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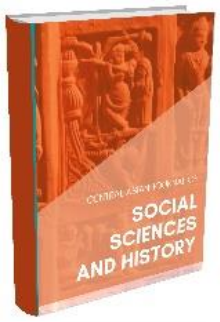

Is Cold War 2 a Reality?

Anyalebechi, Shammah. Mahakwe, PhD

Department of Political Science, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

Throughout history, changes in the international system have followed each other, literally acted as a step for each other. Each term has carried the features of an earlier era. This paper examines the possibility of a second Cold War. In this context, this study first briefly discusses the policies pursued during the Cold War period, its history, causes, consequences, and how the Cold War came to an end. But the major focus is on the post-Cold War era which has undergone many changes in much shorter periods of time. These rapid changes or variability within the system in such a short period of time has caused and still causes changes in the policies pursued by actors in the system. These changes increase the uncertainty of the system, and therefore it becomes difficult to name the current system. In addition, power in the current system has taken many different meanings and this has caused the difficulty for actors within the system to determine their locations. However, this study evaluates the other fundamental powers under the post-Cold War to determine if a second Cold War is a reality in the light of contemporary changing strategy. Understanding how these events affected one another, the paper adopted the balance of power theory loans it's theoretical framework for analysis. As used in this paper, the theory assumes that power is the central concept in the study of inter-state relations because it greatly determines international behaviour by dictating the level, direction, goals and achievement of states foreign policy. Data for the paper were generated through secondary sources. Analysis of data reveals that the Cold War era has ended and the second Cold War is not a reality. Among other things, the paper recommended that the "new Cold War" mindset should be eroded as it implies that U.S.-Russian rivalry is over determined and makes us less likely to look for ways to resolve our differences over time.

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Introduction.

Throughout history, the international system has undergone a series of transformations due to inherent internal contradiction in all matters and ideas. The major principles guiding the forces and relations of production always serve as the basis of these changes. Each change has carried the features of an earlier era. Both social and political relations are structured based on the major economic principles guiding the production process. Immediately after the 2WW, the world, was divided into two major ideologies: capitalism and socialism. These political and economic ideologies guide the foreign policies of States especially the US and the USSR, which often create economic and political tension short of open warfare. This scenario is called the "Cold War." The disintegration of the USSR in 1991 led to the emergence of capitalism as the major ideology. The international system underwent a series of modifications following the emergence of Russia and China as major actors in the international system for two decades. Each of these newly emerged States thrives to protect their core interests through military and economic power, which makes some scholars think of the Second Cold War.

The Cold War is considered to be a significant event in modern world history. The Cold War dominated a rather long time period: between 1945, or the end of World War II, and 1990–91, the collapse of the USSR. In fact, the Cold War was a state of geopolitical tension after World War II between powers in the Eastern Bloc (the Soviet Union and its satellite states, which included the Soviets, Poland, East Germany, Hungary, and Romania) and powers in the Western Bloc (the United States and its NATO allies, which included the United States, Canada, Iceland, Italy, Norway, and Portugal).

However, historians do not fully agree on the dates. Some American historians state that the Cold War began in 1945, but according to Russian researchers, historians, and analysts, "the Cold War began with the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, for this was when the capitalist world began its systematic opposition to and effort to undermine the world's first socialist state and society" (Tucker 2016, p. 608). For Russians, the Cold War was hot in 1918-1922, when the Allied Intervention policy was implemented in Russia during the Russian Civil War. According to John W. Long, "the U.S. intervention in North Russia was a policy formulated by President Wilson during the first half of 1918 at the urgent insistence of Britain, France, and Italy, the chief World War I allies." Nevertheless , a common timeframe is the period between 1947, the year the Truman Doctrine (a U.S. foreign policy pledge to aid nations threatened by Soviet expansionism) was announced, and 1991, the year the Soviet Union collapsed (Global Times, 2010).

However, the end of the Cold War was expected to usher in a new era of friendly Russian ties with the United States and Europe. It was widely thought that post-communist Russia would focus on economic and political development. And relations got off to a good start when Russia, rather than standing by its long-time client Iraq, cooperated with the US in reversing Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. The goodwill did not last. For that alone, historians will be debating for decades to come.Some observers will blame successive US presidents, pointing to a lack of economic support extended to a struggling Russia, and even more to NATO enlargement, which, by treating Russia as a potential adversary, increased the odds it would become one.

Anyways, the Cold War has come and gone, but the contemporary international system has been filled with dicey situations such that many researchers and international political analysts are beginning to wonder if there is the possibility of a second Cold War. Contemporarily, there is the North Korean nuclear test and threat, rising U.S. tension with China, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, etc. In fact, Russia's relationship with the West is on a knife edge, with multiple allegations of Russian involvement in the affairs of other countries. Russia-US relations are at their lowest point since the end of the Cold War. Moscow's continuing support for Bashar al-Assad's "toxic" Syrian regime, alleged

Russian involvement in the US Presidential election, sabre rattling with NATO and the French far right's links to the Kremlin, point to an increasingly assertive Russia. Added to this are claims of an election-day plot in Montenegro, dismissed by foreign minister Sergei Lavrov as "unsubstantiated" (The Telegraph, 2011.). In the West, Russia's confidence has been met with concern. Then foreign secretary Boris Johnson warned that Moscow was "up to all sorts of no good", and was pushing for tougher action against Russia and Syria following a chemical weapons attack.

