an intergenerational trauma: it is not easily put aside and can burst into prominence in responses to any perceptions of US highhandedness (Volkan 1997, McCoy 2016). This site of memory is the Philippines-America war of 1900-1902. In this brutal conflict some 126,000 American soldiers put down resistance to the reimposition of colonial rule, costing the lives of over 600,000 Filipinos (Bankoff 2001, p. 549). Suppressing the resistance took over a decade, involved the destruction of entire communities, and later the use of harsh sedition laws prescribing death or long prison sentences to anyone vocally supporting Philippines independence (pp. 60-64).

Evidence for the potency and longevity of this site of memory can be found in the way the issue is brought into play decades later. It has the power to disrupt what Bankoff (2001, p. 550) calls a "careful fabric of purposeful oversight and selective remembrance". Philippines commentator Simbulan (1985), for example, in a book addressing the US bases issue in the 1980s, did not restrict himself to future-oriented analysis of the costs and benefits. Instead, he also discussed the colonial war, quoting from letters written by American soldiers: "Callocan was supposed to contain 17,000 inhabitants. The twentieth Kansas swept through it, and now Callocan contains not one living native" (p. 69) and "Our fighting blood was up, and we all wanted to kill 'niggers'…This shooting human beings beats rabbit-hunting all to pieces." Incidents such as the punitive sacking of the town of Balangiga in September 1901 and theft of the town's church bells continue to be remembered, while efforts to have the bells returned to the Philippines have been unsuccessful (Bankoff, p. 550).

This site of memory, is not uniformly strong everywhere and amongst all Philippines citizens. Constantino (1978) comments that Filipino accommodation of United States colonialism occurred principally through the adoption of English, a national education system, and "glorification of the American way of life, its heroes and institutions" (p. 65). This produced a Filipino elite who embraced and supported American rule, especially if they had been recipients of colonial education. This elicits ambivalence, such as when President Fidel Ramos, was reluctant to comment on US colonial aggression and would only say it was a bittersweet history (Bankoff, 2001, p. 549).

Outside the Manila political elite however, non-establishment figures, such as recent President Rodrigo Duterte, have been much more prepared to invoke this painful past. Early in his tenure, Duterte raised the 1906 killing of 600 Moro people by

American soldiers, stating that the United States had not apologized to the Philippines for atrocities committed at the turn of the century (Estreme, 2016). His attitude was one shared by locals on the island of Mindanao, who still recall the events of over a century ago (Moss, 2016). In the case of Duterte, the pre-existing emotion shapes responses to criticisms in the present, such as his angry rejection of President Obama's criticism of the Philippines police drug-related killings. Duterte's knowledge of the ambivalence within Philippines collective memory, in which Filipino people both admire and resent the United States, means Duterte can take this stance and remain popular, even whilst the United States also remains popular for the Philippines public.

In sum, this conflicted site of memory has been a potent shaping force in the history of the United States –Philippines alliance. It drives instability, like the near decade-long break following the refusal of the Philippines Senate to extend the bases agreement in the 1990s, or the more recent ructions during the tenure of Rodrigo Duterte. These memory dynamics and consequent balance of identity are summed up in the following table.

Individual site of Memory	Impact on bilateral relationship and alliance
"Brothers in arms" Bataan Death March	Strongly positive
Philippines- America war	Strongly negative
Balance of Identity	Extreme ambivalence

Table 2. United States – Philippines Alliance Site of Memory

Conclusion

This article argues that scholars and policymakers concerned with alliances and their health cannot ignore emotion, identity and collective memory as powerful shaping variables. It sets out a case for why, in the complex and ambiguous post-Cold War era, memory and identity dynamics must be considered alongside rational actor analyses of alliance bargains. War is less common and actors are not in most cases facing the existential threat environment that characterised the Cold War, the Second World War and the early twentieth century and late nineteenth century. At the same time,

contemporary research on decision-making has demonstrated conclusively that memory, emotion and rational calculation are never separable.

This article has set out one methodology by which collective memory as a shaping variable for alliances may be systematically and objectively understood. Drawing on the work of Nora, a pioneer in the field of memory studies, its builds on a simple proposition: that collective memory has structure, and discrete sites of memory can be identified. These can be aggregated to provide an overall profile of the relationship site of memory, and the aggregate balance can be assessed. This is of course not a predictive tool, but an explanatory one, which can help us understand why some alliances seem perennially robust and others fragile and volatile.

In this article, the method has been applied to understanding America's troubled alliances in Southeast Asia. Although Thailand and the Philippines are longstanding US allies, their relations with their Great Power partner have been beset with difficulties in the post-Cold war era. In the Thai case particularly, the domestic politics of memory has not been favourable for a positive alliance memory. This has meant that disagreements over Thai domestic political directions have been able to destabilise the alliance more than might have been the case had there been strong elite and community appreciation of the United States role in Thai security and prosperity. In the case of the Philippines, very strong and positive fundamentals, such as annual commemorations of a powerful shared war memory, cannot obviate the memory of the tragic, brutal and bloody war that inaugurated the commencement of United States imperial rule.

None of this is to deny that calculations about US reliability and longevity in East Asia, evaluations of China as a threat, friend or partner, or concerns about entanglements in US-China strategic competition are not important determinants of the future of these alliances. It is simply to note that, as Volkan put it, "If diplomacy is like a basketball game, then the historical traumas of a people are like a thousand bottles of olive oil poured on the court" (Castelloe 2020).

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The Ideology Critique of Mearsheimer's Theory of Offensive Neorealism: The Case of Russia-Ukraine War and Its Ideologization in Indonesia

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This article examines the ideology critique of Mearsheimer's theory of offensive neorealism. Mearsheimer's offensive realism is currently one of the most dominant theories in International Relations that is used to understand international politics, especially in Indonesia. This is evident when Indonesian scholars are discussing the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Most of them are using Mearsheimer's theory to explain the invasion, as they consider Mearsheimer as the master who understands deeply the dynamics of relationship between Russia, Ukraine that led to war. However, Mearsheimer's approach is problematic, especially in its methodology and assumptions that overly simplify the reality of world politics. This article is using the critical theory approach to argue that the theory of offensive neorealism is ideological because this theory is believed as a 'faith', unquestioningly used to make sense of the reality of the Russia-Ukraine War, without questioning its epistemological and methodological assumptions. This article will conduct the ideology critique of Mearsheimer's theory in order to argue that offensive neorealism is a theory that simplifies reality to support great-power countries and their ideologies in order to maintain their positions. It does not matter whether you are against or pro-Ukraine, because, in the end, this theory only represents the interests of great powers like Russia and America. The weak states should instead "realistically" accept big power countries' conducts and ideologies unquestioningly. Essentially, the theory of offensive neorealism does not represent the interests of small countries as it maintains great powers' dominance in both power and ideology over these small countries.

Introduction

Neorealism is one of the mainstream theoretical approaches of International Relations. This theoretical approach was first popularized by an American IR scholar, Kenneth N. Waltz, in his masterpiece *The Theory of International Politics* (1979). Today, another American IR scholar, John J. Mearsheimer, is considered as one of the foremost *neorealist* scholars, based on his work, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (2001). In his

book, Mearsheimer classified neorealism into two major strands: Waltz's defensive neorealism and his own *offensive neorealism*. There are similarities between these two approaches, notably their assumptions that international structure is very much deterministic in the realm of an anarchical system. Under the anarchical international system, states are forced to rely on their own power to survive. The strong has the privilege to do whatever they wish to do whereas the weak cannot. The strong will survive, while the weak will perish and will be absorbed, and thus states are forced to compete against each other, and conflicts are always possible.

The difference between these two approaches is in how they understand the relationship between power. For Mearsheimer, for the 'great powers' to survive, they must maximize their power and to maintain their hegemonic position (the first among all states) in the system. In contrast, Waltz's *defensive realism* argues that states are trying to maintain stability of international system by maximizing *its security* and preserving the distribution of power among states.

