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The Effect of the History of International Relations on the International Order

Case Study: History of the US (1929-2023)

Faragalla, Samar

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School of Social Sciences, Arts, and Humanities

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on the International Order**

Case Study: History of the US (1929-2023)

Samar Faragalla

May/2023



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**This thesis was submitted for distance acquisition of a
postgraduate degree in international relations, strategy
and security studies at Neapolis University**

Samar Faragalla

May/2023

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Samar Faragalla, 2023

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Samar Faragalla

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Summary:

Studying the history of international relations is of major importance, not only for knowledge but also for lessons. Although the concept of history's cyclical nature is not new, people continue to make the same errors, adopt the same beliefs, and interact with their environments in the same way as they did in the past. The primary question this study seeks to address is why it is crucial to learn from history, as well as how to learn from it. This research uses the theory of the generation to provide analysis for decision-makers to look at history more closely, yet with a cyclical scope, in order to foresee future crises and offers remedies for those that are already occurring.

The generations theory by Strauss and Howe suggests that history can be divided into cycles of one hundred years, and each cycle can be divided into four turnings each with specific characteristics. The four turnings are High, Awakening, Unraveling, and Crisis. The case study for this paper is the US (1929-2023).

By the end of this research, the readers should have passed through this whole cycle and concluded that history has a repetitive nature and can be used to explain historical events. The US is one of the world's most powerful countries in all fields, but it was the only superpower, this paper will present also the cycle of rising and decline of the US influence.

Introduction:

In 1815, Napoleon I assembled his army and launched an attack on Russia. Napoleon had changed the nature of warfare in Europe; he infused soldiers to fight for France and for Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, which were the slogan of the French Revolution. This spirit managed to create an army with well-trained soldiers, better than the mercenaries of the European monarchs, where soldiers fought for salaries rather than a cause. Although the Russian army had problems with movements, supply, and logistics, it managed to strain the French army by implementing the burned land strategy, destroying anything that might be useful to the enemy.

Napoleon's army arrived in Moscow in winter, this was a strategic mistake, and the city was set on fire, most probably by the Russians themselves, to deprive the French of shelter from the cold. Thus, the French army either gave up or passed away from cold, hunger, and guerrilla attacks by the Russians. Napoleon gathered four hundred thousand soldiers for this attack, but only seventy thousand returned to France. This was the Battle of Waterloo which marked the end of twenty-three years of wars between France and European Monarchs, he was banished to a small island in the South Atlantic, St. Helena, where he died in 1821.

In 1933, Hitler was appointed chancellor of Germany, he gained support by condemning the Versailles Treaty in 1919 and called for restoring German honor and pride, also power and restoring the German territories. A few months after his appointment, he pulled Germany out of the League of Nations, denounced the disarmament negotiations, and began rearming Germany. Hitler managed to invade Poland, Norway, Belgium, and Denmark and wanted to carry on going to Russia.

On June 1941, three million men marched on Operation Barbarossa, few months later, German troops had encircled Leningrad and got within twenty-five miles of Moscow. For three years, The Soviet Union and the Germans were the only real fighting in Europe. Although Germans made significant victories, the winter in Moscow, analogous to what happened with Napoleon, had strained the German army and pushed it 250 Kilometers back.

Hitler made a strategic mistake in thinking that the Soviets would fall as fast as Poland did, in fact, what happened is Soviet forces moved southwest into Romania, Bulgaria,

and Hungary, all of which were allied with Nazi Germany. Meanwhile, the June 1944 Normandy invasion landed 130,000 British, U.S., and Canadian forces onto French beaches in one day and a million within the month. By March 1945, the Allied forces had crossed the Rhine River into German territory, and Soviet forces had taken Budapest and Vienna and would soon occupy Berlin. Hitler committed suicide, and the German government surrendered in May 1945¹. With about a hundred- and twenty-six-years difference, both Napoleon and Hitler made the same strategic mistakes that cost them their whole significant victories, and both got the same defeat and fate.

Both defeats caused serious shifts in the international order; Germany and France at these two battles were the most powerful in Europe, and these defeats caused major shifts in the balance of power, starting a new era of international relations, new weapons, new types of wars, and new actors other than states were introduced.

Although the idea of history's cyclic nature is not new, people still fall into the same mistakes, ideas, and environments and still take the moves that match others years before. The main question that this research aims to answer is why it is important to learn from history, not only why, but also how to do so. Using the generations theory, this research aims to provide analysis for decision-makers to take a closer look at history, but with a cyclic scope in order to make predictions for future crises and provide solutions for current ones.

This research will present a cycle of one hundred years in American history, including most of the significant events that shaped the contemporary history of international relations, and shows how the US turned from being one great power amongst other great power to being the only great power and then back again to be a great power amongst great powers. William Strauss and Neil Howe presented the generational cycle which can be explained by the existence of four generational archetypes that repeat sequentially in a fixed pattern every 80-100 years cycle, like the average lifetime of a human. As each generation moves up the ladder and takes a different place, serious changes take place. There are four historical turnings presented in the Strauss-Howe model, high (first turning), awakening (second turning), unraveling (third turning), and crisis (four turning).²

¹ David S. Mason. (2011). **A Concise History of Modern Europe, Liberty, Equality, Solidarity.** Second Edition. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. P32, 138-139.

² Brett & Kate McKay. **The Generations of Men: How the Cycles of History Shape Your Values and Your Future.** Published on 5th June 2020, last updated on 28th September 2022.
<https://www.artofmanliness.com/character/knowledge-of-men/strauss-howe-generational-cycle-theory/>

This paper will be divided into six chapters, each presenting a period of twenty years in American history. Strauss and Howe's model includes four turnings for each generation, the fifth turning will be prior to the four turnings to prove how events move from "crisis" and reaching a similar "crisis".

The first chapter, Crisis (1929-1945), will present the period after WWI and Versailles Treaty. The sanctions imposed by the victorious actors on Germany had contributed to the birth of European dictators who would start another global war, WWII. The crisis-era is characterized by economic distress, inflation, unemployment, and wars. These were the main elements that characterized this era. The Great Depression of 1929, which began in the US, and WWII, which was officially ended by the US atomic bomb attack, are the main highlights of this period. Although there were contributions to reaching peace on the international level, the League of Nations, and Wilson's fourteen principles, the eruption of WWII destroyed all these dreams. By the end of the Crisis turning, the global world was destroyed economically and politically, and was about to enter a new phase of power shifting. Before 1945, the world's great powers were operating in a multipolar system, but after the destruction of Europe by wars, new two strong actors, the US, and the USSR were powerful enough to divide the world into East and West.

The second chapter, High (1946-1964), will present the beginning of establishing the international organizations as international actors as countries, and enjoy power exertion on them to a great extent. The main characteristic of the high period is the establishment of institutional life, this era was highlighted by the establishment of the most powerful international institution such as the UN, IMF, and WB, and the most important military alliance, till today, NATO.

The world during this era was divided into three parties, the Eastern Bloc, the Western Bloc, and the Non-Aligned Movement which represented the developing countries that emerged during the decolonization wave after WWII. The East and the West were divided ideologically, and physically after building the Berlin wall, the West bloc, which was led by the US and its allies and was based on liberal democracy and capitalist economy, and the East bloc, led by the USSR and its allies, which was an authoritarian regime with the communist economy. The tensions between the two blocs were not direct military ones, but ideology wars. During this era, the US enjoyed its high, it was building institutions and associations. The recovery from the 1929 Great Depression was also good, it was the Golden economic era.

The third chapter, awakening (1964-1984), will present the evolution of new culture among citizens, and the beginning of the loss of trust in the government. The Awakening period is characterized by the shift of society's focus from institutions to individuals. During this era, the US witnessed the beginning of activist movements; feminist movements, black rights movements, and anti-war movements. The Cold War reached its peak during this period, especially when dealing with Vietnam War.

The fourth chapter, Unraveling (1984-2006), will present how the economy was working with a policy presented by President Reagan, which depended on lowering income taxes so people would have more money, however, economic crises took place but on a small scale, this policy of lowering taxes will have serious effects on the economy. The highlights of this era were the 9\11 attacks, the Gulf War, and the US invasion of Iraq. During the unraveling, problems were kept under the rug and will explode in the upcoming era. Cultural wars were increasing since the level of personal satisfaction is at its highest while community trust in public institutions is at its lowest.

The fifth chapter, Crisis (2008-2023), this part of the research will present the crises that took place which were, to a great extent, similar to those of the (1929-1945) turning crisis. This period began with the 2007-2008 financial crisis, which some economists measured it as similar to the Great Depression. During this period, the public trust in the US government was very low compared to the numbers in polls during other presidents. The biggest highlight, till this moment, was the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which brought back the memory of global wars and is seen as WWII.

The sixth Chapter will discuss the cycle of the US influence internationally during the previous five chapters, to present how the change of events affects the international order.

The case study for this research is the US. By the end of WWII, the US had stood alongside the USSR as they both experienced an unexpected rise to power. WWII had turned the US from a midlevel global power to the leader of the 'free world' as it had to take on new responsibilities indicating the beginning of a new American era. Therefore, American political and economic leaders had to protect this newfound power and secure the United States as the leader of the 'free world'. Studying the history of the US is important to understand the diversity of culture nowadays, its diversity, and how it is not bounded by geography, because of globalization. Therefore, each chapter in this research will present the

most important decisions taken by the US presidents and their policies while dealing with domestic and foreign affairs.

By the end of this research, the research will have a case study that shows two things, the first one is the cyclic nature of history and its characteristics, according to Strauss and Howe's generations model, and the fact that the world order is no longer a unipolar system. Not only that its no longer unipolar, but also the cycle of influence regarding one of the world's most powerful countries, which ended WWII and won the cold war, the US.

Theoretical Framework / Literature Review

The globe is either suffering from wars or is likely to face new ones. Knowledge is always important to have an insight into what is going on, and more importantly history. Studying the history of international relations gives knowledge to decision makers to describe how certain events took place, explain why these issues arise at one time and diminish at another time and predict what will happen within the scope in which these events took place.

The objective of this research paper is to provide an analysis of some major events that made a great influence on the world as a whole, despite taking place in a certain area, and analyze the similarities among these events. For example, World War I and World War II originated in Europe and spread worldwide in many ways, including the use of WMD which caused global damage, the emergence of the cold war which lasted about 45 years, and the establishment of the UN which is considered reviving of the League of Nations. Wars not only cause changes on the state level but also shift powers. The history of international relations is rich with events that point to detailed images of where the world stands today. The news echoes events from the past, therefore analyzing such events based on social, theoretical, and political basis gives insights into where the world stands today and why³.

Considering the existence of a repetitive nature of history is often considered necessary to explain historical events. Historians have used recurrence models to make sense of the past, this can be found in the writings and Greek historians such as Polybius, Greek Philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle, Italian thinkers such as Machiavelli and Cicero, the French sociologist Émile Durkheim and in the modern history, theories are still evolving about the nature of history and how it moves in cyclic motions from flourish to diminish and then rebirth again.

Historians have discovered numerous analogies between events that occurred in different eras. Consequently, they have proposed that certain historical events tend to reoccur. Other researchers expanded on this concept to create the theory of historic recurrence. A school of thought believes that if history repeats itself, it is possible to focus on emphasized tendencies and specific historical lessons to accept them and prevent repeating mistakes.

³ Charles W. Kegley and Shanon L. Blanton (2011) , **World Politics: Trends and Transformations**. Edition, Cengage Brain, United States of America, 2011. Chapter 1, P5-6.

Historic recurrence is a term used to describe the repetition of similar events in history. The concept has been applied to overall human history; the rise and fall of empires.

In the Bible, the book of Ecclesiastes, chapter one and verse nine, the writer states that:” what has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun” Also in the book of Judges, the people of Israel live in a cycle where it begins with prosperity, people fall in sins, invaders come to take their lands, the people ask God for forgiveness, and God sends a judge to save them (prosperity).