Meanwhile, in Washington, there were increasing signs that former President Trump's detente with Moscow appeared to have been derailed. The United States has denounced Russia's involvement in Crimea as "a brazen military incursion" and its annexation of the territory as "nothing more than a land grab" by Moscow. Before the Crimea referendum, Washington took a tough stance and sent 12 F-16 fighters and 300 military personnel to Poland for training with the rest of the NATO. But after the Russian takeover of Crimea, the US has ruled out any military incursion in the Ukraine over the Crimea issue and has preferred to opt for economic measures, putting sanctions on 11 Russian and Ukrainian officials and hinting at more stringent measures to come. In his turn, Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov told John Kerry there would be "consequences" if any significant economic sanctions were enacted by the US. The stand-off continues (Geir, 2016).

But there is concern in Russia about the West's security agenda. Plans to install an anti-missile defence shield in Romania were described as a "real threat". President Putin pointed to NATO build-up in Eastern Europe as a provocation and warned of Western efforts to undermine the Assad regime, Russia's longstanding ally. Having a balanced look at Moscow's security concerns, rather than just London or Washington's, could give us a better insight into where we are now and how to address East-West tensions. These tensions between Russia and the West reached a new high point following the February 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, which had applied to take the first steps toward NATO membership in 2008, before a new president shelved the plan two years later.

Now that both Russia and the West are showing more strength, could we say that this is the start of "Cold War II"? Is a 21st-century Cold War already being waged? It remains to be seen. Though historians say the decisions at Potsdam set the stage for a long post-World War II rivalry, we may not recognise the beginnings of a new Cold War until it's visible in history's rear-view mirror. Anyway, can Cold War history provide potential lessons for today's politicians given the current echoes of the Cold War, and the tenuous balance of power? Are all these rhetoric and tensions, reminiscent enough of decades past that Vladimir Putin and Joe Biden have had to address the return of the phrase, even if they argue against its use? Are we going back to the bad old days? With diplomatic tensions and mysterious military activity ratcheting up, Is it possible that we are on the brink of a new confrontation, or did the era of danger and paranoia never really go away? But despite these considerable strains in their partnership, the US and Russia remain linked by many important security issues. A Cold War-style standoff between the two is not a good idea and can't be paid for because of economic and geostrategic concerns.

Theoretical Framework: Balance Of Power

Balance of power theory offers a useful lens with which to analyze the concept of the Cold War because Power has long been regarded as central to both the understanding and the practice of world politics hence the pursuit of power is widely considered to be a very important determinant of interstate conflict. Proponents of power theory includes, Hans Morgenthau, Claude jr, Sidney Fay, Gilpin, Carl, Goldhamer and Shils, Harold Laswell, Pollard, Inis, Haas, Spanter etc.

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Accordingly, Morgenthau (1973) asserts that balance of power as a policy implies the use of the concept as a deliberate governmental policy for the attainment and maintenance of equilibrium in the international system. Claude Jr (962) argued that balance of power is revered to as a system of interstate relations. A kind of arrangement for the operation of international falsities in a world of many states. Sidney Fay (1937) on his own side, offered a relatively cogent definition stating that Balance of power means such a just equilibrium in power among the members of the family of nations as will prevent anyone of them from becoming sufficiently strong to enforce its will upon the others.

Scholars of the realist school of thought however, use the concept to explain a condition of equilibrium among states. In this way, the theory is based on the assumption that peace is often more likely where potential enemies are of equal military or, sometimes, political or economic strength. In essence, states will tend to align in a manner that will prevent any one state from achieving a preponderance of power "(Geir, 2016). Also, balance of power is predicted on the supposition that the interests of states are defined primarily in terms of security, thus states vigorously attempt to maximize power (military strength) for the consolidation of her security. No state should be allowed to accumulate power unduly because unrestrained power constitutes a menace to all other states. It is also relevant to recognize that balance of power theorist also emphasize the role of alliances. They believe that through shifting alliances and countervailing pressures no one state or a combination of states will be allowed to grow so strong as to threaten the security of the rest. Alliances might be " adhoc" or permanent.

In contemporary international politics, every state likes a good bargain, and to ensure a relatively win-win negotiations, states seek power as a determinant for a good negotiation from a stand point of strength. Although the thematic dominance of realism, viewed power disparity or global hegemony's more desirable (Organski 1958: Organski and Kigler 1980: Gilpin 1981) when realism is contextualized within the assumptions balance of power (assuming competitors are equally resolved) imbalances minimize uncertainty about the likely military victor, making the weaker willing to comply. Therefore, multi-polarity or bipolarity reveals the need of "power" to be balanced to dissuade war in contemporary international system.

However, in this study, power is related to the ability or systematic use of threat be it military or economic in equal capacity and capability between two or more states (with their allies) which may dissuade conflict of war. The guaranty of peace within the logic of power theory is derived from the argument of structural realists which asserts that local, regional or major power equivalence translates into more stable relationship. Since equality in capabilities ensures that, states are highly uncertain about which side will win in a context, war is less likely to occur (Waltz 1979).

The Cold War: Background Information

Aside the sentiments of American historians and Russian researchers, there are some other opinions regarding the origins of the Cold War. For example, Geoffrey Barraclough, an outstanding English historian, states that the events in the Far East at the end of the century contributed to the origins of the Cold War. He argues that "during the previous hundred years, Russia and the United States has tended to support each other against England; but now, as England's power passed its zenith, they came face to face across the Pacific" (Warner 2013). According to Barraclough, the Cold War is associated with the conflict of interests, which involved European countries, the Middle East and South East Asia. Finally, this conflict divided the world into two camps. Thus, the Cold War origins are connected with the spread of ideological conflict caused by the emergence of the new power in the early 20-th century (Warner 14). The Cold War outbreak was associated with the spread of propaganda on the United States by the USSR. The propagandistic attacks involved the criticism of the U.S. leaders and their

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policies. These attacks were harmful to the interests of American State (Whitton, 2016).

