

YOUTH INTERNATIONAL STUDIES:  
TRENDS AND PROSPECTS  
OF GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

СБОРНИК ТЕЗИСОВ  
II МЕЖДУНАРОДНОЙ МОЛОДЕЖНОЙ  
НАУЧНО-ПРАКТИЧЕСКОЙ КОНФЕРЕНЦИИ

Онлайн, 29–30 апреля 2021 г.





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*Библиотека факультета мировой политики МГУ*

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Dear readers,

You are reading the first issue of the proceedings of our annual Youth international studies conference that took place this time online. The online format helped us reach as many people as possible. It was a great pleasure to see young scholars from Russia, Armenia, Greece, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and France sharing their reports and exchanging opinions on the current political events. We hope our next conference can bring more researchers together.

In the first chapter, “Trends and challenges in international security”, you may find the broad spectres of topics. But a special place is taken by cyberspace, nuclear energy and regional security in East Asia. We were glad to start this chapter with theses “Second space race: space as a sphere of geopolitical collisions between the great powers in the first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century” by Nikita Volkov to honour the anniversary of the beginning of the Space Era that was celebrated a few days before our conference.

The issue of intercultural dialogue, digital media, and propaganda is deeply studied in the second chapter, “Information and intercultural communication in international relations”. Our participants shared a variety of polarising topics, such as the political discourse of Donald Trump or the politicisation of Islamic culture.

The third chapter, “Geopolitical and legal aspects of the analysis in international relations”, is dedicated to the issues of humanitarian laws, women’s rights regulation and critical analysis of classical geopolitical concepts. Young scholars showed their expertise conducting analysis of different judicial systems and international law, including women’s rights regulation in the kingdom of Morocco and regulation of the energy sector in the EU and the EAEU.

Bilateral and multilateral relations in the context of Eurasia, the European Union and the UN were studied in the fourth chapter, “Regional aspects of international relations”. Participants showed their deep understanding of the current regional aspects of international relations while speaking about different topics such as the Eurasian Economic Union, ethnopolitical conflict in Croatia and foreign policy of France.

Kind regards,

Aleksandra Pavliuchenko

Head of the organising committee

for the Youth international studies conference

## CHAPTER I

### TRENDS AND CHALLENGES IN INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

#### SECOND SPACE RACE: SPACE AS A SPHERE OF GEOPOLITICAL COLLISIONS BETWEEN THE GREAT POWERS IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

*Nikita Volkov*<sup>1</sup>

For hundreds of years, space exploration was an unattainable dream for humankind, but the dream became a reality in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although official provisions of the existing treaties serve as a guarantee of equal and fair space exploration, recent years are marked with rising tensions between great powers in the use of outer space.

1. History of the First Space Race. The beginning of the first Space Race was marked by the launch of the Soviet satellite “Sputnik — I” in 1957. In 1961, Russian lieutenant Yuri Gagarin became the first man in space to orbit the Earth in “Vostok — I”.

In 1958, as a response to the Soviet Union’s initiative, the United States of America (USA) launched their satellite “Explorer — I” and in 1961, Alan Shepard became the first American astronaut who was sent to space.

At that time, space exploration for both superpowers was one of the overwhelming priorities, and American president John F. Kennedy, in 1961, proclaimed the Moon’s expedition as a national goal to be accomplished by the end of the decade. It is believed the first Space Race was won by the Americans on July 20, 1969, when Neil Armstrong set foot on the Moon, making “one giant leap for humanity”.

2. International treaties on the use of outer space regulation. The first Space Race served as a catalysis for the adoption of the Outer Space Treaty (1967). Initially signed by the Soviet Union, the USA, and the United Kingdom, the document set the principles of space exploration for the benefit and interest of humankind, the non-appropriation of outer space, and banned the deployment of nuclear weapons and other types of mass destruction weapons in space [5]. Since 1968, four other treaties were developed by the international community to rein-

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force the principles outlined in the Outer Space Treaty — the Rescue Agreement (1968), the Liability Convention (1972), the Registration Convention (1975), which requires space nations to register all their launched objects into outer space with the United Nations, and the Moon Agreement (1979) [6].

3. Space policy of Russia and China in the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The collapse of the Soviet Union officially put an end to the Cold War and the First Space Race in 1991. The newly born State, the Russian Federation, inherited most of the Soviets' space infrastructure and a great space nation status [4]. Nowadays, Russia plays a significant role in space — exploits the third-largest number of satellites got into orbit, serves as an important partner in a frame of the International Space Station project, and runs several huge cosmodromes [2]. Furthermore, the Russian Space Agency (Roscosmos) initiated negotiations with the Chinese National Space Administration (CNSA) on the conduction of a joint Lunar mission in 2020. As a result, General Director of Roscosmos, Dmitry Rogozin, and Zhang Kejian, Head of the CNSA, signed a Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the governments of Russia and China on cooperation in the creation of the International Scientific Lunar Station on March 9, 2021 [2]. The announcement of a space alliance between Russia and China did not come as a surprise to the international community — last years have been marked with political and social convergence between Russia and China, as well as the growing confrontation between the two nations and the Western states, mainly the USA.

4. Space policy of the USA and its allies in the first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In February 2021, elected American President Joe Biden introduced his space policy, which is mostly aimed to embrace investments in space science and technology to tackle the issue of climate change. Despite having disagreements with Donald J. Trump's space strategy, Biden's administration still puts a lot of faith into the Artemis Lunar Exploration Programme in collaboration with Japan, Canada, and the European Union (EU). The lunar mission under the auspices of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration aims to land the first woman and first person of colour on the Moon [1]. However, it seems inevitable Joe Biden is going to shift the timelines for the Artemis Lunar Exploration Programme likely from 2024 to 2030.

In the first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Russia and the USA remain the leaders in the field of space security. On the one hand, the growing influence of China, Japan, India, and the EU, but on the other hand, the phenomenon of private space corporations, such as SpaceX and

Orbital Sciences, have already served as a signal for the renewal of existing international treaties and regulations for further stability in outer space.

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## MODERN REALITIES OF CYBERSPACE

*Ekaterina Romanova*<sup>1</sup>

Nowadays a person can hardly imagine everyday life without information and communication technologies: the Internet, mobile phones, computers, and much more. ICTs are used daily, and through them, an invisible influence is continuously exerted on a person. In the modern world, under the influence of information technologies development, new virtual dimensions are being formed, which are becoming more and more important for the domestic and international policies of states. These virtual dimensions include cyberspace, which designates a special area of social interactions mediated by a set of processes occurring in the computer networks of the world and has turned into another human habitat and activity.

Cyberspace does not know state borders; therefore, it is becoming the most important field of political, economic, informational, and cultural competence. As cyberspace evolved, various threats emerged and intensified, as well as responses to counter and neutralise these threats. The fact is that possibilities of cyberspace are used not only by states but by terrorists for recruitment and propaganda, by the opposition to achieve political goals and undermine the reputation of the existing government.

In Western scholarship, as well as journalism and diplomatic rhetoric, the term “cyberspace” is used, while the term “information space” is typical for Russia. As a rule, the information space is understood as a wider sphere in comparison with cyberspace, which is limited to computers and other electronic networks and the information contained in them. At the same time, the information space is a broader area that unites all information and data existing in both virtual and real dimensions.

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To analyse current events, it is worth considering the fact that the Internet is today's key infrastructure for global cyberspace. And the fact that the Internet was created by the United States, influenced its current architecture and the virtual sphere it forms. The current system of cyberspace governance is more reflective of the interests of the United States and is challenged by a growing number of states.

Almost 20 years ago, Russia became the first country to raise the issue of challenges and threats arising in the information space at the UN.

It came up with an initiative to ensure international information security — a draft resolution of the UN General Assembly “Achievements in the field of informatisation and telecommunications in the context of international security”, which has been annually included in the agenda of the General Assembly since 1998.

From that moment, the Russian position is based on the need to prevent wars and conflicts in the information space, which can be unleashed to achieve military and political goals. In this regard, any concepts that allow the use of force in it are completely unacceptable.

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CYBERSECURITY, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE  
AND THE NATURE OF MODERN WAR

*Anna Golikova*<sup>1</sup>

Cybersecurity is a substantial part of the modern world. Cyberspace began to be discussed at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the advent of the Internet, and it spread in the 1980s. Currently, we are witnessing the digitalisation of all processes in international relations. Advances in technology have significantly changed our understanding of security. The dependence of modern societies on new technologies makes it necessary to look for methods of countering various cyber-threats and, at the same time, methods of conducting offensive operations against possible adversaries.

Now we are dealing not only with the possibilities but about the real facts of the confrontation between states in cyberspace. In fact, for the first time since the appearance of nuclear weapons in the 1940s, a fundamentally new sphere of using force in international relations appeared. The provision of cybersecurity is becoming one of the most important problems of modern international security [2]. The AI plays an important role in the cyberthreat landscape and it influences and changes information security. We increasingly come across the opinion that AI will shape future strategic security. Artificial intelligence, capable of large-scale analyzing of threat data, is revolutionising the way cybersecurity is approached through accelerating response times and empowering under-resourced security forces [1].

In its 2013 impact assessment, the European Commission stated that there is an “insufficient level of protection against network and information security incidents undermining the services that support our society (for example, public administrations, finance and banking, energy, transport, health)” [3]. The US Department of Defense defines AI as “the ability of machines to perform tasks that normally

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require human intelligence”, such as “recognising patterns, learning from experience, drawing conclusions, [and] making predictions”. At the same time, internal problems are becoming the main source of tension in international relations. The threat of terrorism, which emerged in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, has risen to a global level with the development of science and technology. Technological development opens new areas to confrontation, including military ones, such as cyberspace.

The use of AI can both exacerbate and mitigate the effects of disinformation within an evolving information ecosystem. Similar to the role of AI in cyberattacks, AI provides mechanisms to narrowly tailor propaganda to a targeted audience, as well as increase its dissemination at scale — heightening its efficacy and reach. It is important to consider cyber defence (detecting and protecting) and cyber offence (detecting and exploiting) Cyberattacks exploit the previous well-known vulnerabilities that systems designers have simply failed to secure. Artificial intelligence contributes to the complexity of cyberspace defence systems. The importance of AI is due to the presence of various factors:

- AI automates repetitive learning and discovery through data;
- AI analyses more and deeper data using neural networks that have many hidden layers;
- the Internet of Things (IoT) and sensors have the ability to harness large volumes of data, while artificial intelligence (AI) can learn patterns in the data to automate tasks for a variety of business benefits;
- it is a wide-ranging tool that enables people to rethink how we integrate information, analyse data, and use the resulting insights to improve decision-making [5].

It is important to consider that artificial intelligence can influence and aggravate traditional threats as well. All this leads to the fact that AI will affect both the military sphere and the rivalry between countries. In the US Military Academy, the cadets have programmed the tank with an algorithm directing it to use its lance to “kill” the enemy fighters. Governments all around the world support the development of autonomous weaponry. Thus, in December 2020 American Air Force used artificial intelligence on a U-2 spy plane for the first time [4]. In October 2012, Human Rights Watch and several non-governmental organisations started the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots. In 2013 the UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) raised the question of whether the creation, sale and use of lethal autonomous

weapons systems should be banned. In 2020 the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots conducted research and found opposition to the development of AI weapons in 26 out of 28 countries, including Russia, China and the US To prevent the spread of the AI threat to security, it is necessary to create a framework for monitoring the development of technologies. This will allow us to take advantage of modern technology. To maximise AI benefits, we have to:

- encourage greater data access for researchers without compromising users' privacy;
- invest more government funding in unclassified AI research;
- promote new models of digital education and AI;
- engage with state and local officials so they enact effective policies;
- regulate broad AI principles rather than specific algorithms;
- maintain mechanisms for human oversight and control;
- penalise malicious AI behaviour and promote cybersecurity.

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A FAREWELL TO COUNTERINSURGENCY:  
THE RETURN OF CONVENTIONAL WARFARE

*Thomas Briot*<sup>1</sup>

For most western countries, the end of the Cold War brought about the illusion that the threat of war was foregone. Indeed, the last colonial conflicts (Indochina, Algeria, Vietnam, Rhodesia, Angola and so on) had ended, and the worrying threat of a Soviet invasion through Germany was now gone.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century was thus to be one of peace, and the necessity of maintaining large armed forces seemed to be fading. This short-lived euphoria abruptly came to an end when hijacked planes came crashing into the World Trade Centre, and the Cold War was replaced by the war on terror. While this war on terror did involve two conventional military operations (Operation Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom), it sparked the revival of counterinsurgency warfare. Indeed, American and NATO forces were committed to never-ending counterinsurgency campaigns against Iraqi and Taliban insurgents, with no end in sight.

Accordingly, Western militaries adjusted their doctrine and equipment to better suit this small-scale, asymmetrical warfare, abandoning the prospect of large-scale engagements against a conventional enemy. However, this era of counterinsurgency warfare may well be coming to an end as NATO forces retreat from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Recent geopolitical developments hint that conventional warfare is back in fashion: increasing tensions around the South China Sea and Taiwan are fertile soil for a new large-scale conventional military conflict. PRC Chairman Xi Jinping has called on his troops to “put all their minds and energy on preparing for war” [5], while the US Asia-Pacific commander Admiral Philip Davidson warned that China could invade Taiwan in the next 6 years [1]. This is just one of the potential causes of a major military conflict, others being the military build-up around Ukraine or disputes over the Iranian nuclear programme.

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The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, albeit being a small-scale conflict, has shown that conventional war is still a viable option for resolving territorial disputes. Russia has developed its conception of 21<sup>st</sup> century conventional warfare in the so-called Gerasimov doctrine, involving hybrid warfare methods, thus emphasising the use of technology and political technologies to disrupt the enemy rear.

These developments have not gone unnoticed by Western planners, who have started adjusting military doctrine and equipment to prepare for the return of modern conventional warfare.

The French armed forces offer an interesting insight into this shift. The Army chief General Thierry Burkhard has publicly announced his ambition to prepare the French army for “high-intensity war”, creating working groups to assess the country’s readiness for a major conflict. This represents an important shift for the French military doctrine, which up until this point had been focusing almost exclusively on counterinsurgency and peacekeeping missions, as French forces have been deployed in multiple African countries (notably Mali and the Sahel region) and Afghanistan.

This shift in the doctrine is also accompanied by a significant rise in military spending, with a 46 % increase for the 2019–2025 budget compared to the one in 2018. The French armed forces are planning major military exercises in 2023 involving division-sized units manoeuvring in open terrain. Operation of this scale has not taken place since the Cold War, and some analysts describe these exercises as the French Louisiana manoeuvres.

This shift is also visible in the American military establishment. Major Robert C. Piddock of the United States Marine Corps wrote in his thesis:

“As we prepare and transform as a military to meet the anticipated future environment and threats, all national leaders, both military and civilian, must ensure the US militaries conventional dominance is not lost along the way. The skills, knowledge, expertise, and warrior culture necessary to dominate conventionally are perishable and if lost will have to be relearned at a very high cost”.

It is reasonable to assume that this return to conventional warfare had been much awaited by Pentagon: frustrated by the inconclusive campaign in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan, the US military has been longing to return to what it knows best: large-scale conventional conflict. This is perhaps best indicated by US conclusions on its Vietnam failure: an influential study by the US Army War College [3] stated that the reason for American defeat in Vietnam was not due to its fail-

ure to adapt to asymmetrical warfare, but because it had not fought conventionally enough. In other words, “The army should not have deviated from its big-war approach and engaged in some half-hearted counterinsurgency experiments” [6].

The British armed forces have also announced an important modernisation programme for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, seeking to adapt to new forms of warfare. All in all, it seems that militaries around the world are all turning from a force tailored for regional, small-scale conflicts to one fit for large-scale operations using modern technology. Echoing increasing geopolitical tensions around the world, this change in military doctrine hints that important conventional conflicts are still a possibility in the nuclear age.

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THE REACTION OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN GERMANY  
TO US NUCLEAR WEAPONS DEPLOYMENTS  
AT THE PRESENT STAGE

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The debate over the deployment of US nuclear weapons within Germany's national borders is a hot topic today, amongst political parties and the broader German public. This topic has become especially important since the adoption of the new US nuclear strategy [2], which now allows for a guaranteed pre-emptive nuclear strike against the Russian Federation.

Returning to the early 2010s, it is worth recalling that in 2010 the German parliament decided by a majority vote [3] that Berlin would do everything in its power to reassure its NATO allies that the presence of nuclear weapons on German territory was of no practical importance.

However, in 2020–2021, the rhetoric of the recent past has fallen into oblivion. Based on statements [4] by the German Foreign Minister H. Mas and Bundestag speaker S. Seibert in May 2020, Germany will remain committed to its position that Berlin will maintain its ambivalent approach toward nuclear weapons: Germany remains faithful to the North Atlantic Treaty and is committed to renouncing nuclear weapons in the future. Thus, the foreign minister rejected the proposal by SPD co-chairman R. Mützenich (the Social Democratic Party of Germany) to withdraw all US nuclear forces from the country [5]. Even before Mas made his closing remarks on the subject, German government spokesman Seibert said that Berlin would continue to honour its commitments under the NATO nuclear deterrence concept.

In 2016, after a series of provocative articles in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on the topic of the new President Trump's intention to change the priorities of US foreign policy not in favour of protecting the Western European grouping of NATO member states, a new round of discussion began, the echoes of which reach to this day from

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the German media and show no tendency to cease. The reaction to this was the publication [7] in Spiegel magazine of an article: “Germany does not need nuclear weapons”. Since then, the initiative of SPD leader (2017–2018) M. Schulz on the non-separable evacuation of US nuclear weapons and their means of delivery rapidly began to gain popularity in Germany. The initiative received support even among cabinet ministers, one of the supporters was the head of the German Foreign Ministry himself — Z. Gabriel [6]. Gabriel himself was one of the supporters [6]. Then, Schulz’s initiative was embodied in the programme of the SPD in the elections to the German parliament in the fall of 2017.

Against the general negative background to the activities of the Trump administration, the “Union-90-Greens” party in its programme has already postulated an ultimatum to close the last “American nuclear stronghold” (a military base with a nuclear arsenal) near the German city of Büchel and cancel the “nuclear presence” in the FRG in the NATO defence initiative, referring [8] to the norms of international law. The Greens’ idea was already supported by the Left Party. The last to participate in this action was one of the youngest, but extremely active parties in the country’s history, the “Alternative for Germany”, which decided in its programme: to withdraw not only American nuclear weapons but also to withdraw all the allied forces from the country. The CDU/CSU alliance and the Free Democratic Party (FDP) were the opponents in this confrontation [9]. They defended the thesis that the American nuclear umbrella corresponded to the national interest of Germany in the face of the growing “Russian threat”.

In this context, it is relevant to mention the German contribution to the NATO “double solution” (1979), which envisaged the beginning of the deployment of American Pershing-2 medium-range missiles and cruise missiles on the territory of the European Alliance countries in parallel with the initiation of negotiations with the USSR to restore the military-political balance. The German Foreign Ministry urged [1] the Russian side to comply with the terms of a 60-day US ultimatum to destroy the 9M729 missile, allegedly tested at a range of 500–5500 km prohibited under the Strategic Missile Treaty. The foreign ministry representatives stated that the negotiations on the INF Treaty had reached a stalemate and this was of serious concern to the Federal Republic of Germany. After the US withdrawal from the INF Treaty on February 2, 2019, another initiative from the FRG followed, namely a proposal by members of the Bundestag to relocate the 9M729 missiles beyond the Urals.

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ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT  
OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC TO COMBAT TERRORISM

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The issue of international terrorism is one of the most serious and destructive phenomena for mankind. Today, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, in the context of globalisation, terrorist organisations have more opportunities than ever to penetrate other states.

France participates in the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, which monitors the implementation of the Security Council Resolution 1373, and supports resolutions and documents imposing sanctions on terrorist organisations (for example, Resolution 1526 directed against Al-Qaeda, and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism adopted in April 2002) [3].