G.W. Trompf in his book *The Idea of Historical Recurrence in Western Thought: From Antiquity to the Reformation* ⁴presented the cyclical view of history and how ancient thinkers had likened the human life cycle with a polity life cycle. Polybius has the most significant and advanced theoretical exponent on historical recurrence. He believed that past events offer different paradigmatic movements and patterns which will be prominent again currently or in the future. The study of history, for Polybius, is sound training for politics. For early Greeks, the cyclic idea was part of their everyday life. History, for early Greeks, is like life; it is born, then grows, and finally decays. Recurrence is explained through the processes of birth, death, and rebirth of life forms.⁵

Polybius believed in the concept of *Tyche*, fortune. History, for Polybius, is explained in the fortune wheel, where a man or a state can only experience prosperity or happiness once in their whole life as the cycle would shift; human life is like a circle divided into two halves, good or ill. The luckiest men are those whom *Tyche* is kind to them for most of their lives. It is impossible for a human to be constantly fortunate. Polybius used this concept to explain the rise and fall of the Greek and Roman empires, history for him was moving like a wheel where a set of events happens to be good and so states flourish and then the wheel moves to the ill side and so states diminish. Therefore, the study of the past helps to assess and provide a description for any political society whether in times of growth process or decline. Polybius justified the rise of Rome because of its internal balance, which made it a strong world power, while the rise of Athens was because of its great men, and the rise of Macedonia was because of its royal leaders. The fall of states, for Polybius, was either because of outside forces like wars or internal forces such as disagreements.⁶

⁴ Trompf, G. (1981). **The Idea of Historical Recurrence in Western Thought: From Antiquity to the Reformation.** A thesis presented to the Australian National University. February 1974

⁵OpCit. **The Idea of Historical Recurrence in Western Thought: From Antiquity to the Reformation.** P1-5

⁶ OpCit. **The Idea of Historical Recurrence in Western Thought: From Antiquity to the Reformation.** P88-187

Aristotle was the one who exploited the principle of life-cycle to support the concept of historic recurrence. The Aristotelian school owns credits for providing a model to be used to explain the cycle of *growth*, *zenith*, and *decay* to describe human affairs. Aristotle explained the rise and fall of empires through *Periodoi* or cycles.⁷

Niccollo Machiavelli was a pioneering philosopher of the Renaissance, who reverted to the cyclical nature of history rather than linear. Machiavelli brought back the Polybius cyclical model to explain the rise and fall of empires through the wheel of fortune. Machiavelli presented the cycle of governments, which is derived from the Polybius model, to explain the history of the Roman Empire and his city, Florentine., (*Istorie Fiorentine* 1527). Machiavelli believed that states pass through a cycle of constitutional stages, he believed that governments rotate. Machiavelli was preoccupied with the issue of decay; therefore, he saw governments tend to move towards and end in the worst form. Machiavelli presented a new reading to the cycle model, in his book *Istorie Fiorentine*, he analyzed the politics in Italy and Florentine in the period 1434-1494, meanwhile, he explained the cycle of governments to be moving in ‘order’ and ‘disorder’, where states arrive at perfection and then start to decline. In his book *Istorie Fiorentine*, Machiavelli explained, when a state is at its perfection, it soon begins to decline, and soon it will drown in disorder to a point that won’t be able to decline more, only then a necessity will arise to ascend again. And finally states for from evil to perfection, and the cycle goes on⁸. Accordingly, he suggested that the cycle should begin with *virtù*, the stage of political effectiveness then, a period of peace, and so peace brings idleness *ozio*, idleness brings disorder, and disorder *rovina*. *rovina* in its way brings order, and order brings *virtù*, and at last glory and *buona fortuna*.⁹

One of the leading theorists in the 14th century is Ibn Khaldun, he is well-known for his ideas on Islam and politics. Stowasser regarded him as the father of social sciences, one of his most impressive is the cyclical theory of history. Ibn Khaldun’s cyclical theory of history has defined the rise and fall of sovereign powers, he assumed that sovereign power is like living organisms; born, grow up, matures, and die, this theory explained how sovereign powers are born and die by the end of the cycle. The cycle for Ibn Khaldun’s theory is 120 years. In his book *Al-Muqaddimah* ¹⁰, Ibn Khaldun presented the stages of rise and fall of

⁷ Ibid. **The Idea of Historical Recurrence in Western Thought: From Antiquity to the Reformation.** P112-134

⁸ Niccollo Machiavelli (1527). Translated by Thomas Bedingfield (1613). **Istorie Fiorentine**. P125

⁹ Ibid. **The Idea of Historical Recurrence in Western Thought: From Antiquity to the Reformation.** P428-439

¹⁰ Ibn Khaldun (1377). **Al-Mukaddimah.**

sovereign powers. The first stage is the foundation, which is the stage of success, a leader will come into power, this leader will be strongly obeyed, the people will be loyal to him. The leader during the foundation stage will take full control of subjects, defend his own borders, and forbid any stronger power to be in his own land. The second stage is the personalization of power, in which the leader enjoys absolute power, builds a professional army, and acquires loyalty to be only for him. The third stage is growth and expansion, in which big achievements in architecture, literature, art, and science take place. During the growth and expansion stage, the state is at its strongest level, with no threats from the inside or outside, the beginning of luxury life, and because of the improvements in the economy, money is being shared with the subjects. The fourth stage is stagnation, in which satisfaction and peacefulness are achieved, leaders during this period desire to imitate their ancestors' actions and inexperienced leaders with weak characters take place. Lack of courage, comfortable life, and unwillingness to war become the main principles. Bad habits and lavish lifestyle spread. The fifth and final stage is decline and dissolution, in which lack of money, an unmoral lifestyle, blaming for ancestors, and unfaithful soldiers. During this period the state is destroyed. After the last stage, when the sovereign power fall, another power rises.¹¹

The idea of historic cycles didn't diminish, in fact, it evolved more through the models and writings of many modern scholars such as Joshua S. Goldstein in his book *Long Cycles: Prosperity and War in the Modern Age*¹², where he likened empires diminishing to human midlife crisis; after a long period of expansion over confidence arises and governments become more likely to attack their strongest rivals and this doesn't end well, where governments end up diminishing just like what happened with Adolf Hitler and Napoleon I.

This research paper will look at the historic recurrence using different analogies as the previous ones were built on specific patterns as if they are happening to people and ignored people's choice of entering the cycle of repetition. Meanwhile, the shifts in the international order that takes place in these analogies have patterns that are real and true at a point that allows decision-makers to make effective use of the past to make sense of the future.

Theories of international relations are defined as a set of ideas used to explain how the international system works, with evidence, and describe states as national interest-seeking

¹¹Onder, Murat & Ulasan, Fatih. (2018). **Ibn Khaldun's Cyclical Theory on the Rise and Fall of Sovereign Powers: The Case of Ottoman Empire**. 231-266. 10.31679/adamakademi.4539440.

¹²Joshua S. Goldstein (1988) . **Long Cycles: Prosperity and War in the Modern Age**. New Haven: Yale University Press

actors. Realism is one of the oldest schools of thought; it dates back to the writings of Thucydides about the Peloponnesian War in Ancient Greece. Realism is based mainly on the belief that politics is a power struggle and states are the main actors in international relations characterized by being self-interested and pursuing their national interests. Realists see world politics as a continual, non-stop, struggle for power as the strong dominate the weak. Moreover, there is a constant possibility of war, since states are self-interest actors who seek only their survival, therefore, cooperation is less likely to take place because each state is always uncertain about the intentions of its neighbors, with no permanent friend nor permanent enemy. In his book, *The Prince*, Machiavelli likened human nature to the nature of the global world, self-interested. Accordingly, for realists, war is always on the table as peace is only achieved when military power is distributed to prevent the monopolizing of a single superpower from controlling the world. Consequently, states will always be in a continuous struggle for power, as Thomas Hobbes mentioned, it's *a war against all* since there will be a small power that grows and threatens the monopolization of a single actor with power and this disturbs the balance of power. Any possibility to exclude this aspiration for states to reach maximum power is considered for realists a hopeless utopian aspiration, therefore, states must maximize their military capabilities to deter any attack as they are always prepared for war. The only way to reach peace is through a shift in power among opposing alliances to counter each other.¹³

One of the main critiques that were addressed to the realists was their definition of balance of power since the state's main goal is to maximize its power and this is achieved in many ways, for instance, deterring another state to rise and a continuous state of countering, therefore, peace is not on the table for them; security of one means in security for all. During the period between WWI and WWII, the world was destroyed, and states thought they now need peace rather than power, so, contributions were made to encourage more cooperation among states to reduce any possibility of a new war, unfortunately, this was an unachievable end, since the outbreak of WWII, states knew that the power struggle will always be there.

Regardless of the pessimistic nature of realism, it described people's real intentions best; when international actors were given a choice between cooperation to achieve the balance of power or maximizing their power, they chose more power. John Mearsheimer, a realist political theorist, quoted in his book *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*:

¹³ Charles W. Kegley and Shanon L. Blanton (2011) , **World Politics: Trends and Transformations**. Edition, Cengage Brain, United States of America, 2011. Chapter 2 P29-37

*Great powers fear each other. They regard each other with suspicion, and they worry that war may be in the offing. They anticipate danger. There is little room for trust. . . . From the perspective of any one great power, all other great powers are potential enemies. . . . The basis of this fear is that in a world where great powers have the capability to attack each other and might have the motive to do so, any state bent on survival must be at least suspicious of other states and reluctant to trust them.*¹⁴

Classical realism explained world politics in terms of the individual decisions taken by states that are inherently self-interested by nature. Eventually, realism evolved to neorealism, sometimes called structural realism, where power politics is explained in terms of anarchy; differences in relative power within the global hierarchy, and most importantly, the distribution of military powers. In the structural realism model, conflicts are explained in the structure of the international system.¹⁵

Many contributions were made and will be discussed in this paper, by international actors to reach a state of peace, but conflicts, wars, and aggression kept on growing, sometimes in similar patterns, as explained in Power Transition Theory; which is a theory of international relations stemmed out from the structural theory to explain the long threads of war, and peace is only achieved when there is imbalance.

The seeds of future wars are found in the past ones; the seeds for WWII were in WWI. In power transition theory, war is more likely when a dominant great power is threatened by the growth in its rival's capabilities, which by other means reduces its relative power. There are three triggers for great power wars, transition in power, relative power parity, and dissimilarity in the preference for the status quo. Power transition theory had explained the reasons and results for armed aggression.¹⁶

Although liberalism is one of the mainstream theories and is the dominant ideological force shaping Western political thought in believing in universal and perpetual peace, realism and theories that evolved from it managed to explain more the real intentions of international actors and their desire to seek power and achieve their own interests at any cost. Theories that evolved from realism had proved the certainty of the impossibility of achieving global peaceful international relations that last for a long time. Power transition theory is explained

¹⁴John J. Mearsheimer (2001). **The Tragedy of Great Power Politics**. W. W. Norton & Company. Chapter 2 Anarchy and the struggle for power.

¹⁵ Andrew Heywood (2011). **Global Politics**. Palgrave Macmillan. Chapter 3. P54.

¹⁶OpCit **World Politics: Trends and Transformations**. Chapter 7. P267-270.

through the long cycle theory of war; where a small actor grows to be a great power causing shifts in the international order by threatening the available great power. This cycle has been repetitive in the history of international relations in many patterns.

Nothing new develops without a past. The usage of historical analogies served to explain and make sense of international relations problems and also promised to provide some sense of rationality and predictability for the study of the history of international relations and decision-makers.

William Strauss and Neil Howe are two American Authors who presented the generational cycle theory in their book *Generations, The History of America's Future: 1584-2069*. Strauss and Howe argued that the last five hundred years in Anglo-American history can be explained by the existence of four generational archetypes that repeat sequentially in a fixed pattern every 80-100 years cycle, like the average lifetime of a human. As each generation moves up the ladder and takes a different place, serious changes take place. There are four historical turnings presented in the Strauss-Howe model, high (first turning), awakening (second turning), unraveling (third turning), and crisis (four turning).¹⁷

The first turning, High, which usually follows a crisis era. It is a time of strong civic values; institutions are strong and individualism is weak. During high, governments focus on planning and building, it is the era in which big technological advances take place.

The second turning, Awakening, is the era in which the focus shifts from building institutions to developing individuals' inner life. The way of looking into things during this era is utopian. Activists consider this era a chance to cause cultural and spiritual improvements since the previous era was poor in these two objectives.

The third turning, Unravelling, liberating cultural forces are set loose, individualism and personal satisfaction are the highest, and trust in public institutions is at the lowest. People seek pleasure and extreme lifestyles during this time, more than ever. During this period, government leaders ignore problems, therefore, confidence in society's future darkens and the culture feels consumed and diminished. Art during this era reflects the growing pessimism.

¹⁷ Brett & Kate McKay. **The Generations of Men: How the Cycles of History Shape Your Values and Your Future.** Published on 5th June 2020, last updated on 28th September 2022.
<https://www.artofmanliness.com/character/knowledge-of-men/strauss-howe-generational-cycle-theory/>

The fourth turning, Crisis, is the era in which institutional life is destroyed; the community is threatened by economic distress, hyperinflation, widespread unemployment, natural disasters, man-made disasters...etc. These are the disasters that the government leaders ignored during the unraveling.

Research Methodology:

This research will discuss the importance and the effect of studying the history of international relations, especially American history, and how this study will provide a predictive model for the future. The main question that this research aims to answer is why it is important to learn from history, not only why, but also how to do so. This research aims to provide analysis for decision-makers to take a closer look at history, but with a cyclic scope in order to make predictions for future crises and provide solutions for current ones. The generations theory by Strauss and Howe will be the method of analyzing the gathered data to explain how the cyclic nature of history had explained historical development.