During World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union fought together as allies against the Axis powers. However, the relationship between the two nations was a tense one. Americans had long been wary of Soviet communism and concerned about Russian leader Joseph Stalin's tyrannical, blood-thirsty rule of his own country. For their part, the Soviets resented the Americans' decades-long refusal to treat the USSR as a legitimate part of the international community as well as their delayed entry into World War II, which resulted in the deaths of tens of millions of Russians. After the war ended, these grievances ripened into an overwhelming sense of mutual distrust and enmity. Postwar Soviet expansionism in Eastern Europe fueled many Americans' fears of a Russian plan to control the world. Meanwhile, the USSR came to resent what they perceived as American officials' bellicose rhetoric, arms buildup and interventionist approach to international relations. In such a hostile atmosphere, no single party was entirely to blame for the Cold War; in fact, some historians believe it was inevitable (Encyclopedia Brotannica, 2016)

Although, one major crisis of the Cold War involved the Soviet Union blocking grounds to Berlin in attempt to allow Communist to start supplying fuel and food. The Soviet Union wanted control over the city of Berlin and they thought by cutting off all ground supplies they could do so. Little did they know, the United Kingdom and United States would respond with the Berlin Airlift to reach the people of West Berlin with the supplies they needed. Flights were continued daily for about a year and then the block finally ended. How the United States and their allies overcame the block and helped the people of Berlin determined their destinies for many years that came. Although the Berlin blockade undoubtedly increased Cold War tensions and helped foster the environment in which the American arms build-up would later develop, it did not, in itself, lead to any large and long-term strengthening of the U.S. military (Ojserkis, 2003).

The Cold War therefore, consisted of several confrontations between the United States and the USSR, supported by their allies. According to Hammond (1969 cited in Geir Lundestad2016, p.290)." The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, NATO, was created as a result of the Cold War and was designed as a defence mechanism against communism. "Doubtless the Warsaw Pact, multilateral military alliance with a combined command structure, was largely what it appeared to be-a mirror image of NATO (Hammond, 1969: 57)." Russia formed the Warsaw Pact as a comeback to the establishment of NATO. However, according to researchers, the Cold War was marked by a number of events, including "the escalating arms race, a competition to conquer space, a dangerously belligerent form of diplomacy known as brinkmanship, and a series of small wars, sometimes called "police actions" by the United States and sometimes excused as defense measures by the Soviets" (Gottfried cited in Lundestad, 2016, p.290). The Cold War had different influences on the United States and the USSR. For the USSR, the Cold War provided massive opportunities for the spread of communism across the world, Moscow's control over the development of other nations and the increased role of the Soviet Communist party.

In fact, the Cold War could split the wartime alliance formed to oppose the plans of Nazi Germany, leaving the USSR and the United States as two superpowers with considerable economic and political differences. The USSR was based on a single-party Marxist–Leninist system, while the United States was a capitalist state with democratic governance based on free elections.

The key figure in the Cold War was the Soviet leader Gorbachev, who was elected in 1985. He managed to change the direction of the USSR, making the economies of communist ruled states independent. The major reasons for changing in the course were poor technological development of the USSR (Gottfried 115). Gorbachev believed that radical changes in political power could improve

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the Communist system. At the same time, he wanted to stop the Cold War and tensions with the United States. The cost of nuclear arms race had negative impact on the economy of the USSR. The leaders of the United States accepted the proposed relationships, based on cooperation and mutual trust. The end of the Cold War was marked by signing the INF treaty in 1987 (Gottfried 115 cited in Geir Lundestad 2016, p.290). The Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. As a result of the collapse of the Communist, the Cold War ended. This is what finally gave the United States major military powers.

Major Causes of the Cold War

The major causes of the Cold War point out to the fact that the USSR was focused on the spread of communist ideas worldwide. The United States followed democratic ideas and opposed the spread of communism. At the same time, the acquisition of atomic weapons by the United States caused fear in the USSR. The use of atomic weapons could become the major reason of fear of both the United States and the USSR. In other words, both countries were anxious about possible attacks from each other; therefore, they were following the production of mass destruction weapons. In addition, the USSR was focused on taking control over Eastern Europe and Central Asia. According to researchers, the USSR used various strategies to gain control over Eastern Europe and Central Asia in the years 1945-1980. Some of these strategies included "encouraging the communist takeover of governments in Eastern Europe, the setting up of Comecon, the Warsaw Pact, the presence of the Red Army in Eastern Europe, and the Brezhnev Doctrine" (Phillips 118 cited in Geir Lundestad , 2016:p.290). These actions were the major factors for the suspicions and concerns of the United States. In addition, the U.S. President had a personal dislike of the Soviet leader Joseph Stalin and his policies. In general, the United States was concerned by the Soviet Union's actions regarding the occupied territory of Germany, while the USSR feared that the United States would use Western Europe as the major tool for attack.