Mearsheimer's theory is widely used to explain Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022. He argues that the United States' actions led to the invasion because it backed NATO's expansion to Ukraine. NATO's expansion is essentially a direct threat to Russia as a regional hegemon in Eastern Europe. Facing a loss of its hegemonic position, Russia has no other choice but to prevent the expansion by invading Ukraine. And it is possible that as war goes on and Russia keeps losing, Russia may end up using nuclear weapons to salvage what is left on the battlefield.

Mearsheimer's theory are used by many Indonesian foreign policy experts and academics to understand and explain Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which is noted by Dharmaputra (2022) as 'westsplaining Ukraine'. For example, Wahid Supriyadi, former Indonesian Ambassador to Russia, in line with Mearsheimer's argument, stated that Ukraine's desire to join the NATO led to Russian invasion to Ukraine, as Russia had no desire to see Ukraine, as a buffer state, host NATO's military equipment. In addition, a video of Connie Rahakundini Bakrie, a military and intelligence analyst, that shows her pro-Russian position has been seen by 3 million people. Essentially, this condition reflects that many of Indonesian foreign policy experts are simply not critical of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, accepting as normal that a great power can simply invade its weaker neighbors. Of course, this does not mean that every Indonesian IR scholar or foreign policy expert is pro-Russia. There are many that support Ukraine, but their voices are often drowned within local discourse.

The fact that most Indonesian IR scholars *believe* his views uncritically means that Mearsheimer's view is *ideological* in the sense that his theory is accepted *dogmatically*. There is no other theory used to understand the reality of Russia-Ukraine war, except based on Mearsheimer's theory. At this point, we would like to further develop Dharmaputra's (2022) work by contributing ideology critique to Mearsheimer's theory. In this article, we will problematize the methodological assumptions of Mearsheimer's theory. Even though this critique is almost similar to what many IR scholars' criticism regarding the neorealism approach in general, we will expand on the criticism by focusing on the Russia-Ukraine war.

This article uses qualitative method in which the interpretative mechanism is adopted in a sense more critical rather than understanding (phenomenological approach). We are questioning the philosophical foundations of the neorealism approach. Instead of using case study, we will use a meta-theory approach in order to criticize the theoretical building-blocks of *offensive realism*. Therefore, this paper will not test any theory. This meta-theory mechanism tries to display the contradiction in terms of neorealism arguments as well as its methodological assumptions based on self-reflection. This kind of self-reflection is different from neither deductive nor inductive research method. In this context, Indonesia's understanding of the Russia-Ukraine war based on *offensive realism* is the consequence of social construction of international reality represented by dogmatic mind of *offensive neorealism* approach. Hence, the problem is not the reality, rather it is the philosophical assumptions of *offensive realism*. We could understand the Russia-Ukraine war differently and perhaps much better by utilizing area studies or postcolonial or imperialism studies or many more approaches in IR that were displayed in the late IR debate around the 1980s and 1990s (Waever, 1997). In short, *offensive realism* acts as horse blinders, preventing us from looking from different perspective, such as from the Ukrainians' viewpoint.

Moreover, this article is not an external criticism in the sense of liberalism versus realism debates. We will not provide an alternative approach to make sense of the reality of the Russia-Ukraine war. Instead, this article focuses on ideology critique of Mearsheimer's theory to emancipate the mindset of the theory users, especially IR scholars who have deeply believed in the offensive neorealism approach as a 'faith' or using David Lake's term is the 'isms' as 'sects' (Lake, 2011: 471).

This paper is divided into four parts. The first part discusses theory as ideology and self-reflection as ideology critique as a conceptual framework deriving from critical theory. Ideology critique or self-reflection is an important concept to criticize the theory

that becomes an ideology of the users. Self-reflection mechanism is important to break the faith in a theory by reflecting on the philosophical foundation of the theory or basic assumptions of a theory that are dogmatized by the users. The next section addresses neo-realism reflecting the reality of the Russia-Ukraine war. The reality is constructed by the abstraction of offensive neorealism assumptions which provide consequences not to calculate Ukraine's position and in general ignore weak states. The third section discusses the ideology critique of offensive neorealism. The last section summarizes the findings and its implication in the practical realm.

Theoretical Framework

In this section, we do not have enough space to go deeply into intellectual debates between IR scholars who pro and contra stark distinction between theory and ideology. We will explain the substance of debates for only utilizing our goal to unmask the ideological dogma of Mearsheimer's theory. The pro-separation between theory and ideology argued that the norm of objectivity in scientific research is possible. Ideology is a simplification of reality for political purposes whereas theory, in turn, is used to make complex reality comprehensible. This argument emphasizes an assertion that rationality should proceed according to a strict deductive mechanism. It is the mainstream of Western philosophy to achieve scientific accuracy. It produces dichotomous ways of thinking between ideology and theory. (Baggini, 2018: 53; Dreyer, 2014: 269; Omelicheva and Zubytska, 2016: 30; Martill & Schindler, 2020). Scientification of IR is important to address IR as a discipline and science (George, 1976; Bleiker, 1997; Krombach, 1992; Jackson, 2017). Having taught IR, especially about the theory and methodology in more than eight universities in Indonesia, we are convinced that scientification of IR is very much massive in Indonesia, particularly in cities in Java such as Jakarta and Yogyakarta, and other parts of East Java where these regions happen to be the core of IR influencers. It is also supported by Hadiwinata (2022) and Puspitasari, Wardhani, and Dharmaputra (2022) that IR in Indonesia is dominated by Western IR, especially the American social science and English school. Most of the references, curriculums and perspectives of IR in Indonesia have been preoccupied with Western IR (American IR school of thought) since the beginning of the development of IR around the 1960s when the Rockefeller Foundation and Ford Foundation were the important funding for liberal order agenda (Mas'oed, 2020; Hadiwinata, 2022). From this point of view, IR is a discipline instead of an interdisciplinary field or multidisciplinary or transdisciplinary or anti-discipline, that is limited in the frame of positivist scientism (Jackson, 2017; Corry, 2022:2). A discipline

is a subject matter that only can be applied by using positivism methodology and theory testing by using an empirical case study based on the correspondence theory of truth. It is impossible to include normative or value-laden into IR because it is not in the discipline or impossible to be verified or falsified.

However, our argument in this paper, academia, to be more specific, scientification, is ideological. There is no separation between ideology and theory. Therefore, theory as the core of scientification is ideological. Hence, theory should naturally be normative, not objective. Theory and political ideology (view) are always in the same bucket, just like the genie in the bottle that we cannot split them. The imported knowledge of scientific IR since the beginning, is part of the expansion of liberal ideology to build liberal order, including in Indonesia (Mas'oed 2020; Hadiwinata, 2022). In the history of IR theories, since Carr and Morgenthau, knowledge has played an important role. However, that knowledge shapes the beliefs and interests of international subjects. Hence, IR theories are ideological. This mode of theorizing first entered International Relations through Mannheim, where Carr and Morgenthau brought his knowledge into realism as a "particular ideology". This realism knowledge of "particular ideology" has been further developed by Foucauldian and practice-based approaches since the 1990s in the frame of knowledge as a form of productive power in the practice of scientification of IR (Allan, 2018). In this paper, to put it simply, the term ideology and ideological are limited to the same meaning. Ideology and ideological, in the mask of science, is a *dogmatic*, uncritically accept everything stated by the theory as correct.

Accordingly, Martill and Schindler (2020:1) and Sofer (1987) argue that academic theories of IR are involved in political and ideological foreign policy decision-making. For example, decision-making theory in rational choice theory is believed a scientific process. In fact, it is being used for American political and ideological purposes. All constructions of liberal theories are rooted and in line with the expansion of the American liberal order. Politicians and (ideologists) use theories of IR to help them to understand the world politics and to solve the problem for their political and ideological purpose. In short, they use, whether implicitly or explicitly, theoretical tools from IR theorists as (international) political weapons. Therefore, IR theorists are impartial and instrumental. Furthermore, in the globalization era where there is economic openness, liberalism IR theory and realism IR theory are always in dispute to win. This signifies a problem for IR theories since theories are not necessarily neutral and objective since they have a clear political stance in the conflicts of today. In short,

theories are difficult to achieve an objective view to solve conflict as a whole. Partial IR theories lack analytical purchase. (Martill and Schindler, 2020:3). It can be concluded that the commitment to constructing IR theories as research-explanatory tools and differentiating them from ideologies to build its scientific credibility is difficult to achieve and almost impossible unless we consider the critical theory to emancipate IR theorists. Hence, it speaks of emancipated world politics. It is what Devetak (1995) calls the project of modernity where he adopted Habermas's view. The main purpose of critical international theory in the discipline of IR is the emancipation of the theorists, not objectivity/neutrality as Morgenthau (1946) calls 'scientific man' expected or attempt to.