In order to satisfy the objective of this research, the research approach adopted is qualitative research, since its main characteristics are the analysis, and interpretation of comprehensive narrative and visual data to gain insights into a particular phenomenon of interest. Qualitative research can be characterized as the simultaneous study of many aspects of a phenomenon and the attempt to study things as they exist naturally. Secondary data were used because the needed information was supposed to describe the nature of international relations throughout history and the role played by the US after WWII. For the purpose of this research, the type of data collected needed to enjoy a high level of credibility since it represents events from the past.

For the purpose of this research, different sources of information were adopted to gather data. Books, as they contain important scholarly information, and are particularly helpful for theoretical, philosophical, and historical inquiries. The main access for books used in this research is the university library and google scholar. Academic articles, because articles in scholarly journals are valued and trustworthy as their publication includes a process of reviewing to ensure its accuracy. News, because it can provide better insights that academic sources cannot, like finding out people's reactions, opinions, and prevailing attitudes around the time of an event. Encyclopedias, as are written by different contributors who are knowledgeable about the topic. Therefore, encyclopedias are reliable sources of information because they have been edited by experts in various fields. All the gathered data, using the internet or libraries, were analyzed to be put in a certain chapter to serve a certain purpose in the whole research. Each piece of information was analyzed and tested for its validity and importance for the research purpose.

The main limitation while collecting data was finding anon-bias history writing because the era the research is covering was mainly characterized by ideological disputes. Therefore, each piece of information needed to be tested for its biases since the objective of the research is to provide an analysis that can be used on many levels and not support one party against the other.

Case Study:

History of the US (1929-2023)

Chapter 1: Crisis (Forth Turning)

The Great Depression and WWII (1929-1945)

The seeds of WWII were found in WWI. The most significant events during this period are the great depression and WWII. The great war, WWI, had left mutual exhaustion among European countries, although, some were victorious, Britain, the USA, France, and Italy, and others were defeated on the battlefield, most importantly, Germany. In 1919, at the Palace of Versailles, Paris Peace Conference was held, thirty-two political leaders representing three-quarters of the world population attended. The man of the hour at that time was US President Woodrow Wilson, who was greeted by the people of the major European capitals, as he presented the fourteen principles on which Germany surrendered.

Victorious members had different ambitions regarding peace agreements at the conference, US wanted to implement the fourteen principles, Wilson's fourteen principles as its project to bring back peace, Britain wanted to maintain the balance of power needed to secure its empire, France wanted to dismember Germany to create security for itself, and Italy wanted the territories it was promised to have. Germany, along with other defeated countries, was forced to sign treaties that provided different peace than it had anticipated. Versailles treaties and the upheavals in Europe have contributed to creating a new world and changed maps of Europe and the Middle East. Germany was forced to sign these treaties as the victorious wanted to impose harsh peace that would prevent any revival of German military power that might endanger their security. This harsh peace fueled the fire for WWII.¹⁸

One of the main achievements of the Versailles Treaty was the establishment of the first international organization, The League of Nations. The League of Nations was the first international organization whose primary mission was to maintain world peace. Therefore, the principle of collective security was the most important to achieve the League's primary goal. Accordingly, Article 16 of the Versailles Treaty stated that an act of aggression against any of the members is an act against all; an invasion of a country would automatically bring

¹⁸ Richard W. Mansbach and Kriten L. Rafferly. (2008). **Introduction to Global Politics**. Routledge. P119-122.

forward the combined might of all¹⁹. Europe was a product of realist's vision while the League of Nations was a liberal effort to bring an end to war, although, preventing conflicts was, indeed, the cause of conflicts, collective security was supposed to prevent conflicts by making it an obligation that all members should aid victims of aggression and make it a common interest to achieve global peace and stability. The league members combined their efforts to punish aggressors rather than preventing aggressions in the first place, they believed to have no permanent friend or enemy. Realists never had hope in collective security since it was clear that if a great power member was dissatisfied with any of the League's obligations and had the military capability to resist the League's collective sanctions it would do so without hesitations as these obligations were voluntary.²⁰

Regardless of the optimistic nature that the League of Nations created in achieving peace after years of wars, the 1920s were fortunate years for the League until political and economic crises began to arise in the 1930s and everything began moving downhill. The fact that the US never joined the League was a key source of ineffectiveness; according to the US Constitution, the president can sign treaties but the Senate must ratify the treaty by two-thirds at least. The US adopted the policy of isolationism at that time, which indicated that it must avoid overseas involvement, political and military.

The League failed to apply sanctions on violations of great powers, for example in 1923 when the French occupied the industrial Ruhr to force Germany to pay for reparations it owed, this incident fueled the crisis-era which is about to start; Germans quietly responded with passive resistance. The German government provided funding by printing money. As a result, catastrophic inflation broke out in Germany, wiping out people's money.²¹ By 1930, all dreams of things would get better disappeared as political and economic conditions got worse.

The significant crises during this period of the cycle were political, WWII, and economic, the great depression. In 1929, US President Herbert Hoover began his term, and a huge economic crisis took place in the same year, the Great Depression. The great depression began in August 1929, it was the longest and deepest downturn in the history of the United States and the modern industrial economy. The great depression occurred as a result of a series of financial crises including the stock market crash in 1929, a series of regional

¹⁹Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. **Treaty of Versailles**. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Treaty-of-Versailles-1919>.

²⁰ Ibid. **Introduction to Global Politics**. P122-133.

²¹ Ibid. **Introduction to Global Politics**. P134.

banking panics from 1930-1931, and a series of national and international financial crises in 1931-1933. This downturn hit the bottom in March 1933 when the commercial banking system collapsed. After then, sweeping reforms of the financial system accompanied the economic recovery, despite that, it was cut short by a double-dip recession in 1937.²²

The US stock market crash in 1929, or it can be called the great crash, is a sharp decline in the stock market values in the US resulting great depression that lasted ten years. During the mid-1920s, the US stock market went through a rapid expansion, therefore, the public rushed to brokers to invest their liquid assets and savings in order to sell it as profit. Consequently, billions of dollars were withdrawn from banks in Wall Street broker for loans to carry margin accounts. People sold what they have to pour cash into the stock market. Any warnings of the precarious foundations of this system were noticed but disregarded. The Great Crash deeply affected both industrialized and non-industrialized countries in the world. The first panic for the Wall Street crash was on the 24th of October, Black Thursday, and the second panic was on the 28th of October, Black Monday.²³

Europe and the rest of the world also were badly hit by the Great Depression, no part of Europe was left untouched, especially Poland, Germany, and Austria. The unemployment level was raised to its high, one in five of the population was unemployed. Trade between European countries collapsed and by 1932, the value of European trade had fallen to one-third of its value in 1929. The depression brought mass unemployment and poverty to all levels of European society. Levels of inflation began to rise in the early 1920s, it moved across Europe. The problems were most intense in Germany, Austria, and Hungary as governments resorted to printing more money to pay for the war, economic reconstruction, new welfare demands, and reparations. Not only governments, but the experience of inflation had also deeply affected European society by seeing pensions and savings turn into worthless paper. The European economy began to fall as it was restrained by the fall in prices, lack of demand, and a high rise in the level of unemployment.²⁴

²² Gary Richardson. **The Great Depression 1929–1941**. www.federalreservehistory.org . 22nd November 2013. <https://www.federalreservehistory.org/essays/great-depression#:~:text=The%20Depression%20was%20the%20longest,financial%20crises%20punctuated%20the%20contraction.>

²³ Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. **The stock market crash of 1929**. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/event/stock-market-crash-of-1929>

²⁴ Pariticia Calvin. (2000). **The Great Depression in Europe, 1929-39**. www.Historytoday.com. Published in History Review Issue 37 September 2000. <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/great-depression-europe-1929-39>

On the other hand, this period marked the rise of militarism and fascism, upon which the evolution of WWII was fueled. Fascism as an ideology emerged during this era, it emerged as a political ideology, neither anti-communist nor antisocialist, it was mainly military nationalist, and in favor of economic security, law, and order, even if this would only be achieved through a dictatorial rule. Mussolini was a dictator who seized power in Italy in 1922 as the first dictatorship in Europe in a country that had maintained a parliamentary government since unification in 1861. Mussolini and his fascists had threatened to take over the government and promised to restore order and stability. Therefore, the king appointed him as prime minister and the parliament granted him a year of emergency power to restore order in the country. Within a few years, Mussolini had altered the parliament, put the press under supervision, and canceled all political parties except for his fascists.²⁵

Hitler's early life, and when he came into power, paralleled that of Mussolini. Hitler smashed the nation's democratic institutions and transformed Germany into a war state with the intention to conquer Europe. Hitler had supreme authority, and without the support of the Nazi party and the powerful German officer class, he wouldn't have risen to power. The Nazi Party was formed by Hitler and other patriotic Germans who were humiliated by the terms of the Versailles Treaty; Germany was obligated to pay thirty-three Billion Dollars as war reparations, surrender all of its colonial territories to the victorious, lost its military and merchant fleets, limit the army to one thousand, and to turn over its coal mines in the Saar to France. As a result, Hitler called for a new leader in Germany to restore its dignity, a national leader. Hitler believed that inferior groups with capitalist ideologies, Jews, are the reason behind the German defeat, therefore, he made sure to spread this ideology, the Aryan race, to justify the Holocaust. Millions of European Jews were murdered in Germany and all the countries that Hitler took.²⁶

In 1935, Mussolini invaded Ethiopia, this was the first violation of the treaty of the League of Nations, two years later Italy withdrew itself from the League of Nations. In 1939, Hitler began marching 1939 toward Poland and managed to invade Poland. By mid-1940, Nazi troops invaded Norway and Denmark, Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France, forcing a French surrender within six weeks. With notable speed and ease, Hitler had taken

²⁵ Ibid. **A Concise History of Modern Europe, Liberty, Equality, Solidarity.** P134

²⁶ The National WWII Museum. **How Did Adolf Hitler Happen? Adolf Hitler's Rise to Power.** [www.nationalww2museum.com](https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/how-did-adolf-hitler-happen) . <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/how-did-adolf-hitler-happen>

over most of Europe. In the summer of 1940, England was the only country that remained at war with Germany²⁷.

In 1933, President Franklin Roosevelt was elected to succeed Hoover. After Roosevelt met the Soviet commissar for foreign affairs, Maxim Litvinov at the White House, he announced that the US will establish diplomatic relations with the USSR. Although the US did not physically take part in WWII, after the bombing of Pearl Harbor by Japan in 1941, the US declared war on Japan and officially participated in WWII. Germany surrendered in May 1945. After the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan surrendered in September 1945, and the Second World War came to an end²⁸. The League of Nations failed to stop Hitler or any of the countries that launched attacks or were attacked during WWII. Therefore, countries began withdrawing themselves from the organization, and any chance of maintaining collective peace faded. Hitler's march toward Russia was the straw that broke the camel's back, Hitler failed to strategically plan this march from the beginning, and the German army surrendered, while Hitler killed himself.

The end of WWII marks the end of the crisis era, The era which left the world with economic depression, much of Europe, Asia, and parts of Africa were ruined, cities were bombed, and bridges and railroads were destroyed. Millions of military and civilian lives were destroyed. countries spent more money on World War II than in all previous wars put together. By 1945, exhausted countries faced severe economic problems that frustrated reconstruction efforts.²⁹

The end of the crisis left the world in severe depression. While the WWI end was horrifying with the deaths of ten million, WWII was far worse, about sixty million deaths were recorded in Europe, and Asia only. It was the first war in which civilians were systematically targeted; the bombing of Hiroshima-Nagasaki. The end of this era marked a change in the scope and depth of warfare.³⁰

According to Strauss and Howe's model, the crisis is the period in which everything that was ignored or left behind starts to appear; problems kept under the rug start appearing.

²⁷ Ibid. **A Concise History of Modern Europe, Liberty, Equality, Solidarity.** P138

²⁸ Library of Congress. **Presentation, U.S. History Primary Source Timeline, World War II.**

<https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/united-states-history-primary-source-timeline/great-depression-and-world-war-ii-1929-1945/world-war-ii/>

²⁹ International Monetary Fund. **Money Matters: An IMF Exhibit -- The Importance of Global Cooperation Destruction and Reconstruction (1945-1958).** Part 1 of 6. www.IMF.org.

https://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/center/mm/eng/mm_dr_01.htm

³⁰ Ibid. **A Concise History of Modern Europe, Liberty, Equality, Solidarity.** P141

In 1945, the world was left at its lowest, regardless of the fact that WWII was a zero-sum game, all were left damaged and destroyed. The international order remained a multipolar system, although great powers were changing and Germany managed to take control of most of Europe.

Chapter 2: High (First Turning)

America's Most High (1946-1964)

A high, according to Strauss and Howe's model follows a crisis. It is the era of planning, building, and technological advances. This period is commonly known as the Golden Age of economic growth. This era is the golden age of capitalism, it marked the establishment of new actors; international organizations. Intergovernmental organizations, IGO, are usually founded upon treaties or multilateral agreements. Member states determine the way in which an organization is run, vote within the organization, and provide its funding³¹. While the traditional focus of international relations was mainly on states, since 1945 until this moment, international relations are no way spoken of by states only or be seen without international organizations. This era marks the beginning of the longest war ever known in American History, the Cold War, policies adopted by the US were part of its grand strategy during the Cold War. In 1945, President Harry Truman came into office. Truman's term was the era the Marshall Plan was adopted and implemented to contain the West.