France tops the list of countries actively countering the spread of terrorism due to its extensive history of interaction with former colonies: for example, back in the 1960s, the Fifth Republic faced a wave of terrorist attacks from the Algerian opposition.

During the presidency of Nicolas Sarkozy (2007–2012), the French government actively supported the adoption of a special “Anti-Terrorist Package” [4], which implied increased control over telephone calls and emails, as well as the deprivation of citizenship of imams who advocate fundamentalism and personal violence.

On January 7, 2015, the editorial staff of the weekly *Charlie Hebdo*, best known for its provocative cartoons of political leaders, was attacked in Paris [1].

The worst wave of terrorist attacks swept across France in November 2015. On November 13 three explosions occurred at the Stade de France in Saint-Denis during a football match between the national teams of France and Germany, as a result of which three people died [1].

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But the most shocking case is the terrorist attack on the Bataclan concert hall during a concert by the American rock band Eagles of Death Metal [1].

The November events led to the strengthening of police control and the introduction of a state of emergency on the territory of the state for three months.

In October 2017, the new President of the Fifth Republic, Emmanuel Macron, promulgated the law “On strengthening internal security” [3]. The main provisions of this law significantly influenced the further anti-terrorist policy of the state: firstly, in France, protection perimeters were established during major events (sports and cultural events), a mandatory search and examination of bags and personal belongings of people attending such events were established; secondly, the closure of religious places where the idea of “hatred and discrimination” is promoted, or spread is possible.

The lack of results of Macron’s anti-terrorist policy was noticed in 2020 after the murder of school teacher Samuel Paty on October 16 (an 18-year-old radical Islamist beheaded the teacher after he showed the caricatures of the magazine Charlie Hebdo) [1]. News of this event caused condemnation from the international community and led to contradictory results for the President of France.

At the moment, the question is about the situation of Muslims in France: a sharp restriction of religious freedoms and the introduction of additional military force to maintain security within the state’s borders have generated a significant increase in Islamophobia and prejudice [5].

In addition, France is taking significant steps to eliminate sources of terrorist financing around the world: in 2018, the international conference “No terrorist financing!” was held in Paris, which was attended by 70 states and 20 international organisations [3].

In the fight against international terrorism, France is not limited to manifestations of “soft power”. For example, since 2013, the military contingent of the Fifth Republic has been present in the Sahel as part of the Serval (2012–2013) and Barkhan (since 2014) to combat terrorism. The French government also pursues an active policy of combating ISIS in Iraq and Syria: in 2014, the Fifth Republic launched Operation Shamal [3].

Analysing the actions of the French government in the fight against terrorism in recent years, one can conclude that to successfully overcome the terrorist crisis within the borders of the Fifth Republic, it is necessary to increase all-around cooperation on the world stage. Only

a revision of the migration policy of the European Union and collective action in the fight against radicalism can contribute to the expansion of the national security strategy within the borders of Western democracies.

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## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JAPAN AND AUSTRALIA AS A GUARANTEE OF SECURITY OF THE ASIAN-PACIFIC REGION

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Relations between Japan and Australia began after World War II as a result of signing the Trade Agreement on July 6, 1957. From that moment, the economic ties between the two countries began to improve significantly and developed into a strategic partnership. The statement on Security Cooperation was signed in 2007, which is an extremely unique moment for Japan and since that time it only touched on this area with the United States, as the main guarantor of the country's sovereignty [1].

The partner relationship of Australia and Japan is not interesting among the world community. However, the sociological surveys show that people in Australia trust Japan more than China, South Korea and other countries in the Pacific region [2]. Meanwhile, the Land of the Rising Sun as the third country in terms of investments in Australia, as well as Russia, is neutral about the friendship of these states. The following data were obtained: 66.7 % of respondents answered the question about relations between Australia and Japan "neutrally", while 16.7 % are friendly or antagonistic to the relations. However, when students read the second question, they admitted that Australia and Japan generally influence each other in part, while 16.7 % spoke of a significant relationship between the two Pacific states. Respondents also believe that Australia and Japan have a tendency to ally (66.7 %) or partly have such possibility (33.3 %).

On November 7, 2020, it was announced that the treaty on the interaction of the armed forces of Australia and Japan would be signed in 2021. According to the "Agreement on Mutual Access", the armed forces can be present on the territory of the countries (including for military exercises) that signed the document. Each side guarantees

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the sovereignty of the countries, which means a defensive alliance in the event of an attack by a third country (in this case, the main threat is China). Although the signing of this regulatory action will be with the participation of the new Prime Minister of Japan, Yoshihide Suga, nevertheless, the idea belonged to his predecessor, Shinzo Abe. First of all, this is due to the implementation of the concept of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific region”, the direction of which is aimed at cooperation in the field of defence, stability and economic growth of the region. Accordingly, we can say that cooperation and partnership relations between Japan and Australia have reached a new level of integration. Thus, this is due to the lack of sustainable sovereignty of the land of the rising sun and the desire for security in the field of compliance with international maritime law. Thus, the concept was a reaction to the great influence of the People’s Republic of China in this region, which led to the policy of containing the Celestial Kingdom within the land borders, as Shinzo Abe repeatedly stressed that China was going to turn the South China Sea into a “Beijing Lake”, which indicates serious violations of international maritime law.

The previous Prime Minister made it clear that the concept has an anti-Chinese and democratic orientation to protect the independence of each participant, which can geographically be in any continent. In addition to the interests of Japan, Australia itself faced a serious influence of China in the economic sphere, making the country dependent on the Celestial Kingdom. Recent political scandals over China’s influence on Australian politics have only increased scepticism about Beijing. That is why close cooperation with Japan is an important component of Canberra’s foreign policy. So, in 2015, the Free Trade Agreement was signed, which provides for the economic integration of both countries. “The Mutual Access Agreement” has benefits for Japan as for Australia. For the Land of the Rising Sun, the Agreement will strengthen Japan’s military power to ensure security in case there would be a war with China. Australia is also one of the leading economies in the Asia-Pacific region, and this fact will be a diplomatic success of the new Prime Minister of Japan, which may be the main achievement of Yoshihide Suga for the future election in September 2021. For Australia, the Agreement will get no fewer benefits, as the country needs to recover from the coronavirus epidemic and the trade war with China. Japan thus provides many opportunities for Australia’s influence in the Far East.

The rapprochement of Japan and Australia caused different points of view in other countries. The Chinese Foreign Ministry believes that

any agreements should focus on peace and prosperity, not on undermining other countries in the Pacific region. However, the obvious anti-Chinese orientation of this document makes it clear to the Celestial Kingdom that many states in this region should also have a huge impact on the development of defence and economy. The United States took the rapprochement positively even under the administration of Donald Trump, as his concept of “America first” was primarily directed against the People’s Republic of China. That is why the US foreign policy strategy fully coincides with the Japan-Australia partnership [3]. Curbing China’s development was a major component of the administration of the former United States President Donald Trump. The policy of Joseph Biden in the Pacific region will also correspond to the activities of conservatives, although with great perseverance and protection of the interests of the democratic countries. Russia, represented by the media, took the information about the possible military cooperation between Japan and Australia neutrally because it does not see this as a national threat. The military alliance of the two Pacific countries is aimed exclusively against China’s monopoly in this region, which is why the Russian Federation is not concerned about this state of affairs. The authorities also understand that the United States is not the initiator of this rapprochement, the integration is exclusively between the two states.

Thus, international relations between Japan and Australia are aimed at cooperation in almost all areas. Chinese influence has only increased the rapprochement of these countries, as they are seriously concerned about the economic and political potential of the Middle Kingdom. Further relations will be aimed at integrating many areas of state policy, including the military.

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## ASEAN-UN COOPERATION TRENDS IN THE CONTEXT OF REGIONAL SECURITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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The multifunctional and multi-level structure of international relations often requires formalising into a system of common goals and objectives, as well as a common vision. South-East Asia occupies a significant place in the global picture of the world, having passed the stage of the “three waves of industrialisation” and having made a push in social, political and economic development. The region has a political, economic and cultural regional intergovernmental organisation comprising 10 countries, called the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. ASEAN was formed on August 8, 1967, in Bangkok with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration, better known as the Bangkok Declaration. Currently, the organisation operates within the framework of a comprehensive document that reflects the Association’s model of behaviour until 2025. This document is called the Vision of the ASEAN Community to 2025.

According to this document, ASEAN seeks to improve the standard and quality of life, as well as to extend rights and freedoms to all ASEAN citizens [2]. The governments of the ASEAN countries are determined to respond to global and regional challenges, as well as to develop the economic sphere. Therefore, the organisation is ready to form new dialogue platforms. In this regard, the UN has a key role, as ASEAN highlights the complementarity of the Sustainable Development Agenda with the United Nations 2030.

Speaking about the relationship of the Association of Southeast Asia with the United Nations, it is worth noting that their cooperation began with the signing of the document and the participation of ASEAN in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the early 1970s [4]. The starting point in the interaction between ASEAN

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and the UN was the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation between ASEAN and the UN in 2007.

The organisations adopted the Joint Declaration on the Comprehensive Partnership between ASEAN and the United Nations, which served as the basis for cooperation in the fields of political security, economy and socio-cultural cooperation, as well as cooperation between the secretariats.

It should be mentioned that an Action Plan for the implementation of the Joint Declaration on the Comprehensive Partnership until 2020 was adopted between ASEAN and the UN. The Action Plan includes the current priority areas of cooperation and takes into account the vision of the ASEAN community for the period up to 2025. This document will help both sides to fully realise the potential of a comprehensive partnership.

A key element of interaction between ASEAN and the UN is cooperation to promote regional and international peace and security. In addition, ASEAN-UN cooperation in the field of peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building continues to strengthen. It is important to admit that special attention is being paid to strengthening the peacekeeping capacity of ASEAN member states through training programmes and exchanges on policies and best practices [3].

In 2021, ASEAN is facing a complex crisis, taking place in Myanmar. The complex human security situation in Myanmar forces the ASEAN countries to view the Myanmar case not just as an “internal matter”, but rather as a regional issue that requires the attention of the international community. It is known that ASEAN has several restrictions on security decisions, which in turn limits ASEAN’s collective action. Since the conflict in Myanmar is complex, and ASEAN is not able to solve it on its own, the organisation should attract the attention of the international community, in particular the UN. Building a partnership between ASEAN and the UN can help coordinate diplomatic efforts and deliver humanitarian aid to people in Myanmar. It could draw on the expertise of the 6,600 ASEAN citizens currently staffing the United Nations system to create a joint mechanism anchored in the “ASEAN way” that combines the trust of ASEAN with the capacity of the United Nations. In addition, there is the experience in resolving such situations between organisations. For example, during the 2018 Sulawesi earthquake in Indonesia the Government of Indonesia has committed the ASEAN Coordination Centre for Humanitarian Assistance in Disaster Management to become a platform through which international partners and the private sector coordinate their humanitarian efforts.



The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs worked at the Emergency Operations Centre to facilitate coordination between ASEAN and the UN. This experience was noted as a new way of working between the two organisations. A partnership between ASEAN and the United Nations will provide a more coordinated international response to the increasingly fraught situation in Myanmar [1].

Thus, the importance of ASEAN-UN cooperation is not questioned. The presence of the ASEAN observer status at the UN indicates that the interaction does not have a “one-sided” character and is aimed at developing a comprehensive partnership. Such relations of the two world organisations clearly show how cooperation can influence the internal processes of the ASEAN member states, where ASEAN by itself experiences difficulties in addressing security threats and challenges.

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CRUDE OIL AND NATURAL GAS TRANSPORT ROUTES  
AS A COMPONENT OF ENERGY SECURITY IN EAST ASIA

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Main transport routes through which China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Singapore import hydrocarbons pass through the waters of the South China Sea and the Strait of Malacca. As a result, the energy security of East Asian countries and their economic development remain highly dependent on the security of these sea areas. In 2003 the former President of the People's Republic of China Hu Jintao called this situation the "Malacca dilemma".

The protection of energy transit routes in the South China Sea has been an acute issue of the international agenda in recent years and is of particular interest now. In 2013, the US Energy Information Administration included the Strait of Malacca in the list of "choke points", i. e. strategically important straits and bays, highlighting its importance for international oil and LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) trade [6]. About a third of the total oil sold now in the world passes through this strait. According to IEA, the Strait of Malacca is already an important transit route with about 7,700 oil tankers passages (compared with 10,600 for the Strait of Hormuz) and around 2,400 LNG tankers passages in 2014 [4]. The experts of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies Geoffrey Hartman and Jane Nakano claim that the significance of the "Malacca dilemma" will increase in the nearest future due to the growing demand in the Asia Pacific [4].

There are several threats to the security of crude oil and natural gas transport routes in the South China Sea and the Strait of Malacca.

The first threat is piracy. An increasing number of attacks on merchant ships in the Strait of Malacca is the key factor, that reduces the security of maritime routes. 30 cases of piracy were re-

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corded in the Strait of Malacca in 2019, including incidents with oil and LNG tankers. In comparison with 8 cases in 2018, the surge is more evident [3].

Second, risk of a major power conflict between China and the United States that may spark based on regional maritime disputes in the South China Sea. China, Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei, and Indonesia are involved in this rivalry that continues to develop in three directions: disputed territories of the Paracels and the Spratly Islands, Chinese territorial claims within the nine-dash line and competition for energy resources of the South China Sea (according to CSIS, an estimated 190 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 11 billion barrels of oil, with much more potentially undiscovered) [6]. In 2017, in response to the exploration work carried out by the Vietnamese energy company PetroVietnam together with the Spanish partner Repsol in the waters claimed by China (so-called Block 136-03), the latter sent 40 warships to Hainan Island, thereby showing its readiness for confrontation [5]. Under pressure from Beijing, Hanoi abandoned exploration drilling and broke the contract with Repsol. Besides, China has constructed a number of artificial islands in disputable waters and deployed its aircrafts, anti-ship cruise missiles, anti-aircraft batteries and missile defences on them. The People's Republic of China is considered to be the major contributor to the militarisation of the region by Western experts. To maintain stability and keep sea lines open, the USA sent their aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson to the South China Sea [2, 7]. However, the South China Sea is still a hot-bed of tension.

The international community promotes certain measures to address this problem, including, first, the peaceful settlement of territorial disputes in the South China Sea through negotiations and, possibly, the launch of joint energy projects in the disputed waters. Also, it is crucial to remember about piracy and implement the anti-piracy methods established by the "Rome Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation" (1988). Finally, as an additional measure, logistics companies should increase their ability and readiness to switch to alternative routes for transporting hydrocarbons to East Asia: for example, through the Sunda or Lombok Straits (in the case of blocking the Strait of Malacca) or through the Makassar Strait and the Philippine Sea (in the case of a conflict in the South China Sea).

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## CHAPTER II

### INFORMATION AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### THE MAIN AREA OF THE WORK OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION IN THE CIS

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In recent years, public diplomacy has increasingly demonstrated better protection of national interests and effective support for the implementation of foreign policy goals. This has led to the fact that today research on the issues of public diplomacy is of deep interest among researchers.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Western countries, as well as NATO and the EU stepped up their activities in the CIS region. In this region, the confrontation between hard power and the penetration of soft power has created threats and challenges to Russia's national security interests. So, strengthening regional integration with post-Soviet countries, and a strategic course towards political unity is urgent.

In recent years, the development of public diplomacy has gradually become one of the main directions of the theory and practice of diplomacy. This study will reveal the main areas of activity of Russian public diplomacy in the CIS.

To successfully achieve the goal, this report is divided into theoretical and practical parts. First, the concepts of public diplomacy and soft power will be defined. Second, the main tasks and goals of Russian public diplomacy at this stage have been identified, and the main directions of public diplomacy in the CIS countries have been clarified.

The meaning of modern public diplomacy is that the American scientist Edmund Asbury Gullion introduced it into the academic world. According to Gullion's summary of the Murphy Centre's definition of public diplomacy [1], in general terms, one of the participants in public diplomacy is non-governmental actors, through interaction with the media and cultural exchanges to achieve the goal of influencing public opinion and ideology.

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Classical American public diplomacy is a rudimentary form of modern public diplomacy. It is defined as a government vehicle that uses information propaganda programmes, educational and cultural exchanges, and digital diplomacy, as well as Internet platforms, to achieve American foreign policy goals [9].

The concept of soft power appeared in an article titled “Soft Power” published by the American scientist Joseph Nye in 1990. Joseph Nye believes that soft power is seen as achieving the desired result without the use of coercion such as force or temptation — “paying” others, but relying on one’s own ability to attract. Joseph Nye also believes that “Culture, Values and Political Resources” is a necessary basic component of national soft power [2].

“Soft power” is defined in an article titled “Russia and the Changing World” as “a set of tools and methods to achieve foreign policy goals without the use of weapons, but through information and other levers of influence” [7], “influence” as the main potential of soft power was subsequently shown in the presidential decree “On measures to implement the foreign policy of the Russian Federation” in May [8]. The main goals can be summarised as follows: formation of political values, cultural attractiveness and focus on public diplomatic resources and the information space of non-governmental organisations to support foreign policy. Other important areas of Russian public diplomacy also include digital media diplomacy, science education diplomacy, think tank diplomacy, and humanitarian aid diplomacy [3].

On December 8, 1991, Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, as the founding countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, signed the “Belovezhskoye Agreement” and formally said goodbye to the Soviet Union. In the Alma-Ata Declaration of December 21, 1991, 11 union republics of the former Soviet Union (except for the three Baltic countries and Georgia) officially confirmed the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States as an international organisation [4].

Public diplomacy not only serves as a long-term subject of Russia’s attention at the global level but also establishes close contact with the CIS countries, creates a positive image, builds mutual trust, strengthens friendship and unity between countries, accelerates the integration process, strengthens its influence in the region and the implementation of foreign policy strategies which make the CIS region one of the priority areas.

Russia’s resources for the implementation of soft power through public diplomacy in the CIS countries are mainly concentrated in the following areas.

First, it pays attention to cultural exchanges, cooperation in the field of science education, cooperation in the field of sports and training for national personnel of the CIS countries.

Secondly, it provides Russian television and radio programmes to the CIS countries to create an information space for Russian media in the CIS countries.

Thirdly, it “contributes to the expression, preservation and development of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of all peoples inhabiting these countries” [5].

Fourthly, it focuses on the protection of the common cultural and historical heritage.

Fifthly, it provides support to compatriots in the CIS region in education, language, society, labour, humanitarian, and other spheres and protects their rights and interests [6].

The author’s main conclusion is that the CIS countries are still a priority area of Russian public diplomacy, and extensive humanitarian cooperation has become the main area of work to facilitate friendly exchanges with the CIS countries, strengthen friendship, establish a dialogue, strengthen regional unity and establish Russia’s image in the CIS states. In the process of implementing soft power, there is an interaction between some resources of soft power to increase its effectiveness.

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THE ISSUE OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES  
IN THE MEDIA COVERAGE OF RUSSIA AND JAPAN

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An unsigned peace treaty has been an open issue in Russian-Japanese relations for several decades. The stumbling-stone in this problem from a political point of view is the dispute over the ownership of the so-called “Northern Territories”, or the southern Kuril Islands — Kunashir, Shikotan, Iturup and the Habomai ridge. This protracted territorial conflict between Russia and Japan negatively affects bilateral relations and jeopardises effective cooperation between the countries.

The relevance of the topic we are researching is due to the current geopolitical situation, in which the signing of the Russian-Japanese peace treaty could give impetus to the development of several areas of cooperation at once, and would defuse some tension in the Asia-Pacific region. Russia fears the prospect of becoming a peripheral state in Eurasia due to the active development of China and its hegemonic tendencies [5]. An alliance with Japan would be a strategically correct step towards balancing China. On the other hand, Russia is a reliable energy partner for Japan, but if a Russian-Chinese block is formed, it can further destabilise the situation in the Asia-Pacific region.