In this section, we will not explore extensively about critical theory in IR. There is a different discussion on that matter. In this paper, we will use reflexive methodology as one of the critical theory philosophical legacies as Hoffman calls critical interpretivism (Hoffman, 1991). This method does not need an empirical case study to criticize or to find weaknesses in theory or to fail a theory because it directly challenges the theoretical foundations of a theory. A case study is just a steppingstone to voice a theory or a part of theories because a case study will be known or understood if there is a theory; data cannot talk by itself. In short, our method is a meta-theory mechanism. Therefore, this paper is beyond deductive or inductive movement and certainly does not contain positivism methodology in any kind of variants of positivism. This is, what popularly Cox calls critical international theory or Weber calls Between 'isses'. Critical international theory is important to emancipate IR scholars (theorists) from the dogmatism of theories that they believe in so much as 'faith'. IR scholars such as Andrew Linklater, Robert Cox (in some of his work), Nicholas Rengger, and Ben Thirkell-White, James Bohman, Mark Hoffman are supporters of critical international theory (theories).

In emancipating the dogmatic mind of neorealism, we will use a reflexive mind or self-reflection (Devetak, 2013). We will focus on questioning the philosophical foundation of offensive neorealism. At this level, we argue that neorealism, especially offensive realism, is ideological. Therefore, we will use ideology critique whilst also define the meaning of critique. At the end of this paper, we will prove that offensive neorealism is in prisoner of its dangerous doctrine. In ideology critique, we will use the Indonesian philosopher as expert of critical theorist, Fransisco Budi Hardiman. Hardiman (1993:185-187) illustrates the meaning of Habermas' critique which he called self-reflection.

Hardiman (1993:185-187) starts with the first critique of the construction of Habermas' critical theory which is derived from Kant's transcendentalism. It is a reflection on the possible conditions of our knowledge, statement, and actions as subjects who think, speak, and act. Habermas refers to this critique as 'irrational reconstruction'. It tries to explain how Habermas works in reflecting theories about existing knowledge. A critical thinker carries out critique on the methodology if he reconstructs rules for activities of thinking, speaking, and acting in which he himself is involved in describing those rules, in such a way that he remains to obey the rules he is currently working on. While Kant was being critical in the first critique on the methodology or the activity of knowing (and he discovers the *a priori* categories of human knowledge), Habermas did so on the three interrelated activities of knowing, acting, and speaking (and he found out categories of action and cognitive interests). From this point of view, Mearsheimer and his followers have not yet reached what Kant is achieved. Hence, the theory of the offensive neo-realism assumption has become ideological.

Hardiman (1993:185-187) continues with the second critique on the practice of science is taken from Hegel's idealism and Marx's materialism. In this sense, the critique reflects on the unconsciously generated obstacles that cause the subject (individual or certain social groups) to submit to them in the process of the subject's self-formation. Habermas calls this critique 'self-reflection'. Habermas did this upon the philosophy of science developed in the early days of the history of modern positivism. In other words, the critique is a reflection of false consciousness. What Mearsheimer believe in his assumption of offensive neorealism is false consciousness.

After Hardiman (1993:185-187) explores the root of Habermas's critical theory from Kant, Hegel, Marx, Comte and Mach, he further conceives that Habermas applied the above critiques to theories about science (philosophy of science) developed throughout histories, such as Peirce's pragmatism and Dilthey's historicism. In his exploration of Peirce's pragmatism, Habermas tries to explain how through Peirce's reflection on the logic of research in the empirical-analytical sciences, the connection between the empirical-analytical sciences and the categories of rational-purposeful action comes out, with monologues propositions (syllogistic arguments) and becomes as what he called 'technical interest'. In his exploration of Dilthey's historicism, Habermas tries to explain how through Dilthey's reflection on the hermeneutical method of the historical-hermeneutical sciences, the connection between the historical-hermeneutical sciences and the categories of communicative action is clearly present

through everyday language (language game) which he calls 'practical interests'. At this point of understanding, the theory is not objective, but it is always for someone and some purpose (Cox, 1981:128). The science claimed in neorealism in general is in fact not objective. It is always instrumentally full of interest (technical and practical).

As Hardiman (1993:185-187) explored, Habermas continues to reflect on the interest of the ratio itself, the concept of which is explained in Kant's transcendentalism and Fichte's practical idealism. From Kant, Habermas learns about the concept of transcendental pure interest and from Fichte, he finds about the empirical interest of rationale aligns with Fichte's preference for practical ratio over pure ratio. The transcendental nature of the interest shows that interest is linked with a transcendental aspect of the ratio and is independent of ever-changing empirical conditions. Meanwhile, the empirical nature of the interest stresses that interest is related to the empirical aspect of the ratio that depends on the changing empirical conditions.

In an empirical sense, an interest means the will to free oneself from dogmatism or everyday natural consciousness or the will to free oneself from the physical and psychological limitations of humans as a species. In other words, reflections on Kant's and Fichte's works are Habermas' attempts to explain the status of human ratio emancipatory interests. Habermas' explanation of the interest ratio is both transcendental and empirical, or 'quasi-transcendental'. He made these efforts so that interests are not misunderstood as merely biological and psychological interests (naturalism) that can fall into determinism or be misunderstood as pure interests (transcendentalism) that are ahistorical, asocial, and apolitical. This interest is understood as 'inter-esse' (being in between), which is the intermediary between life and knowledge and the empirical and transcendental aspect.

From his study, Habermas explains that technical and practical interests are rooted in their own rational interests, namely emancipatory interests. In his reflections on Marxian psychoanalysis and ideological critique, Habermas shows that both are examples of critical sciences that use self-reflection as their methodology. He uses the second critique to show that both sciences are concerned with emancipatory practice and ultimately with emancipatory interests themselves. At this level of understanding, Habermas would like to guide a theorist or a user, in this context, Mearsheimer (and his followers) to emancipate himself, liberating his false consciousness of the assumptions of offensive neorealism.

The Ideology of Mearsheimer's Theory of Offensive Neorealism

The devastating conflict between Russia and Ukraine has resulted in dire consequences; thousands of people have been killed, millions of people were displaced, and cities were destroyed. John J. Mearsheimer, a realist scholar from the University of Chicago asserted that the Ukrainian crisis involves not only Russia, but the United States (US) is also responsible for the conflict. In his lecture at the University of Chicago, Mearsheimer provided some background of the conflict in which the US has been involved. There are four core strategic interests of the US, namely the Western hemisphere, Europe, Northeast Asia, and the Persian Gulf. He highlighted that although other areas are important for the US, Europe has always been an integral part of America's foreign policy. The reason for this is not only because Europe has great power, but also its historical relations with Europe during World War II when the US did not withdraw from Europe which led to an element of stability during the Cold War era (University of Chicago, 2015). While Europe and the US play the leading roles in international diplomacy and military strength, the US puts more attention to whatever happens in Europe, including the crisis in Ukraine (Mearsheimer, 1993).

Furthermore, in his lecture, Mearsheimer showed a map of Ukraine where the people of Ukraine are divided into two: the Western Ukraine where most people speak Ukrainian and some other regions in the East, such as Donbas, Crimea, and Kharkiv, which are occupied by Russian-speaking people (University of Chicago, 2015). As the country is badly divided, Mearsheimer also mentioned that during the presidential election in 2004, the population in the East would choose Viktor Yanukovych who is viewed as a pro-Russian as their leader. Yanukovych then won the 2010 election, defeating Prime Minister YuliaTymoshenko. Yanukovych's political decision to pursue closer ties with Russia and reject the European Union (EU)-Ukraine Association Agreement led to a series of protests in Kyiv, which is called "Euromaidan" in 2013. Based on statistics shown by Mearsheimer, people in the East have little interest in joining the EU, while their Western counterparts want to be a part of the association (Mearsheimer, 2014; Roman, et. al., 2017).