The period between 1950-1973, is referred to as the Golden Age of economic growth. The growth in exports promoted investment at home, therefore an increase in output and productivity, making economies more competitive in the international market, therefore an increase in foreign sales. The rise in external demand, secured by universal adherence to trade liberalization, made investment more profitable and thus, facilitated high investment, high productivity, and low wage equilibrium characteristic of Western economies during the 1950s and early 1960s. it was a rapid growth after experiencing a major recession.³²

The League of Nations was disbanded and the United Nations was founded in 1945 on the bases that the previous league failed to achieve, securing war-free life for the upcoming generations. The UN Charter aimed at achieving many ends to secure a better future for the succeeding generations as this generation had witnessed two terrible wars successively. Besides maintaining international peace and security, reaffirming faith in fundamental human rights, establishing conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations from the treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and promoting social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom. In addition, to avoid any possible wars and maintain peace and security, developing friendly relations based on

³¹ Shazelina Z. Abidin. (2016). **International Organizations**, E.International Relations. www.e-ir.info

³² VONYÓ, T. (2008). **Post-war Reconstruction and the Golden Age of economic growth**, **European Review of Economic History**, Cambridge University Press. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41378546>. P221–241.

equal rights and self-determination of people's rights was a must to strengthen cooperation on various bases. Worldwide cooperation was highly encouraged to solve international economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian problems. The UN serves as a center where countries can coordinate their actions and activities to achieve these ends³³. Since this turning is the era of institutions, the US is important to the UN body because the inspiration behind its establishment was the League of Nations, also it is a charter member of the UN and a permanent member of the UNSC.

In 1947, the economic situation looked frustrating. Forty-four countries agreed to international cooperation, many hoped that the US would provide economic aid to help resolve the crisis. By the end of WWII, unlike other countries which were struggling, the US ended the world as the greatest world creditor, holding most of the world's gold, with a substantial balance of payment surplus, and almost no physical damage on its own land.³⁴

The International Monetary Fund, IMF, is one of the main organizations that sought to build a framework for international economic cooperation. IMF was established in 1944, and within it was the World Bank was designed as a lending institution that focuses on long-term development and social projects³⁵. IMF has been also known as the world's financial crisis fighter which the member countries rely on to deal with crippling sovereign debt and prevent contagion from spreading through the global financial system.³⁶

Post War era is known for its extraordinary economic achievements. The Bretton Wood Conference, in 1944, paved the way for currency convertibility and a more open trading system. Consequently, economic growth and interdependence among nations are witnessed, underscoring the benefits of international cooperation on economic issues. The main objective of economic policies during this era is to promote faster economic growth and increase the integration of the world economy through founded institutions. This objective has been achieved to a remarkable extent through expanded access to education, an increase in saving and investment, technological advances, and greater integration of countries into the world economy through trade, communications, and capital markets. Almost all countries

³³ Lynch, C. M. , Fomerand, . Jacques and Mingst, . Karen. **United Nations**. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/United-Nations>

³⁴ Ibid. **Destruction and Reconstruction (1945-1958)**. Part 2 of 6. www.IMF.org. https://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/center/mm/eng/mm_dr_02.htm

³⁵ International Monetary Fund. **Articles of agreement of the International Monetary Fund**. United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference (1944 : Bretton Woods, N.H.). Article I. P2

³⁶ Jonathan Masters, Andrew Chatzky, and Anshu Siripurapu. **The IMF: The World's Controversial Financial Firefighter**. www.cfr.org. <https://www.cfr.org/backgroundunder/imf-worlds-controversial-financial-firefighter>

have benefited from the postwar economic expansion. A significant improvement in the quality of life worldwide, particularly in developing countries.³⁷

When the US entered WWII, this caused huge changes in American life; men and women entered military life and witnessed parts of the world they wouldn't have otherwise. When WWII ended, the US was in better condition than any other country, therefore an active foreign policy was pursued to help Western countries and Asia since the US was at a time of economic growth and general prosperity. In 1948, the US start enacting the Marshall Plan after being approved by President Harry Truman, it is also known as the European recovery program which sought to provide aid for Western European countries after the devastation of the wars. The Marshall Plan was a reconstruction plan to rebuild cities, industries, and the infrastructure that had been heavily damaged during the war. The long-term end of this plan is to remove trade barriers between European countries, as well as foster commerce between these countries and the US. The US was the only superpower that has not been damaged by wars. Sixteen European Nations, including Britain, France, Belgium, Norway, Netherlands, and West Germany, were targeted in this reconstruction plan. On the other hand, the Soviet Union refused to be part of this plan to secure its internal affairs from the US intervention; this plan was put in to block the spread of Communism to the West.³⁸

Decolonization is a process by which colonies become independent of their colonizing countries. After WWII, European countries lacked the political support and economic resources to suppress the revolts in their colonies. On the international level, two superpowers rose and the world seemed like moving toward a new order; these powers were the USA in the West and the USSR in the East, and both had explained their opposition to colonization. According to the UN Charter, countries should enjoy their right to self-determination.³⁹

After WWII, agreements were made between Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Joseph Stalin in Yalta 1945 on the topic of dividing Germany between victorious allies; Great Britain, the USA, USSR, and France, four zones of occupation. Each zone was ruled almost independently. In 1947, the US and Great Britain combined their economic zones but remained separate political entities. Four Years after WWII, in 1949, the

³⁷ International Monetary Fund. External Relations Dept. Tamim Bayoumi (1995). **Finance and Development**. International Monetary Fund. P48-49.

³⁸ Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute. **Marshall Plan, 1948**.
<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/marshall-plan>

³⁹ Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. **Decolonization**. Encyclopedia Britannica.
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/decolonization>

three western zones joined together formally forming the Federal Republic of West Germany, on the other hand, the Soviet Zone became the German Democratic Republic of East Germany⁴⁰. Consequently, the West zone was included in the Marshall Plan reconstructing Western Europe, whose plans and policies were capitalist. On the other hand, the Eastern zone was a communist zone under the rule of the USSR.

The division of Germany marks the beginning of a new era in which great powers are dissolving and dividing into only two Great Powers; the USA in the west and the USSR in the east ending an era of an international order, the multipolar order. By 1948, the Soviets had installed left-wing governments in Eastern European countries, on the other side, the USA feared the permanent dominance and the threat of Soviet-influenced communist parties that came into power in the democracies of Western Europe. The Soviets wanted to maintain control of Eastern Europe in order to safeguard against any possible threat from Germany and to spread communism, which was the biggest threat for the Western Allies, led by the US. The aid provided by the Marshall Plan had put Western Europe under American influence. The Soviet Armies were situated in central and eastern Europe, therefore, a need for a military alliance to counterweight the Soviet Armies, in 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty established the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. As a result, a unified military organization among the Soviet countries was formed in 1955, the Warsaw Pact.⁴¹ The Cold War reached its peak in 1948- 1953.

During WWII, the US didn't participate by any means, until 1945; in order to avoid a costly invasion of Japan, the US decided to end the war by dropping an atomic on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, while the Soviets had already declared also war on Japan. Doing so, the US declared its technological superiority and consequently declared the beginning of the Cold War. In 1953, President Eisenhower won the election and announced the US plans for the first artificial satellites. During this period, high, the US made decisions on many levels that proved its strong effective existence in the international system, starting with developing its nuclear weapons, which started the nuclear race with the Soviets, Launching Explorer 1 satellite, and sending the first man to ever step on the moon, 1969⁴². All the technological

⁴⁰ Chris Knowles. (2014). **Germany 1945-1949: a case study in post-conflict reconstruction.** www.historyandpolicy.org . <https://www.historyandpolicy.org/policy-papers/papers/germany-1945-1949-a-case-study-in-post-conflict-reconstruction>

⁴¹ Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. **Cold War.** Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Cold-War>

⁴² Titan Missile Museum. Cold War Timeline. www.titanmissilemuseum.com . <https://titanmissilemuseum.org/about/cold-war-timeline/>

advances took place during John F. Kennedy's term, as he came into office in 1961. These were the most plauded decisions made by the government, other decisions, like the Korean and Vietnamese wars, were plauded at its time, but were criticized in the aftermath, marking a new era of looking into governmental decisions.

The Cold War was not characterized by direct armed conflicts but by proxy wars as in the Korean and Vietnamese, which took place in southern Asia, and a series of propaganda campaigns that aimed to undermine the other side. The US propaganda was fueled by increasing the fear of communism and encouraging democracy. House Un-American Activities Committee, HUAC, is a committee established to investigate disloyalty and rebel activities by private citizens, public employees, and organizations suspected of having communist ties. Also, this committee did a series of hearings designed to show the communist subversion in the US. Fear of communists generated caused people to testify against each other, and therefore being blacklisted in any field they were in.⁴³ The influence of this organization had expanded to an extent that made people split into two opinions, one group felt that this is an invasion of their freedom, and others saw it as a necessity to secure national security.

The first turning, a high, is characterized by governmental institutions' two main actions: planning and building. During this era, several treaties and institutions were made to reconstruct what was damaged during the war. It is the era of institutionalism, not individualism. The establishment of organizations supported this purpose and was used by the two superpowers, the USA in the West and the USSR in the East, by several means to maintain the opposing aims of each. The end of WWII marked the end of the multipolar order and the beginning of the bipolar order.

⁴³ Truman Presidential Inquiries. **House Un-American Activities Committee**. www.trumanlibrary.gov. <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/education/presidential-inquiries/house-un-american-activities-committee>

Chapter 3: Awakening (Second Turning)

Consciousness Revolutions (1964-1984)

In the previous turning, the main focus was poured on rebuilding the country and its institutions, putting laws and regulations, and establishing international organizations to regulate international relations. During this era, a shift from building institutions to developing individuals' inner life; activists took this as a chance for cultural and spiritual improvements.

This turning began with the assassination of President Kennedy. In 1963, President Johnson began his term as president of the US. The period between 1945 and 1991 is known as the Cold War, this war was not depending on weapons and fighting in the field, in fact, it was a political, economic, and propaganda war, a war of two different ideologies each trying to march west or east more and force its ideology on the other side by many ways.

Since the beginning of the Cold War, the tension between these two superpowers was on many levels. The Americans were fueled with fear of communist expansion, on the other hand, the Soviets perceived the Americans to be bellicose rhetoric, arms build-up, and interventionists. For the US, the best defense plan against Communist expansionism was the containment strategy; since no way could these two powers agree on something nor start a new world war. Therefore, the American foreign policy for four decades was containing the spread of communism and preventing its spread.⁴⁴

The US policies during this era were working on the Cold War and containment of its allies against the threat of communism and on consciousness revolutions that were taking place inside the country as a result of a rise in individualism and a call for individual rights rather than collective country policies. The 1960s were a time of enormous change in the boundaries of American individualism.⁴⁵ Some of the opposition that was raised during these revolutions were based on opposition to the current foreign policy of the US.

Regardless of the achievements in civil rights during this period, this era began with a huge shock, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, in 1963. This incident was a shock to the nation and incited new social movements rebelling against the now well-established government and social institutions from the High.

⁴⁴ History.com Editors.(2009). **Cold War History**. A&E Television Networks. www.History.com .
<https://www.history.com/topics/cold-war/cold-war-history>

⁴⁵ Everett Carl Ladd. (1989). **Individualism in America. The '60s began an era of changes in the boundary between 'me' and 'we'**. www.csmonitor.com. <https://www.csmonitor.com/1989/0103/elladd.html>

In her book, *Feminine Mystique*,⁴⁶ which was published in 1963, Betty Friedan described the pervasive dissatisfaction among women in American Society after WWII. She coined the name of the book to describe the societal assumption that women could find fulfillment through marriage, housework, and bearing and raising children. On the other hand, women have no desire for pursuing a career, have higher education, or have a political voice. Friedan noticed that housewives were not satisfied with what they are and what they have, but had difficulty articulating their feelings. Feminists went to Law Court to fight for equality, stand up against discrimination, and work on the legal aspects of women's rights. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission was instituted to enforce equal pay. In 1960, 37.7 % of American women were in the workforce, which is 60% less than men, with few chances of advancements and little representation of women in professions. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 has opened the way to lawsuits against discrimination in employment. The professions began to open up for women and increase in payment as well. This book was the spark for feminist movements, by 1970, 43.3% of women are in the workforce, and the number is growing.⁴⁷

In 1966, the National Organization for Women was formed, and in 1968, feminists protested at the Miss America contest in Atlantic City, arguing that pageant contests are sexist. The 1960s was a decade of change for women, cultural changes had led women to fight for their right to equal pay and end domestic violence. Deep cultural changes caused a shift in the role of women in American society, as a result, more females than ever entered the paid working force.⁴⁸

Not only for feminist movements but fighting for human rights for all depressed groups. Black rights movements. The Civil Rights Movement was a nonviolent social movement in the US to reject legalized racial discrimination in the US. In 1964, Congress passed Public Law. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Provisions of this civil rights act prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex, as well as, race in hiring, promoting, and firing. It also strengthened the enforcement of voting rights. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is the nation's

⁴⁶ Betty Friedan. (1963). ***Feminine Mystique***. W.W. Norton.