At the same time, the territorial dispute is an acute and painful topic of political discourse. Geopolitical interests and security issues are of absolute priority for Russia, and the ownership of the Kuril Islands as strategically important territories is far beyond the scope of any possible discussion. For the Japanese, the territorial dispute is a matter of national honour. The “Northern Territories” are considered as primarily Japanese lands, and the government is doing everything to keep the image of the illegally occupied islands in the minds of voters, appealing to their feelings and emotions [2].

Thus, for our study, it was extremely important to trace how and with the help of which the authorities broadcast their position to soci-

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ety. With the help of the media, the state can not only inform citizens on topical issues of foreign and domestic policy but also effectively influence our perception of this information, form visual images and collective ideas [1].

The study aims to analyse the mechanism of forming a newsbreak around the problem of the “Northern Territories” in the media, taking into account the official position of the states of Russia and Japan.

In the course of our work, we found out that both in Russia and in Japan, the territorial problem is a fairly popular agenda among the media and is widely covered. We noted an annual increase in the number of publications directly related to the territorial dispute, which indicates the desire of the authorities not only to educate citizens and provide them with up-to-date information but also to form their opinions corresponding to the course of the authorities. Supporting the image of power is a key function of the socio-political discourse around the South Kuriles.

Russian publications in the media are characterised by active support for the Foreign Ministry’s policy and presidential rhetoric in the negotiations. Over the past few years, the following tactics have been chosen by the Russian media: the problem of belonging to the Kuril Islands and the signing of a peace treaty were divided into two independent information blocks [6]. Likely, the collective perception that the signing of a peace treaty is not associated with any territorial concessions from Russia will only strengthen in the future.

As for the Japanese media, their position on the issue of the “Northern Territories” is traditionally radical. Newspapers, especially national ones, do not skimp on openly anti-Russian rhetoric [4]. However, unlike Russian federal media that support the government’s political course, Japan’s national-conservative newspapers criticise Japanese diplomacy for being ineffective in negotiations with Russia. Rising nationalism reacts sharply to the lack of concrete action on the part of the prime minister, although the government with its own hands continues to fuel people’s interest in the territorial dispute (for example, by opening the National Museum of Territory and Sovereignty) [3].

Summing up the interim results, we can conclude that shortly we will not be able to witness the resolution of the territorial dispute between Russia and Japan. A sophisticated knot of contradictions, drawn back during the Cold War, was not subject to future diplomacy. The only way out of this situation is seen only to turn the problem of the southern Kuril Islands or “Northern Territories” into a weapon in the defence of countries’ national interests.

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PROPAGANDA METHODS DURING THE 2020  
ARMENIA-AZERBAIJAN CONFLICT

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We live in an era called the “third world war” by researchers when conflicts between states and political forces are not only held with a military clash, but also with the help of information attacks. Information became the weapon of the “third world war”, and those knowing how to use it correctly can achieve much more than those who are still waging their war in traditional ways. In their speeches, political leaders create a model of the world, which they want to broadcast to their population, the military, as well as the population and soldiers of the enemy. The information in this model can be true, modified, or completely false. The main purpose is to influence people.

Despite the dubious moral and ethical aspects of propaganda, it has become an accepted means of achieving political and commercial goals around the world. It is impossible to imagine political or any other competitive struggle without the full-scale use of technologies to manipulate the mass consciousness of the population.

The war that began on September 27, 2020, on the territory of the Republic of Artsakh is an international event that affects the interests of not only Armenia and Azerbaijan. The purpose of our research is to investigate what propaganda methods were used by political leaders of both sides in their Twitter accounts. We examined the Twitter accounts of the representative of the Armenian Ministry of Defense Artsrun Hovhannisyan and the head of the foreign policy department of the Azerbaijani presidential administration, Hikmet Hajiyev.

This study was conducted using two methodologies: the concept of the Russian psychologist G. Krysko and the concept of the American psychologist R. White.

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According to G. Krysko, the attacking side has several strategic objectives:

1. ensure that neutral states support their country, but are hostile to the enemy;
2. humiliate the military-political leadership of the enemy, which will lead to the undermining of authority, and discredit the methods of conducting domestic and foreign policy;
3. fight enemy propaganda;
4. assure the enemy audience of the weakness of their armed forces;
5. incite conflicts between different social groups in the enemy country;
6. encourage the enemy population to resist the policy of war;
7. encourage the enemy's military personnel to escape, desertion, surrender;
8. create panic, mass psychosis, defeatist sentiments among the civilian population and military personnel of the enemy.

According to the American psychologist R. White, the authorities can influence the audience using a set of methods:

1. "Devilish" character of the enemy. The enemy is an insidious force, which wants to harm on principle and has a tendency to cowardly and behind-the-scenes methods.
2. A courageous self-image. Promoting the perseverance and heroism of own group and public punishment apostasy and supporters of a peaceful resolution of the conflict.
3. Morality of your nation and enemy's immorality. An ideal image of one's state in contrast to an immoral adversary.
4. Selective inattention. Only those topics are perceived that confirm the prevailing image of the enemy and all the rest are rejected.
5. Lack of empathy. The categorisation of the enemy as an inanimate and immoral creature puts him outside the law, makes empathy towards him very weak and thereby protects the person from psychological damage when committing his aggressive actions.
6. Militaristic self-confidence. Increased fear is often combined with militaristic self-confidence, especially among professional soldiers.

We examined how these methods are used during the escalation of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict and concluded that the concepts developed by both psychologists are not only a good theoretical basis, but also effective practice methods.

In the account of Azerbaijani representative Hikmet Hajiyev, more than 80 % of tweets turned the audience against the enemy, simultaneously creating a positive image of their power and army. More than half showed the “devilish character of the enemy”, especially through information about killed and injured civilians. Through the suffering of civilians, the Azerbaijani side showed “the immorality of the enemy and the morality of oneself”.

As for the publications of Artsrun Hovhannisyan, more than 70 % relate specifically to the military actions on the territory of Artsakh. We also highlighted information about soldiers, which is more than 10 %. These tweets tell the stories of individual soldiers or show photographs of smiling soldiers. This is the use of the method of militaristic self-confidence.

Most often, the tweets of the representative of Armenia use the method of “militaristic self-confidence” and “the devilish character of the enemy”. The first method is characterised by publications about own victories, the destruction of the enemy’s armed forces. The second method is reflected in publications with illustrations of destroyed peaceful settlements, people left homeless, videos of the bombing.

In conclusion, we can say that to achieve information superiority over the enemy, both sides used propaganda methods: create a negative image of the enemy, that destroys all moral values, and their image of the saviour using soldiers who “fight against the world’s evil”. To impose their picture of the world, the authorities often repeated the same information, which exposed them in a favourable light and ignored inconvenient information.

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## RUSSIAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE RUSSO-GEORGIAN WAR: TBILISI POSITION

*Umarbek Nuriddinov<sup>1</sup>*

M. Saakashvili's coming to power after the Rose Revolution in Georgia changed the situation around this conflict. In his speech, the President stressed that the main vector of the state's foreign policy is aimed at European integration, but maintaining warm relations with the Russian Federation remains a priority [4]. It was he who set the goal — to restore territorial integrity, not excluding the use of force. The President of Georgia accused Russia of separating territories. Russia began to passport the population of Abkhazia and South Ossetia back in 2004. However, according to Russian media, Georgia attempted to restore territorial integrity with the use of force that pushed the Russian Federation to defend its interests in the “near abroad”. One should take into account the fact that it was the rapprochement of Georgia with NATO, with the United States that was one of the catalysts for the actions of the Russian Federation, prompting it to take active actions against Georgia.

In November 2007, Russia completed the complete withdrawal of troops from Georgia ahead of schedule, even though the Russian bases in Georgia played a stabilising role in the Transcaucasian region [1]. Gradually, relations between the two countries deteriorated. The Georgian parliament has decided that the stationed peacekeeping contingent of the Russian Federation will not contribute to the resolution of the conflict. On February 15, 2006, the Georgian parliament decided to replace Russian peacekeepers with peacekeepers from other countries, accusing Russia of trying to annex the territory of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Russian sources note that Russia defended the interests of the population from Georgia's aggression because Georgia was the first to use

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force. And the Western media are discussing the opposite side of the problem. Georgia began to prepare for war. By this, cooperation between Georgia and NATO has intensified. Georgia bought weapons and military equipment. The United States provided military assistance, in particular in 2002–2004 allocated about 64 million dollars within the framework of the “Training and equipment” programme and another 100 million dollars in 2005–2006 in the framework of the “Operation to maintain stability” programme [5]. In 2006–2008 the United States provided Georgia with non-repayable loans totalling \$30.6 million for the “Providing military aid for military needs to foreign states” programme and another \$10 million for preparations for joining NATO.

Thus, militarisation of Georgia grew at a rapid pace. Its military budget in 2008 was \$1 billion. In general, the United States indirectly supported Georgia and pushed it towards war. But if the United States was preparing to support Georgia in restoring territorial integrity, while not excluding an armed conflict with the Russian Federation, whose peacekeeping contingent is stationed in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, then why did they ignore the military power of the Russian Federation to such an extent? According to Friedman, the United States underestimated the military power of the Russian Federation.

According to the official version of the Russian side, the reason for the introduction of Russian troops is Georgia’s aggression against the territories of South Ossetia beyond its control and the consequences of this aggression: a humanitarian disaster, the exodus of 30,000 refugees from the region, the death of Russian peacekeepers and many residents of South Ossetia. According to Foreign Minister S. Lavrov, Russia’s military response to Georgia’s attack on Russian citizens and soldiers of the peacekeeping contingent was fully proportional.

The goals of the Russian Federation in the Five-Day War are as follows:

- to teach a lesson to the leader of Georgia, oriented to the West and fenced off from Russia;
- to demonstrate its military power and influence in the “near abroad”;
- to frustrate Georgia’s plans to join NATO;
- to recognise Abkhazia and South Ossetia to strengthen their military influence;
- undermining the Georgian economy. After the “Five Day War”, foreign investors feared a new round of conflict and stopped investing in the Georgian economy. Material damage is estimated at about \$1 billion, which is about 8 % of the estimated GDP in 2008.



In conclusion, we can say, that Russia proceeds from its national interests. The Russian Federation regards Transcaucasia as a “zone of its interests”.

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A GENDER FACTOR IN THE POLITICAL DISCOURSE  
OF DONALD TRUMP

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The United States presidential election is always of great interest to the world community. In the 2016 United States presidential election, the interest in the political rivalry of the candidates was also fueled to a certain extent by the gender component of their confrontation. For 200 years, the United States was ruled by Protestant men. Catholic Kennedy overcame religious discrimination, Barack Obama overcame racial discrimination, and Hillary Clinton, with her iron will and extraordinary mind, dreamed of overcoming gender discrimination. She entered the fight for the Oval Office as the clear favourite of the Democratic Party. Unlike Hillary Clinton, an experienced politician who represented the US political establishment, a businessman and billionaire Donald Trump, a man alien to politics, not even a member of the party he represented, suddenly turned out to be his own for millions of ordinary Americans.

The relevance of this work is to study one of the functions of political discourse, namely the manifestation of gender identity in the discursive practices of men and women, as well as its significant role in the formation of public consciousness. The role of the gender factor in the construction of the image of a politician was investigated by studying the case of Donald Trump, and the increasing role of gender aspects in the representation of the masculine image of Trump in the political media discourse was traced.

The purpose of the work is to study the features, nature and ways of manifestation of the gender factor in the political discourse of Donald Trump.

To achieve this goal, the following tasks are set:

1. consider the evolution of the concept of “gender” and “gender discourse”;

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2. analyse the theory and functions of political discourse;
3. determine the role of the gender factor in the 2016 election campaign;
4. analyse the impact of manipulative strategies in Trump's discourse on electoral decision-making;
5. consider the specifics of the gender factor in the upcoming election campaign in 2020.

The study allowed us to come to the following conclusions:

1. In the twenty-first century, the world community is faced with the challenge of achieving de facto equality of men and women in all spheres of public life.
2. The power struggle between female and male politicians always involves a gender component. Both sexes are now, as before, not free from the pressure of gender stereotypes that affect the degree of success of a person, according to which they are evaluated by society.
3. Gender is an important component of political discourse, as it helps politicians to achieve their main goal—to influence the electorate.
4. Political discourse — the discourse of politicians, a class of genres belonging to the sphere of politics (government discussions, parliamentary debates, speeches of politicians) [2]. The main purpose of political discourse is to form in the audience those thoughts and beliefs that are necessary for the author of the discourse.
5. In his pre-election political discourse, Donald Trump uses a wide arsenal of manipulative strategies and tactics. He discredits his rival — a woman and creates in the perception of the audience a picture of himself and the future of the country in which the American people can reach the peak of their power.
6. In general, the 2016 elections can be described as a kind of gender discourse: the confrontation between men and women. American society is ready to recognise equality between men and women, but it is not ready to accept a female president. Trump's sexism cost him some women's votes, but gender positioning was less important than social policy and he has been chosen after all.
7. The start of the 2020 election campaign again has shown that voters are not ready to see a woman president of the United States. In the first primaries, not all female candidates got enough votes to continue the race [1].

8. Politics remains an area in which gender stereotypes persist, putting pressure on women who want to become politicians of the highest order. One of the persistent stereotypes in society's view is that a woman is not suitable for big politics. However, there is a growing awareness that politics is too serious a matter to be entrusted only to men, that women's intervention in politics can limit the power of politics from a position of strength, that "women's problems" are universal [3].
9. So far, the world is far from achieving gender respect, even at the political level. This challenge can only be solved by education, which will explain that gender equality is not about displacing men, but about giving women the choice to engage in any professional activity. In the meantime, no expert will take the responsibility to predict the exact time when there will be a complete rejection of gender roles.

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DIGITAL MEDIA IN THE MODERN POLITICAL PROCESS:  
A CASE STUDY OF THE AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

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The development of social platforms as new platforms for political interactions raises the question of the platforms' influence on political discourse. Our study aims to identify the mechanisms by which social platforms and search engines can manipulate political discourse.

The 2020 US presidential election was chosen as a case, during which the largest number of confirmed cases of content manipulation by social platforms and search engines in favour of a Democratic candidate was revealed.

Three major social networks used as platforms for political discourse — Twitter, Facebook, Youtube; were selected as the platforms under study; and the most popular search engine in the US is Google.

Having studied the cases of interference of the platforms under study in the information confrontation between the Republican and the Democratic parties in the 2020 presidential elections, it was possible to identify four main mechanisms for manipulating political content.

1. Obstruction of dissemination of materials: an example of this mechanism is the dissemination obstruction of an article by the New York Times about incriminating emails from Hunter Biden, the son of presidential candidate Joe Biden.

2. Blocking of accounts and communities: an example of this mechanism is the blocking of the fastest-growing group on Facebook “Stop the Steal”, dedicated to fixing cases of falsification of the American elections in 2020, at the time of blocking the group had 365 thousand members. The account of former US Senate candidate Dianne Lorraine, who used the community hashtag in her publications, was also blocked.

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3. Censoring of publications: this mechanism can be most clearly seen in case of publications in the official account of the current US President Donald Trump: publications in his account are marked as misleading regarding elections or other civic issues, and are hidden in the user's news feed; for viewing additional user consent is required.

4. Blocking alternative platforms: the mechanism includes blocking the alternative platform BitChute in all Google services on election day in 2020.

The manipulations mentioned above also affected the image of the platforms under consideration. For the first time, a large-scale transition of users to alternative platforms was recorded.

Parler has become the leader in the number of downloads amongst applications for Android and iOS. To summarise, it can be noted that social platforms and search engines have a high potential for manipulating political discourse. This problem cannot be solved without changes in the legal framework and transparency of the algorithms of these platforms.

Over the past decades, digital media have shown their effectiveness as platforms for positioning political actors in political conflicts and election campaigns. Notable examples are the presidential campaign of Barack Obama in 2008 and Donald Trump in 2016, as well as the 2020 campaign rally.

Obama's team began to use social media 7 months earlier than in the campaign headquarters of his rival John McCain [6]. Moreover, in 2007, Barack Obama's election website made it possible to create a personal account with donating tools, signing up for volunteers, and giving out news according to the user's geolocation. This made it possible to segment potential voters and increase the likelihood of their positive decision in the voting by demonstrating the solution of the issues under concern, at the regional level.

The segmentation of potential voters was also carried out on social media. This made it possible to increase sympathy for the candidate by addressing issues relevant to certain social groups. Groups such as "Latinos for Obama", "Veterans for Obama" were also created on Facebook [6].

Barack Obama's team divided the levels of voters' engagement and worked depending on them:

- "personal" was characterised by the simplest actions that a person could help a candidate's campaign. This level required the voter to create an account on the site, share information about a candidate, donate money for a campaign, subscribe to social networks, subscribe to an email newsletter;

- “social” has been characterised by great efforts for online campaigning. The voter was required to record a video or post a blog entry in support of the candidate, create a group on social networks in support of the candidate and invite their friends there;
- “team-oriented” campaign was characterised by both online and offline campaigning, and it included working with voters on the street, participating in organising campaigns and events in support of the candidate, attracting others for support, performing various works on behalf of the headquarters.

The actions of each voter were analysed, and the next steps were proposed only by the previous steps. The result of this consistent work was the launch of a large campaign on social networks under the hashtag #voteforobama and several viral videos, in particular, “Crush on Obama”, which gained 120 million views on Youtube, and it was recognised as the main one in the entire history of the Internet, according to the international professional Internet award The Webby Awards. Also, videos, where bloggers urged young people to agitate the older generation to vote for Barack Obama, became a separate trend.

Trump’s team used the same techniques as the team of his predecessor. The segmentation of the electorate on social media was carried out in the same way, on Facebook there were created groups “Students for Trump”, “Latin Americans for Trump”, and even such exotic ones as “Bikers for Trump” [2]. But two fundamentally new methods can also be named.

Firstly, creating viral posts on personal social media accounts. Secondly, Trump’s team approached the distribution of the campaign’s advertising budget in a fundamentally different way. Hillary Clinton made a bet on traditional media, investing about \$30 million in commercial rotation and native advertising on entertainment shows, and only \$3 million [2] in digital media advertising. While the advertising budget for Trump’s digital media campaign was \$30.2 million [2]. In addition, during the election campaign, the candidate used the services of Cambridge Analytica, which specialises in election campaigns on social networks. Campaign algorithms were being used Facebook statistics to help launch highly targeted ads. According to some experts, this company has successfully participated in about ten election campaigns [3].

It can be noted that the electoral campaign for all candidates in 2020 was distinguished by a particular interest in digital platforms. So, for example, the candidate from the Democratic Party, Bernie Sanders, conducted fundraising for his election campaign on the Internet [5],

while the media mogul and Mayor of New York, Michael Bloomberg conducted his campaign. Despite the campaign was not long-term, it was one of the most vivid and expensive Meme 2020 campaigns based on “memes” [4].

This election rally was saturated in terms of the censorship amount used in the interests of certain candidates. The most striking example of such censorship is the case with the laptop of Hunter Biden when the informational dissemination was blocked in various ways by social platforms [1].

In view of the foregoing, we can conclude that digital media are gradually gaining more and more influence as a new environment for the political process. And they are also beginning to gain more and more popularity as a platform for the confrontation between the authorities and the opposition in the process of shaping the agenda in the election campaigns’ implementation; or when they are organising a public discussion during political crises.

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TRADITIONAL AND NEW MEDIA IN THE DIGITAL AGE  
AND THEIR ROLE IN THE INTERNATIONAL  
POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

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The development of information technologies has changed the structure of information media space dramatically. It also has transformed the media's role in modern political processes. Therefore, the study of the specifics of the digital media sphere as a means of modern political communication has become extremely relevant.

“Mediasphere” in a broader sense includes the whole world in the variety and complexity of existing means and channels of communication [6]. Speaking more specifically, the media space is an information environment created by modern mass media [7], which comprises both traditional and new ones, including social media, the target audience, and the public media discourse they create.

Nowadays new digital media, such as Interactive online resources, social networks and messengers have become increasingly popular, while traditional media (radio and TV and printed materials such as books and magazines) are on the decline.