According to Mearsheimer (2014), the US and its European allies are the ones to blame for the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Their desire to detach Ukraine from Russian influence and incorporate it into the West has become the main deep cause of this mess. There are three key elements to execute the strategy. The first one is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) expansion where the Bill Clinton administration has moved NATO eastward toward Russia's border since the Cold War.

Next is the EU expansion which aims to integrate Ukraine's economy into the West. Lastly, the fostering of an Orange Revolution where the US promoted democracy in Ukraine. When these strategies are incorporated, Russia would see the West as a threat and Ukraine would be peeled away from Russia (Mearsheimer, 1993; Pavliuk, 2002).

There are two tranches of NATO expansion in Europe. It started in 1999 when Poland, The Czech Republic, and Hungary were incorporated into NATO and then it continued in 2004 when the Baltic states, such as Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia joined the organization. Mearsheimer suggested that since the mid-1990s, the Soviets adamantly opposed NATO expansion to Eastern Europe. However, they were just too weak to resist its influence and some states on Russia's border were becoming NATO's member states (University of Chicago, 2015). The peak of the conflict was in 2008 at NATO's Bucharest Summit where NATO stated that "NATO welcomes Ukraine's and Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO. We agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO". This move was unacceptable for Russians as Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister responded to the Bucharest Summit, "Georgia's and Ukraine's membership in the alliance is a huge strategic mistake which will have the most serious consequences for pan-European security" (University of Chicago, 2015).

Moreover, Russia's President, Vladimir Putin, said that Georgia and Ukraine becoming part of NATO is a direct threat to Russia. The war between Russia and Georgia in August 2008 – just four months after the Bucharest Summit – is proof that Russia declined Georgia's strategy to move closer to NATO. Mearsheimer (2014) thinks the Bucharest Summit is an important event that sends a signal that Russia really sees NATO as a threat and does not admit NATO expansion to Georgia and Ukraine, not to mention the other strategies promoted by the West, such as EU expansion and democracy promotion.

Mearsheimer views the coup of February 22nd 2014, as an important event that threw the crisis into gear. It all started in 2013 when Yanukovych did not accept the EU deal to form an association agreement that might bring Ukraine and the EU closer together. Yanukovych's rejection led to a massive protest at the "Maidan" or the city center in Kyiv in December 2013. Not long after, Putin offered a US$15 billion loan to Ukraine – a lot more than what the EU could offer. Yanukovych's positive response to Putin's deal led to civil unrest that caused deaths in protest. The turmoil finally caused the removal of Yanukovych from power, but the protesters refused to accept the deal

which brought about significant fascist elements among protesters. As a result, Yanukovych fled for his life to Russia (McFaul, et. al., 2014).

On February 23ʳᵈ 2014, the parliament voted to repeal Russian as an official language in Ukraine. This event led to the seizing of checkpoints in Crimea by the Russian military forces on February 27ᵗʰ 2014. Their presence was not meant to conquer or invade Crimea, but they were there since the beginning as a consequence of a leasing agreement where there is a naval base in Sevastopol. However, on the next day, more Russian troops came and in March, Russia finally incorporated Crimea after a series of referendum events. This event has caused a conflict in Eastern Ukraine although, according to Mearsheimer, there is no hard evidence that showed Russia's physical involvement (University of Chicago, 2015).

As one of the prominent neorealist scholars, Mearsheimer views Russia's invasion of Ukraine as a preemptive act to anticipate the adversaries. This is because the US-backed NATO invasion of Ukraine is seen as a direct threat to Russia that may increase the likelihood of war between nuclear-armed powers and underlie Putin's aggressive action toward Ukraine. Neorealism believes that power as the role of power politics is significant in international relations and that competition and conflict are the keys to pursuing the interests of states. The conditions of international anarchy drive states to trump other international variables, such as norms, multilateralism, economic independence, and morality. In an anarchic world, strong powers have the privilege to try whatever they wish to try. Therefore, anarchy encourages competition, especially the ones that contribute to security.

As we already mentioned elsewhere above, there are two types of neorealism and structural realism. The first one is Mearsheimer's offensive neorealism and the second one is Kenneth Waltz's defensive realism. Offensive realism looks at the accumulation of power in a state which will lead to a hegemon. According to Mearsheimer, great powers are trying to find a way to survive in a world where there is no single agency to protect them. On the other hand, the anarchic system benefits them to seek opportunities to gain power at the expense of rivals. This is due to states' realistic assumption that other states are inherently aggressive. Therefore, Mearsheimer's notion focuses more on how states are trying to survive by maximizing their power in order to become the hegemon in the system. In contrast, Waltz's defensive realism views states as an entity trying to maintain the stability of the international system by maximizing its security and preserving the distribution of power. In an anarchic structure of the international system, states execute a moderate

policy to attain their national security by acting as security maximisers (Smith & Dawson, 2022).

In the case of the Ukrainian crisis, the expansion of the EU and NATO eastwards has generated more complex structural geopolitics of Eastern Europe. Ukraine's strategy to maintain positive relationships with both East and West through its multi-vector foreign policy was quite successful in the 1990s and early 2000s. However, there was a backlash in the mid-2000s when Ukraine found itself situated in a geographic corridor between Russia and the West (the EU and NATO) called 'the shared neighborhood'. The West's strategy of institutional expansion and democracy promotion to Eastern Europe has provoked Russia to generate a strong response in Ukraine, for example, the annexation of Crimea. Moreover, the Russian attack on Georgia upon the Bucharest Summit was a warning for the countries of the Russian sphere not to seek NATO membership. It is obvious that in the perspective of structural realism, the changing power structure of Eastern Europe is feared as it would lead to greater instability and conflict. Moreover, the West failed to care about Russia's signal to stay away from its sphere. As neorealists would suggest, Russia's actions are a local great power's attempt to maintain a sphere of influence around its border to increase external pressure. This attempt is common for great powers to pursue as they have the desire to defend their powers in an anarchic realm.

Ideology Critique of Mearsheimer's Theory of Offensive Neorealism

Mearsheimer's theory of Neorealism is ideological because this theory was established from scientific postulation. Scientific postulation is a grand narrative which IR scholars rely on to make sense of world politics. Scientific postulation is like a 'bible text' for IR scholars to operationalize the way they see world politics. It is the most legitimate and authoritative foundation as a belief system which critical IR scholars call 'foundationalism' (Lapid, 1989; Waever, 1997; Chernoff, 2009) and in a clear argument, Monteiro and Ruby (2009) call an imperial foundational project. The project is to proceed the IR discipline to be unified increasingly by a self-conscious endeavor on the part of its practitioners to make it a 'science' (Hollis and Smith, 1990:16). Substantially and methodologically, as a science, offensive neorealism is not different from defensive neorealism. As Mearsheimer also claims himself a structural realism similar to Waltz, believing in dependent and independent variables as the logic of causality. The structure is an independent variable that is very much deterministic to make sense of world politics/international relations as a dependent variable. The states neorealism is a simple theory to explain world politics based on data as a tool to justify

the theory (Mearsheimer, 2014). Therefore, the deductive method is an important logic to be applied. Data can 'speak' from a theory. As the result, a theory always gets confirmation and/or verification in order to achieve correspondence of truth through deductive nomology.

As Mearsheimer and Waltz believe, neorealism as a theory is becoming 'a belief system', meaning ideological. However, this belief system (ideology) is not perfect as we expected. The first ideology critique is on scientific postulations as the foundation of neorealism or what we call the mainstream American IR school of thought. The reality of world politics cannot be detached from our views, interest and intention. Neorealism cannot be neutral, or objective and the theorist cannot be independent. Mearsheimer is very much consistent to speak on behalf of American interests, especially in his analysis of Russia and Ukraine entitled "Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West's Fault," (2014). However, Mearsheimer's dogmatic view makes his sense abandon many facts. As the proof that Motyl (2014) has provided, Mearsheimer fails to display an adequate knowledge of data. At that period, Mearsheimer's neorealism as what he assumes rational and objectivity fail him because he invokes Russian historical memory, ideology, and political culture—or perceptions. Structural realism's assumption of a rational leader is not applicable or contradicts the perceptions of a leader. When Kant in the frame of critical theory was constructed by the new truth of knowledge, he realizes (reflects) it. In contrast, Mearsheimer keeps on his arguments consistently and dogmatically up to now (2022).