⁴⁷ Napikoski, Linda. (2021). ***The Women's Movement and Feminist Activism in the 1960s***. <https://www.thoughtco.com/1960s-feminist-activities-3529000>

⁴⁸ Kenneth T. Walsh. (2010). ***The 1960s: A Decade of Change for Women***. www.usnews.com . <https://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2010/03/12/the-1960s-a-decade-of-change-for-women#:~:text=Gradually%2C%20Americans%20came%20to%20accept,for%20housework%20and%20child%20rearing.%20>

benchmark civil rights legislation and continues to resonate in America. The Civil Rights Act was eventually expanded by Congress to strengthen the enforcement of these fundamental civil rights.⁴⁹

The rise in individualism during this period had taken a path during this period in which citizens, especially the youths who were kids or were not even born during wars, had openly expressed their refusal to the American foreign policy because it did not achieve the ends it declared it wanted to. Achieving international peace and security has been in the US foreign policy with its allies, but in reality, only proxy wars were taking place in countries that still have conflicts.

The civil rights movements in the early sixties led to the formation of Students for a Democratic Society, SDS. The SDS had a belief that a nonviolent youth movement could transform the US society into a model political system where people, rather than elites, would control the social policy. The principles adopted by members of these movements had led them to be frequently in conflict with government officials. In 1962, the political manifesto of the SDS movement was adopted by the founding members. The document adopted was based on criticizing the US political system for its failure to achieve international peace and security or to address the plenty of social ills, including racism, materialism, militarism, poverty, and exploitation. The manifesto called for Participatory Democracy that would empower citizens to share in the social decisions, and therefore, affect their life and well-being. Followers of these movements became subjects of investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI, for terrorist activities⁵⁰.

This movement, SDS, had generated a political awakening across college campuses, and this became the core of the counterculture movements that dominated student activism during the sixties. The Vietnam Anti-war movement was one of the most pervasive acts of opposition against government policy in modern times. Protests were all over the country, especially during the height of the war in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Anti-war marches attracted a widening base of support over the years, reaching their peak in early 1968 after the

⁴⁹ Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration & Management. **Legal Highlight: The Civil Rights Act of 1964.** <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasam/civil-rights-center/statutes/civil-rights-act-of-1964#:~:text=The%20Civil%20Rights%20Act%20of%201964%20prohibits%20discrimination%20on%20the,hiring%2C%20promoting%2C%20and%20firing.>

⁵⁰ William W. Riggs. (2009). **Students for a Democratic Society.** The First Amendment Encyclopedia. www.mtsu.edu . [https://www.mtsu.edu/first-amendment/article/1201/students-for-a-democratic-society#:~:text=Students%20for%20a%20Democratic%20Society%20\(SDS\)%2C%20a%20radical%20youth,the%20League%20for%20Industrial%20Democracy.](https://www.mtsu.edu/first-amendment/article/1201/students-for-a-democratic-society#:~:text=Students%20for%20a%20Democratic%20Society%20(SDS)%2C%20a%20radical%20youth,the%20League%20for%20Industrial%20Democracy.)

successful Tet Offensive by North Vietnamese troops, which proved that the end of the war in not near.⁵¹

By 1969, President Richard Nixon began his presidency. During his time, the US troops began withdrawing from Vietnam, and Southeast Asia. Vietnam protests began among peace activists and leftist intellectuals on college campuses and gained national prominence in 1965 after the US began bombing North Vietnam. In August 1964, North Vietnamese torpedo boats attacked two US destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin, as a result, President Lydon B. Johnson ordered the retaliatory bombing of military targets in North Vietnam. By the time the US planes began regular bombings, some critics began to question the government's assertion since it was fighting a democratic war to liberate the South Vietnamese people from communist aggression. Despite the support of the American population to the US government policy in the Vietnam War, a small outspoken minority was making its voice heard through protests, especially after President Johnson began increasing the aggressiveness of air and ground war in Vietnam.⁵² Disillusionment was beginning to increase as the taxpaying public knew about the cost of the war, twenty-five billion dollars per year. Under the draft system of conscription, thousands of men were called into service every month. These decisions had added fuel to the fire of the antiwar movements causing more demonstrations to take place⁵³.

On the 21st of October, one of the most prominent anti-war demonstrations took place at Lincoln Memorial, around thirty-five thousand headed for the Pentagon demanding to end the war in Vietnam. A smaller segment at the front moved forward, scaled the walls, and forced their way into the Pentagon. The Deputies and soldiers were taunted and assaulted with vegetables, rocks, and bottles. The troops inside the Pentagon rushed outside as the violence escalated and hundreds were arrested.⁵⁴

Students' demonstrations on college campuses were based on the belief that the Vietnam War was wrong. An anti-war fever grew by mid-1971, Daniel Ellsberg brought about the publication of the Pentagon papers which revealed previously confidential details about the conduct and misconduct by government and military officials. The revealed

⁵¹ White House Historical Association. **Anti-War Protests of the 1960s-70s**. www.whitehousehistory.org/anti-war-protests-of-the-1960s-70s

⁵² History.com Editors. (2010). **Vietnam War Protests**. A&E Television Networks. [www.History.com](http://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war/vietnam-war-protests) .
<https://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war/vietnam-war-protests>

⁵³ Alan Rohn. (2014). **How Much Did The Vietnam War Cost?**. www.thevietnam.info .
<https://thevietnamwar.info/how-much-vietnam-war-cost/>

⁵⁴ U.S. Marshals Service. **U.S. Marshals and the Pentagon Riot of October 21, 1967**. www.marshals.gov .
<https://www.usmarshals.gov/who-we-are/history/historical-reading-room/us-marshals-and-pentagon-riot-of-october-21-1967>

documents included evidence of broken treaties, deceptions, stolen elections, lies, and murder⁵⁵. These and other revelations have caused more Americans to doubt the accountability of the US government and the integrity of the US military establishment. In 1973, in the Paris Peace Accords, President Nixon announced the effective end to the war in Vietnam in response to the antiwar mandate.⁵⁶

In 1977, the US had a new president, Gerald Ford, during his presidency, the US witnessed the best years of steady inflation rates. In 1977, President Jimmy Carter began his term, and so does the economic recession.

By the end of Carter's term, the US and USSR were both committed to treaties to limit their nuclear race actions as a way of trying to reach peace and avoid the use or test of any of these destructive weapons. On the other hand, the new lifestyle was introduced in the West that constituted an ideological burden on the East, and would soon have its effectiveness.

⁵⁵ Alex Kingsbury. (2023) . **The Man Who Leaked the Pentagon Papers Is Scared**. [www.nytimes.com .
https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/24/opinion/international-world/ellsberg-nuclear-war-ukraine.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/24/opinion/international-world/ellsberg-nuclear-war-ukraine.html)

⁵⁶ Tom Valentine. (2013). **What was Paris Peace Accords?**. [www.thevietnam.info .
https://thevietnamwar.info/how-much-vietnam-war-cost/](https://thevietnamwar.info/how-much-vietnam-war-cost/)

Chapter 4: Unraveling (Third Turning)

Cultural Wars (1984-2006):

The third turning is the period in which liberating cultural forces are set loose, liberalism and personal satisfaction are at their highest, community trust in public institutions is at its lowest, and confidence in society's future is darkened; pessimism is growing. The third turning's most important mark is the ignorance of real problems by businesses and government leaders; therefore, these problems will accumulate and then explode in the upcoming turning, the fourth turning, crisis. The unraveling period, (1984-2006), began with Reagan's presidency.

The election for the presidency began in 1980, during Reagan's presidential campaign, he won the support of religious conservatives as he promoted family values. Reagan had an economic plan, the four pillars plan; reducing federal income and capital gains tax, reducing federal spending, reducing government regulations, and tightening the money supply to reduce inflation. The inflation rate was 20%, therefore, Reagan promised during his presidential campaign to restore the free market from excessive government regulation and encourage private initiative and enterprise. In August 1981, President Reagan persuaded Congress to lower taxes and signed the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981. The Act of 1981 brought a reduction in individual income tax rates, in expensing of depreciable property, in incentives for small businesses, and in incentives for savings. In 1986, another Tax Reform Act was signed to bring the lowest individual and corporate income tax rates⁵⁷. Reagan's economic plan included high-interest rates, combating inflation, and cutting taxes, especially for wealthy Americans. Therefore, rich people will spend more, and investing private sector will increase and so creating more jobs; lowering tax rates means that people will work hard to keep more money. Reagan's economic policies had resulted in gains in the short term, but in the long term, only rich people became richer, poverty increased, and no improvement was noticed in the conditions of the middle class, the cost of living went high, and crisis began taking place such as savings and loans S&L crisis in 1986 and the stock market crash in 1987.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Reagan Foundation. **The Second American Revolution: Reaganomics**. Ronald Reagan Foundation and Institution. www.reaganfoundation.com . <https://www.reaganfoundation.org/ronald-reagan/the-presidency/economic-policy/>

⁵⁸ Chester Pach, **Ronald Reagan and Supply-Side Economics**. www.billofrightsinstitute.com . <https://billofrightsinstitute.org/essays/ronald-reagan-and-supply-side-economics>

Regardless of the low tax rates which decreased the government revenues, Reagan increased the defense, since he believed that the US was exposed to a window vulnerability to the Soviet Union and its nuclear weapon. Reagan's defense buildup and inability to control federal spending on the welfare state meant the federal deficit swelled to record peacetime levels. Indeed, during his administration, the national debt increased by a larger amount than it had during all previous presidencies combined.

Reagan's foreign policy depended on two main aspects; winning the cold war and combatting communism. Reagan believed in the greatness of America and its leading role in world peace. During his first term, Reagan was calling the Soviet Union the evil empire, therefore, in 1983, President Reagan sent U.S. troops to Grenada to lead a multi-national force in liberating that country from an oppressive Marxist dictatorship. Not only were the communists ousted, but the troops also rescued nearly one thousand American medical students whose safety was in jeopardy under the brutal regime. Reagan was a realist, he understood the competitiveness of the world and believed that the US should be the champion of freedom for the people everywhere.⁵⁹

By the time Reagan left office, the military budget had increased by 43% more than any other military budget before, troop levels increased, more weapons, and equipment, and the country's intelligence program improved. America had closed the door to expensive military expenditure by the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, but Reagan's military build-up was cheered at a point under the slogan of making America great. "Star Wars" One of Reagan's controversial proposals was the Strategic Defense Initiative, SDI, it was a system intended to make the US invulnerable to any nuclear missile attacks by the USSR by stationing those defenses in outer space. The US managed, by this technique, to circumvent the United Nations Antiballistic Treaty, ABM. By 1983, Reagan announced his plans to create a shield against nuclear missile attacks. The Soviet Union and its military were in an economic dilemma trying to cope with the military race for preeminence, but the Soviets lagged far behind the West in computing⁶⁰. By the end of Reagan's two terms presidency, the

⁵⁹ Reagan Foundation. **President's Reagan Foreign Policy: Making the World over Again.** Ronald Reagan Foundation and Institution. <https://www.reaganfoundation.org/ronald-reagan/the-presidency/foreign-policy/>

⁶⁰ Greg Schneider and Renae Merle. (2004). **Reagan's Defense Buildup Bridged Military Eras.** [www.washingtonpost.com. https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/business/2004/06/09/reagans-defense-buildup-bridged-military-eras/ec621466-b78e-4a2e-9f8a-50654e3f95fa/](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/business/2004/06/09/reagans-defense-buildup-bridged-military-eras/ec621466-b78e-4a2e-9f8a-50654e3f95fa/)

national debt was very high due to small government revenue while extremely high military spending.

George H. W. Bush, who was Reagan's vice president came into power in 1989, the year in which the US was about to establish its superiority over the world. In the 1988 campaign, had made the most important pledge, no more raise in taxes⁶¹, however, Bush's presidency was more focused on foreign policies than domestic.