There are several crucial features of the contemporary media system:

1. interactivity, ensuring the involvement of the audience in the process of creating, editing and relaying content;
2. transcoding is a feature enabling to change quickly the format of media messages and to disseminate information among previously unrelated media channels;
3. multimedia which is a combination of different information formats within one media source;
4. variability comprises online information updates, user's self-navigation in the information space.

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Besides, nowadays media have become global: natural and political borders are becoming increasingly blurred the way that our world represents a unique information network that is capable of adaptation and self-development [2, 6].

Digital format is also one of the specific features of new media. However, it seems wrong to differentiate between traditional and new media only for the purpose to “print or analogue/digital”. The dominant communication model is the key determining feature instead [2].

Traditional media mainly implement a Top-Down communication model. In contrast, new media apply an engaging model, carrying out not only Top-Down but also Bottom-Up communication strategies, giving voice to the general audience [3].

Media resources are involved in shaping public opinion and can indirectly influence political decision-making. This is an agenda-setting theory [3]. Mass media may cover particular events and conceal others, focusing on certain aspects or actors. Thus, media are able to establish a hierarchy of news prevalence, to mould public opinion on particular issues, thereby influencing real politics [3].

“CNN effect” could be considered as an example of modern media power. This refers to the ability of 24-hour news networks, such as CNN, to manipulate domestic and international agendas through influencing the audience and, particularly, those responsible for political decision-making [1].

The US military operation in Somalia is usually cited as the clearest illustration of the CNN effect [1]. Several American television channels, including CNN, issued a series of reports on the civil war in Somalia in 1992. Increased media exposure provoked a huge reaction in American society. Thus, the influence of the media on public opinion has become, albeit not a decisive, but an important factor in influencing the adoption of certain foreign policy decisions in the United States.

Concerning New Social Media Influence on the political climate, we can mention public protests in Belarus during summer and fall of 2020. One of the key factors in protest mobilisation was an influence of a new social media resource — telegram channel NEXTA Live. Its popularity skyrocketed in August: from barely 300,000 to more than 2 million people [5].

The resource has been widely criticised for biases and lack of impartiality. The Belarus state authorities even put NEXTA's logo and live channel on the list of extremist materials. However, the channel has become a key tool for social mobilisation, inciting and coordinat-

ing protests. Traditional media (such as state-owned TV channels) endeavoured to counter this NEXTA's activity proved to be unable to resist the information pressure carried out by the telegram channel.

The increased NEXTA's popularity has its roots in the channel's specifics. NEXTA Live completely meets the main criteria of new media. The channel is interactive, which ensures the involvement of the audience in the process of creating and re-transmitting news content. This idea inspires more confidence among readers than the information supplied by traditional media on the Top-Down principle. This makes NEXTA Live a more attractive source of information than traditional media, which are reluctant to change in order to correspond to the needs of the audience.

This example clearly illustrates that new media turn out to be more successful and thus more influential in the digital media sphere than traditional ones.

Nowadays media play an increasingly significant role in the political processes. The abovementioned effects and features illustrate the declining monopoly on the information of traditional media and the empowerment of groups that were previously unable to broadcast globally. The audience of new media resources is turning from passive consumers of information to its authors and editors. Traditional media should adapt to these circumstances to preserve their influence, and governments should understand these trends of the media sphere development to pursue their policies efficiently and independently.

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THE POLITICISATION OF ISLAMIC CULTURE IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY:  
DESTABILISING FACTOR IN EAST-WEST RELATIONS

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The politicisation of Islamic culture<sup>2</sup> began in its present form in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the time, as in our day, this process was mainly promoted by Islamic fundamentalists. Today it is an undeniable fact that in their nearly 100-year journey fundamentalists have been able to achieve certain successes, and the role of the Islamic factor in the modern political process has become difficult to overestimate. Islamic fundamentalism is no longer just an ideology or a worldview, but a real political factor capable of having a significant impact on the political process and international relations.

The current tendencies in the politicisation of Islamic culture date back to the 1990s, when many Arab and Muslim countries experienced the rise of fundamentalist sentiments. It is worth noting that Islamic fundamentalism can spread rapidly only in a society in which religion is of paramount importance. However, it would be wrong to consider the high level of religiosity in Arab and Muslim societies as the only basis for the spread of Islamic fundamentalism as a political movement.

Today, far-right political forces (religious and non-religious) are present in virtually every country in the world. Having traced the history of their emergence and the stages of their evolution, we can conclude that fundamentalism in politics came, first of all, to replace ideological contradictions, becoming an alternative method of politicising cultural (civilizational) differences of societies. This process was largely described by S. Huntington in his work “The Clash of Civilizations” [1] which anticipated the transition of civilizational differences and contradictions from the cultural field to the political one.

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<sup>2</sup> Here: building policy on the basis of Islamic culture and worldview, as well as the transfer of traditional cultural values into the ideological field.

In this regard, it seems natural that many representatives of the Arab and Muslim world, disillusioned with both capitalist and socialist ideologies, turned to Islam in an attempt to fill the ideological vacuum.

Islamic cultural values, which have taken the place of the ideological values of the last century, receive much broader support among the population since they are largely embedded in the nation's self-consciousness, its traditions and customs, rather than being instilled from the outside. In turn, reliance exclusively on cultural values leads to their politicisation in a radical form, which carries a number of dangers.

The politicisation of culture leads to the formation of antagonistic relations with representatives of other cultures. In foreign policy, cultural antagonism manifests itself in the form of difficult interaction with foreign partners, as cultural identity becomes a means of political influence. At the same time, attempts to solve urgent international problems take place on the same cultural basis, sometimes ignoring the more effective political methods of solving them.

Moreover, the politicisation of cultural values within one society can trigger similar processes in other societies as a symmetrical response. A series of extremist actions, as well as armed attacks and terrorist attacks in France in the fall of 2020 by Islamic extremists on a religious basis, sparked a wave of anti-Islamist and anti-Islamic sentiments in French society. The right-wing front, led by Marine Le Pen, gained wide support from indigenous French people, who rallied around traditional French values and announced the beginning of "reclaiming democratic rights from obscurantism" [3]. In this case, the cohabitation of two societies critical of each other within the same country only increases the tension of the situation.

On the one hand, France's social stability and well-being are undoubtedly at stake. On the other hand, the French authorities' harsh response to Islamism has provoked a barrage of criticism from foreign countries, whose entire governments or individual representatives have been disgruntled with the French fight against radical Islam. Despite the untenable arguments of the representatives of such countries (especially Turkey), one cannot ignore the fact that such a negative reaction significantly complicates both international relations and intercultural dialogue.

At the same time, politicised culture, unlike ideology, leaves no room for manoeuvring. In the society of politicised culture, a person's attachment to cultural values is not a subject of discussion, and changing a person's beliefs is unacceptable. The consequence of this is the

emergence of a type of identity that is not flexible, as the modern globalised world requires, but is instead something more static. Despite this, this kind of identity is most often not completely static. It can be described as rigid, that is, as having an imbalance of “flexibility-staticity”, but not completely devoid of the possibility of change. The formation of this type of identity leads to a crisis in society. In Middle Eastern societies and Turkey, the crisis of Islamic identity manifests itself in a dual attitude toward the West. On the one hand, bearers of traditional Islamic values accuse the West of exalting false values and ideals; on the other hand, they quite often try to emigrate to Western countries themselves, as well as have real estate and bank deposits there [2].

Thus, the politicisation of Islamic culture today is one of the most significant challenges facing both Eastern and Western countries. With its great mobilisation potential and ideology appealing to the masses, Islamic fundamentalism in politics is, nevertheless, a destabilising factor both domestically and internationally.

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USING THE CONTEXT THEORY TO MAINTAIN  
INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE EAST  
AND THE WEST: THE ISSUE OF MULTICULTURALISM  
AND MIXED CONTEXT IN RUSSIA

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In recent years political processes in the world have become more and more violent, as a result, western and eastern countries tend to distance themselves from each other. On the other hand, globalisation and peoples' migration continue to make their way into the nations' cultures, and the dialogue is considered the best way of communicating between eastern and western states.

Firstly, it should be noted which countries are understood as “the West” and “the East”. Traditionally, the borderline between East and West is related to Europe and Asia division: the limiting object is the Urals: western nations include the majority of Western European states (from Poland on the east to the UK in the west); countries of North America (The USA and Canada), although, it is clear, that China, Japan and Kazakhstan, for instance, are “the absolute East”, there are some “middle” countries, which cannot be judged definitely (the smaller European part of Russia is in Europe, and the bigger part of Russia is in Asia, the South American states as Brazil or Argentina etc. are sometimes named East). Overall, it must be noted that the reason for this uncertainty is the difference in interpretation. Distinguishing of the world nations as the East and the West lies deeply in the history of mankind development and these two categories are inseparably linked with cultures, traditions, customs, and tempers of peoples.

The nature of the difference between the East and the West as philosophic notions goes far to ancient Rome, where the West was recognised as “our native country, our ally” and the East as “our opponents, the strangers, unknown cultures” [6, p. 140]. Nowadays a couple of concepts, mentioned above, is traditionally used just to express basic

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differences between some countries. East is strange, philosophic, contemplative and slow, collectivist and it is full of traditions, and West is clear, pragmatic, fast and individualist, and western life changes too quickly [6, p. 141]. Notwithstanding great political conflicts and unification, the main trends today are striving for peaceful living in cultural diversity and sustaining intercultural dialogue in the society.

We can define intercultural dialogue as the interaction of the representatives of diverse cultures as equal partners. Even though intercultural dialogue support is quite an often-discussed issue, there are few practical ways to keep equal communication on both sides of the opposition. We believe that the current theoretical study may help to find ways to make the intercultural dialogue an existing means of international relations. It should be mentioned that understanding the culture of the partner is key for a fair relationship. In this area, Edward Hall's context theory should be studied firstly: most of the eastern or Asian countries are considered to be High-context cultures (HCCs), and the great number of European, or western countries (Sweden, Germany, etc.) together with the USA are the Low-context cultures (LCCs) [4]. Though, the majority of Roman countries as France or Italy tend the High context [4].

The peculiarities of HCCs in comparison with LCCs can be described according to Hall's theory: "A high context communication or message is one in which most of the information is already in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message. While a low context communication is just the opposite; the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code" [3]. Therefore, as we may see, the frontier between East and West does not exactly coincide with the borders between the HCCs and LCCs.

Of course, this theory may be criticised and complemented, that is why here a question appears, in which aspect of context should we regard some mixed-type countries which are not "purely Eastern or Western", like Russia, Ukraine, the Southern-American countries, etc. And even the European democracies and the USA itself, the former "absolute West", accepting annually millions of migrants and refugees from Northern Africa, Arab countries and Asia, are no longer western-type Low-context areas. And Great Britain possesses many HCCs traits too. That is why we suppose it rather appropriate to take into consideration the point of Omid Alizadeh Afrouzi [1] and Yarn [8]: "The terms HCC and LCC are not categorised with strict individual characteristics or boundaries, instead, many cultures tend to have a mixture or, at least, some concepts that are shared between them overlapping the two context cultures".



Moreover, Gudykunst and Nishida [2] suppose that “both low- and high-context communication are used in every culture, but <...> one tends to predominate” [2, p. 542].

Even though a number of Russian and foreign findings tend to see Russia as a high-context culture [7], one should presume that for Russia as a multinational space, this approach is not at all true: cultures of the numerous Russian folks had influenced greatly all of the country’s life aspects and HCCs may prevail in some situations and regions while in the others the LCCs can have an advantage.

It is quite true, as it can be seen from the research of Richardson and Smith [5] who suppose that one cannot observe cultural values directly [5]. Additionally, one should take into account that low-context and high-context values inside a culture are not necessarily consistent with each individual’s use of HCC/LCC communication. As a result, researchers can analyse high-context and low-context communication at an individual level in order to explore high-context and low-context values at a cultural level by using a survey quantitative analysis [5]. Such kind of analysis may help to better understand the contextual peculiarities of each Russian region.

On the whole, it can be concluded that the two opposite notions regarded mainly as a tradition of distinguishing cultures, East and West, should be studied closer, and after all, the results may show us that what is important in maintaining intercultural dialogue this is cultural context peculiarities within each individual group of people, so these peculiarities must be considered for building cross-cultural communication.

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LINGUISTIC DOMINANCE AS AN INSTRUMENT  
FOR MANIPULATION IN THE SOFT POWER REALM

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With globalisation development and the emergence of new political centres like countries with emerging economies, the issue of cultural policy, carried out in the soft power concept [7] by the actors of international relations, is acute. Within the framework of the soft power concept, peaceful ways of resolving existing problems and establishing influence in the international community are a priority for a state position's strengthening.

Thus, we consider languages as an instrument of domination and manipulation in the soft power concept in this paper. This work also touches on other specific types of some countries' policies, particularly cultural [12]. The cultural policy of countries is associated with the implementation of their language policy, which is designed to maintain and regulate the official language, as well as "import" the culture outside of its borders.

Our work aims to consider some languages as a power for getting domination for manipulating in world policy realm from a historical aspect [10], to analyse language policies of the UK, France, and Spain, as well as today's succeeding countries, and to form and summarise positive and negative factors of the language policy implementation.

The object of this study is the countries' language policies.

Using methods of comparative historical and statistical analysis we came to the following conclusion.

The history of Great Britain, France, and Spain, in the period from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, demonstrates that geopolitical situation and international relations are crucial for gaining the status of the country as the lingua franca origin. This status is not only a result of successful language policy [9], but it is also a common policy of the countries mentioned above.

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Thus, the era of colonialism allowed Spanish to become the language of international communication. Then, the French language became predominant in the world after the revolutionary events in France in 1789–1799 [1] and the aggressive expansionist policy of Napoleon Bonaparte. After the defeat of France in the war with Russia, French remained the language of diplomacy throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century but lost its importance due to the formation of the German state and a number of other reasons. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the German language was a contender for linguistic dominance, but due to the tragic events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (World Wars), the Anglo-Saxon world turned out to be the most favourable because of the US economy and a bipolar system [4].

The main criteria for acquiring the status of a national language as a *lingua franca* are as follows:

1. successful geopolitics conducted by a country in the region and the world;
2. a successful global economy policy;
3. funding of language institutes and the diplomatic network;
4. the existence of cultural and historical ties (including ex-colonialism ties).

Amongst collateral criteria are:

1. the use of non-verbal and associative signs in mass culture (cinema, literature, music, lifestyle, etc.) [3];
2. the use of technologies borrowed from the principles of soft power;
3. the existence of institutions that regulate the language corpus of a language [2].

It is worth noting the main negative factors for the loss of the status *lingua franca*, such as:

1. the loss of global influence at the geopolitical level;
2. the decline of the economic growth [11];
3. the lack of funding for language promotion institutions;
4. diplomatic isolation.

The language policies of the United Kingdom, France, and Spain today differ from each other, but they use similar tools. The UK focuses on communication with the United States and the Commonwealth countries using economic dominance as well as language [8]. Spain international broadcasting is aimed at Latin American countries in its implementation [1]. France promotes its language policy with the help of the International Organisation of Francophonie and diplomatic net [5].

Thus, the successful language policy of countries allows them to exercise diplomatic pressure, appealing to the interconnection and codepen-

dency of countries. We can see their manipulation on a general linguistic and cultural basis, which is a tool for the states in whose hands the levers of control throughout the linguistic and cultural space are held.

To sum up, the language policy is an important component of both domestic and foreign policy, but it must be well thought out. Otherwise, the lack of attention from the Government leads to unfortunate consequences both within the region and at the global level.

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THE REPRESENTATION OF POLITICAL LEADERS' EMOTIONS:  
FEATURES OF TRANSLATING EMOTIVE VOCABULARY

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In the anthropocentric paradigm, the language of emotions is legitimately viewed through the prism of a linguistic personality. A linguistic personality is characterised by the “position of linguistic consciousness and speech behaviour” [2], which in turn are conditioned by the social role played [6]. Such a concept was introduced into sociology as role sets, which classify social roles, depending on the status of people in society [4]. A politician / political leader is one of the possible variations of social roles, which differs not only in the quality, image and goals of life but also in the speech set.

The language of politics is characterised by significant mobility and emotive-evaluative expression, but it is also distinguished by the function of influencing the audience and their emotions. The means of influence include vocabulary with an emotionally expressive colouring, which finds its expression at all levels of emotives (connotations, affectives and potentials) [5].

Proceeding from the fact that the communicative intentions of a politician are determined by the pursued goal — to influence, convince, convey, it is legitimate to note the need to talk about discursive strategies.

The process of translating emotives is complicated by contextual features and is situational in nature.

In order to illustrate the implementation of emotive components in the speech activity of politicians, and the ways of their interpretation, let us turn to the speech of the ex-President of the United States, Donald Trump, which was recorded in one of the news articles. This article discusses Donald Trump's approach to international trade, his accusations of dishonesty addressed to leaders of other nations, and how to deal with the trade deficit.

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As President of America, Donald Trump says: “We have lost 500 Billion Dollars a year, for many years, on Crazy Trade with China. NO MORE!” [8].

The emotive potential of the neutral word “lose” is realised due to the adjacent lexical units, which together create the emotional context of the entire utterance. This lexeme, out of context, can be translated by a set of emotive equivalents, where the denotative meaning is the word “потерять”, and the connotative meaning is “лишиться ч-л., проигрывать, упускать, забывать, etc.”. The entire context influences the choice of the appropriate language unit. Further, the president turns to the expressive-evaluative vocabulary — “crazy”, the equivalents of which in Russian are the words: “сумасшедший, безумный, бредовый, etc.” Elliptical exclamation point, “No more!” can be translated as “Хватит!”, “Довольно!”, “Достаточно!”, “Больше не будет!”.

The ex-president’s speech can be translated as follows: “Мы теряем по 500 миллиардов долларов в год из-за невыгодного сотрудничества с Китаем. И это на протяжении многих лет. Больше этому не бывать!” When translating, the denotative meaning of the word lose is preserved, which, nevertheless, retains its emotive charge. When translating the phrase crazy trade, we are referring to contextual substitution, which leads to some stylistic distortion. The literal translation of crazy “сумасшедшее сотрудничество / сумасшедшие торговли” is unacceptable because there is a violation of the lexical collocation of words. To avoid this kind of violation, you should use a contextual synonym. Realisation of emotional expression occurs when translating the sentence “No more!” The neglect of the clichéd set of equivalents is explained by their semantic incompleteness. The use of a lexical extension in translation is justified by the adequacy of the translation.

The manifestation of the emotional explication of ex-President D. Trump is due to the discourse strategy of trust and is aimed at the emotional manipulation of the host audience.

“We are going to start whittling that down, and as fast as possible” [8], one of the translation options for which is “Мы сократим расходы и как можно скорее”. In the original text, the phrasal verb “to whittle down” is used, the main meaning of which is “обкромсать”. The translation text uses the word “сократить”, which is characterised by stability of expression and requires contextual expansion.

Donald Trump’s language is notable for its expressive colouring, which finds its expression in the semantics of the word. Any explicit statement is motivated and conditioned by external stimuli. To convey

the expressive means of the speaker's language, it is necessary to fully immerse in the context, take into account extralinguistic factors and appeal to linguistic manipulations.

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## FEATURES OF POLITICAL TEXTS

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The scholars' community has developed two approaches to defining a political text — broad and narrow. According to a broad approach, a political text should be understood as any text devoted to political issues or related to political activity. According to a narrow approach — the text is political, if the author is a politician [8, p. 14]. According to E. A. Repina, the essence of a political text can be revealed in the following characteristics:

- it has a strict connection to the political sphere;
- the subject matter of the texts is always related to political issues;
- aimed at a mass audience [7].

The political text has several specific features that distinguish it from other types of text. These features include its focus on a mass audience, and not on an individual. Oftentimes, political texts raise topical issues in the field of politics. As pointed out by A. P. Chudinov, “the political text is directly or indirectly focused on the distribution and use of political power” [9, p. 89].