Secondly, Mearsheimer's is too preoccupied with his own assumption about a threat. There is no convincing proof or whatsoever that the West threats Russia by eagerly democratizing Ukraine. A lot of proofs appear otherwise. The West is not a threat to Russia, but it is Russian perception culturally and ideologically that are eager to imperialize Ukraine. In regard to perceptions, Putin's life is imprisoned in his memory of the past. In other words, it is wrong to believe that the West Westernized Eastern Europe (Ukraine) and Russia feel threatened. Motyl (2014) continues to argue that "Neither NATO nor any major NATO country has ever stated that Ukraine should be incorporated immediately into the alliance. No NATO member state would invoke Article 5 and rush to Ukraine's assistance in case of an attack by Russia". In addition, there is no proof that the Western presidents or prime ministers asked to Ukraine to democratize the country by requesting an authoritarian regime, Yanukovych to resign during the Maidan revolution. In fact, Ukrainian felt that the West less supported them to advance Ukraine's integration into Western institutions.

Another fact that Mearsheimer ignored was Putin explicitly abolished the 1994 Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances, signed by Russia, the UK, and the USA in rationalizing his annexation of Crimea. Hence the Ukrainians do not have any security guarantee from Russia, the UK, and the USA.

Those above mentioned second points of argument clearly enlighten us to realize that Mearsheimer's offensive neorealism justifies Russia's perception, including history, memory, and cultural imperialism. One of the neorealism postulations mentions that the anarchical structure of the international system has not changed. Russia remains in power in the system. In the frame of Waltzian, history has been experiencing changes such as World War I and World War II in the international system, but the system itself remains to maintain great power like Russia. Hence many neorealists believe the same key patterns that have shaped international politics in the past and the future as well, especially the tendency for powerful states to maintain the system balance of power politics. In regard to this logic, neorealism as its claim neutral and objective supports Russia's imperialism of Ukraine. Schweller (1996) argues that neorealism's lack of state behavior analysis in fact actually exhibits a profound status quo bias. Neorealism substantially makes sense of the world on the basis of status quo power. Mearsheimer's neorealism serves status quo imperialistic ideology.

Those points above clearly differ from Waltz's main argument that focuses on maintaining power (capabilities) distribution. Mearsheimer perceives the world as a zero-sum reality, one state's gain is another's loss. As the consequence, the struggle for power is strategically conducted on how states maximize their relative power politics. It will automatically make sense that international relations are determined or agreed to the ideology of the powerful state in the anarchical structure of the international system. Schmidt (2004: 433) argues that Mearsheimer believes power is the main currency of international politics. Mearsheimer (2001:56) defines power largely in military terms. Mearsheimer believes that force by violence is the rationale of world politics. Hence the hierarchy of structure of the international system depends on military power. In short, IR is a discipline in academia that maintains the powerful states, situated the powerful states on the highest structure in the international system. As a result, if mainstream IR actually believes in these ideas of offensive neorealism, IR is representing the ideological status quo.

There are two theories according to Cox (1981): problem-solving theory/traditional theory and critical theory/constitutive theory. Problem-solving theory is "knowledge that is confined to the problem-solving mode performs the

ideological function of perpetuating the international status quo" (Linklater, 2007: 48). The problem-solving mode is to solve a given reality such as accepting social, power relations, and institution taken for granted, including supporting the existing great power and its ideological agenda, such as establishing a liberal world order. In contrast to problem-solving approach, critical theory or constitutive theory is knowledge to emancipate the mind of the theorists or IR scholars to be free from their truth claims or dogmatic postulates. Hence, they should question the existing reality such as questioning social, and power relations and institutions. If it is only one given reality, it means this reality is ideological. The order of reality conditionally upholds the status quo of the powerful states. Meanwhile, critical theory acknowledges a normative adoption in favor of a social and political order different from the predominating order. However, it depends on the constraints of the range of choices to alternative orders which are possible to transform the existing world" (Cox 1981:130).

Ashley (1984) called neorealism as an 'orrery of errors' as it is bounded by structuralism, statism, utilitarianism, and positivism in a machine-like self-enclosing unity. It resulted in an unbroken chain of self-regarding, self-reinforcing commitments that seem designed to defy criticism or to resist scrutiny. He categorized the four elements of the orrery of errors into statism, utilitarianism, positivism, and structuralism. Neorealism is statist as Ashley (1984) put it as the state is an entity whose existence, boundaries, identifying structures, constituencies, legitimations and interests can be treated as given, independent of transnational class and human interests, and indisputable. For purposes of theory, the state is always perceived as an entity capable of having certain objectives or interests and of deciding among and deploying alternative means in their services. It does matter the context, textually a state is taken for granted like this definition. In the international context, neorealist theory cannot recognize the global collectivist concepts that are irreducible to logical combinations of state-bounded relations. Concepts of transnational class relations or the interests of humankind, can be granted an objective status only to the extent they can be interpreted as aggregations of relations and interests in the nation-state system (Ashley, 1984).

In terms of utilitarianism, Ashley (1984) did not refer to the utilitarianism as Bentham's and Mill's morality, but it is characterized by its individualist and rationalist premises which is machine-like. The rationality that constructs microeconomic theories of politics, game theory, exchange theory, and rational choice theory. It is instrumental in terms of economic rationality that Weber called substantive rationality or Habermas called practical reason (practical interest). This kind of utilitarianism is very much

inhuman; it is atomizing the individual actors similar to a computer in the system. Based on the utilitarian theory, the actors behave rationally in the narrow instrumentalist sense (Ashley, 1984:243); it is instrumentally used by the status quo or great power.

Moreover, the positivism that neorealism holds will limit the range of scientific criticism that may exclude the discussions of forms of social consensus that might be value-laden, historically contingent, and susceptible to change. As the norm of scientism, we think we cannot say otherwise (Ashley, 1984: 254). Lastly, the structuralist suggests that a structural totality, or profound social subjectivity, may exist independently of, before, and as a part of the elements. Therefore, the states-as-actors behavior may persist those states must rely on themselves, making it an excuse for domination (Ashley, 1984). This logic is what offensive neorealism argues under the condition of the anarchical system, self-self is important to survive by invasion. It is what Russia now is attacking and invading Ukraine. Self-help is only an excuse for Russia to invade Ukraine and scientifically, it is objective and rational.

In regard to this framework, offensive neorealism claims, such as scientific approach, objectivity, and power, should be questioned. Mearsheimer should examine his own thought reflectively in order to emancipate himself because he has been dogmatized by his own mind. The purpose of the reflective mind is to emancipate Mearsheimer from the set of offensive neorealism systems of mind where he discovers himself. By reflexive mind, he can liberate himself from his own creation of (the dogmatism) of offensive neorealism and come into self-consciousness. The implication of this is ending to normative choice to free Ukraine from imperialism. In short, critical theory suggest the transformation of the political community from the act of Russian imperialism, including the megalomania of the great power into a more ethical discourse of world order where Ukraine wisely can have choices. World leaders should question great power politics.

Unfortunately, Indonesia is a post-colonial, anti-imperialism, anti-colonialism the period of the Sukarno regime, nowadays, under the Jokowi regime, the Indonesian government is reluctant to support Ukraine's liberation, as they do not show clear stance between both sides. For example, Jokowi's statement on Twitter to stop the war without mentioning the country, including the abstention of Indonesia position on the United Nations (UN) resolution suspending Russia from the Human Rights Council. This position is securing Indonesian national interest by ignoring, letting big power of

world politics acts as they wish which anarchical international system is conditioned states to do so. In short, it is what Mearsheimer's theory is all about.