The Fall of the Berlin Wall took place during Bush's presidency, in 1989, which marks the beginning of a new era. The Fall of the Berlin Wall is one of the most famous scenes in recent history. On the 9th of November, 1989, five days after half a million people gathered in East Berlin in a mass protest, the Berlin Wall dividing communist East Germany from West Germany began to fall. Thousands flowed through, celebrating and crying, in scenes beamed around the world. Many climbed the wall at Berlin's Brandenburg gate, chipping away at the wall itself with hammers and pickaxes. The wall was eventually built in 1961 because East Berlin was sending people to the West, since life condition there was more advanced than those in the East. By the 1980s, the Soviet Union faced acute economic problems and major food shortages, and when a nuclear reactor at the Chornobyl power station in Ukraine exploded in April 1986, it was a symbolic moment in the impending collapse of the communist bloc. On 3 December, Gorbachev and Bush sat side by side in Malta and released a statement announcing the Cold War between the two powers was coming to a close.⁶²

Bush held talks with Gorbachev prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, both agreed to sign an arms control agreement that significantly cut both countries' nuclear arsenals. START I, signed on 31st of July, 1991, was the first treaty to require both the US and the USSR to reduce strategic nuclear weapons⁶³. The USSR collapsed when Gorbachev was in power, in 1991 marking the end of a bipolar order and the establishment of a new world order, the unipolar system. On the 3rd of January, 1993, START II was signed by Bush and Yeltsin, the Russian President, to limit strategic weapons, and required reductions

⁶¹ NBC News. (18th August 1988). **1988 Flashback: George H.W. Bush Says, 'Read My lips: No New Taxes'** . NBC News [Video]. <https://youtu.be/AdVSqSNHhVo>

⁶² BBC News. (5th November, 2019). **Fall of Berlin Wall: How 1989 reshaped the modern world.** [www.bbc.com](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-50013048). <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-50013048>

⁶³ Arms Control Association. **START I at a Glance.** www.armscontrol.com. <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/start1>

implemented in two phases. This treaty would remain in force for the duration of START I, which entered into force in 1994 and would expire in 2009.⁶⁴

By the time the US was implementing its superiority internationally, economic decisions needed to be made in domestic policies. Bush broke his pledge in 1988, of no more taxes, in 1990 as it was necessary for the 1991 fiscal year. The mid-1990 recession darkened the fiscal outlook further, although this increase, followed by another one during Clinton's presidency, had left the federal government in surplus and the economy booming, it had cost Bush his reelection.⁶⁵

In 1990, the Gulf War emerged, which was triggered by the Iraq invasion of Kuwait. Saddam Hussein ordered the invasion and occupation of Kuwait with the apparent aim of acquiring that nation's large oil reserves, canceling a large debt Iraq owed Kuwait, and expanding Iraq's power in the region. It was the first major international crisis of the post-Cold War era, and the US-led response would set important precedents for the use of military force over subsequent decades⁶⁶. In response, Bush sent a military force to Saudi Arabia, saying that the reason was to prevent Iraq's invasion of Saudi Arabia. Besides, he took the issue to the UNSC, which adopted a series of resolutions directed against Iraq. The UNSC condemned Iraq for aggression and also imposed a trade and financial embargo to force Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait. In November 1990, President Bush doubled the US forces in Saudi Arabia, stating that he wanted the capability to drive Iraq out of Kuwait. He approached the UNSC for a resolution sanctioning military force against Iraq, and the Council adopted Resolution 678. The most important sentence of the resolution was "all necessary means", therefore, Bush requested the House of Representatives and the Senate to adopt a resolution stating that Congress support the use of all necessary means to rescue Kuwait from the Iraqi invasion. In January 1991, Bush initiated a military air action on Iraq, leading a coalition of thirty-four states, depending on a UNSC resolution 678, however, no effort to seek a negotiated settlement led to Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Arms Control Association. **START II at a Glance**. www.armscontrol.com.
<https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/start2>

⁶⁵ John Harwood. (4th December 2018). **George HW Bush's compromise on raising taxes defied conservatives – and altered American politics**. www.cnbc.com. <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/12/04/george-hw-bush-defied-gop-by-raising-taxes-paid-steep-political-price.html>

⁶⁶ Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. **Persian Gulf War**. Encyclopedia Britannica.
<https://www.britannica.com/event/Persian-Gulf-War>

⁶⁷ John Quigley. (1992). **The United States and the United Nations in the Persian Gulf War: New Order or Disorder**. Vol.25. Issue 1. P1-10

By the 28th of February, 1992, Bush declared a cease-fire, announcing the end of the gulf war. The reaction to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was significantly fast, it was days from the invasion and international organizations began holding summits. Although the war began and ended in months, its consequences lasted years after that, and its effect was global.

By the time Bush's presidency ended, the US managed to reach superiority in the international order, announcing the beginning of a new international order, unipolar order. However, the situation domestically was not that good, the US witnessed high levels of unemployment and recessions. 1990 and 1991 witnessed a recession that lasted for eight months but caused a slight loss in the percentage of employment. During this recession, job losses were less severe but more widespread than prior recessions.⁶⁸

In 1993, Bill Clinton was elected the president, and he was more into domestic affairs than foreign affairs. Clinton's presidency was the era of cultural wars. Due to the increase in migrations, there was a struggle to define America. There was a struggle to define America and there was a huge polarization in American politics and culture. Issues that came up and were heatedly debated were abortion, gun policies, separation of church and state, privacy, recreational drugs, censorship, and homosexuality. The views on these issues usually weren't even divided by origin, race, ethnicity, social class, or political view, but rather it was more of the individual worldview. This was a defining change as America evolves. People took sides for their views and often argued or protest their position on some of these issues. Clinton found himself in the culture war due to changes in the nature of religion in America and its place in national life, the nature of the policy positions taken by the administration, and the controversy surrounding the circumstances of his impeachment.⁶⁹

Clinton's era witnessed improvement in domestic affairs, and the beginning of bombings, explosions at the World Trade Centre in 1993, and the bombing in Oklahoma City in 1995. These bombings marked the beginning of a string of threats against the US by both domestic and foreign terrorists. In December 1993, Clinton signed the North American Free Trade Agreement NAFTA, which eliminated trade barriers between the United States, Canada, and Mexico, creating the world's largest free trade zone. This agreement truly benefited all Americans. NAFTA was considered an administration victory, but many

⁶⁸ Christopher J. Singleton. (1993). **Industry employment and the 1990-91 recession**. Monthly Labour Review. P 15-16.

⁶⁹ David B. Cohen, John W. Wells. (2007). **In the Eye of the Storm Bill Clinton, the Culture War, and the Politics of Religion**. Journal of Religion and Society. Vol 9. The Kripke Center. P1-13.

regarded it as a net loss for American labor and the environment, which suffered in the absence of adequate Mexican regulations.⁷⁰

In January 2001, President George Bush Jr took office. Bush Jr presidency witnessed the end of the unraveling era in which most great events that would affect the upcoming era takes place. Bush Jr began his term with tax reductions. The highest tax policy changes were enacted by Bush Jr two Acts; The Economic Growth and Reconciliation Act of 2001 EGTRRA, and The Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003 JGTRRA. Despite promises from the proponent of the tax cuts, evidence proved that they did not improve the economy or pay for themselves as promised, tax cuts at their best, would pay for less than 10% of their long-term cost with increased growth. In fact, they ballooned deficits and debt and contributed to the rise in economic inequality. The economic expansion that lasted from 2001-2007 was weaker than the average.⁷¹

On 11th September 2001, a series of terrorist attacks were launched against the USA by using four hijacked passenger jet airliners, two of them crashed into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York causing collapse to the first North Tower and then the South one, the third airliner was crashed into the Pentagon, the Headquarters of the Department of Defense, in Virginia outside Washington DC, the fourth one was moving toward the White House in Washington but it crashed in a field near Pennsylvania after the passengers tried to seize control of the plane, there were no survivals on any of the flights, three thousands were killed. A videotape was released in October 2001, in which Osama Bin Ladin, as head of Al-Qaeda Organization, owned the responsibility of the attack and praised his followers, as “Vanguards of Islam”.⁷²

The 9\11 attacks changed the US and shifted its view on terrorism and security, it showed how fragile national borders had become in the age of technology. The political objects that the attack targeted had significance; the impact was great because the targets were great, the World Trade Centre, and the Pentagon, and it is believed that it was heading toward the White House. The targeted spots of the attacks have been symbols of global financial power, global military power, and global political power. The significance was the emergence of an intractable security threat. The attack wanted to destroy the myths of the

⁷⁰ Miller Center. **Bill Clinton-Key Events**. UVA. www.millercenter.org . <https://millercenter.org/president/bill-clinton/key-events>

⁷¹ Emily Horton. (2017). **The Legacy of the 2001 and 2003 “Bush” Tax Cuts**. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

⁷²History.com Editors. (2018). **September 11 Attacks**. www.History.com. <https://www.history.com/topics/21st-century/9-11-attacks>

USA's invulnerability; the world's greatest power had dealt such a devastating blow in its largest city and national capital. As a result, The US had invested all its power, politically, militarily, and economically, and initiated the 'War on Terror' to destroy the organization.⁷³

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were part of the Global War on Terror, GWOT. Bush Jr announced that the US had begun military action in Afghanistan. The initial strikes were against al-Qaeda terrorist training camps and Taliban military installations. In addition to military action, the US and its Coalition allies would provide humanitarian aid to the citizens of Afghanistan.⁷⁴

Bush Jr had raised the specter of Iraq's pursuit of WMD as one justification for taking decisive action against Iraq. Bush Jr announced that the US forces had begun a military occupation of Iraq, on March 2003, US forces invaded Iraq vowing to destroy WMD and end the dictatorial rule of Saddam Hussein. In June 2003, the US occupation killed Saddam's sons Uday and Qusay. In December 2003, Saddam Hussein was captured, and in November 2006, he was sent to trial and ended with a sentence of death by hanging. When WMD intelligence was proved illusory and violent insurgency arose, in January 2004, David Kay, the former US. weapons inspector, tells Congress: "We were almost all wrong." A presidential commission concludes in March 2005 that "not one bit" of prewar intelligence on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction panned out, therefore, the war lost public support. The US troops had fully withdrawn from Iraq in 2011 but left Iraq in total destruction.⁷⁵

⁷³ Ibid. **Global Politics**. Palgrave Macmillan. P291-295

⁷⁴ George W. Bush Library. Global War on Terror. www.georgewbushlibrary.gov .
<https://www.georgewbushlibrary.gov/research/topic-guides/global-war-terror>

⁷⁵ Council on Foreign Relations. **2003-2011 The Iraq War**. www.cfr.org . <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/iraq-war>

Chapter 5: Crisis (Fourth Turning)

The Financial Crisis and the Russian Invasion of Ukraine (2008-2023):

The fourth turning, the crisis, is the era in which institutional life is destroyed, and the community is threatened by economic distress caused by defaulting on the national debt, hyperinflation, widespread unemployment, social distress caused by class or race warfare, ecological distress caused by natural or man-made disasters, energy or water shortages, epidemic\pandemics, secessionism and civil revolts, and traditional or nuclear or cyber warfare. Disasters during crises are the ones that society failed to deal with during the unraveling.

By the end of Bush Jr term, the US had entered into a financial crisis that to a great extent was similar to the Great Depression of 1929, the 2008 financial crisis. The seeds of the financial crisis were planted during years of very low-interest rates and loose lending standards that fueled a housing price bubble in the US. It began with good intentions, lowering the income tax rates to boost the economy making money available to businesses and consumers at bargain rates. The result was an upward spiral in home prices as borrowers took advantage of the low mortgage rates. In the 2000s, investors were looking for low-risk and high-return investments, therefore, they started throwing money into the US housing market so as to get a better return from the interest rates paid by homeowners to mortgages. Subprime borrowers, those with poor or no credit history, were able to realize the dream of buying a home. As a result, interest rates started to rise and homeownership reached a saturation point. The Fed started raising rates in June 2004, and two years later the Federal funds rate had reached 5.25%, where it remained until August 2007. The early signs of the disasters were in 2004 when US homeownership had reached its peak, and then in early 2006, home prices began to fall. This caused real misery to many Americans because their homes were worth less than they paid for them. They couldn't sell their houses without owing money to their lenders. In 2007, subprime lenders began filing for bankruptcy, in April, New Century Financial, which specialized in subprime lending, filed for bankruptcy and laid off half of its workforce. The financial crisis 2007-2008 took years in the making. By 2007 summer, financial markets around the world were showing signs that the calculation was overdue for years of a binge of cheap credit. This crisis had brought Wall Street Giants to

their knees, triggered the great recession, and cost ordinary people their jobs, life savings, their homes, or all three⁷⁶.