In summary, the major causes of the Cold War, includes:

1) Ideological differences (communism v. capitalism);
2) Mutual distrust and misperception;
3) The fear of the United State regarding the spread of communism and fear of communist attack
4) The nuclear arms race (Gottfried 10).
5) Truman's dislike of Stalin
6) USSR's fear of the American's atomic bomb
7) USSR's dislike of capitalism
8) USSR's actions in the Soviet zone of Germany
9) America's refusal to share nuclear secrets
10) USSR's expansion west into Eastern Europe + broken election promises
11) USSR's fear of American attack
12) USSR's need for a secure western border
13) USSR's aim of spreading world communism

This feeling of suspicion lead to mutual distrust and this did a great deal to deepen the Cold War

Consequences of the Cold War

The effect the Cold War had for both the United States, the USSR and on the world is astounding. Good things came out of the Cold War, as well as bad things. Economic breakdowns, amazing technological advances (Such as during the Arms Race), political rewiring, proxy wars, millions of lives lost, and a higher interest in security than ever are just a few of the ways countries have been affected. The legacies of the Cold War continue to shape and influence our lives today. However, it is summarised as follows:

i. The Cold War led to numerous proxy wars, acts of espionage, and potential nuclear warfare. Behind it all however, the Cold War was a breeding ground for competition in the fields of science. Both the United States and the USSR managed to build up huge arsenals of atomic weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles.

ii. The Cold War provided opportunities for the establishment of the military blocs, NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

iii. The Cold War led to the emergence of the destructive military conflicts, like the Vietnam War and the Korean War, which took the lives of millions of people (Gottfried, 2016).

iv. The Cold War led to the dismantling of some destructive missiles. Like the Soviets arsenal in Cuba, (Cuban Missile Crisis), and American arsenal in Turkey at the time.

v. The USSR collapsed because of considerable economic, political and social challenges.

vi. The Cold War led to the destruction of the Berlin Wall and the unification of the two German nations.

vii. The Cold War led to the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact (Gottfried 136).

viii. The Cold war provided the opportunities for achieving independence of the Baltic States and some former Soviet Republics.

ix. The Cold War made the United States the sole superpower of the world because of the collapse of the USSR in 1990.

x. The Cold War led to the collapse of Communism and the rise of globalization worldwide (Phillips 119 cited in Geir Lundestad , 2016:p.290)

xi. The end of the cold war signified a new era of history that has changed the entire world. The development of many countries was enormous. The face of Europe and Asia has changed dramatically. Vast changes have been felt socially, politically, and especially economically. Some of its consequences also were derived from numerous internal problems of the countries, which were connected with the USSR, especially developing countries (India, Africa, etc.). Its effect on foreign policy was paramount. This fact means that foreign policies of many states were transformed (Schlesinger Jr. 1967: p24). The effect of these changes is not only felt across the ocean but can be felt here in Nigeria.

The End of the Cold War

Almost as soon as he took office, President Richard Nixon (1913-1994) began to implement a new approach to international relations. Instead of viewing the world as a hostile, "bi-polar" place, he suggested, why not use diplomacy instead of military action to create more poles? To that end, he encouraged the United Nations to recognise the communist Chinese government and, after a trip there in 1972, began to establish diplomatic relations with Beijing. At the same time, he adopted a policy of

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"détente"–"relaxation"–toward the Soviet Union. In 1972, he and Soviet premier Leonid Brezhnev (1906-1982) signed the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT I), which prohibited the manufacture of nuclear missiles by both sides and took a step toward reducing the decades-old threat of nuclear war (Revelations from the Russian archives — The Liberal Congress).

Despite Nixon's efforts, the Cold War heated up again under President Ronald Reagan (1911-2004). Like many leaders of his generation, Reagan believed that the spread of communism anywhere threatened freedom everywhere. As a result, he worked to provide financial and military aid to anticommunist governments and insurgencies around the world. This policy, particularly as it was applied in the developing world in places like Grenada and El Salvador, was known as the Reagan Doctrine.

Even as Reagan fought communism in Central America, however, the Soviet Union was disintegrating. In response to severe economic problems and growing political ferment in the USSR, Premier Mikhail Gorbachev (1931) took office in 1985 and introduced two policies that redefined Russia's relationship to the rest of the world: "glasnost," or political openness, and "perestroika," or economic reform. Soviet influence in Eastern Europe waned. In 1989, every other communist state in the region replaced its government with a noncommunist one. In November of that year, the Berlin Wall–the most visible symbol of the decades-long Cold War–was finally destroyed, just over two years after Reagan had challenged the Soviet premier in a speech at Brandenburg Gate in Berlin: "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall." By 1991, the Soviet Union itself had fallen apart. The Cold War was over (Schlesinger, 1967, p 22).

Conceptual Clarification

The term "cold war" first appeared in a 1945 essay by the English writer George Orwell called "You and the Atomic Bomb." (Kennedy, 1989). The cold war was the name given to the economic, political, military and ideological rivalry that took place between powers in the Western Bloc (the United States, its NATO allies and others) and powers in the Eastern Bloc (the Soviet Union and its satellite states) after World War II. The two powers never directly engaged in military action because both had nuclear weapons that if used, would have had devastating consequences for both sides. Alternatively, proxy wars were fought. A proxy war results when opposing powers use third parties as substitutes for opposition. Historians do not fully agree on the dates, but a common timeframe is the period between 1947, the year the Truman Doctrine (a U.S. foreign policy pledging to aid nations threatened by Soviet expansionism) was announced, and 1991, the year the Soviet Union collapsed.

The Cold War had been the continuing conflict, caused by tensions, misunderstandings and competitions that existed between the United States and the USSR, as well as their allies from 1945 to the early 1990s (Gottfried 10). Throughout this long period, there was the so-called rivalry between the United States and the USSR, which was expressed through various transformations, including military buildup, the spread of propaganda, the growth of espionage, weapons development, considerable industrial advances, and competitive technological developments in different spheres of human activity, such as medicine, education, space exploration, etc.