Even though clearly, the Indonesian constitution is against the imperialistic act. In fact, Indonesians are indirectly dogmatized by Mearsheimer neorealism, preoccupying the discussion of the role great powers, ignoring, marginalizing the role of weak states. As the views of Indonesians and its government are only concerning on the role of great powers in the anarchical international system, as the consequences, they support great power imperialistic action. Hence, they are apologetic for wishing for the transformation of the political community. We conclude that they believe in neorealism dogmatic claims: power relations, the anarchical structure of the international system, self-help, neutrality and objectivity of viewing world politics, and monolithic methodology by just copying reality without reflexive mind and normative investigation. As Dharmaputra (2022) argue that many Indonesians at the officials, scholars, and societal level seem reluctant to criticize the order of great power where they can act in whatever they like. In short, Indonesians are blinded by the reality of world politics that constructed by Mearsheimer's theory.

Dharmaputra (2022:118) mentions the initial governmental states in news (Nikkei, CNBC) to stop the Russia-Ukraine war because it brings suffering to mankind (9 March 2022). However, the official statement is unwilling to directly mention Russia as imperialist state. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs statement on 25th February never mentioned Russia's colonialization of Ukraine and keep repeating the Indonesian position as a neutral state, asking "all parties" to stop the war. In the United Nations, Indonesia is also officially stance in abstention when it comes to suspending Russia from the Human Rights Council. Another proof of Indonesian pro-status quo and ideological is the invitation Jokowi administration to both Russia and Ukraine in G20, November 2022.

Dharmaputra mentions the societal level, where the Putin-Russia imperialistic movement is idolized by Indonesians because they challenge the arrogance of the West. Dharmaputra (2022:120-121) displays data from social media and news, quotes from *Al-Jazeera* (19 March 2022), *Kompas* and *Media Indonesia*. Where All of those news illustrating that many Indonesians and commentators expressed advocation for Russia and tolerate Russia's invasion of Ukraine by saying Russia's situation is understandable. They also said that Russia taught a lesson to the US, NATO, and its allies (Bakrie, 2022; Fitriani, 2022). It is the West's fault. This logic is in line with Mearsheimer's thesis (2014): "Why the Ukraine crisis is the West's fault: the liberal delusions that

provoked Putin" and are still consistent up to now (Mearsheimer, 2004). The same as other facts, Dharmaputra (2022:120-121) provided from most Indonesian users on Instagram and TikTok supported Russia. In addition, the SMRC survey found that only 20% actually supported Russia. In the context of the Lowy Institute Survey that only 17% of Indonesian follow news from abroad, it means that 20% is a lot of numbers. All these imply that the Indonesians are imprisoned by neorealism ideology. They only view world politics from the great power games; Perceiving Russia has the guts to challenge the West, (the US and its allies). In regard to this logic, a former Ambassador to Poland, Darmansjah Djumala associated a great power with an elephant. Ukraine as a small state is flanked by two 'elephants.' Former Ambassadors to Russia and former Deputy Ambassador to Russia (Hamid Awaluddin, Wahid Supriyadi, Agus Sriyono, respectively) had nostalgic memories from their work experience in Russia, and Indonesia-Russia historical relations to justify the status quo of Russia and her imperialistic ideology in world politics. We believe that imagining Russia as a great power and Putin's hypermasculinity as a hero to Indonesians is very much ideological. It fits enough to neorealism assumptions as they are already infiltrated by neorealism unconsciously; of course, a dogmatism without a critical mind is truly installed unconsciously. As we mentioned above as well, neorealism is the dominant IR approach of the American school of thought in Indonesia where convincingly IR scholars and IR teachers view world politics from the eyes of great power. In short, neorealism is a popular IR theory in Indonesia.

Finally, Dharmaputra (2022:123) shows academias and public intellectuals support for Russia, such as a popular video by Connie Bakrie that has been seen more than 3 million times. When Bakrie visited Russia on 24-27 October 2022, she admired Putin's speech. In between Putin's speech and the Q&A session, Connie was invited to ask a couple of questions. She stood up and said: "Your fans in Indonesia are amazing. Everybody says 'Uraa!' all the time... Can I have a picture with you (Putin) later?" And Putin replied, "Yes with great pleasure.... Such a beautiful woman naturally". Another example is a Russian expert who got a Doctoral Degree from Saint Petersburg State University and a lecturer from Prof. Dr. Moestopo (Beragama) University, Fadra (2022), IR professor Evi Fitriani from the University of Indonesia (Hutt, 2022), European Studies expert from Gadjah Mada University, Muhadi Sugiono (Kompas, 2022) expressed their analytical influenced by neorealism 'dogma' in which they focus on 'lords of the jungle' who control the world politics. They blamed the US, NATO, and its allies for provoking Russia, using Mearsheimer's metaphor called "poke the

bear in the eye" (Mearsheimer, 2022). For Mearsheimer, world politics is like a jungle, great power situated in the anarchical structure of the international system, this situation is tragic for great power" (Mearsheimer, 2001). It can be concluded that Mearsheimer's theory of neorealism is very powerful to dogmatize many people, especially in Indonesia. Interestingly, Indonesian IR scholars' discourses are framed by Mearsheimer's theory and sing the same song that Mearsheimer sings.

Conclusion

We have done our job to conduct reflexive practice by disclosing the ideological mask of Mearsheimer's theory of neorealism. This theory is not scientifically objective and neutral, but legitimizes the status quo, ideologically supporting great power politics, methodologically Western's bias worldview. The theory is always for someone and some purpose as Cox's dictum has always been acknowledged by IR scholars up to now. It is important for IR theory to have emancipated interest and normative orientation. We need to be cautious of IR scholars who claim himself/herself to be objective and neutral, using IR theory just for a tool to make sense of world politics. This statement must be full of instrumental (technical) interest and directed to an ideological position, supporting the status quo and maintaining existing powerful states and an ideological theorist who hides behind the objectivity and neutrality claim.

In the case of Indonesia, politicians and scholars seem to endorse the role of big powers between Russia and the US along with its allies. This kind of action may lead to an ideological positioning in which aligns with neorealism approach while it is clearly written on the constitution that Indonesia condemns any actions of colonialism. Thus, we need to be critical to the Indonesian IR scholars claims on neutral and objective IR research where in fact they use the framework of Mearsheimer's theory. We can see this Russia-Ukraine crisis from different perspectives. Several instances are the area studies where portraying Russia as the hero may seem problematic as it overlooks the collective trauma of the ex-Soviet countries, including the complexity of race, religion, and class from within the Eastern European region. Next is the post-colonialism in how Ukraine is in a helpless situation; being threatened by Russia's dominance and being NATO's puppet all at once; appearing the question: Can the Ukrainian speak? Lastly, imperialism sees neither the West nor the Russia as great powers to put Ukraine under the field of their influence. As a country which had been colonized for years, Indonesia should be sympathetic to Ukraine and not the other way around.

In addition, Indonesian IR scholars should normatively criticize many Western IR theorists who theoretically sustain the role of great power under anarchical

international system. In other words, Indonesian IR scholars should further analyze the complexity of the problem, not simplifying or reducing it by putting heavily in the role of big power relations analysis only. In short, we need to build normative theoretical foundations for mankind and humanity, including nature and the universe (earth). We need to be clear to place our normative position. The debate of IR theories should be in the normative (axiological) matter, not in the epistemological, methodological, and ontological matters. We should bring back normative debates in IR trajectory and realm. Otherwise, we will doom because whereas the IR scholars are ignorance by saying a theory is only a tool, hiding their ideological investigation (research) in the claims of objectivity and neutrality of the scientific dogma, the real of world politics is full of the greediness of human desire to struggle for power in order to either survive for his/herself (self-help) or an excuse to imperialize others.

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The Stakes Could Not Be Higher: The Allied Response in Ukraine[29]

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Why are the United States and other western NATO allies so invested in the war in Ukraine? Why have NATO partners provided such enormous military assistance? This short essay argues that Russia's attempt to override the sovereignty of its neighbour poses a threat not just to Ukraine (although it is, of course, principally that) but also a threat to the modern world order which is built on fundamentally liberal institutions. Nor is it just the fact of Russia's invasion (второжение) but also how the war is being prosecuted. The essay then examines President Volodymyr Zelensky's attempts to cultivate his image in line with Western heroes like Washington and Churchill before turning to rebutting potential criticisms. In all, the essay concludes that the stakes for the world could not be higher.