Despite the difference in approaches to the interpretation of the essence of a political text, all authors agree that a political text is created to form a certain opinion in the audience, any specific ideas about the political situation.

This goal determines the specific functions of the political text:

- **Informing.** This function consists of transmitting sufficient information about the described event or the policy itself. To successfully fulfil the main goal of a political text, information must be memorable and vivid to attract the attention of a political audience.

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- Persuasion and motivation. Any political text is aimed at convincing the political audience of the correctness and reasonableness of the information contained in the message of the author.
- Mobilising the audience to support the author's proposals [1, p. 23].

The study of political discourse is devoted to the work of AG Dugin's "Philosophy of Politics". The author claims that the peculiarity of political discourse is that it has an ideological orientation, which is realised through various means, usually linguistic. They enhance the emotional effect of the text and have a psychological effect on the recipient. This means that the addressee not only expresses his point of view but most often "imposes" it on the addressee.

Politics as a specific sphere of human activity is by its nature a set of speech actions. The main purpose of political communication is the power struggle.

One of the levels of political language is the pragmatic level, that is, the level of application of propaganda. It is at this level that political discourse fully functions.

Next, we will consider the connection between these two concepts in the framework of political linguistics, a science that arose at the intersection of linguistics with political science. The emergence of this area of scientific knowledge is associated with the recent growing interest in the conditions and mechanisms of political communication. It is addressed to every person who reads newspapers, watches TV, or listens to the radio.

It is political communication that is the subject of research in political linguistics.

According to A. P. Chudinov, the following can be considered as characteristics of political discourse:

1. Authorship of the text. The author and narrator of the text are not always the same person. In this respect, we distinguish texts with our authorship, texts without a formal author, texts with displaced authorship. If we are talking about an official address, then the message, as a rule, hides the work of a whole group of specialists. By converting text into speech, the politician takes responsibility for its content.
2. The addressee of the political text. Ordinary citizens, political adherents, political opponents can act as the addressee.
3. Strategy and tactics in political communication. "In political communication, the strategy is focused on changing the political views of the addressee, on transforming his attitude to certain theories, events, people..." Communicative tactics are concrete ways to implement a strategy.

Thus, the following conclusions can be drawn: one of the levels of the political language is the pragmatic level, that is, the level of the use of propaganda. It is at this level that political discourse fully functions. The concept of discourse includes such components in the minds of the addressee and addressee, such as texts, the content of which is taken into account by both participants, the speaker's idea of the addressee, the author's tasks when creating the text, the speaker's political views, as well as the political situation at the time of the creation of the text.

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THE PECULIARITIES OF SPORTS TERMINOLOGY TRANSLATION  
IN THE FIELD OF INTERNATIONAL SPORT EVENTS

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In today's changing world, sport serves as a soft power which unites nations and helps build and sustain strong relations between governments through competitions of any kind. And mass media play a significant role in this since the most dedicated fans want to be timely provided with up-to-date news about what is happening in the sports world. Thus, the relevance of the study is due to the high popularity of sports materials among a wide range of people, especially those who are involved in the international sports business.

The object of the study is the English-language terminological units from media materials that are produced in the field of international sports business; the subject is the specifics of their translation into Russian.

The research aims to examine the features of informative translation of sports terminology in the field of international sports business. It should be highlighted here that it is crucial when making decisions regarding huge sports events since misunderstandings and misinterpretations may cause issues in the state's policy and its relations with other countries.

Considering the genre specificity of mass media on the topic of sports, Nikolai Parkhitko and Stanislav Martynenko note that some genres are prevailing in sports journalism: notes or correspondence, reportage, interview, article, comments and a portrait outline [4].

Brian Rosenthal identifies three main types of materials that cover sports events: Advance stories, Game Summary and Post-Game Analysis [6].

Thus, it does not seem surprising that today the genre palette of sports materials is very diverse. Consequently, the translation of sports vocabulary can be connected with some issues which arouse the necessity for a translator to have special knowledge, as well as a set of

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tools and techniques. Let's consider these lexical features in more detail based on football.

Today mass media use football terminology quite often. The thing is that it is comprehensible only to "professional" fans. The recent study of Ivan Bolkhovityanov is of interest since he deeply investigates the problem and focuses on the potential difficulties of translation and their interpretation.

In Russian, for instance, such a concept as "крыло" or "фланг" can be found in both military and sports vocabulary, and if we are talking about football, these concepts are interchangeable. The English nouns "flank" and "wing", respectively, are not, because they have different semantic shades — "flank" is used exclusively in military terminology, while "wing" can be found in sports. The wrong perception of the LU's meaning may result in distortions leading to a variety of negative consequences as some may presume there is a hidden threat or mockery expressed via the metaphor [2, 3].

Let us have a look at another example. Without special knowledge and not knowing the context, it can be challenging to translate the title of the article "AFC Champions League: Best Clinical Finishes of 2020". In this example, it is not possible to find an analogue for "a clinical finish" without knowing the niceties of playing football. A competent specialist, though, will immediately understand that in this case, we are talking about an unbeatable kick, or "неберущийся удар". So, the title should be translated as "Лига чемпионов АФК: лучшие неберущиеся удары 2020 года". Once again, the clear translation shows that the translator knows and follows the unified terminology accepted in all the countries thus expressing the country's policy in following them.

It is worth paying special attention to the lexical and mixed transformations. The most common lexical transformations include transcription, transliteration, and replication. Lexical-semantic substitutions include concretisation, generalisation, modulation and entire transformation and explication [1].

Having examined the lexical diversity of football terms, it was revealed that when translating such LUs as "left/right back", "sweeper" "main referee", "linesman", "the centre line" and other terms, mainly related to the positions of the players and referees on the football field, most often the tracing technique is used — so, the terms in question are translated as "левый/правый защитник", "чистильщик", "главный судья", "судья на линии", "центральная линия", respectively. At the same time, when translating some LUs, such as "linesman" and "referee", the use of the transcription technique is also acceptable, which gives us such Russian-language analogues as "лайнсмен" и "рефери".

The explication was noted in such examples as “the kick-off”, “indirect free kick”, “to bend the ball”, “to mark someone”, “to centre the ball”, “to toe the ball” etc. As a rule, this technique is used when translating vocabulary related to the gameplay process. Without an explanation, it will be difficult to understand that we are talking about such aspects as “стартовый свисток, начало игры”, “свободный удар”, “сделать навес”, “опекать кого-либо”, “простреливать”, “ударить пыром/носком”.

As a rule, transliteration is being used when translating the names of football teams, especially those that have an abbreviation. The most remarkable example is the name of the team “ЦСКА”, which in English will be translated as “CSKA”.

Lexical-semantic substitutions, as a rule, are encountered when accomplishing TTs of not separate terms, but fragments of an article or other material, printed or oral.

According to the results of the research, it was concluded that when working with terminological units in the field of international sports business, there is a tendency towards translators’ remaining within the frames of sports and political discourse, which requires the translator to make maximum efforts and do hard work when choosing the appropriate lexical units of the translated language with the goal of not going beyond the boundaries of the genre when conveying the meaning of the source material as accurately as possible.

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## CHAPTER III

### GEPOLITICAL AND LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE ANALYSIS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF UNESCO'S INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN THE CULTURAL AND HUMANITARIAN SPHERE IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY: ANALYSIS OF STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS

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At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>st</sup> centuries, the tough bloc confrontation of the Cold War era has been superseded by a more kaleidoscopic configuration of the international system, which adds additional nuance to the process of global competition. Against the background of tectonic transformations within the international system and the deepening heterogeneity of value systems, the cultural and humanitarian dimension of world politics is becoming particularly relevant. In this regard, the role of the specialised agency of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (hereinafter referred to as UNESCO, or the Organisation) as a platform for multilateral dialogue in order to find a common denominator of divergent foreign policy vectors in the cultural and humanitarian sphere [3, p. 3]. The purpose of this paper is to analyse the conceptual framework of UNESCO's activities amidst the adaptation of the specialised agency to changes in the international environment.

From 1 to 16 November 1945, 44 states participated in the UN London Conference on the Establishment of the Organisation for Education and Culture (ECO/CONF) [2]. On November 16, 1945, representatives of 37 countries signed the UNESCO Charter in London. [13, p. 5–23], which entered into force on November 4, 1946. The historical path has left a deep imprint not only on the goals and main activities of UNESCO but also on its organisational structure. November 16, 2020, marked the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UNESCO's foundation, yet until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the “structural core” of the Organisation including the General Conference (hereinafter referred to as the GC), the Executive Board (hereinafter referred to as the IP) and the Secretariat have not undergone significant changes [3, p. 29–34].

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UNESCO's modernisation process received a new impetus after the launch of the UN reform, which commenced following the 2005 World Summit. For instance, in 2007, UNESCO Director-General K. Matsuura supported the key takeaways of the report "Delivering as One" prepared by the High-level Group under the UN Secretary-General, and noted the importance of UNESCO's participation in the pilot project implying implementation of the 4 new concept-based guidelines at the level of eight countries [4].

In addition, since 2004–2005, as part of the long-term personnel reform of the Organisation, a comprehensive human resources policy framework has been applied, including 10 new measures, in particular, in the field of recruitment, rotation, performance assessment, professional development, etc. [6, p. 1]. In 2005, the Director-General's report was published showcasing the Medium- and Long-term Strategy for UNESCO Staffing for 2008–2013 (hereinafter referred to as the Strategy), prepared by K. Matsuura's apparatus and approved by the IP at its 171<sup>st</sup> session. The central Strategy's objective is to achieve the alignment of UNESCO's human resources and strategic directions, focusing on programme implementation, results-based management (hereinafter referred to as RBM) and minimum costs. The Strategy is structured around two pillars: "optimal allocation of human resources" and "reliance on highly qualified personnel" [6, p. 6–10].

Apart from the standard-setting documents of UNESCO including conventions, recommendations, declarations, charters and normative documents of that kind, the Organisation's activities in the field of cultural and humanitarian cooperation are guided by the UN Charter and follow the logic of the document under the title "Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" [12]. Furthermore, the Organisation rests on 17 fundamental documents (so-called Basic Texts), including its Charter [13].

At the 34<sup>th</sup> session, the GC approved the UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy for 2008–2013 (hereinafter referred to as document 34 C/4) [7], which replaced document 31 C/4 [5]. The unfolding large-scale reform of the UN system predetermined the specifics of the new strategic document, which was developed by using new methodological approaches and principles (strict hierarchy of goals, intersectoral, RBM, "rolling strategy", etc.) [1]. The conceptual framework for UNESCO's current activities in the cultural and humanitarian sphere is defined in the Medium-Term Strategy for 2014–2021 (hereinafter referred to as document 37 C/4) approved at the 37<sup>th</sup> session of the GC [9] and including two 4-year periods.



The requirements of the UNESCO reform, which are to strengthen the Organisation's connection with local needs and ensure higher involvement in the activities of the UN system, became the starting point for the adoption of the above-mentioned document 37 C/4. According to the latter, UNESCO sets itself a wide range of tasks, including the promotion of the system-wide initiative "Delivering as One", the implementation of specific strategies in relation to two global priorities — "Africa" [9] and "Gender equality" [10], the carrying out of concrete activities for youth [11]. Recognising the uncertainty and variability of the international situation, the authors of document 37 C/4 though reiterate the traditional mission of UNESCO: "promoting peace, poverty eradication, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, science, culture, communication and information" [8, p. 13]. The comprehensive goals of UNESCO — "Peace" and "Fair and Sustainable Development" — are subdivided into nine strategic intersectoral goals [8, p. 14–27].

On the eve of document 37 C/4 expiration, the GC at its 40<sup>th</sup> session adopted resolution No. 102 inviting the Executive Chief to initiate the development of a draft medium-term strategy for 2022–2029 (41 C/4) [14].

The analysis of UNESCO's strategic documents has demonstrated the flexibility of the specialised agency against the background of rapid changes in the international structure. The strategic vision reflected in document 37 C/4, accumulating the best elements of previous strategies, combining unique methodological approaches, adapts the UNESCO mandate both to the processes of internal restructuring and to the reform of the UN system on the whole, as well as demonstrates the continuity of the mission set for UNESCO at the time of its genesis, and links the Organisation's activities with the cross-cutting principles of the international agenda.

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## WOMEN'S RIGHTS REGULATION IN THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND A MODERN SITUATION

*Anahit Gyulazyan*<sup>1</sup>

In general, the regulation of women's rights at the national level is largely based on international agreements and declarations, in connection with which one of the main international instruments in the field of gender equality — the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) — can be mentioned [7]. It was adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 18, 1979, and lists a number of rights that must be protected at the national level. These include civil, political, and economic rights, as well as rights in the field of family relations, etc. A special body, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, was established in order to monitor the implementation of the provisions of the Convention. It is worth noting that the Kingdom of Morocco joined the CEDAW in 1993 [9].

The peculiarities of the regulation of women's rights in Morocco are determined by the specificity of this state. Morocco is a country full of contradictions. It intertwines Islamic customs and secularism, Arab and Berber identities [6]. For European countries, Morocco belongs to the East, while the Arabic name of the state (al-Maghrib al-Aqsa) means "Far West", which indicates a high level of westernisation of the kingdom in the eyes of the Arab world [8]. This cultural pluralism has undoubtedly left a deep mark on the regulation of human rights, in particular the rights of women.

After gaining independence from France in 1956 [3], the first important step towards gender equality in Morocco was taken in the Constitution of 1962 [2]. Article 5 established the equality of all subjects before the law, and Article 8 proclaimed the equality of civil and political rights of men and women. Further, equal economic and social rights were established.

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The reforms of the 1990s represent the next stage in the regulation of women's rights in Morocco. As already mentioned, in 1993, the country joined the CEDAW and initiated a number of changes in favour of women's rights. In accordance with Article 18 of the Convention, in 1997, the delegation of Morocco submitted a report on the measures taken by the State in the field of women's rights to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [11]. It referred primarily to the constitutional amendments of 1992 and 1996 which were aimed at guaranteeing women's rights and human rights in general. Changes in the labour legislation and the Criminal Code were also noted. It should be mentioned that in 1997 women were appointed as ministers of the Government of Morocco for the first time [10].

Morocco's main achievement in the area of women's rights is the adoption of the 2004 Family Code which has greatly expanded women's rights and opportunities [12]. Thus, the equal minimum age of marriage for men and women (18 years) was established, the joint duties of spouses were fixed, and significant barriers to polygamy were established. An important step has been taken in regulating divorce. The Personal Status Code of 1957 used to give the right to initiate divorce only to men, and women received the right to divorce only in return for providing compensation to their husbands [1]. Now, there is the concept of "shiqaq" — irreconcilable differences — on the basis of which a woman can initiate a divorce on an equal basis with a man. Nevertheless, the Code preserved the right of men to divorce unilaterally (talaq). It is noteworthy that the adoption of the Code triggered protests from conservative Islamists, who accused King Mohammed VI of westernising the country [5].

The next major development in Morocco in the area of women's rights and human rights is the adoption of the Constitution in July 2011 generally [6]. Article 19 established the equal rights and freedoms of men and women. Specific rights and freedoms were further listed, such as the right to life, freedom of thought and opinion, freedom of the media, etc.

Changes in the legal framework for women's rights in Morocco are significant, but in practice discrimination against women is still very common. The report of the non-governmental organisation Human Rights Watch in 2020 points to a large number of serious violations of women's rights, in particular domestic violence, criminalisation of abortion, illegal labour of girls, violation of freedom of speech, etc. [4].

Thus, it is impossible to conclude that women's rights in Morocco are fully protected or, on the contrary, completely violated. What is clear is that measures are being taken to achieve gender equality. This is a long process, and we can't expect any instant transformations.

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ISSUES OF THE SITUATION WITH REFUGEES,  
MIGRANTS AND STATELESS PERSONS  
IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Today, like many decades ago, migration flows are generated by all sorts of conflicts, forcing hundreds of thousands of people to break away from their homes. Deprived of access to the means of social and legal protection that the state is supposed to provide, refugees turn out to be the most vulnerable group of the population. The situation sharply increases the need for the international community to take special measures to alleviate their plight.

The situation with refugees, migrants and stateless persons, without exaggeration, can be classified as one of the most acute and painful issues of the modern world since it affects the fundamental interests of peoples and states. The global changes that impacted the world at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century require rethinking and re-evaluating the legal aspects of the related problems. Obviously, people have been moving from place to place since ancient times. The problem, however, is that while some move in search of better jobs, education or economic benefits, others have to flee conflict, terrorism or human rights abuses. In addition, the number of those migrating due to the effects of climate change is currently increasing. Thus, for some, migration is a matter of choice; for others, it is a matter of life and death.

In 2020, the coronavirus infection (COVID-19) claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, infected millions of people, and radically changed the global economy. Everyone is at risk of contracting the virus, but refugees, displaced people or stateless persons are among the most vulnerable ones. Often, they live in crowded and unsanitary conditions, unable to protect themselves from the virus, and they face growing economic instability and are often excluded from the fight against poverty and hunger. In addition, many states have

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taken harsh and unprecedented measures against migrants, refugees and stateless persons, even though public policy during a pandemic should guarantee the equal and non-discriminatory treatment of all people, regardless of their immigration and civil status or the fact of their displacement [1].

For the remaining period until 2030, which is called the Decade of Action and Implementation, the following recommendations were formulated within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG):

- harmonisation of definitions of migration: the data collection should apply the reports and methods recommended by the UN Statistical Commission;
- support for data collection: there is a need to systematically strengthen the human and financial capacities of national statistical offices in partner countries;
- expand the experience of migration in the SDG review process: migration experience should be more systematically integrated into the SDG review process to better respond to changes in the living conditions of migrants and refugees [3].

Last year, the UN celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The report on the 2020 SDG, prepared by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with experts and international agencies, notes preliminary but insufficient progress and warns of the regressive impact of the coronavirus pandemic. COVID-19 threatens to reverse progress towards SDG 3, which aims to ensure healthy lives and well-being for all, according to the report.

Even if it weren't for COVID-19, the world would still not be able to end poverty by 2030 under SDG 1. Projections suggest that 71 million people will live in extreme poverty in 2030 due to coronavirus infection. While income inequality has gradually declined in some countries, the global recession following the pandemic has sent millions of people back into poverty and exacerbated inequality.

To my way of thinking, no state alone can cope with either a pandemic or a migration crisis. Together, states can contain the spread of the virus and mitigate its consequences for the most vulnerable groups of the population. To do this, it is necessary to ensure the availability of medical services regardless of legal status, provide financial support to everyone who lives on the state's territory and meet the criteria of vulnerability, and ensure response measures that do not contribute to further xenophobia and racial discrimination.

Moreover, the following measures are needed to protect the rights of refugees during the period of coronavirus infection.

Firstly, working with host governments. UNHCR supports governments to include refugees in national COVID-19 preparedness and response plans. In line with the Strategic Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Plan, UNHCR advocates for the inclusion of refugees in planning for the workforce, services, medicines, personal protective equipment and other medical supplies needed to prepare for and during the novel coronavirus outbreak.

Secondly, support for vaccine introduction. Refugees should be given access to COVID-19 vaccines when they become available in host countries. Globally, UNHCR is working with partners through the COVAX Centre (a unique initiative to procure and distribute COVID-19 vaccines centrally) to access vaccines for refugees and other populations in a humanitarian setting. At the country level, UNHCR works with the Ministry of Health, WHO, UNICEF and other partners on vaccination strategy and implementation planning. UNHCR advocates for the inclusion of refugees in the national quantification of vaccine needs and in the national request.

UNHCR recommends the same target groups be applied to refugees as defined in the national COVID-19 spread strategy. The most effective way to ensure immunisation of refugees and others of concern to UNHCR, including stateless persons, is to include them in national plans [2].

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CONTROVERSIES IN LEGAL REGULATION  
OF THE ENERGY SECTOR IN THE EU AND THE EAEU

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Against all the odds in political relations between the European Union and the Eurasian Economic Union member states of these organisations are crucial economic partners: the total amount of EAEU export to the EU is estimated at 223.5 billion dollars [2]. Both are interested in the further development of their cooperation and harmonisation of the bilateral legal framework. The tendency to improve collaboration also means standardisation and technical compliance, investment, digitalisation, and simplification of trade processes.