Whereas Cold war can be understood as Psychological war, which is played diplomatically and by secret agencies. Propaganda and mass media is used to target each other. Tensions remain but use of direct arms against each other is a rare case. This obviously is not a serious question! However, world wars are armed conflicts between superpowers in which almost every country plays a role. Wars are just hostilities between conflicting ideologies that may or may not involve every country. It is termed "cold" because there was no large-scale fighting. The Cold War split the temporary wartime alliance

between the US and Soviet Union against the Nazis. The Cold War ended in 1991 following the division of Soviet Union into several Republics.

A war without a fight is difficult to explain. That is what makes the Cold War so unique. This was an expensive war; both sides took hard hits financially and it lasted over four decades. The Cold War probably could not have been avoided since there were too many differences between the United States and Russia. With so many controversies between the leaders it is hard to believe that anything could have been done to have made them see eye to eye.

However, the timing of the Cold War was crucial and one of the most diverse in the recent world history. Not only was it a war of diversity, but a war of great length that lasted about fifty years. What made this time so significant was that the whole world was involved in this war in some way. The world was split into two opposite teams and one minor mistake could have easily resulted in another world war. The Cold War is different from most wars for the simple reason of it was a war that was never actually fought.

But for Cold War II is a phrase mainly used by academics and journalists to speculate the possibility of tensions between two current sides. Usually, it is exemplified with tensions between the United States and Russia or between the US and China. Interchangeable terms are the new Cold War, Second Cold War, and Cold War 2.0. It should not be considered the successor to the original Cold War.

The International System after the Cold War

The collapse of Berlin Wall which was considered to be the symbol of Cold War era and which separated the two Germany and the collapse of USSR which was considered as one of the pole leaders of the Cold War era led to enormous changes in the system in which we had been living since 1945. This changing system has been altered once again after the attacks on the World Trade Center which is one of the biggest symbols of the USA on September 11, 2001 and it has taken another form after the USA presidential elections in 2009.

In the post-Cold War world, power system has changed; the actors within the system have begun trying to re-define their roles and their places within the system and they have entered into a hurry in order to secure a place for themselves within an environment in which even the USA is not prepared to become the only force.

The main reason for this hurry is the fact that the clarity of the enemy which is a common one for both of the poles in the bi-polar world. In addition to this, there are no clear lines among the groupings formed in the newly emerging system. This has caused for the understanding of strategic partner or ally to lose its effect in an increasingly manner. The groups have been obliged to have relations with one another; even the states in one of the groups have been obliged to have relations individually with the countries in the other groups.

According to Sanders, (2008), With the collapse of communist regimes in Eastern Europe and disintegration of the Soviet Union, the bipolar international system dominating the Cold War period disappeared, leaving its place to basically a unipolar system under the leadership of the United States, speaking especially from a military/political point of view. The former rivals of the United States, especially the Soviet Union and China, have either collapsed or jettisoned the central features of their ideologies that were hostile to the United States. Other countries have turned to American military protection. The "American Empire" may best be seen operating in the Persian Gulf, Iraq, and the Middle East, in general, where the armed forces of the United States have established a semi-permanent foothold and thousands of soldiers deployed at bases keep a watch on Iran, Syria, and other "potential enemies".

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Standing alone as the only hegemonic power in the changing balance of power, the USA has tried to reshape the new system in accordance with its own thoughts, using its policies and strategies. The terrorist attacks in the USA on September 11, 2001 have led to a change in the newly emerging system. The effects of interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq which took place after the 9/11 are still unclear. Albeit widely criticized, American military power serves a number of critical functions. In some areas, in the Persian Gulf for example, it guarantees weak states against attacks by their stronger neighbors. In Asia, the presence of the United States stabilizes the region in which a number of states might otherwise feel compelled to develop much larger military forces than they currently have. American military power in Japan does not only protect Japan against foreign enemies. It indirectly protects China and other Asian states against the consequences that might flow from a heavily re-armed Japan. Moreover, American military power serves as an organizer of military coalition, both permanent (such as NATO) and ad hoc (such as peacekeeping missions). American military participation is often necessary to the command and control of coalition operations. When the Americans are willing to lead, other countries often follow, even if reluctantly. However, these are certainly not to argue that American interventions occur in every large conflict around the world. But it means that almost any country embarking on the use of force beyond its borders has to think about possible reactions of the United States (Sanders, 2008).

Moreover, new elements of power are started to rise, such as Russia who leveled up its economy through the increase in the oil prices, China who has become increasingly influential in political and military areas through its economic growth, India who has a developing technology and growing population and the EU. The change in the post-Cold War era is not limited to the change in the balance of power. The technological developments has made communication almost unlimited and managed to connect the whole world. This connection has particularly felt in the economic field and highlighted the phenomenon of globalization. This change in the economic field has affected the main actors within the phenomenon of power and the economic power has begun to be used more effectively than the political power or military power.

From an economic/political point of view, on the other hand, the international system can be said to be multipolar, rather than unipolar. The United States certainly a great economic power, but it is not the only power. There are other power centers, most notably, the European Union, the Organization of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, as well as many nation-states outside of these integrations or organizations (See, Harrison, 2004). As a matter of fact, when the United States exercised military operations to "stable" the world in Kuwait, Afghanistan, and Iraq and elsewhere, it insisted on sharing the costs of the operations with other major powers or relevant countries. Thus, the international system of the post-Cold War era actually reflects a mixture of both unipolar and multipolar system in which at least five major powers, the United States, Europe, China, Japan, and Russia, dominate international affairs.