Why are the United States and other western NATO allies so invested in the war in Ukraine? Why have NATO partners provided such enormous military assistance? As demonstrated by figure 1 below since the Russian invasion became unavoidable on January 24th, 2022, until August 3rd of the same year, NATO partners have provided $33.08 billion of military assistance. Even more clearly than Georgia in 2008, Russia's invasion of Ukraine gives the lie to the conceit that the Cold War ended with the "bloodless defeat" of the USSR (Ioffe, 2016). While the bulk of this has come from the United States and Britain, countries that are clearly contributing outsized amounts include Poland, the Czech Republic, and the Baltic nations. The amount of aid given has increased since this data was collected and shows no sign of stopping. Yet while the fact of aid has been acknowledged, the motivations of the Western alliance in giving it have been less questioned to date.

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[29] An earlier version of this essay was given in the form of a presentation to a conference of young scientists at Prekarpats'kii Natsional'nii universitet imeni Vasilia Stefananka (Precarpathian National University named for Vasilii Stefanka) on 12th December 2022.
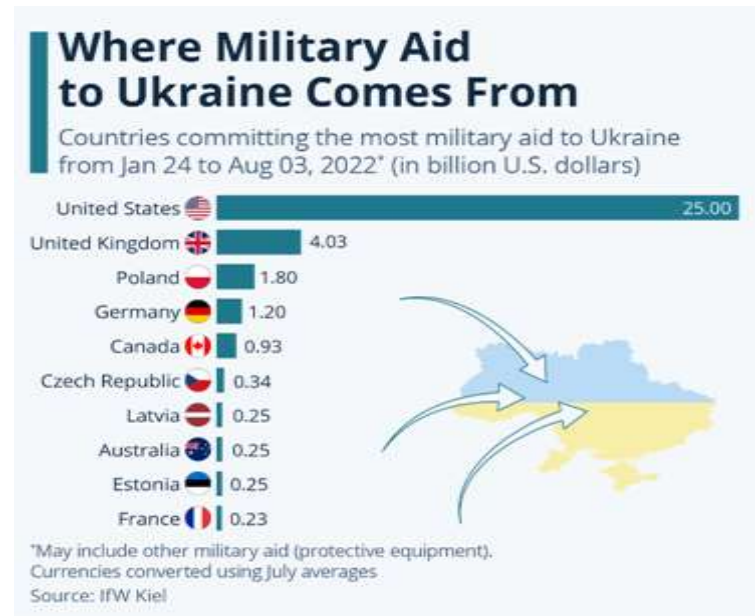
Figure 1. Military Aid Given to Ukraine

Such questions are important in both theoretical and empirical terms. Theoretically, Putin's initiation of the largest war in Europe since World War Two (and increasingly being fought with the trench warfare methods of World War One) presents a major challenge to optimistic speculation about the "inevitability" of a global state (Wendt, 2003). The horror undermines the teleology sometimes associated with the Liberal paradigm (Wendt, 2001) and demonstrates the enduring power of realism to explain international politics (Mearsheimer, Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West's Fault. The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin, 2014). Empirically, the motivations are also important as they suggest the point at which such aid might stop or increase- when Western goals for the conflict can no longer be achieved, for instance.

This paper argues that the Western alliance NATO, led principally by the United States, is supporting the Ukrainian armed forces to the extent that it is because the war presents an existential threat to the Liberal International Order which has existed since 1945. Bluntly, the war of choice is a threat to the world and not just one country. This is not to say that Baltic fears of Russian invasion are realistic, but rather that the success of the "Special Military Operation" (the Russian term for the invasion- the word 'war' being banned) would re-legitimate the settling of disputes by force. The United Nations may have feet of clay, but it is the best alternative to the law of the jungle that we have. This brief commentary first makes such a claim and how

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has encouraged this interpretation before rebutting prospective criticisms.

Russia's War as a Threat to the International Order

The Russian invasion of Ukraine is fundamentally a challenge to the international order as well as an assault on a neighbor. It is the crime of aggression and a return to great powers using force to overwhelm weaker neighbors. This comes despite several Russian official recognitions of Ukraine in various international fora. Similarly, the way in which the Russians went about preparing for the war as well as prosecuting it makes a mockery of international norms. In all these ways, then, Russia's war is a threat to the international order.

"Aggression is the name we give to the crime of war… aggression is remarkable because it is the only crime that states can commit against other states" (Walzer, 1977, p. 51). The prohibition of aggression is the primary reason for the existence of the United Nations as outlined in Article 2 of the Charter. The idealistic creation of the United Nations was supposedly meant to put paid to a world in which the strong do what they like and the weak suffer what they must. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine is a textbook example of the crime of aggression, challenging all other "rights that are worth fighting for" (Walzer, 1977, p. 53). Committing aggression undermines the world order.

This is a world order which is based on the idea that words and agreements have weight in influencing and rendering state actions predictable. Such predictability aids stability and helps state action, similar in many ways to Hale's (2008) "foundational" theory of ethnicity. Thomas Hobbes (2009) is often quoted in reference to the idea that "covenants without the sword are but words" yet in his theory of the social contract there is also acceptance of the idea that words can build institutions- and not just in domestic politics, but also in international relations. The most basic way in which this works in international relations, however, is recognition of a state's claim to existence implicit in its acceptance into the United Nations.

It was this point which Russia violated both in 2014 and, more egregiously, in 2022. Russia officially recognized Ukraine in 1991, upon the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Not opposing Ukraine's entry into the United Nations, the country took on certain obligations in how it would treat Ukraine or any state worthy of the name. Further, this initial recognition was followed by an explicit agreement for Ukraine to return to Russia 3,000 nuclear warheads it had inherited from the Soviet Union in what

would have been the world's third largest nuclear arsenal. This was the Budapest Memorandum, under which the United States, United Kingdom, and Russia all agreed to uphold Ukraine's sovereignty in the event of outside threat.

Infamously, Putin has not recognized Ukrainian claims to nationhood, believing it to have been a state created by the Bolsheviks and a distortion of people who have forgotten their true identity as ethnic Russians. In 2008, Putin is reputed to have told George W. Bush that "*Ukraine is not even a state*". Certainly, by 2021 Putin claimed that "*modern Ukraine is entirely the product of the Soviet era*" (Putin, 2021). Putin repeated this line again just days before the invasion in February (Schwirtz, Verenikov, & Gladstone, 2022). Further the way he did so- justifying the invasion on the grounds of entirely fabricated "neo-Nazis"- removed the imperative of evidence from international politics and stood as direct assault on the idea of fact and reason.

This norm-busting and hypocritical attack on Ukraine is underlined further by the way the war is being fought. At the time of writing, there are too many alleged Russian human rights abuses to list, including mass killing and rape of civilians as well as looting. Having failed to take Kyiv in its initial blitzkrieg and having endured the drudgery of the summer months, Russia seems to have put its hope in "general frost" to let the winter kill off and demoralize Ukrainians. The tactic of targeting civilian life-support infrastructure such as power and water stations is designed to assist this. Yet such tactics are themselves violations of the rules of war- because there can be rules in Hell. For instance, they violate the principle of non-combatant immunity (Walzer, 1977) and enlarge the battlespace.

There have, of course, been other wars in the post-World War Two period that have been started on a lie and seem similar in many ways to the invasion of Ukraine. As horrific as it is, other troops have committed human rights abuses, including against civilians. One need only think of the 2003 war on Iraq, for instance, to see a war premised on a lie and with significant implications for civilians. Given these considerations, then, one might be tempted to ask what makes the war on Ukraine so different? Leaving aside the geographic locations of the countries- Europe having been the host of the two world wars, if nothing else, there are at least a few differences.

First, while there was opposition to the way the United States removed Saddam Hussein, only a few declared that Hussein was innocent and disagreed that the world would be better off without him. It was the means, rather than the end, with which they disagreed- which is distinct from the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Second, although it

was a small coalition, the United States did receive begrudging support for its war from some other countries- the "coalition of the willing," in the words of Colin Powell. The United Kingdom, most of Eastern Europe, and some states in North Africa all supported the war in Iraq both in sentiment and with materiel. In attacking Ukraine, however, Russia is using only its own troops and appears to have arrogated to itself a unique right to intervene whenever and wherever it likes.