This issue is high on the agenda, because of numerous conflicts existing within the framework of cooperation between different countries of the EAEU and the EU. Particularly, Russian companies are discriminated against during the implementation of their projects. For example, “Nord Stream 2” faces severe criticism and countermeasures are taken by western partners, who justify their actions with a possible threat that comes from this pipeline.

The purpose of the study is to identify major controversies in legal regulation of the energy sector in the European Union and the Eurasian Economic Union. The methods of inductive and deductive reasoning, and a comparative analysis were used. In addition, special particular attention is paid to methods of analysis of social and political processes. Those were used to identify reasons and consequences of problems, existing within the framework of cooperation.

The study hypothesises that there exists fundamental controversies in legal regulation of the energy sector in the EU and EAEU, that is why it is crucial to develop cooperation between these two organisations and it is important to harmonise the legal framework.

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The research has confirmed the following.

1. The legislative framework of relationships in the energy sector of the Eurasian Economic Union has a declarative nature. The main document that regulates the trade of energy resources is the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union, in particular, its 20<sup>th</sup> section [3]. It establishes main principles of energy relations between the state members. The Third energy package of the European Union is more of a precise nature. Its Directives describe different mechanisms of trade regulation and principles of its functioning [2, p. 58].

2. EAEU allows for the presence of natural monopolies according to Article 79 Section 20<sup>th</sup> of the Treaty. The Third energy package, on the contrary, has an antimonopoly nature, which is supported by the principle of segmentation of vertically integrated companies [1, p. 61]. For the energy transport infrastructure, a separate legal entity should be created. This entity should have a certain type of independence from the main enterprise to eliminate the possibility of supplier's control establishment over the energy market.

3. The European Union is less attractive for foreign investors. The Third energy package has "Third party clauses" of Directive 3/EC/09 [1, p. 64], which puts restrictions on foreign companies who import energy resources. The EAEU market is becoming more liberalised based on non-discrimination, the regime of investment facilitation and free competition. Those circumstances were described in the framework of energy dialogue between Russian and the EU. The problem is that, while the sale and transportation are in the legal framework of the European Union, the production of energy resources is out of touch with European legislation, which puts them under restructurings.

4. The European Union has already created its unified energy market except for "new" and "isolated markets". Article 81 Section 20<sup>th</sup> of the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union only defines the unified energy market as a concept, which is up to be established in future.

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INTERCONNECTION OF FOREIGN POLICY  
AND ENERGY POLICY IN THE EU DECISION-MAKING  
ON NORD STREAM 2

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The European Union (EU) has long been attempting to unify its energy policy, most notably by liberalising its energy market, adopting the Third Energy Package (TEP) and creating the Energy Union. However, the European common foreign and security policy (CFSP) still largely remains in the hands of the member states. Thus, when a certain case concerns both policy areas, a collision emerges between the supranational institutions and national governments on the subject of supreme authority in decision-making. Nord Stream 2 (NS2) pipeline project serves as a demonstrative example of such a case, being highly controversial both as an energy policy and as a foreign policy matter. The submarine pipeline is almost completed, but the construction is hindered by sanctions from the US that target investors into the project and its insuring and underwriting companies.

The EU supranational institutions conducted a number of actions to impede the pipeline construction or create obstacles in its future use. The European Parliament adopted three resolutions that contained calls for stopping NS2, while the European Commission passed changes to the TEP gas directive that expand its jurisdiction onto submarine pipelines from third countries, with the third-party-access condition coming into force and the consequent restriction of capacity use to the maximum of fifty per cent [3]. The institutions oppose the project primarily for political reasons.

The consideration of the EU supranational institutions' conduct towards NS2 is significant for understanding the role of the EU as an actor in energy policy and world politics. For energy policy, the role is two-dimensional: internal and external. Internally, the EU is conducting such a policy to make it unified among the member states.

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In the case of NS2, the EU institutions make rapid advances to establish themselves as principal regulators, sending messages to third countries and member states that they should not be left aside if they consider the matter crucial for the EU energy security. This is primarily a response to Germany and Russia considering NS2 a bilateral project, while the EU thinks in broader terms of its effect on the whole energy market. However, market concerns are not as dominant as political opposition with Russia, which is woven into allegations against Russia using gas deliveries to leverage the EU politically, anti-monopoly legal charges against Gazprom, construction of new liquefied natural gas terminals, demands to preserve gas transit through Ukraine, and other energy policy aspects of a wider political confrontation. Energy security becomes the key declared term here, connecting energy policy with world politics. It is listed as one of the six key challenges for security and defence in the EU Global Strategy [2]. For the world politics dimension, the EU is attempting to position itself as a single actor in the international arena. Here, the abovementioned messages are also directed at the US, which, although being the principal EU ally, is viewed as conducting illegal policy by imposing sanctions against the European companies. This leads to the introduction of the term “energy sovereignty”, which differs from “energy security” (stability of supplies) by its political component and can be defined as the supremacy of an actor in providing for economic and political conditions of its own energy supply and autonomy in external energy policy [1]. Therefore, political leveraging in energy policy is an assault on energy sovereignty. Thus, the NS2 case raises broader questions on the EU and its member states’ independence in foreign policy and the extent to which they can defend it, which can have a major impact on European security as a whole.

In conclusion, the consideration of both abovementioned dimensions might not be sufficient to explain the situation around NS2 since it is, above all, a project of private companies. Therefore, in the EU neither the supranational bodies nor the member states’ governments can seriously affect the companies. Such decisions as building or rejecting a pipeline are no longer taken in political circles, but by the market itself [4]. This leads to inferences that the whole scope of political debates on NS2 is exaggerated since most of the threats or calls to stop the project can never be legally fulfilled. The EU supranational bodies, despite showing certain activity in the matter, still cannot succeed in prevailing over member states’ power due to NS2 going beyond being merely an energy project and becoming a crucial part of

the CFSP agenda. Therefore, NS2 should not be seen as an example of the failure of supranational governance in energy policy; if its future were decided solely in this policy area, the EU would highly likely have more success.

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THE UN'S ROLE IN THE CONTEXT OF VIOLATIONS  
OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW IN THE CONFLICT  
IN SOUTH-EASTERN UKRAINE

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An armed conflict is a constant in international relations and is an integral part of the development of the system. It should be mentioned that significant results have been achieved in the establishment of human rights by the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Today, basic freedoms and rights, such as the right to life and liberty, freedom from harassment, freedom of movement, the right to proper medical care, and many others, are the property of humanity. There are many laws and declarations that directly guarantee human rights at the international level. The fundamental documents in international human rights law are the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of human rights, adopted by the General Assembly in 1945 and 1948. An international humanitarian law, which is part of the jus in bello norms, acts as a regulator of the preservation of human rights during armed conflicts. The key documents for international humanitarian law are the Geneva conventions of 1949 and their Additional protocols to conventions.

It is known that every sovereign state is obliged to respect and fulfil the rights of citizens caught up in the conflict. An international humanitarian law distinguishes between the two forms of an armed conflict: an international armed conflict and an internal armed conflict. Thus, in an internal conflict, states often violate the rights of their own citizens. However, this does not relieve them of responsibility for the fate of their population and of fulfilling international obligations. After the coup in Ukraine in 2014, the first thing the new government did was the abolishment of the law on languages that applied to individual regions of Ukraine. In response to these actions, peaceful rallies were held in the cities of Donetsk and Lugansk regions, which called for the return of this law into force. However, in April 2014, the new govern-

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ment of Ukraine began to carry out the “Anti-terrorist operation” in the territory of Donbas [4]. Trained formed nationalist contingents were involved in this type of operation.

In fact, aviation and heavy weapons were used against Ukrainian citizens in Donbas. In the course of such attacks on the civilian population, the Ukrainian side did not take any action in advance to reduce the casualties among the civilian population, in particular: preliminary warning of shelling, the creation of humanitarian corridors and sanitary zones. Thus, we can see that the Ukrainian leadership is waging a war with its own population.

In the course of Ukraine’s growing aggression against its own population, Russia proposed steps to resolve the military conflict in Ukraine in order to stop the war. Even though a contact group of Normandy four was formed with the aim to unite both sides (Ukraine and the LDPR) in reality, the Ukrainian side continues to purposefully fail to implement them. Accordingly, it would be appropriate to apply the Geneva Convention for the protection of civilian persons in this conflict [3].

The UN publishes its own reports, which say that the armed forces of Ukraine use torture to obtain confessions of involvement in the war from the citizens of Donbas. Exhausting forms of torture such as cutting off oxygen, using electric current were used against people who were in Ukrainian captivity.

The change of Ukrainian elites in 2019 did not lead to changes in the issue of human rights. This is evidenced by the factual violations of the Constitution of Ukraine by V. Zelensky and the country’s government. Violations of all articles of the Constitution of Ukraine regulating the rights, freedoms and duties of a person and citizen apply against residents of Donetsk and Lugansk [2].

Serious human rights violations in Ukraine are also highlighted in the annual report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for human rights (OHCHR), which operates in the UN system.

According to the 2020 report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for human rights, thousands of pensioners from Donetsk and Luhansk are left without their savings. There have been registered cases of plundering civilian property by employees of the Ukrainian army.

Based on the conclusion of the Venice Commission in 2019, it was established that the law on the use of the Ukrainian language in all regions of Ukraine violates the balance of the implementation of the linguistic rights of national minorities. Such actions of the Ukrainian



authorities indicate a violation of the Constitution of Ukraine, which provides for the free development, use and protection of the Russian language and other languages of national minorities of Ukraine [1].

Therefore, we can say that the current government of Ukraine ignores the implementation of international treaties and obligations that affect constitutional and international human rights.

The Ukrainian authorities demonstrate by their actions that their position on the issue of Donbas wouldn't change. At the same time, Ukraine confirms its unwillingness to act within the legal framework. Official Kiev demonstrates violations of international law and the UN Charter because they continue the war in Donbas.

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GEOPOLITICAL WORLD MODEL OF HEARTLAND AND RIMLAND:  
RUSSIA'S PLACE IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA

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The creation of geopolitical models that divide the world into opposing parts is one of the most discussed topics in the academic community. The subject of discussion, as a rule, is the nature of world domination. Turning back to the concept of “heartland-rimland” not only allows us to reconstruct an essential part of geopolitical theories, but it also finds Russia’s place as the dominant heartland on the world stage through the analysis of its macroeconomic indicators.

The countries of the heartland — Russia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan — and Rimland — Finland, Belarus, and China — were selected for the analysis. The criteria used are GDP, the level of unemployment and the level of inflation. Nowadays it is indispensable to find the place of the Russian Federation in the distribution of world political forces.

The study of the GDP of the heartland countries showed that, in general, the economies of the countries are resistant to shocks and are quite mobile as governments plan to get out of the crisis in three years. Nevertheless, individual features of development strategies are revealed. For example, in Russian Federation, a sharp drop in oil prices is expected, which may be a sign of the projected budget deficit [4, 6]. In order to support the oil and gas industry, it was decided to launch “ZapSibNeftekhim”, which will produce approximately 6.8 tons of polymers this year, and by 2030 it will have produced 18–20 million tons per year [5]. In Kazakhstan GDP is projected to decline due to the possible accession of Uzbekistan to the EEU and the forced zeroing of subsidies to agricultural producers, although in 2020 President Tokayev allocated 170 billion tenge in a low-interest loan to support agriculture. Uzbekistan’s GDP indicators, such as services, industry, agriculture and construction, show steady growth, which indicates the

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development of the country and the growing influence of the heartland. Investments in these industries will grow according to the forecast of the State Budget for 2021 [3].

Inflation in the heartland countries remains at a controlled level, confirming the thesis of the economic stability of the countries. Despite the weakening of national currencies and the lifting of coronavirus restrictions, the heartland countries are coping with rising prices by initiating social support measures.

However, in the heartland countries, the level of employment began to decline. To control the situation, a number of management decisions are made. Thus, Uzbekistan already allocates funds to ensure employment, which was one of the consequences of the decline in the number of emigrants.

If the GDP indicators of the heartland countries allow us to talk about harmonious competition, in which each country consistently develops its production and economy, including uniting in economic unions, then the GDP indicators and the growth rates of the rimland countries' economies differ significantly. For example, in Belarus, a significant drop in GDP is expected due to the damage to the IT sector, protests and budget deficit, while in Finland by 2021–2023 GDP growth will have reached 3 %. In China, GDP growth was revealed in the third quarter of 2020. Belarus actively develops its cooperation with Finland partly due to contradictions with the Russian authorities [2]. For example, a single railway track will provide Belarus with an access to the year-round ports of the Baltic Sea. Moreover, cooperation with China is also expanding [1].

The inflation rate in the Rimland countries remains at a low level. For example, to maintain a controlled level of inflation, China has taken effective measures to support small and medium enterprises.

The unemployment rate in Rimland countries has not increased significantly more than in the heartland countries. Thus, in Belarus, no branch of production has stopped working, which allowed the unemployment rate to remain unchanged (0.2 %). In China, unemployment is projected to rise to 5.5 %, but the party leadership is already planning to create an additional 9 million jobs. Unemployment in Finland increased significantly, reaching 7.4 % in October 2020.

The analysis showed that the countries of the heartland and Rimland tend to unite with each other to create mutually beneficial economic conditions. Rimland, led by China, surpasses Heartland in economic indicators. However, a high potential for the development of the Russian Federation, where the predominant part of the heartland

concept is located, was identified, which may indicate a future confrontation and interaction between the two owners of the heartland and rimland. Moreover, the study shows the economic potential of the first-order countries. Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan — not yet contenders for the status of the owner of the heartland — nevertheless show steady economic growth. It is quite reasonable to assume that Russia will only strengthen its influence by occupying key positions in economic unions with first-order countries: analysts note that the EEU is becoming a real threat to the EU.

In conclusion, it is worth noting that the concept of heartland and rimland has a right to exist in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Comparing the historical past, macroeconomic indicators, development strategies and government regulation measures, it becomes clear: the struggle between the heartland and Rimland for world domination continues, and the location of the main geopolitical forces will gradually shift to Russia, as the dominant heartland.

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THE TOPICAL ISSUE OF SEPARATING PERSONAL INTERESTS  
FROM NATIONAL INTERESTS AS A DESTRUCTIVE ELEMENT  
IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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Nowadays, in the world where public policy, international relations and diplomacy are more seriously regulated by the formal rules than in the previous centuries, where international public law and unwritten norms occur to be a significant part of the entire mechanism of stabilising and developing international relations. Hence, it becomes more and more important to understand the answer for one of the main questions in this field: who are you having talks with? The question means an existence of a huge, but not always noticed difference between “national interests” in the common sense of the term and the so called interests of authoritarian countries’ rulers, or dictators.

Oxford Academic exiles a researcher in this theme to H. W. Brands’ article that gives them a brilliant scientific idea that describes the problem: “Monarchs and dictators may manage to determine policy on the basis of narrow notions of personal self-interest, although even sort of persuaders in the autocracy delude themselves of a coincidence between self-interest and national interest” [1].

In this connection, the term ‘dictatorship’ should be explained: according to Britannica Encyclopedia, it is “a form of government in which one person or a small group possesses absolute power without effective constitutional limitations” [2].

An important thing in this research is a theoretical aspect that can be found on the pages of Cambridge University Press [5]: “All governments have an institutionally defined default level of domestic audience constraint in foreign affairs that is generally higher in democracies, but leaders maintain some agency within these institutions and can strategically increase their exposure to or insulation from this constraint”. Authoritarian leaders can, for instance, use propaganda [3] to

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convince citizens they have the same interests usurpers do. But they don't.

Looking into history, one can find countless examples of such not national but separated personal interests as a problem in international relations. It can be easily explained if considering state forms of the past — a lot of them can be boiled down to dictatorships and absolute monarchies, beginning from Pharaohs and ending with military juntas of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Researchers can find an impact of such a phenomenon on international relations. For instance, the interstate controversy between London and Rome mostly caused by the desire of English King Henry VIII to be divorced against the rules promoted by the Roman Catholic Church led to collapse in international relations and to 'divorce' between two countries for decades and it can hardly be said that the King took into account national will.

Summing up the literature analysis, including scientific works of those political scientists and international relations researchers from the most authoritative institutes and universities of the world, Sciences Po, Princeton University Dartmouth College, Bremen University [6], Cambridge and University of British Columbia [4] and current situation in international relations, one can get to a point of formulating a few basic factors that lead to a current increase in the described.

The issues are:

1. developing of informational technologies, including those which distribute lies and propaganda, that causes misunderstanding between entire nations;
2. diplomatic ossification of a factioneer's politician role in diplomacy and foreign affairs;
3. growth of professionalism of authoritarian regimes political technologists and diplomats due to the global technological and cultural development;
4. disregard of democratic governments for violent ways of resolving international conflicts with authoritarian ones.

Today's international relations system is, and it can be easily proved, being affected by the destructive problem exactly described in this analysis. That's, in a line of others [7], one of the reasons this report, and the entire theme is so important till today. Actually, there are lots of exponential cases in 2021, such as Kim's militaristic foreign policy that is shown to the world not as an uncontrolled action of a dictator but as a will of North Korean people; Khomeini's nuclear programme which falsely claimed to be a part of national defence development; and a less vivid example of a former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanu-

kovych's position about Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement [8].

As a general conclusion, it can be mentioned again that the problem of considering separated personal interests of rulers of undemocratic countries national interests is a current issue rooted deeply in history. Until today, it has a serious negative impact on the international cooperation and counteracts the stable activity of international democratic institutions and sustainable development of the whole world.

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THE CONFRONTATION OF LAND AND SEA  
IN THE GEOPOLITICAL CONCEPT OF CARL SCHMITT

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At all times of human history, peoples with different cultural, religious and historical backgrounds have come into conflict with each other, which often turned into fierce military clashes. As sad as it is to admit, misunderstandings between States with different systems of values and ideals are inevitable. Various concepts oppose some peoples and unite others. Some of them are based on linguistic and cultural affiliation, historical past and geographical location. One of the most interesting concepts was put forward by the famous German philosopher and political theorist Carl Schmitt in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In such works as “The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europium” and “Land and Sea”, the sociologist reflects on how much the mentalities of the Anglo-Saxon (Great Britain and the United States) and Eurasian (Germany and Russia) states differ.

Schmitt attached importance to the confrontation between the “nomos of the earth” and the “nomos of the sea” and considered it significant for all mankind: “World history is the history of the wars waged by maritime powers against land or continental powers and by land powers against sea or maritime powers” [2]. The philosopher associates a sea power with the powerful underwater creature Leviathan, while the animal Behemoth is the symbol of the land power. Both names are borrowed by Schmitt from the Bible. Colliding with each other, the monsters fight in a deadly battle. The hippo tries to tear the Leviathan apart with its horns and teeth, while the Leviathan tries to clamp its fins over the Hippo’s mouth and nose so that it cannot eat or breathe. The myth reflects real historical events well. During the blockade of the continental states, the maritime powers closed the approaches to the land to cause famine.

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Schmitt wrote that all states tried to achieve continental domination initially. Then, with the advent of new types of ships, the discovery of America, and the development of international trade, some states gradually became maritime powers. The most powerful of them was England. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, a small island on the northwestern side of Europe gained world domination by breaking away from the land and making a decisive choice in favour of the sea.

What is the difference between the maritime and continental states? To begin with, land power is associated with the fixity of space. This is embodied in conservatism, strict legal norms that are subject to tribes, peoples, states, empires. The firmness of the Land is reflected in the firmness of ethics and the stability of social traditions. Overland and especially settled peoples are alien to individualism, the spirit of entrepreneurship. They are characterised by collectivism and hierarchy. Seapower is a type of civilization based on opposing attitudes. This type is dynamic, mobile, and prone to technical development. Such states have a passion for navigation, trade, and individual entrepreneurship. The individual, as the most mobile part of the collective, is elevated to the highest value. At the same time, ethical and legal norms are blurred, becoming relative and mobile. This type of civilization develops rapidly, actively evolves, changes the external cultural characteristics, keeping only the internal identity of the general attitude unchanged. A distinctive feature is also considered a new method of warfare, which begins to be used in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. If earlier the states of the European continent followed certain rules of conducting land wars, then the war at sea represented a new type of confrontation. It involved the destruction of the enemy's trade and economy. The enemy in such war was not only the belligerent enemy but also any citizen of a hostile state.