This effect of the economic power has led the international companies and non-governmental organizations have much more effect on the functioning of the system, apart from the states. After the Cold War, there have been many other changes apart from those which are stated above briefly. However, it is impossible to evaluate all the changes of this era in a single paper like this. These changes might be a subject of an entire book. Within this context, this paper tries to explain the understanding of power which has changed after the Cold War and the place of the actors in the system based on the hegemonic power and however brings us to the question.

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Is Cold War 2 a Reality?

A lot of smart international political observers seem to think the United States and Russia are in a "new Cold War." For about four years now or more, since Russia's occupation of Crimea and China's launch of the Belt and Road Initiative, there has been much speculation about whether another Cold War between East and West is coming (Walt, 2018). In the last few months alone, headlines have proclaimed that "The New Cold War Is Here," heralded "Putin's New Cold War," and warned that "Biden Is Preparing for a New Cold War." (Lomas, 2007 cited in Walt, 2004). But are we really returning to the past? According to Walt (2004) "Contemporary politics is full of false analogies, and the return of the Cold War seems to be one of them".

Today, you can find articles on the subject in Politico, the New Yorker, and the Nation, and a quick Google search will take you to an entire website devoted to the topic, yet the more balanced views of a couple of years ago are harder to find these days. Politicians in both countries are using increasingly harsh language to describe each other and people on both sides are convinced the other is engaged in various dark plots against them. There are even signs of a new arms race, with Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un boasting about sophisticated new nuclear weaponry and the United States preparing to launch a costly program of nuclear modernization.

In the words of Stephen Walt (2004) a Professor of international relations at Harvard University, ". The current situation is bad. But to call it a "new Cold War" is misleading more than it is enlightening. If one compares the two situations more carefully, what is happening today is a mere shadow of that earlier rivalry. So viewing today's troubles as a new Cold War downplays the role that human agency and bad policy decisions have played in bringing the United States and Russia to the current impasse, distracts us from more important challenges, and discourages us from thinking creatively about how to move beyond the present level of rancor.

To see why this is so, remember what the original Cold War was like**.** For starters, the Cold War was a bipolar competition in which the United States and the Soviet Union were far and away the two most powerful countries in the world. Although other factors contributed to their rivalry (see above), each was the other's greatest potential threat and by necessity each kept a wary eye on the other. To a large extent the Cold War was structurally determined by the global distribution of power among states, and some sort of rivalry was probably inevitable (even if other factors were involved and helped determine its intensity).

Moreover, the two superpowers stood in rough parity with each other, although the United States was, on balance, in a much better position. The United States' economy was about twice as large as the Soviet Union's and its allies were far more capable and reliable than theirs. After all, the United States had West Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, France, Israel, and a number of other powerful states on its side; the USSR had the likes of South Yemen, Cuba, Angola, and a bunch of restive satellites in the Warsaw Pact. China was Moscow's junior partner at first, but the two communist giants soon had a nasty falling out and Beijing tacitly realigned with the United States in the 1970s (as did Egypt, another Soviet client state). The United States had vastly greater power-projection capabilities, a superior navy and air force, more sophisticated technology, and better training. But the Soviet Union did have a large and well-equipped army that was designed for offensive warfare and its forces lay close to Western Europe and not that far from the Persian Gulf. And it eventually acquired a large arsenal of nuclear weapons. On balance, the United States was ahead, but never by a big enough margin to relax. So, the two superpowers competed constantly for additional influence, and did whatever they could to weaken the other without provoking World War III (Walt, 2018)

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At the same time, the Cold War also featured an intense competition between rival political ideologies: liberal capitalism and Marxism-Leninism. Both were inherently Universalist ideologies, insofar as their proponents believed that each provided a model for organizing society that was broadly applicable everywhere in the world. Liberal capitalism rested on claims about basic rights that all humans were said to possess, while Marxism-Leninism rested on "scientific" laws of social and economic development that Marx and his followers had supposedly discovered. Because each ideology saw itself as universally valid, proponents felt obliged to try to spread them far and wide. Even worse, given each side's Universalist pretensions, the mere existence of one posed a fundamental challenge to the legitimacy of the other. For both ideological and power-political reasons, therefore, "live and let live" was never a serious option.

Finally, as many other observers like Arne Westad (2007) has shown clearly, the Cold War was a global competition waged on every continent in the world. The rivalry between Moscow and Washington shaped much of the agenda of world politics from the 1940s onward, and had far-reaching (and frequently negative) effects in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and Latin America. That was the real Cold War, and let's not forget that it was punctuated by several intense nuclear crises, an arms race in which each side accumulated tens of thousands of powerful hydrogen bombs, and proxy wars in which millions died. While regrettable and maybe even dangerous, what is happening today is very different.

First, and most obviously, the world today is not bipolar. It is either still unipolar or some sort of heavily lopsided multipolar system, with the United States still No. 1 and the other major powers trailing behind. Jay Carafano (2016) noted that this is not a "single threat" world. We no longer live in a bipolar word with two competing superpowers. The president of USA then Barack Obama nailed it when he said "America's got a whole lot of challenges." (Carafano, 2016). What he failed to mention is many of these challenges. Then he has bungled the drawdowns in Iraq and Afghanistan, responded ineptly to the Arab Spring, poorly managed China's push to rewrite the norms for settling territorial disputes in the Pacific, presided over the resurgence of Al Qaeda and made no real progress in diminishing the long-term threat of a nuclear-armed Iran or North Korea.