This financial crisis caused the US to enter the deepest financial recession since WWII. It was also the longest, lasting eighteen months. The unemployment rate more than doubled. The economic recession ended in 2009, but the economic weakness was preserved; economic growth was only moderate, and long-term unemployment lasted for a year after that; it was a long unusual slow recovery.⁷⁷

Barack Obama began his presidential term in 2009 as the first African-American president of the US. Obama during his presidential campaign promised to end the war in Iraq, save the American middle class, put an end to partisan, racial, and economic divides, and unite the Country. In his early days of presidency, Obama managed to fulfill some of his campaign promises: support for reforms to a financial system like Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act 2009, and outlawed the torture of prisoners detained during the War on Terror. Obama implemented the most significant piece of medical care. Obamacare. During his term, Obama managed to end the war in Iraq, reduce troops in Afghanistan and was the fourth US president to win a Noble Prize, in 2009, for his extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples.⁷⁸⁷⁹

During the crisis era, the public's trust in institutions is destroyed, this can be observed by polls throughout the years in the public trust in the Federal Government. Trust in government among the public, and both Republicans and Democrats was much higher during Bush's first term than his second. Among the public, trust on average fell from 43% in Bush's first term, which included the post-9/11 attacks, to 29% in his second. The decline came among both Republicans, whose average trust declined from 54% to 41%, and Democrats from 35% to 21%. By October 2008, during the financial crisis, just 19% of Republicans and 12% of Democrats trusted the government to do the right thing. In 2015,

⁷⁶ Manoj Singh, reviewed by Thomas J Catalana. **The 2007–2008 Financial Crisis in Review.** www.investopedia.com . <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/economics/09/financial-crisis-review.asp#:~:text=The%202008%20financial%20crisis%20began,their%20savings%2C%20and%20their%20homes.>

⁷⁷ Federal Reserve History. (22nd November 2013). **The Great Recession and Its Aftermath.** www.federalreservehistory.org . <https://www.federalreservehistory.org/essays/great-recession-and-its-aftermath#:~:text=The%20decline%20in%20overall%20economic,recession%20since%20World%20War%20II>

⁷⁸ The White House. **Barack Obama: The 44th President of the United States.** www.whitehouse.gov . <https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/presidents/barack-obama/>

⁷⁹ Miller Center, **Barack Obama-Key Events.** UVA. www.millercenter.org . <https://millercenter.org/president/barack-obama/key-events>

exactly before the upcoming elections, just 19% say they can trust the government always or most of the time, among the lowest levels in the past half-century. Only 20% would describe government programs as being well-run. And elected officials have been held in such low regard that 55% of the public says “ordinary Americans” would do a better job of solving national problems.⁸⁰

In 2018, the US got a new President, Donald Trump. Trump was a strong nationalist who believed that the US had distributed its resources over non-American or unnecessary wars, treaties, and commitments that were burdens on the government. Therefore, he began withdrawing the US from treaties, addressing migration issues, and building a wall on the border with Mexico.

On 21st January 2017, opposition to Trump and his policies began, women came out to demonstrate because of his language in the 2016 presidential campaign and worried about a political culture that was misogynistic and attacked equality for people of color, and immigrants. Hundreds of thousands of women took to the streets in the nation’s capital, they wanted to send a message that they will continue to fight for social justice.⁸¹

Talks about the Russian intervention in the US presidential elections in 2017 began at that time. The US public had been charged with a fear of the return of the Soviet Union, and by this intervention, Russian as the strongest former of the Soviets was intervening in the White House. The US national security adviser, Michael Flynn, resigned on 13th February 2017, amid a flow of intelligence leaks that he had secretly discussed sanctions with the Russian ambassador to Washington and then tried to cover up the conversations. Suspicions about the Trump team’s pre-election contacts with the Kremlin began.⁸²

The most important highlight during Trump’s presidency was his relations with Russia and cutting trade relations with the most powerful economies; Americans should use only American products to support the American economy. Although the US was still enjoying its superiority and influence on the world, the rise of other great actors threatened this position and rolled back the memories of the multipolar system with many great actors not only one or two.

⁸⁰ Pew Research Center. (November 2015). **Beyond Distrust: How Americans View Their Government. Broad criticism but positive performance rating in many areas.** www.pewresearchorganization.com .

⁸¹ American History. **The Women’s March 2017.** National Museum of American History. www.americanhistory.si.edu . <https://americanhistory.si.edu/creating-icons/women%E2%80%99s-march-2017>

⁸² Julian Borger. (14th February 2017). **Trump security adviser Flynn resigns after leaks suggest he tried to cover up Russia talks.** www.theguardian.com . <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/feb/13/michael-flynn-resigns-quits-trump-national-security-adviser-russia>

There are many events that prove that China is on its way no doubt on many bases at nearly the same time: first, economically, after overtaking Japan China is two-fifths behind the US in GDP, second, military, the Chinese military forces are the best in Asia, it also considers itself as the one dominating Asia in military expenditures, and finally culturally and socially, China now participates in Hollywood productions and releases video games⁸³. The rise of China is comparable in magnitude to the fall of the USSR, and it cannot be denied that this rise will cause a shift in the balance of power. Not only the economy, but the Chinese military forces are strong; the Chinese army is the third strongest army in the world, and it has the largest navy in the world⁸⁴. Trump launched a still-running tariff war against China by slapping tariffs of between 30% and 50% on solar panels and washing machines. Tariffs are gradually applied to other US imports from China and to other countries. Trump argued that unilateral tariffs would shrink the U.S. trade deficit with China and cause companies to bring manufacturing jobs back to the United States. Between July 2018 and August 2019, the US announced plans to impose tariffs on more than \$550 billion of Chinese products, and China retaliated with tariffs on more than \$185 billion of U.S. goods.⁸⁵

Russia is the strongest former Soviet state. President Vladimir Putin took the responsibility to bring Russia to a superpower order and managed to do so. For twenty years, till now, Putin had created a sustainable authoritarian regime. Russia is the third most powerful state, after US and China, and had the second most powerful army⁸⁶. Trump's relations with Russia were unique but was accused of being in favor of Moscow's interest than of the US'. Trump's geopolitical moves in the Middle East and Europe have often seemed closer to Russia's goals than those of America.⁸⁷

The shifts in the world order began taking place; the US was not the only superpower in the world. By the beginning of the 21st century, American supremacy continues to generate intense debate about the nature, quality, and sustainability of the power of the US. At the same time, significant developments were taking place in Russia, China, India, and the EU,

⁸³ Keshab, Chandra Ratha, and Sushanta Kumar Mahapatra. (2014). **Rising China: Trajectory of an Emerging Global Power**. Vision 2022: Sustainable growth, Economic development, and Global Competitiveness. P(1167-1173).

⁸⁴ Gerald E. Connolly. (2020). **The Rise of China: Implications for global and Euro Atlantic**. General report, Political Committee, NATO Parliamentary Assembly. P1

⁸⁵ Ryan Hass and Abraham Denmark. (7th August 2020). **More pain than gain: How the US-China trade war hurt America**. www.brookings.edu . <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2020/08/07/more-pain-than-gain-how-the-us-china-trade-war-hurt-america/>

⁸⁶ US News. (2021). **Overview of Russia**. www.usnews.com . <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/russia>

⁸⁷ Stephen Collinson. (22nd December 2020). **The riddle of Trump's relationship with Russia**. [www.cnn.com](https://edition.cnn.com/2020/12/22/world/meanwhile-in-america-december-21/index.html) <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/12/22/world/meanwhile-in-america-december-21/index.html>

which released the question of whether multipolarity is back in reality. The question raised about multipolarity is either because of the US decline or the rise of others.⁸⁸

In early 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic, a crisis that shocked the whole world and forced a lockdown, people did not go to their work, and students didn't go to school. The economic and social disruption caused by the pandemic is devastating: tens of millions of people are at risk of falling into extreme poverty, while the number of undernourished people, currently estimated at nearly 690 million, could increase by up to 132 million by the end of 2020. Unemployment reached an official peak of 14.7%⁸⁹⁹⁰. COVID-19 caused declines in employment and economic activity on a scale comparable to the Great Depression.

In 2021, the US elected a new president, Biden began his term with a divided nation, wracked by the worst health crisis in a century with the coronavirus pandemic, a staggered economy, protests for racial justice, and internal threats to American democracy.

The key event of the past two years is Russia's invasion of Ukraine. After the dissolving of the USSR, former states began their independence from the Soviet Union, including Ukraine. According to Hans Morgenthau, a state's geography and location are permanent and the most important elements upon which its national power rests, for example, the location of the US, with direct access to sea waters, its isolated location, and its huge space had helped it to maintain its position in the world and contributed to drawing the foreign policy. On the other hand, Russia's geography had acted as a defensive weapon for it during WWI and WWII, but its geographical location had always been an obstacle to its foreign policy and national security.⁹¹

Russia is a landlocked state with no access to high water, and all its borders are common with fourteen states. Therefore, for Russia to keep its borders safe, it needs to maintain and keep its influence on all neighboring countries, and most importantly, Ukraine, because it is Russia's only access to high water. In 2001, Ukraine declared for the first time its intention to join NATO. In 2006 Ukraine applied to join NATO, and in February 2019, it

⁸⁸ Ed. Donette Murray and David Brown. (2012). **Multipolarity In The 21st Century: Anew World Order**. Routledge.

⁸⁹ Bergquist, S., Otten, T., & Sarich, N. (2020). **COVID-19 pandemic in the United States. Health policy and technology**, 9(4), 623–638.

⁹⁰ WHO. (13 October 2020). **Impact of COVID-19 on people's livelihoods, their health and our food systems**. [www.WHO.int](https://www.who.int/news/item/13-10-2020-impact-of-covid-19-on-people's-livelihoods-their-health-and-our-food-systems#:~:text=The%20economic%20and%20social%20disruption,the%20end%20of%20the%20year) . <https://www.who.int/news/item/13-10-2020-impact-of-covid-19-on-people's-livelihoods-their-health-and-our-food-systems#:~:text=The%20economic%20and%20social%20disruption,the%20end%20of%20the%20year>.

⁹¹ Hans Morgenthau. (1948). **Politics Among Nations. The Struggle for Power**. New Yourk. Alfred A. Knopf. P80-81.

included in the constitution its intention to join the EU and NATO. Russia has made it clear it would see any NATO expansion to the East as a direct threat. Putin made it clear that he does not want Ukraine to join. He has described the country as “historically Russian land” stolen from the Russian empire, even though it has been independent since the Soviet Union dissolved in 1991. In December 2021, Russia told Ukraine’s allies that it would only not invade Ukraine if NATO banned the country from ever becoming a member state, which was an obvious declaration of war because his request was rejected.⁹²

Every member of NATO is committed to providing military aid and support to other members in case of any need, and that means that there will be Western troops in Ukraine; in direct confrontation with Russia. History had proved twice that Russia is not tolerant of its national security, Napoleon and Hitler, and it would do whatever it takes to maintain it. On 21st February 2022, Putin ordered the deployment of troops to two breakaway regions in Eastern Ukraine after recognizing them as independent accelerating a crisis in the West. Putin justifies the invasion as necessary to protect Russian citizens and Russian-speaking people in Crimea and Southeast Ukraine, and also to resist the NATO expansion to the east, which is a national security threat to Russia. Putin's announcement drew international condemnation and immediate U.S. sanctions to halt U.S. business activity in the breakaway regions and ban the import of all goods from those areas. The US and its allies began preparing in case Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, White House spokesperson Jen Psaki said, in other words, this could be WWII. The Russian UN ambassador, Vassily Nebenzia, warned Western powers to "think twice" and not to make the situation worse. China called for all parties to exercise restraint while Japan said it was ready to join international sanctions on Moscow in the event of a full-scale invasion.⁹³

The consequences of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, jointly with the COVID-19 pandemic led to an increase in the world price of food and crude oil. The rise in the world food price index after the invasion was driven by a significant increase in the price of dairy and oils. Stock prices plunged on the invasion date. The rise in inflation in Russia and Ukraine after the invasion was followed by a rise in inflation in countries that imposed severe sanctions on Russia, and in countries that were not involved in the conflict. The invasion led to geopolitical tensions between the West and Russia, and it diminished the global growth

⁹² Kate Nicholson. (21st April 2023). **What Would It Mean If Ukraine Joined NATO?** [www.huffington.co.uk](https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/what-happens-if-ukraine-joins-nato_uk_644252b2e4b011a819c0b709)
https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/what-happens-if-ukraine-joins-nato_uk_644252b2e4b011a819c0b709

⁹³ Andrew Osborn and Dmitry Antonov. (22nd February 2022). **Putin orders troops to Ukraine after recognizing breakaway regions.** [www.reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com/markets/europe/kremlin-says-no-concrete-plans-summit-with-biden-over-ukraine-2022-02-21/)
<https://www.reuters.com/markets/europe/kremlin-says-no-concrete-plans-summit-with-biden-over-ukraine-2022-02-21/>

forecast due to uncertainty about the effect of the escalated conflict on the global supply chain.⁹⁴

The Russian invasion caused eight million refugees to flee Ukraine in what the WHO describes as "the largest movement of people in the European Region since WWII", many have been involuntarily relocated by Russia. Energy prices began to spike during the invasion, and the consumer price index rose by 5% in March 2023.⁹⁵

The US, on 10th March 2023, witnessed the biggest failure of a US bank since the global financial crisis was playing out in real-time as a major lender to the tech industry succumbed to a classic bank run. Silicon Valley Bank's customers were frantically pulling their money from the California-based lender before US regulators intervened to take control. But the collapse panicked markets, piling pain on weaker financial institutions already struggling with the unintended consequences of soaring interest rates and self-inflicted wounds. A week later, a second US regional bank, Signature Bank, has been shut down, and then a third, First Republic Bank (FRC), has been propped up, and the first major threat since 2008 to a bank of global financial significance, Credit Suisse, has been averted after it was taken over by UBS. Markets remain on edge since the US lost 20% of its Benchmark indexes of shares⁹⁶. It is predicted that countries will overcome this inflation but with a huge cost, depending on the economic situation, which differs from one country to another.