In conclusion, Carl Schmitt's geopolitical concept is an interesting and non-trivial approach to identifying the root causes of the contradictions between the Anglo-Saxon and Eurasian states. It is known that Schmitt opposed pacifist theories and considered war an important tool of international politics. However, these days when many states possess nuclear weapons, the best way to resolve conflicts is to find compromises. The geopolitical concept of the German philosopher helps us to better understand the differences in the mentalities of the opposing states. By understanding this difference, politicians have the opportunity to develop strategies to improve relations between these countries.

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## CHAPTER IV

### REGIONAL ASPECTS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### ON THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE USA AND GLOBAL PEACE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF PROVISION AND PRODUCTION OF GLOBAL PUBLIC GOODS

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Global public goods are characterised to be non-rivalrous, non-excludable and, to some extent, available worldwide [2]. It implies that global public goods affect different countries, peoples and generations. Global epidemiological surveillance, peace and financial stability are considered to be par excellence global public goods. There exist particular global threats (COVID-19, global warming, terrorism) that can disrupt global public goods production. The outbreak of COVID-19 has shown the significance of maintenance of this type of goods. However, the pandemic led to a rise of political opportunism, so that the delivery of various global public goods was put in jeopardy. For example, growing animosity between Russia and the USA led to a withdrawal of two major powers from The Treaty on Open Skies and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, which is why risks of triggering a global nuclear conflict were substantially increased.

The above examples show latent connections between various types of global public goods. If the delivery of one type of goods has failed, the production of other goods is threatened.

International treaties and international organisations are said to be crucial components of global public goods provision. Rigorous statistical research showed that the number of shared memberships in international organisations is strongly correlated with the chances of an armed conflict between national states [5]. However, in times of turmoil, the international agreements are in a severe predicament.

It is easy to illustrate the principal problem from the perspective game theory, namely, the prisoner's dilemma. Although cooperation is a Pareto optimal strategy, egoistic strategies domineer the cooperative ones [3].

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During the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020, one observed such events as the steering of protective masks and vaccine nationalism. However, the WHO urged against them [6]. Although this policy can be beneficial for a particular national government, it causes negative externalities because other countries and peoples remain unprotected, which is why the pandemic itself might be prolonged. For example, by April 15, 2021, the United Kingdom vaccinated more than 20 % of its population (4<sup>th</sup> place in the global rating) via the AstraZeneca remedy [1]. The vaccine was steered from corporate facilities in continental Europe.

The United States is a clearer example since it has 30 % vaccinated population [1]. On the other hand, there are particular positive examples. A high place in the ratings of vaccinations is taken by Bhutan (61 %) by virtue of the aid by the Indian government, whereas the Indian government itself has vaccinated only 6 % of its population.

A similar outline can be drawn in terms of maintaining global peace. Production of national defence can ensure one nation's security at the cost of triggering a spiral of the arms race [4]. Such agreements as the Treaty on Open Skies were created to limit the escalation of tensions. In perilous times, maintenance of existing agreements is far more challenging, and thus the withdrawals mentioned above occurred. Such moves as the withdrawals from various treaties seem to be unconsidered. Not only did they hurt the bilateral relations between the United States and Russia, but also they jeopardised global peace.

International treaties and organisations are a crucial component of the delivery of global public goods. The unstable situation caused by COVID-19 may violate a significant proportion of them. It implies that revisiting the bilateral relationships is supposed to find common ground for new treaties on major strategic issues. The more global threats are mitigated, the more enduring peace can be achieved.

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## WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE BRI TO CHINESE-RUSSIAN RELATIONS IN THE LONG RUN?

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When in July 2020 Mr. Sergey Lavrov, Russian minister of foreign affairs, did not attend a virtual conference that was dedicated to the prospects of the Belt and Road Initiative, a variety of assumptions and hypotheses were formulated, on what the message was from Moscow [8]. It is evident that the Sino-Russian relationship has improved and is based on trust and cooperation over the past few years, due to the common interests in several geopolitical and economic areas. However, here is the main question: does this relationship between China and Russia have the potential to become a long-lasting alliance based on trust and mutual interests; or is there a possibility of a collision of one another's interests in the long run? Based on this question, an objective of this research is to address the possible implications of China's Belt and Road Initiative on the China-Russia relationship in the future and eventually answer the question of whether this kind of relationship involves the establishment of long-term cooperation.

The paper consists of two core areas of concentration:

1. the economic and geopolitical implications for Russia of the BRI in Central Asia;
2. the growing relationships of China with Russian partners in the Balkans.

The first part of the research is focused on the notion of the Chinese economic dominance in the Central Asia territories. More precisely, a fact of the establishment of new Chinese pipelines, that broke Russian monopoly on Central Asian energy exports [9] will be discussed, and how China can strengthen its influence in the region even more and close off a vast number of economic opportunities for Russia by implementing the Belt and Road Initiative. Additionally, the theory of a "heartland" will be brought up and discussed in terms of how China

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counters American advances but creates a challenge to Russia's role in the region by establishing the BRI [3].

In the second part of the research, the issue of Chinese growing influence on the Balkans will be discussed. More precisely, the Chinese economic agreements between Russia's essentially important orthodox partners in the Balkans, as Greece and Serbia. Both of those Balkan territories are dependent on gas deliveries from Russia and have established strong trade relations. China, in turn, attempts to expand its influence in this region by considerable investments in both of those states: from energy projects to infrastructure [11], which will eventually help the BRI project and threaten Russian authority in the region.

After researching the issues mentioned above, the results show that over the past few years China has successfully expanded its interests in numerous regions that have been historically a Russian area of political and economic influence. Even though at the moment the cooperation between Russia and China seems mutually advantageous, in the near future it may turn out that their areas of interest are highly similar and are not subject to cooperation anymore, which will cause distrust and conflict between them. This may lead to the termination of beneficial cooperation between China and Russia and eventually to the ending of an alliance between these two states.

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## DE-DOLLARISATION OF THE RUSSIAN ECONOMY AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

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For the Russian Federation, the issue of attitudes towards the American currency has always been quite topical. It acquired a new relevance starting in 2016 [4], when the Central Bank announced its plans to gradually reduce the share of the US dollar in the economy. Then it was caused by the concern of the Bank of Russia in the situation with companies that take out foreign currency loans and receive proceeds in rubles. There was a sharp increase in deposits in foreign currency, in connection with which the debt burden increased. This posed a danger to the financial system, so they promised to take measures during the same year. However, a new round of discussion of the de-dollarisation plan took place in 2018. Then additional US sanctions were introduced against Russia, which, according to the statement of the American Government, were designed to reduce the risks of countering the country's national security policy.

In September 2018, a plan to de-dollarise the Russian economy [5] was submitted to the government. It was promised to be completed by 2024. It should be noted that the complete rejection of the use of foreign currencies is not considered: we mean only a decrease in the dependence of the Russian economy on the dollar.

Before the conclusion of the Bretton Woods Agreement, the most common currency was the British pound sterling. The reason for this was the English colonies and their fairly large number. Naturally, the British pound was used on the territory of the colonies. However, after the adoption of the Bretton Woods System [1] in 1944, gold became pegged to the US dollar, which led to an expansion of trade and the rapid growth in the global economy.

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The influence of the American currency also increased since countries were first obliged to sell goods on the international market for dollars in order to release any amount of money in circulation. After 20 years, the countries have gradually overcome the post-war crisis. This meant only one thing — the competition in the international market was increasing. The United States does not have such a prevalent position any more. In 1971, the dollar was dropped to gold. Subsequently, America signed an agreement with Saudi Arabia in 1974 to sell oil for the national currency of the United States. The deal could only be made when buying oil for dollars. This obliged the rest of the countries that bought oil to have Saudi Arabia convert their currency to US dollars.

Later, the OPEC countries also joined this agreement. Since 1976, currency relations have been based on a free-floating rate.

The introduction of the Jamaican monetary system [1] finally abolished the gold standard. The exchange rate began to depend on supply and demand in the foreign exchange market. Nevertheless, the position of the dollar is now beginning to squeeze the rest of the world's reserve currencies. Yes, it remains the main reserve currency (its share is about 42 %, euro — 31 %), however, the basis for such conclusions is the decline in America's share in world GDP. Now the United States is in the second place — the first one is taken by China. If the share of the United States in world GDP continues to decline, then the natural result will be a decrease in the role of the dollar among other world reserve currencies. One of these consequences is the reduction of preferences that the status of the main reserve currency brings.

So, the actions of the Central Bank about lending policy launched a new stage in the de-dollarisation of the Russian economy. After the statement of the Central Bank, which took a course to reduce the influence of the dollar in the country, the head of VTB, Andrey Kostin, also expressed acute concern and the need for more ambitious actions in the fight against the American currency.

In his speech at the International Financial Congress in the summer of 2018 [6], he called for opposing the dollar as the main reserve currency at the global level. Such words were prompted, again, by concerns about the sanctions imposed on Russia. The actions of the United States have provoked discussions about replacing their national currency. The head of VTB turned to the President of the Russian Federation for support [2], providing him with specially developed measures to implement a systematic abandonment of the dollar. An option was voiced to abandon the use of the dollar in international settlements.

The actions proposed by Andrei Kostin, were considered as too radical by Vladimir Putin. Russia and the rest of the world cannot afford to completely abandon the dollar: this currency is universal and holds the first place among the reserve ones. The euro cannot yet become an alternative in use — the gap is great, even if it is in second place. However, the President noted the need to create a more stable world economic system [3]. Nevertheless, with this clause, the proposals put forward by VTB were submitted to the Government for consideration.

Without the support of the international community, the plan to de-dollarise the economy is unrealisable. Europe is interested in this idea from the standpoint of obtaining its own benefit. Increasingly, there are calls for the need to make the euro a more serious competitor against the dollar. Each country defends its own priorities. For this reason, the policy pursued by the United States, to some extent, makes the rest of the players fearful of their pressure.

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EURASIAN ECONOMIC UNION:  
THE PATH TO INTEGRATION — RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) as a new regional economic integration association, which was created “for the purpose of comprehensive modernisation, cooperation, increasing the competitiveness of national economies and creating conditions for stable development in the interests of improving the living standards of the population of the member states” is based on four freedoms: free movement of goods, services, capital, and labour. In addition, it is important to implement a coordinated and uniform policy in the sectors of the economy [1].

Taking into account the goals of the creation and activities of the EAEU, it seems appropriate to single out several main groups of problems that are relevant for the organisation, as well as to focus on some possible mechanisms of confronting the existing internal and global risks.

Firstly, integration processes in the post-Soviet/Eurasian space are proceeding rather slowly which is due to several factors: the relatively recent acquisition of independence by states and a jealous attitude towards their sovereignty, the absence of a clear vector of development, lack of setting long-term goals and objectives, and most importantly — the values of the development, as well as a multidirectional vector of implementation of the foreign policy course.

For example, the Republic of Armenia signed an agreement on membership in the EAEU, and it is also part of the Eastern Partnership project initiated by the European Union (EU) [3]. Although today these projects do not contradict each other, it is impossible to unequivocally exclude their competition in the future.

Secondly, in today’s highly globalised world, primarily in economic terms, it can be quite difficult to integrate into the existing global

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structure of relations. For example, the countries of the EU prefer to build bilateral relations with individual members of the EAEU, rather than with the organisation as a whole.

However, for instance, China is more inclined to believe that negotiating in trade unions/associations — not with individual countries — is more effective, since such cooperation turns out to be more influential and competitive. It should be pointed, that sometimes such statements look quite declarative, but still China already has a number of signed agreements with the Union [2].

Thirdly, the EAEU's vulnerability is the existence of the core, such as the Russian Federation, where other countries are more focused on establishing or deepening economic ties with Russia, rather than with each other. Although some positive dynamics can be traced in overcoming this unfavourable circumstance, however, nowadays it still has a significant impact on a number of unresolved tasks in the Union.

Turning to further steps for deepening integration, it should be mentioned that, despite the fact that the EAEU is an organisation predominantly with an economic focus, it is not possible to solve emerging problems without a synthesis of economic and political components, especially when it comes to countering external threats. Along with many other reasons, it is necessary to highlight the absence of the process of cultural and civilisational creation, which significantly hinders integration. Thus, one of the fundamental issues for the development of the EAEU seems to be its positioning not as a pure trade and economic cooperation, but the advancement of the idea of a “global project” with all the fundamental mechanisms, which could become the core of the Greater Eurasian Partnership initiative.

Regarding the economic sphere, the main risk factors, taking into account today's realities, include global crisis, high and unstable inflation, the use of various monetary regimes and their convertibility, competition, the level of labour productivity and its organisation. In the EAEU, no matter how trivial it may seem, it is impossible to bypass such important issues as the predominantly raw materials export orientation of the member countries, a small number of common projects in the field of industrial policy, a high degree of coincidence in the production of goods, which causes competition instead of complementarity.

Also, one of the tasks of paramount importance is the equalisation of the economic development of the member countries. A gradual transition to a high scientific and technological level is required with the prospect of entering third markets. And at the present stage it is impor-

tant to continue to stimulate coordinated economic growth, including through the development of unified tax, financial, customs and other tariffs, which in the future will allow focusing on a single model for overcoming unfavourable situations, including global crises. This, in turn, requires developing joint tactics and defining strategic goals for joint development.

Separately, it would be worth focusing on areas such as education and research, which, although not directly fall under the four freedoms of the EAEU but are still significant for improving integration indicators.

In the digital age, special attention should be paid to the revitalisation of the digital space and startups in this environment, including online platforms, which in the long term may lead to the creation of the EAEU Digital Single Market.

In general, it can be stated that a large number of dilemmas that arise before the EAEU cover not only the economic sphere. Thus, further successful integration will include policy issues, a single strategy and joint global goal setting.

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PARAMETERS OF INTERFERENCE OF EXTERNAL ACTORS  
IN ETHNOPOLITICAL CONFLICT IN CROATIA (1990–1995):  
A CASE OF THE UN

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The ethnopolitical conflict in Croatia (1990–1995) can be understood as a political confrontation between Croats and Krajina Serbs. It was one of the episodes of the dramatic break-up of socialist Yugoslavia (SFRJ) and — at the same time — of the global political reconfiguration after the collapse of bipolarity. Many external actors were involved in the confrontation between Zagreb and Knin (SFRJ/JNA/FRJ; UN/UNPROFOR; European Community; other states). In this article, we provide an overview of the UN intervention into the conflict.

The Security Council Resolution 713 (1991) contained the first UN measures to interfere with the Croatian conflict. According to it, the SC imposed an arms embargo on the SFRJ. The UN Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar appointed [7] the former US State Secretary Cyrus R. Vance under paragraph 3 of the Resolution as the Personal Envoy and asked him to undertake a UN mission to Yugoslavia. The mission attained notable success in promoting the Geneva Accord [9] on ceasefire and principles of peacekeeping mission deployment (so-called Vance Plan), signed on November, 23 by Serbian president S. Milošević, Croatian president F. Tuđman and Yugoslav defence minister General V. Kadijević. However, it was the only first step towards the definite establishment of the UN Protection Force peacekeeping mission (UNPROFOR) under the SC Resolution 743 (1992). The mission would be substituted by the UN Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) in 1995 (under the SC Resolution 982) (1995).

At the same time, the contact group on Former Yugoslavia (of Russia, the USA, the UK, France, Germany and Italy) was also established under the auspices of the UN. It became an auxiliary platform for developing a solution to the crisis (along with the International Conference on the

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Former Yugoslavia). Croatia's admission to the UN in May 1992 (under the SC Resolution 753 (1992) finally turned the conflict into a vertical one.

Lots of authors consider the activities of the UNPROFOR in their papers. Russian experts underline that the interests of the Krajina Serbs were not considered during the implementation of the mission [2]. Despite the UNPROFOR having succeeded in securing the ceasefire in 1992, it did not prevent the Croatian offensive in 1995, and that led to Krajina's defeat [6]. Western authors point out that the UNPROFOR was unable to protect both sides of the conflict from ethnic cleansings [1, 5]. The mission was also passive in preventing the Croatian Army's attacks on Serb territories [1, 4] and incapable of stopping ceasefire violations and perpetrations against human rights [3].

The UNPROFOR/UNCRO did not fulfil their mandate, hence the authors' assessments are objective. The UNCRO just agreed with Croatian expansion by letting the Croatian side pledge to respect human rights on reintegrated territories [8]. The same intention prevailed in the SC Resolution 1009 (1995); the SC strongly deplored "the broad military offensive launched on 4 August 1995 by the Government of the Republic of Croatia". The SC welcomed in Resolution 1023 (1995) the Basic Agreement on the Region of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (the Erdut Agreement), which finished the process of reintegration of Krajina territories. Under the agreement, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of January, 1996 the UN Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (the UNTAES) was established through the SC Resolution 1037 (1996). This measure became the last for the UN to interfere in the ethnopolitical conflict in Croatia.

To sum up, UN interference in the ethnopolitical conflict in Croatia can be characterised as direct, neutral and on the initiative of the UN. The UN and its peacekeeping missions were not able to stop the conflict between Croats and Krajina Serbs, therefore its role can be assessed as unsuccessful.

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## WINNERS AND LOSERS IN THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT

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In the fall of 2020, after multiple violations of the cease-fire agreements, Armenia and Azerbaijan found themselves once again at war [7]. The clashes were the heaviest since the 1990s, with both sides blaming each other for the strikes. There have been more than 5,000 casualties with concerns that the actual number of military and civilian casualties on both sides is much higher, as independent data is not available.

On 9 November 2020 Azerbaijan, Armenia and Russia signed an agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh [2]. According to the deal, Azerbaijan will hold control over the areas of Nagorno-Karabakh that it has captured during the conflict. Armenia has agreed to return to its neighbours all the territories that were not part of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region in Soviet times, developed in the 90s of the last century. The lands that Yerevan controlled around Nagorno-Karabakh made up about 13 % of Azerbaijan's territory.

Besides the black and white assumptions of Azerbaijan as the “winner” and Armenia as the “loser” of the conflict, it is a topic of interest to analyse the consequences of the war for all parties involved in it, be it directly or indirectly.

### **Who won what in the aftermath of the conflict?**

The former co-chair of the Minsk Group [6], formed in 1992 to promote a peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Stephen Mann, commented that in his eyes, Baku was the clear winner. As the main reason, he points out the captured territories because of the achievements at the front. One of the most acquisitions was the conquered city of Shushi, which is of key strategic importance as it is

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located just 15 km away from the capital of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region, Stepanakert. The military victory gave a serious signal of the advantage of Azerbaijan in the region. According to a number of reports from the region, this is due to the use of Turkish military equipment and, above all, unmanned aerial vehicles provided by Ankara.

Some report Turkey itself as a winner. This, on the one hand, is due to the use of equipment and military personnel of the Turkish army in favour of Azerbaijan, which has strengthened the relationship between Ankara and Baku. On the other hand, the Turkish intervention sends signals to everyone that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan plans to be one of the key figures to participate in the future of the Caucasus region.

Undoubtedly, another big winner of the conflict is the Kremlin. The conflict was in no way in the interests of Russia, which maintains good relations with both countries. Moscow's direct intervention after Baku and Yerevan repeatedly violated the cease-fire agreements allowed the maintenance of its influence in the region avoiding a complete breakdown in relations with the two countries. The country will receive a new military base in Nagorno-Karabakh, which will pave the way to the control over the autonomous territory formed after the collapse of the USSR. With its leadership in the peace talks, Moscow also sent a signal to Ankara that it is still a leading force in the region. The big risk is that in five years, Baku and Yerevan will have the right to demand the withdrawal of the Russian military, which could once again change the status quo [3].