If bipolarity eventually returns, as many believe it will, China, not Russia, will be the other pole. And in a striking reversal of the early Cold War, Russia is now China's junior partner and will be far weaker than its Asian neighbor for decades to come. (Russia will likely fall well behind India too, but that's another story.) So the changing geo-strategic dynamics further limit the Cold War style stand-off. Both the USA and Russia have to compete with other rising and aspiring great powers, particularly China. Though China sided with Russia in the Syrian crisis and many other issues in the Middle East, Beijing is pursuing its own strategic interests rather than lining up with Moscow. On the Ukraine issue Beijing has called for a diplomatic solution, supported Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and abstained in UNSC votes.

Second, financial constraint will remain a factor for both sides. There was a certain rough parity during the Cold War, but today the United States is vastly stronger on nearly every dimension that matters. The U.S. economy is about $20 trillion, while Russia's is less than $2 trillion (Wikipedia, 2018). America is technologically sophisticated and highly innovative, while Russia's wealth, such as it is, relies mostly on energy exports whose value is likely to decline as mankind gradually weans itself off fossil fuels. In the meantime, hardly anybody is saving up pennies (or rubles) to buy the latest Russian smartphone. Strobe Talbott, the director of Brookings Institution, opines that Russia can't afford the old Soviet style of military stand-off as it has now a stock market which is not immune to international crises. In fact, unlike the Soviet era of economic self-sufficiency, today the Russian economy is tied to

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foreign economic forces and market fluctuations, hence the too many sanctions melted on them as a result of her invasion of Ukraine. Although, Russia's economy has performed well over the past decade because of its energy boom, a large part of which is due to sales to Europe, which gets one third of its oil and gas from Russia, so Moscow can't afford to risk a reduction of sales to Europe. Likewise, though far stronger economically than Russia, the US can't afford another war – Iraq and Afghanistan have already taken their toll on Wall Street and Washington can't afford further military adventurism.

The economic equation is far different. The United States held a huge economic advantage throughout the Cold War. The U.S. could count on its free-market economic engine to purr smoothly while the Soviet planned economy self-destructed. Today, the U.S. economy has lost much of its competitive advantage. According to the Wall Street Journal–Heritage Foundation "Index of Economic Freedom," economic freedom in the U.S. has declined for an unprecedented eight years in a row. The U.S. needs a sound fiscal strategy to match a new foreign and defense policy (Carafano, 2016).

Nye (2005) cited in Kutay (2017) states that although the USA is named as the only power in the world, the new system is much more complex than the old system. Nye also says that the agenda of world politics has become a three-dimensional chessboard in which one can win by playing vertically or horizontally, the military power has its place on the top of the chessboard, the USA is the only super power in the military area and in this regard, it would be a correct thing to talk using the concepts of "hegemony". In addition, he states that the distribution of power in the economic matters among the states which takes its place in the middle of the chessboard is multi-polar and in this context the USA who is the only power in the military sense cannot get the results it desires to get in the fields of trade, anti-trust or financial regulations without the acceptance of the EU, Japan, China and others.

More so, the U.S. population is comparatively young and still rising; Russia's population is aging rapidly and projected to decline sharply in the decades to come. Compared to the Cold War, if we borrow a leave from Lomas (2007 cited in Waltz 2008) "today's United States vs. Russia matchup is Godzilla vs. Bambi"

Third, Russia also lacks a key element of the Cold War battle: the Marxist ideology that helped bring countries across the globe under its influence, even as late as the 1980s in the cases of Nicaragua and Ethiopia. Thus, there is no serious ideological rivalry at play today. Putin isn't trying to resurrect a communist empire. (If anything he's building a mini version of the nineteenth-century empire). America's liberal brand may have been tarnished of late, but Russia's ideological appeal outside its borders is minimal. Marxism-Leninism captured the imaginations and loyalties of millions of adherents around the world, but Putinism has appeal only to a handful of oligarchs or would-be autocrats. Donald Trump is probably the only person in America who truly believes strongman rule is preferable to democracy, but he won't be president-for-life no matter how much he might want to be.

Note, Francis Fukuyama who put forward the thesis of "the end of history" argued that without having any connection with the end of the Cold War, the end of history has been reached because there has been nothing left to be achieved ideologically and because Western liberal democracy has become universal. Fukuyama also states that the lack of ideological oppositions will make the relations among the states more and more common and no more big conflicts will occur and the ideological conflicts all around the world will give their place to economic competition, technological problems and never-ending solution proposals for these problems, and environmental issues. Today, Russia is now integrated into the European economy, and with its vast natural resources is Europe's largest supplier of natural gas, oil, and coal (Fukuyama, 2003)

Fourth, the real Cold War was a global competition, whereas the geopolitical issues that divide the

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United States and Russia today are confined to areas close to Russia's borders, like Ukraine, or to a small part of the Middle East and Latin America, but it can't match U.S. power theater-for-theater worldwide. And for all the hot air that has been spouted about Putin's "revisionism," Russia's role in most of these conflicts is essentially negative and defensive and very much the spoiler. Moscow may be able to keep Ukraine from moving toward the West or joining NATO, and it may be able to keep Bashar al-Assad in power in what remains of Syria, but like George W. Bush, Putin is discovering that clients are hard to control and getting into quagmires is easier than finding one's way out. Moscow has shown little capacity to achieve positive ends on the world stage or to bring other nations together to work toward the goal of mutual betterment. When compared to Soviet leaders' lofty dreams of world revolution, Putin's "global agenda" is watered-down vodka.