⁹⁴ Peterson K Ozili. (2022). **Global Economic Consequence of Russian Invasion of Ukraine**. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4064770>

⁹⁵ Scott Neuman and Alyson Hurt. (22nd February 2023). **The ripple effects of Russia's war in Ukraine continue to change the world**. www.npr.org. <https://www.npr.org/2023/02/22/1157106172/ukraine-russia-war-refugees-food-prices>

⁹⁶ Mark Thompson. (20th March 2023). **Global banking crisis: What just happened?** [www.cnn.com](https://edition.cnn.com/2023/03/17/business/global-banking-crisis-explained/index.html). <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/03/17/business/global-banking-crisis-explained/index.html>

Chapter 6

The Shifts of the US influence internationally

In the previous chapters, the research presented the shifts that took place in the US in a more domestically concentrated method using the Strauss and Howe model to explain the main events that contributed to the drawing of the country's history. This chapter will present how the shifts of the US influence internationally and the changes that took place in the international order. The sequence of these shifts can be explained through periods of success, overconfidence, overstretch, failure, and retreat⁹⁷. The international order refers to structured relationships between actors on the international level. This chapter will present the role and position of the US, during the selected period, to know the cycle of the US influence internationally. For most of this period, 1929-2023, the US had taken the responsibility of maintaining a balanced international order to maintain peace worldwide. Taking on this mission, the US position and role in the international order had been through many changes.

The US before WWI was adopting a non-interventionist policy in order to be out of any alliances that might drag it into conflicts, until the end of WWI. President Woodrow made a case for the US intervention in the conflicts of WWI and its interest in maintaining a peaceful world order. Wilson thought that the US alone could shape an effective peace settlement, through the fourteen points presented, because he believed that the combatants were politically and morally bankrupt. Wilson felt that the US would play a decisive role and dominate the postwar peace conference. Wilson managed to gather the European superpowers and this led to the establishment of the first international organization, the League of Nations, its primary goal was security. Despite Wilson's ambitions, the US Congress rejected membership in the League of Nations as it would draw it to the European conflicts. During the 1930s, the League of Nations proved to be ineffectual in the face of growing militarism.⁹⁸

Wilson's fourteen principles were the most significant step towards internationalism rather than isolationism of the US, this involvement was supposed to serve the country's interests by maintaining peaceful world order and the US should make the world safe for

⁹⁷ James Dobbins and Gabrielle Tarini. (15th September 2020). **The Lost Generation in American Foreign Policy.** WWW.rand.org . <https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/09/the-lost-generation-in-american-foreign-policy.html>

⁹⁸ Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute. American Isolationism in the 1930s. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1937-1945/american-isolationism#:~:text=Isolationists%20advocated%20non%20involvement%20in,its%20interests%20in%20Latin%20America.>

democracy, but the Great Depression of 1929 raised the voice of isolationist advocates towards non-involvement in European conflicts and non-entanglement in international politics, instead, the US should focus on maintaining the crisis of the Great Depression and avoid any military or political conflicts across oceans. US's remote location had made it possible for it to be detached from old-world conflicts, therefore, when the US took a step back, along with the fact of not being a member of the League of Nations, militaristic came to power in Italy and Germany promising economic relief and national expansion. The absence of a strong US response to the German annexation of Czechoslovakia in 1938 encouraged the German government to enlarge its military campaigns.

During Hoover and Roosevelt's terms, the US concentrated more on rebuilding the US economy and dealing with widespread unemployment, as a result, international affairs took a back seat, until the Japanese attack on the US Navy at Pearl Harbor 1941. The attack on Pearl Harbor served as a way to put the US back again as President Wilson wanted it to be, accordingly, this was enough to convince the majority of Americans that the US should enter the war on the side of the Allies after a decade-long of isolationism since the Great Depression.

Until the end of WWII, the international order was a multi-polar system, which means that there was no single actor that dominated the world in reality, although there were contributions made by France and Germany, both had led to global wars as there were serious changes in the international order. The US's remote location had helped to be away from any serious losses during wars, and not being part of any alliances had contributed to its rebirth after the economic crisis as all its resources were invested in state-building to overcome the crisis. Therefore, after the total destruction of the European countries by the end of WWII, the US was the only powerful international actor that remained internally and internationally strong and stable, since the US participation in WWII ended the war, the US began a new era of international involvement.

The period between 1950-1973, is referred to as the Golden Age of economic growth. By the end of WWII, European powers were left in destruction on all levels, on the other hand, the US began taking responsibility to help Europe to recover from the war. Two years after the war, the Soviet Union was in control of Eastern Europe, and Western Europe was threatened by Soviet expansion. Therefore, Marshall Plan was introduced to provide economic support to restore the economic infrastructure in Western Europe during the post-war period. President Truman introduced Truman Doctrine which promised intervention to

protect countries from communist expansion. Actions taken by the US on the international level were pointing to a new international order; European superpowers were not strong enough to be part of the new world order. Accordingly, the only power which was threatening the US influence in Europe was the Soviet influence, this marked the beginning of the bipolar order, the beginning of the Cold War.

In the name of promoting democracy and human rights, the US attempt to mold other countries and the world order with its own value and political system. As a result, the US sought to impose rules that served its own interests in the name of upholding a “rules-based international order”. Therefore, Truman Doctrine was not limited to economic reinforcement nor to only Europe; decolonization was one of the main characteristics of the post-WWII era, countries were gaining their right to independence and self-determination, as in the UN Charter, and so these new states needed help, and the US’s Truman Doctrine or Policy of containment, had taken the responsibility to develop these new actors. The Policy of Containment of countries under Western influence was part of the US grand strategy to oppose the spread of communism, besides, one of the most powerful military alliances that were part of the containment is NATO.

The US was worried that the newly formed states after decolonization would turn into communism, and this might ruin the world economy. Therefore, the US officials that the new role of the US as a superpower was to help reestablish a healthy global economy in a world that had been destroyed by wars. On the other hand, to gain control over strategic resources, massive amounts of oil, and uranium, needed for nuclear weapons, and these were available in Europe’s old colonies. Both the US and the USSR wanted to gain control over such resources.

The US was working on the economic level by providing economic aid, at the military level through NATO which provided collective armies in case needed, and on the social level by promoting new lifestyles, or what is called the American dream. The Cold War had two fields; proxy wars which were taking place in Vietnam, and ideology wars which were between freedom and democracy in the west and communism in the east. The US had taken into consideration peoples’ ideas of wars after two devastating wars, and accordingly, it didn’t take into consideration the arms race with the Soviets only but also dealt with social and economic problems, like freedom of speech and democracy.

The main attains of the Marshall Plan are that it provided markets for American goods, created reliable trading partners, and supported the development of stable democratic governments. The policy of containment remained central to the US foreign policy throughout the Cold War, officially ending with the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. As a result, the US managed to exert its ideology and influence over the countries that soon became the most powerful states as Britain and France. This era was the peak of the Cold War.⁹⁹

In the 1960s, the US influence began taking new forms, more into people than into politics as countries were already known to the democratic ideologies and capitalist economies, and no marching East or West was openly witnessed, other than the Vietnamese war. Civil rights movements began taking place in the US seeking to enact new laws to ensure civil rights laws for all races and sexes, such as Women and Black Americans Rights. These movements were witnessed worldwide and created doubts about American freedom and democracy. The US officials were worried that these movements might encourage new nations of the world towards the Soviet Union. Post WWII, American foreign policy was designed to make the US a big and positive influence for peace and progress throughout the world.

The civil rights movement has affected US politics in fundamental ways. These movements have broadened US politics and inspired diverse movements for citizenship rights and social justice in the US and worldwide. The movements had an influence on freedom struggles around the world. participants in freedom struggles in Africa, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Latin America, and China have made it clear that they were deeply influenced by the US civil rights movements. Europe hadn't witnessed a tide-turning civil rights movement capable of making an impact on the political sphere.

The Us had also influenced peace treaties to end wars as part of its role to maintain a peaceful world order such as the Camp David Treaty 1979 at the White House with President Jimmy Carter, Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat, and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin signed a historic peace agreement, ending three decades of hostilities between Egypt and Israel and establishing diplomatic and commercial ties.

⁹⁹ Milstone Documents. **Marshall Plan (1948)** . www.archives.gov. <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/marshall-plan#:~:text=On%20April%203%2C%201948%2C%20President,economic%20infrastructure%20of%20postwar%20Europe>.

Despite the US influence worldwide, there were still critiques directed to the US policy regarding wars although it was calling for peace and freedom; the Vietnam War cost more American lives than all Americans in 21st Century conflicts combined. Antiwar demonstrations took place in the US and grew by mid-1971 to end the war in Vietnam, 1975 marked the end of this war, and until this moment, Americans still view wars through their trauma from the Vietnam War.

During Reagan Bush's terms, both consolidated American leadership of the free world, expanded democracy, deterred aggression, negotiated nuclear arms reduction, helped liberate Eastern Germany, reunified Germany, and won the cold war. The American influence did not get stronger in this era but the Soviet influence became weaker, and citizens in Eastern Germany, the Eastern side of the Berlin Wall which symbolized the division of the world, were fleeing to the West seeking a better life. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, The US became the world's most powerful country declaring the beginning of a new era of international order, a unipolar system

Although the US was enjoying a unique status in the world order, its influence internationally was not the same as it was during the previous years. The US involvement in the Gulf War and invasion of Iraq reflected another face of the US' interventions; on one hand, the US wanted to turn Iraq into a democratic model for the rest of the Middle East, but what actually took place was a total destruction of the country and false accusations for having WMD.

The decline of the US influence began during Bush's presidency. America's diminished influence reflects the shifting in the balance of global power; which is mainly because of the rise of new powers.

There are several reasons for the decline of the US influence internationally, the first thing is the domestic opinion regarding the US involvement internationally; some Americans see that the US global involvement is not working for them, and are calling for the nation for the Americans only, this view was advocated during Trump's presidency. The second reason and most importantly is the rise of new actors, and their capability to exert great influence internationally such as China, Russia, India, Japan, and North Korea, each has its own strength point and scope for power that had guaranteed them a place in the global order leading to the appearing of a lot of point of views that says that the shifting in the

international order had happened and the US is not the only superpower anymore; its again a multipolar system.

The decline in American influence seems best explained by the classic cycle of hubris followed by nemesis. An American sense of omnipotence was encouraged by victory in the Cold War and continued.

Conclusion.

This research presented a sequence of events that took place in the past hundred years in the US and the world that were moving in a specific sequence or pattern. As mentioned in the introduction, Hitler made the strategic mistake of thinking that defeating Russia in its own land would be as victorious as his past victories, while in fact, he had Napoleon's example. Decades later, Russia responds to the NATO expansions to the east, although invading a sovereign country is a violation, from studying history, Russia's reaction was not a surprise.

Strauss and Howe presented specific characteristics that are found in each turning and distinguish it from another turning. During high, people are optimistic and support civic values individualism is weak, but the sense of thinking as a community is high which supports institutional work to achieve those aims. Big technological advances, and building and planning, take place during high. This is reflected in the US in the era after WWII, in which the US presented itself as the world's hero, and America as the place where dreams are made of. During Awakening, people begin looking at the world in a different way, they see that there are values that are important to the world rather than following institution and organizations; individualistic culture begin to grow. It is the era in which utopian communities are common and activists begin rebelling against the current culture. The activist movements during the sixties and the seventies in the US reflect this nature of individualism. During unraveling, individualism and personal satisfaction reach a peak, while community trust in public organizations is at its lowest, pessimism is reflected in Arts during this period. The 9\11 attacks were a big shock to American citizens, it caused trauma for US citizens because of the lives lost because of the attacks. Also, the false accusation of Iraq possessing WMD and the use of this to invade Iraq, and throw a lot of money into the invasion led to a loss of community trust in the US policy to maintain peace and security as it was promoted during the Cold War. Serious problems are neglected during this era and explode in the upcoming one. And the final turn is a crisis, it is the period in which institutional life is destroyed and the community is threatened by economic, ecologic, political, and health crises. The Great Depression in 1929 and the financial crisis in 2008, WWII, and the consequences of the Russian invasion of Ukraine are examples of crisis that took place in the US or was related to it that is considered a crisis.

According to the generational theory, by Strauss and Howe, each 20-25 years constitute a certain period of time with certain characteristics. The reason why historians and decision-makers use historical analogies is to justify state's actions and policies as well as

create novels for future policies. The past is accepted as a guide for the present, therefore, one key role for historical analogies is the predictive power. The study of historical analogies can be employed by leaders to generate support for their political agenda, to persuade and change people's attitudes to problems, and to justify and legitimize leaders' decisions and states' foreign policy. Leaders use previous events as a reference to their actions, which strengthens the sense. Therefore, the use of analogies can be politicized.

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