### **On the disadvantaged**

There is no doubt that Armenia suffered a great defeat. The transfer to the Azeri authorities of about 40 % of the total territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and the loss of the city of Shushi exposed the state's weakness. These large territorial losses resulting from the decision of Nikol Pashinyan to sign the cease-fire led the state to a political crisis. Protests erupted in Erevan with people storming institutional buildings and the parliament. Huge discontent among Armenians grew and along with the pressure from the opposition and top military officers, Pashinyan was forced to resign triggering new parliamentary elections. The resignation of the Prime Minister who took office in 2018 following the so-called Velvet Revolution will be a return from the Western orientation of Armenia, and Russian influence is expected to grow.

The United States and France may also be considered as "losers" after not taking part in the peace negotiations. This may mark the end of

their role as external mediators even though the states along with Russia are part of the Minsk Group. A possible explanation for this lack of participation is the distraction by other events as the global pandemic, elections abroad, Belarus, Lebanon, etc.

Perhaps the developments in Nagorno-Karabakh will also affect NATO's attempts to strengthen its influence in the region, which will most seriously affect Georgia, which is negotiating to join the alliance.

In conclusion, the stability of the South Caucasus is of crucial importance since it is a transit region for the Azeri oil and gas export to Central Asia and Europe. Successful mediation efforts are necessary to prevent new cease-fire violations and a new eruption of the conflict.

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## THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

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The issue considered in the study is relevant because of the growing interest of the European Union in the post-Soviet space. The topic acquired particular relevance in 2008 with the launch of the Eastern Partnership project.

The aim of the paper is to analyse the Eastern Partnership initiative and identify the main problems of this project.

In 2008, the European Union launched the Eastern Partnership project. This initiative aims at strengthening cooperation with six post-Soviet countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine [4]. The goal of the project is to spread its influence over the post-Soviet region.

However, it should be noted that the Eastern Partnership is not a new project of the European Union in the east. The eastern vector of EU foreign policy began to develop with the formation of the ENP (European Neighborhood Policy), the creation of which coincided not by chance with the change in the geographical framework of the EU [3]. The fact is that with the expansion of the Union, the possibilities of including new states were exhausted. That is why in 2004 the EU countries began to develop the ENP.

We can say that the European Neighbourhood Policy was successful, although it also had significant shortcomings. The main problem was the number of participants. The ENP included 16 countries, and this included both the southern and eastern neighbours of Europe. In this regard, the EU member states realised the need for a differentiated approach and division of the ENP into two projects based on a geographical principle.

In 2006, Germany undertook the first attempt to identify an independent direction to the ENP, putting forward the concept of “ENP

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plus”, which assumed the intensification of relations with the countries of Eastern Europe [6]. Despite the desire of German politicians to bring this idea to life, it was not implemented. Nevertheless, by 2006 it became apparent that there was a tendency to split the common ENP [1].

In May 2008, a joint Polish-Swedish initiative, which was named “Eastern Partnership”, was presented. This project has been a great success. The head of the European Council, Charles Michel, stressed that “the Eastern Partnership is flourishing” [5].

Despite this fact, the project faced a number of problems during its implementation. The key problem of the project is the lack of unity between the EU countries in relation to the Eastern Partnership. The endpoint of the initiative itself is still not obvious: is there a possibility of integrating the eastern neighbours into the EU? And even despite the fact that on the official website of the European Neighbourhood Policy in the section about the Eastern Partnership (Subsection: myths about the Eastern Partnership) it is indicated that the project is not a process of countries’ integration into the European Union, some countries of the European Union and the post-Soviet space assume the future possibility of including new countries [2].

Another problem for the successful development of the project is the position and role of Russia in the Eastern European region. Russia pays special interest to the post-Soviet states. The EU’s activity about the post-Soviet states was perceived by Russia with caution since the project alienated the countries of the former USSR from Russia and offered them a European vector of development [7].

All these factors undoubtedly have a great influence on the development of the Eastern Partnership. The countries involved in this project need to work on their ideological components to achieve further success.

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## FRANCE'S ROLE IN THE EU ECONOMY: ISSUES AND PROSPECTS

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The European Union includes countries with different economic potential [2], and the example of France can be used to assess the degree of influence of an individual EU member state on the economic situation of the Union as a whole.

The purpose of this work is to study the economic relations of France in the EU and its impact on the economic development of the union as a whole.

France is a major player in world trade. It is the world's sixth-largest exporter and importer of goods according to the WTO, and trade accounts for more than 65 % of the country's GDP. Of course, in 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, trade volumes plummeted.

Since 2015, the balance of goods and services, except energy, has turned negative, as the shortage of industrial goods continues to increase, mainly due to the transfer of car production and investment in imported equipment [5]. Imports are growing rapidly, as the French population buys a significant amount of imported goods, which are sold locally at lower prices compared to products produced in France. Despite the government's efforts to encourage innovation, French exports have relatively low added value. In 2019, the trade deficit excluding services reached the US \$52.1 billion. According to the latest data published by INSEE (Points de Conjoncture, December 2020), in 2020, exports of goods and services decreased by 18 % compared to 2019, while imports decreased by 11 %, foreign trade did not bring positive results due to the consequences of the pandemic [2].

The UK's exit from the EU has become a strategic opportunity for the French elite to promote their vision of the European economic system. Another call for a political offensive is the change of political genera-

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tions in Germany. Further difficulties, including the growing divergence between Paris and Berlin and resistance from some other EU member states, even inspire Emmanuel Macron to take more active action [2].

The French President seeks to restructure the domestic market [1]. In his famous speech at the Sorbonne University in 2017, Macron presented the main goals of the eurozone reform. He supported the idea of a budget and a eurozone finance minister to boost structural investment and boost economic growth. In addition, the creation of a separate budget for the euro area will ensure its stability in the event of a crisis. He concluded that the eurozone budget should be replenished primarily by European taxes (and, as a result, be independent of the influence of the largest potential sponsor — Germany). Moreover, the French experts also add to this the need to create common eurozone bonds, which could provide security for the growing public debt in the monetary union and thereby increase public investment.

In recent years, the Franco-German “engine” has failed, and more and more disputes arise between the French and German vision of the future of the EU. Thus, Macron’s forces to look for non-standard ways of acting and increasingly put the Germans in an uncomfortable position when he tries to unilaterally shape the European agenda.

The study concludes that France is trying to restore its geopolitical position in relation to Germany with the help of innovations in the economic structure of the EU, which include several ideas on how to heal the EU and is trying to dominate the European agenda at the geopolitical and geo-economic level. That is why German politicians suspect that Macron is seeking to replace the German economic leadership with the French one.

The role of the state in the European Union is gradually increasing, but the situation is aggravated by the crisis that is taking place in conditions of the spreading of coronavirus infection and the undermining of the national economy of France against the background of the collapse of global economic ties. The state will need enormous material costs to overcome the crisis and rehabilitate the economic and financial systems. The situation is compounded by the fact that there are no unambiguous forecasts about the timing of the exit from the crisis, which does not allow us to plan the development of the world economy. The primary task of the French economy now is to meet the needs of the state and the nation in an emergency situation, the increase of France’s role in the European Union and the need for change will become one of the priorities facing the French government and France as a whole as the international situation stabilises.

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## NEW THREATS TO FRENCH INFLUENCE IN AFRICA

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Since 1960, the French government has maintained a sphere of special influence in Africa (“*Françafrique*” policy), using military-political and economic mechanisms of impact and ensuring priority access of French companies to African resources. The increasing challenges to “*Françafrique*” from the African states themselves and external competitors lead to attempts by the French authorities to adapt to the new conditions. Moreover, it is in recent years that France has faced new challenges and menaces — such as the growth of the terrorist threat (and, most importantly, the emergence of new forms of expression of terrorist groups), the presence of third players in the struggle for the resource base (now, China’s power is increasing), the decline in the prestige of the French government and the high costs of maintaining prestige in Africa.

At the moment, the influence of France is being challenged by new players in the region, primarily China, who is trying to get preferences for its mining companies. 75 % of France’s electricity depends on uranium, so the loss of preferential access to the African uranium market could cause serious damage to the economy of the Fifth Republic.

In connection with the fact of the growing terrorist threat, such a concept as a “weekend jihadist” is gaining more and more relevance, representing the local population which is involved in the commission of precision terrorist attacks either through financial ties or through family and tribal ties. Before and after the action, these jihadists continue to live normal life, which makes it difficult to fight them. The capture of the resource base of the Sahel region by the militants could mean the complete loss of France’s control over the uranium market (which is represented by countries such as Niger and Mali). Since 2013 France con-

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ducts operation “Serval”, later transformed into operation “Barkhan”. As of June 2020, the strength of forces involved was about 5 thousand soldiers, 22 helicopters, 530 armoured vehicles [3], but for more than 7 years of operations, the main task has not been achieved — France deters terrorists but cannot eliminate them. At the same time, the military presence helps to traditionally support pro-French governments and often influence the change of power (although the military coup in Mali in 2020 has shown the inability to maintain the pro-French regime of President Keita). The increase in budget spending on the military presence causes discontent among the population in France, which negatively affects the authority of the current president in the election race, and the inability to eliminate terrorists leads to anti-French sentiments in African countries.

In this regard, France, despite its intentions to maintain its military presence in North African countries, plans to reduce the cost of maintaining a military contingent. At the G5 Sahel summit in February 2021, E. Macron announced the reduction of the French contingent in African operations with the active involvement of NATO and EU allies and more active involvement of African countries in the fight against terrorism [1]. Thus, the regional influence of France remains, but is expressed in new forms.

In such circumstances, France has to retreat from the old, forceful methods of maintaining influence and look for the new ones, including negotiating with the most moderate Islamists. As an illustration, it can be cited the release from Malian prisons in October 2020 of two hundred jihadists released as part of the Malian government’s deal with the gangs [2]. Officially, both Paris and the official authorities of the African countries do not negotiate with the militants, but this dangerous trend is noticeable — for example, the Malian authorities are forced to negotiate with the largest and most influential militants in exchange for providing security to the population. On March 14, in central Mali, with the mediation of the Supreme Islamic Council and with the participation of at least 95 terrorists of “katiba Masina”, a truce has been concluded with the Malian branch of “Al-Qaeda”. Farmers are allowed to return to the fields and resume trading in the surrounding markets, but the jihadists have retained the right to carry weapons and preach, and women are required to cover their faces [4].

Thus, it is obvious that the French influence in the region and the policy of “*Françafrique*” is under pressure from regional actors [5]. However, it is successfully adapting to the dynamic development of events on the African continent.

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UNDERSTANDING TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY  
TOWARDS CENTRAL ASIA: NEW APPROACHES

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After the end of the Cold War, Central Asia was born as a post-Soviet region where five newly independent republics are located: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. It has become an area for international and regional competition in many aspects. There is not any kind of institutional cooperation among regional states. It makes the region open to other actors' policies.

Non-regional actors are the subject of this competition in different areas and at different levels. It is possible to divide these actors into two groups among themselves as first-level and second-level states. Russia, China, and United States are in the first-level group in terms of their potential material and ideological capacities. Turkey is one of the second-level states in competition in Central Asia with such as Iran, Arab states, Pakistan, India, Japan, etc. They are mainly regional powers. The main reason for grouping non-regional states as the first and second category is their dominance in traditional (economy, security, and military cooperation) and non-traditional foreign policy aspects (soft power policies in cultural and educational fields).

Why do these two groups of states aim to outweigh international relations in Central Asia? First of all, the region is located historically on trade roads, and regional states have rich energy resources. Secondly, integration policies of first-level regional actors include Central Asian region for their regional, for instance, Eurasian Economic Union, and global, such as One Belt — One Road, integrations.

Thirdly, due to cultural, religious, and linguistic ties of Central Asian states with others, not only the first-level actors but also the second-level states also aspire to influence international relations in Central Asia and their process of national identity formation of regional states.

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Fourthly, there are several security problems from Central Asia connected with the Afghan issue, such as fundamentalism and drug trafficking. All of them enforce non-regional states which have regional and global ambitions to develop Central Asian policy. As a result, it is unlike great power competition in the nineteenth century between the Russian and the British Empires; in contrast, today's map of international relations in Central Asia has a multi-actor and a multi-dimensional structure.

What does it mean for Turkey and the Turkish foreign policy? Why does Turkey need to develop a regional policy? Turkey is one of the second-level actors in Central Asian politics. Its regional policy and second-level role derive from two main determinants. On the one hand, it has cultural, religious, and linguistic ties with Central Asian Turkic republics except for Tajikistan. Therefore, it develops its regional policy in related fields under the policy of the Turkic world; it adds Azerbaijan into the world. On the other hand, the lack of the material resources of Turkey and the borderland between Turkey and Central Asia limit Turkey's presence in the region. Geographically, the South Caucasian region connects Turkey with Central Asia. Therefore, Turkey's second-level role in Central Asia is limited.

During the 1990s, Turkey's Central Asia policy developed with great ideological enthusiasm for Turkic togetherness. It was viewed by several experts as such a kind of expansionist national foreign policy, even neo-ottoman. At the same time, Turkey was supported under the 'Turkish model' by Western powers to access regional energy resources through Turkey. According to this kind of model, Turkey will be a model state for newly independent states with its relatively liberal economic and democratic model. At the end of that period, it was understood that Turkey was not ready to take new roles in the post-Soviet area materially and ideologically.

However, something has started to change in the 2010s. Turkey developed a new regional policy based on more pragmatic and mutual economic interests with Central Asian states. More importantly, the establishment of the Turkic Council has moved Turkey's regional policy to a new integration level.

A regional state for the first time has become a member of such organisation without effects of the first-level status as Russia, China, or the US. At that point, the question as to what extent Turkey is playing the role for determining international relations in Central Asia gains importance because it is a second-level actor.

It has cultural, religious, and linguistic ties with regional states. Its relations with first-level actors in Central Asia make Turkey a unique

actor. Traditionally it has alliances with Western powers, even if there have been several crises in recent years.

At the same time, Turkish-Russian relations are developing more than ever in the history of the two states. Turkish-Chinese relations are gaining momentum in recent years depending on changing Turkish foreign policy priority to Eurasia.

In these circumstances, new approaches to Turkey's Central Asian policy become a significant issue not only for Turkey but also for the competition in the region.

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THE POLICY OF THE HOLY SEE  
TOWARDS MUSLIM-MAJORITY COUNTRIES  
OF SOUTHEAST ASIA IN THE MODERN ERA

*Stella Abrasheva*<sup>1</sup>

Being one of the most rapidly developing regions in the world, Southeast Asia is famous for its religious and ethnic diversity, as well as for its complicated history. Since 1991 the Holy See (or the Vatican City), whose religious and secular activities are closely intertwined, has been showing a growing interest in this region, especially in its three Muslim-majority countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei). According to Mgr. Antonio Guido Filipazzi, the Apostolic Nuncio to Indonesia, the distinctive feature of the Holy See's policy is paying attention to the needs of the Roman Catholic Church [1]. Let us consider more precisely the policy of the Vatican towards these three countries.

The Holy See is actively developing relations with Indonesia, with secular and religious ties between the countries being maintained. If we look at the publicly available speeches of Vatican representatives on relations with Indonesia, we can note that the main concepts of the Holy See's policy towards Indonesia are the peaceful coexistence of different religions in this country and the necessity of promoting inter-religious and interfaith dialogue [7, 8]. However, contacts between the leaders of the Holy See and Indonesia are not as intense as they could be. The last visit of the Pope to Indonesia took place in October 1989. In 2020 Pope Francis was officially invited by the Indonesian authorities [2], but the visit did not take place probably due to the coronavirus pandemic.

As for Malaysia, the Holy See established diplomatic relations with this country in 2011, but the contacts between the officials of the two countries referred to an earlier period: the first visit of the Malaysian Prime Minister to the Vatican City in the modern era took place in

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2002 [5]. As in the case of Indonesia, the main concept of the Holy See's policy towards Malaysia is interreligious dialogue, which is incredibly important, especially amid several scandals due to the use of "Allah" by Catholics to call the God [6]. Besides, the Vatican representatives discussed with the Malaysian side such political problems as a peaceful resolution of the Palestinian question [3] or the settlement of the Korean problem [4].

Unlike the aforementioned countries, Brunei does not have official relations with the Holy See, and the latter one does not show a great interest in establishing them. So, there is no information about political contacts between the countries or the ones between the Roman Catholic Church and local Muslim organisations. It may be due to the small number of Catholics in Brunei: 16,000 (3.7 % of the population) [10] or to the national philosophy of Brunei, the Malay Islamic Monarchy. Nevertheless, the fact that in 2020 Cornelius Sim, a native of Brunei, became a cardinal is quite indicative, as it lays a good foundation for building possible contacts between the two countries [9].

To sum up, the Holy See seeks to contact those Muslim-majority countries that share its values of promoting peaceful dialogue between religions and try to establish contact themselves. Interreligious dialogue remains the main concept of the political activity of the Holy See towards the Muslim-majority countries of the Southeast Asia. However, there is intra-Catholic church communication with all countries, even with Brunei, which seems to have no interest in normalising relations with the Vatican.

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INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS  
IN THE CHINA-INDIA BORDER DISPUTE

*Zhu Xu*<sup>1</sup>

Although India's economic and international status has grown rapidly in recent years, the issue of the Sino-Indian border remains a stumbling block to India's great power dream. According to the Indian elite, "India should live at the highest level of the world hierarchy, as high as the brahmins in the domestic caste system" [8]. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of India, also believes that India can play an important role in the world, not because of India's ambitions, but because of the power of the environment, geography, and history [6].

However, India is not a geographically complete country, and the war caused by the Sino-Indian conflict has inflicted serious psychological trauma on India, said Shekhar Gupta, editor-in-chief of the Indian Express: "China never leaves our mind as our most serious security threat" [2]. China and India are considered civilizational twins as well as eternal rivals [1]. As a result, any sudden situation on the Sino-Indian border will trigger the spread of Indian nationalism, and Indian nationalism is the internal driving force behind the outbreak of border conflicts between China and India.

China's support for India's neighbours, especially Pakistan, is considered an 'indirect threat' to India. [9] In addition to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), China's One Belt and One Road Initiative in South Asia includes three projects: the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIM), the Trans-Himalayan Corridor, and China's cooperation with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road. India perceives China's advancements in Asia as a threat to its security at sea and on land [4]. According to Raja Mohan, a well-known Indian strategist, "the BRI will massively strengthen China's commercial, economic, political and

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security influence on India's neighbourhood and marginalise Delhi's regional primacy" [10].

According to Antara Ghosal Singh, "Chinese policymakers are of the opinion that having a foothold in South Asia or securing economic integration with the region is not only crucial to consolidate China's strategic presence in the Eurasian hinterland but also to thwart any future attempt by its adversaries to confine China in the East Asia" [7]. China's expanding influence in South Asia threatens India's continued dominance of the subcontinent and is the main driving force behind India's policy of confrontation with China.

One of the external factors influencing Sino-Indian relations is the policy of the United States. This factor has existed since the Sino-Indian border war in 1962 and remains critical to this day, and also contributed to the Sino-Indian conflict in 2020. New Delhi's concern over China's growing power and influence in Asia has led to enhanced strategic ties between India and the United States [3]. Similarly, India also needs the United States as a strategic counterweight [5].

The United States has tried to exaggerate the uncertainty that China's rise has caused in Asia, especially by focusing on the challenge that China poses to India, thereby encouraging it to move strategically closer to the United States.

The Sino-Indian border dispute has stirred the nerves of the two nations, and the nationalist sentiments provoked by the two countries have led to instability in Sino-Indian relations, while India has been under considerable pressure in the face of China's economic and military rise. The influence of the United States on Sino-Indian diplomatic relations is gradually deepening, which also affects the process of the Sino-Indian border dispute. We can make a better judgment by analysing the main factors of the Sino-Indian border conflict for further research on the future development of Sino-Indian relations.

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