But the U.S. must watch several regional and rising powers worldwide. Nations can coordinate their malicious activity with Russia's or stage some trouble of their own if they sense the U.S. will be too preoccupied with Putin to deal effectively with their actions. Tehran, for example, might decide to clown around in the Straits of Hormuz the next time Moscow messes with a Baltic state. The U.S. may not need a worldwide containment strategy like it did during the days when the Iron Curtain was at its height, but it surely needs a more serious global strategy to protect its vital interests and allies. Therefore, Russia is not a global competitor. The U.S.-Soviet competition was truly global in scope.

Fifth, there is rise in the power of world and regional organization. Moreover, as well as the EU which uses its soft power as an economic power softly, the regional organizations has become increasingly important. The regional organizations such as BRICS (formed by newly emerging economic powers; Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Eurasian Economic Community, And Countries Economic Community (consisting of Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia), the East and Central African Common Market, Economic Cooperation Organization have a constantly increasing influence. Hence, the increase in the effectiveness of these regional organizations blocks the way for the bigger powers, which fight a power struggle with one another, to establish a regional hegemony. Thus, these bigger powers are not able to force these states to accept their (bigger powers') will. For instance, Turkey improves its relationship with Iran despite of the USA; and South Korea increases its relationships with Japan, China and the EU. The Central Asian states and the Caucasus states engage with the Western countries, without Russia's approval on the matter.

Lastly, Russia is still by far other world's largest country, but it's not anywhere near as large as what the Soviet Union was," says Mark Kramer, director of Cold War studies and a senior fellow at Harvard University's Davis Center, who is also co-author of Imposing, Maintaining, and Tearing Open the Iron Curtain: The Cold War and East-Central Europe, 1945-1990.

In his words, "You have to put cold water on the faddish idea of a 'second Cold War,'". Russia, without the vast military might of the Soviet Union, has significantly smaller military forces than the U.S. does, in terms of both manpower and budget. It lost key bases in several East European countries, all of which are now members of NATO (Kramer & Porter 2002)

NATO has expanded farther eastward since its rival alliance of Soviet republics and satellite states—the Warsaw Pact—disbanded along with the Soviet Union when its 15 republics split into independent states in 1991. Kramer & Porter (2002) went further to state that a lot of repercussions of the breakup of the Soviet Union have figured very directly in the current crisis." To him, the conflict in Ukraine is one of those repercussions. "Russia also lost some important military and transportation facilities in 1991 that have figured directly in the current conflict, such as basing the headquarters of Russia's

Black Sea Fleet [in Ukraine]," explains Kramer. That base, at Sevastopol in Crimea, was part of independent Ukraine after 1991, and until some years past had to be leased by Russia. "The thousands of Russian soldiers who were stationed in Sevastopol under the leasing arrangement spearheaded Russia's annexation of Crimea in March 2014 when Putin acted in the immediate wake of Ukraine's Maidan revolution, therefore, this in fact is not a global military and ideological struggle. It is just a regional dispute, and the stakes are entirely different (Global Times, 29th March, 2010).

Summary and Conclusion

At its peak, the Cold War was a global system of countries centered on the United States and the Soviet Union. It did not determine everything that was going on in the world of international affairs, but it influenced most things. At its core was an ideological contest between capitalism and socialism that had been going on throughout the twentieth century, with each side fervently dedicated to its system of economics and governance. It was a bipolar system of total victory or total defeat, in which neither of the main protagonists could envisage a lasting compromise with the other. The Cold War was intense, categorical, and highly dangerous: strategic nuclear weapons systems were intended to destroy the superpower opponent, even at a cost of devastating half the world.

Today's international affairs are in large part murky and challenging, but they are a far cry from Cold War absolutes. Calling twenty-first-century great-power tensions a new Cold War therefore obscures more than it reveals. It is a kind of terminological laziness that equates the conflicts of yesteryear, which most analysts happen to know well, with what takes place today. Although many echoes and remnants of the Cold War are still with us, the determinants and conduct of international affairs have changed.

Globalization is going to continue, particularly at the technological level, less at the political level, where the nation state is likely to remain the basic unit. At the moral level it has been significant improvement in the world: fewer wars, more democracy, and less poverty. These improvements are likely to continue. Remember, despite their disagreement on certain strategic and economic issues in the Middle East, the two super-powers have converging interests in the region, including halting proliferation and tackling Islamic radicalism. Despite their differences on Iran, for example, both have an interest in not letting Iran develop a nuclear weapons capability.

None of this is to deny that U.S.-Russian relations are in a bad state. It is also hard to imagine someone as compromised as Donald Trump doing much to fix it. But instead of embracing the language and imagery of the Cold War, we would do better to think seriously about the missteps and blunders that have brought the United States and Russia to the present impasse, and look for creative new ways to unwind them. And step one is to discard a lazy label that can only get in the way.

Therefore thinking of the current conflict between the United States and Russia (even with Russian invasion of Ukraine) as a new Cold War exaggerates its significance and distracts us from the far more serious challenge we face from a rising China. Even worse, it encourages us to take steps that are actively harmful to our own interests. Instead of trying to drive a wedge between Moscow and Beijing (as realpolitik 101 would prescribe), the "new Cold War" mindset implies that U.S.-Russian rivalry is over determined and makes us less likely to look for ways to resolve our differences over time. Even worse, it will encourage us to fall back on the confrontational approaches we employed during the real Cold War, which will merely drive Beijing and Moscow closer together.

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