Which leads to a discussion of the third principal different between the two cases: the American attack on Iraq did not follow hostile actions with the rest of the world, which stands in stark contrast to the Russian actions. In hindsight, Russia's invasion seems like the latest move of a country which respects no sovereignty or international norms. The 2006 murder of Alexander Litvinenko violated the prohibition on the hostile use of fissile materials, as the target was poisoned using highly radioactive polonium-210. Likewise, Russia was the principal suspect in the 2018 murder of Sergei Skripal, again in the United Kingdom, using a poison unique to the Soviets/Russians. The hacking of and intervention in the British EU membership referendum and the 2016 American Presidential election were similarly unprecedented moves which made a mockery of the norm of sovereignty. Even in the sporting world, Russia violated international norms against doping in the Sochi Winter Olympics of 2014 and in sending FSB-trained hooligans to beat up England fans at the 2016 Euro Championships in France (Arnold & Foxall, 2018). If Russia would not even abide by international sports norms, then invading the second most populated country in the post-Soviet space confirmed the country was a law unto itself.

This section has argued that Russia's assault on Ukraine should be interpreted as the culmination of an assault on the rules-based international system that has structured the world since 1945. By invading its neighbor, Russia made mockery of a system that sought to banish armed conflict among great powers for good. It follows that the defense of Ukraine is not solely a defense of a single country (though it is, of course, principally that) but also the defense of an entire system of sovereignty and norms-based collective action. The stakes could not be higher. The next section argues that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has cultivated a Western-aligned image of a state that wants to maintain the system, thus providing further support for the thesis.

Zelensky's Artful Image

Perhaps only an actor could have done such a good job in aligning Ukraine with previous narratives familiar to people in the West. At once, Zelensky has encouraged

narratives portraying the conflict as one of David versus Goliath, a re-run of the American Revolution, and of himself as Churchill standing up to Hitler ('Putler'). This section recounts the last two images to argue that Zelensky is himself encouraging the thesis that the Russian invasion of Ukraine is a war of civilization against barbarism and one for the survival of the current international system.

First, the comparison of the Ukrainian fight against Russia as a re-run of the American Revolution rests on some solid historical parallels. In both cases, weaker newly independent powers fought against former colonial masters for a recognition of their independent identities. Ukrainian independent obviously took a somewhat more circuitous route than the declaration of independence, needing the two revolutions of 2004 and 2014 to make it a reality, but the parallel stands. Indeed, the name given to the 2014 revolution against Victor Yanukovych, the 'revolution of dignity' really makes this point.

Indeed, political theorist Hannah Arendt (2006) discussed two kinds of revolution- those based on passion and those based on compassion. The former were seen throughout history in the form of the French Revolution, the Nazis, and the Bolsheviks and inevitably ended with violence and the reformation of society. The latter, those based on compassion, Arendt aligned to the American Revolution (a distinction which the historian Simon Schama also endorsed). Without getting into the weeds of the empirical cases, it seems that the "color revolutions" which have characterized the post-Soviet space in the last 25 years- and of which Putin is so afraid- also belong to this category. The 2003 Rose Revolution in Georgia, the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine, the 2005 Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan, and the 2011 failed white-ribbon Revolution in Moscow itself (Kolsto, 2022, pp. 167-189) are all cases which fit this pattern. Mostly bloodless revolutions, they used the pressure of popular protest to force unpopular Moscow-aligned elites to leave office.

A preliminary glance at the discourse confirms this. One discussion in the American media compared Volodymyr Zelensky and George Washington in the early stages of the war. In particular, Zelensky's defiant video released to the Ukrainian people showed him in central Kyiv and telling the people that "here we are, we are defending Ukraine" (Motil, 2022). Another comparison is the merging of the pre-revolutionary American Gadsden flag and its Ukrainian counterpart (see figure 2 below), there are efforts to encourage this perception. Indeed, from personal experience in Ukraine in 2018 and 2019 the author can testify to strong pro-American sentiment in Ukraine, including people who wanted to join the American military.

Figure 2. Merging of Ukrainian and Gadsden Flags

The other comparison that is made is between Zelensky himself and Winston Churchill. Perhaps not by accident, such a positioning also reinforces the comparisons between Putin and Hitler. Zelensky's famous response to the American offer of evacuation just before the invasion- "I need ammo, not a ride" (Reilly, 2022)- and his decision to stay in Kyiv despite the dangers from outside have been compared to Churchill walking the streets of London during the Blitz. Zelensky himself has encouraged this comparison such as in his address to the British Parliament when he directly invoked the ghost of Churchill (see figure 3 below). While Churchill may have his detractors, the story of World War Two as essentially a morality tale is deeply embedded in many Western education systems- a point which further supports the notion that the stakes could not be higher.

This brief section has argued that both discursively and intentionally, Zelensky has been portrayed as the heir of such Western elder statesmen as Washington and Churchill. Those historical figures led nations that would come to determine the world order and its current basis. Both by aligning himself and being aligned with their personalities, then, Zelensky himself makes the case that the current war is existential not just for Ukraine, but for the entire world order.

Figure 3. Zelensky compared to Churchill

Rebutting Criticisms

Any theory has its critics and that will be true of this one as well. I have offered a description of the situation as I see it, not an absolute or definitive truth. But in the spirit of debate, it seems appropriate to consider other interpretations of the conflict. Accordingly, this section takes up realist- and identity-based alternatives to the explanation I have given.

First, the realist explanation championed by people such as John Mearsheimer argues that far from being a defense of world order, the West actively pushed Russia to invade through its incessant emphasis on NATO expansion. In fact, Mearsheimer's (2014) essay "Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West's Fault" was circulated by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in defense of its actions regarding Ukraine. It follows from this premise that the West sees in Ukraine a chance to weaken Russia, and have it exhaust its military might- better dead Ukrainians than dead Americans or Europeans, goes the thinking.

Such an explanation presumes an enormous cynicism on the part of the West, but that is the wont of realist scholars. Yet the argument also fails on its central premise- that the Russian invasion was in some sense 'provoked' by NATO expansion. On the one hand, NATO is a defensive alliance so it is unclear why such a situation would threaten Russia. On the other hand, this explains the timing of neither the 2014

nor 2022 interventions. The 2013 protests on the Maidan were triggered by the overturning of the EU accession agreement and not any moves to join NATO. The 2022 intervention came after there had in fact been NATO training of Ukrainian troops (prompted, in its turn, by the earlier Russian intervention, and which accounts in part for the proficiency of the Ukrainian defense) and not before it, as such an argument would suggest. So much for the realist claims.

Identity-based explanations might emphasize the role of the far right in Ukraine and particularly the prominent role they played in the Euromaidan. This explanation takes Putin's words about fighting neo-Nazis at face value, sending Russians once more to fight against the eternal enemy of fascism (Laruelle, 2021). It is true that the war with Germany is a central component of modern Russian identity, and that Ukraine has a small neo-Nazi fringe. However, the size of the Ukrainian fascist element has been overstated and even the much-vaunted Azov battalion is overstated. Further, if Russia is so keen on fighting Nazis, then one has to ask why they are encouraging them in countries other than Ukraine (Shevkovtsov, 2018)? Indeed, why did the Russians allow the creation of the largest neo-Nazi skinhead movement in the world in their country as late as 2009 (Arnold, 2015; 2016)? This is not even to mention the rumors that Kremlin eminence grise Vladislav Surkov oversaw the development of the skinhead movement as political project. While Russia's simple uttering of an explanation might not be reason enough to doubt it, combining it with hypocritical actions is.

Conclusion

This brief essay has argued that the West is backing Ukrainian resistance to Russia's invasion because it threatens not just that state but also the entire liberal international order. By presenting justifications that are patently false and committing the crime of aggression against a neighbor, Russia is undermining the edifice on which international politics rest. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky encourages such interpretations by the persona he adopts, and the parallels made to famous historical figures. Just as Churchill held back the German fascist threat, so too Zelensky's nation leads the fight against resurgent Russian fascism (otherwise known as 'Rashism' or 'Ruzzism'). In other words, the stakes could not be higher.

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