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SECTION I: POLITICS, HISTORY

60th Anniversary of the March on Washington

TAMAR SHIOSHVILI^{1*}

Abstract

Most people agree that for genuinely advance towards democracy, the imperative is to abolish unfair discrimination – unequal behavior towards race, ethnicity, gender and other difference. Crucial way to reach equal treatment, is guaranteeing complete protection of civil rights, that are believed to be granted by God. Several groups of the U.S. population have endured agony from discrimination at different times of the U.S. history, and many still suffer today. This article depicts the challenges of establishing constitutional equality; difficulties of reconstruction, legal discriminatory attitude from the ruling institution after the civil war, and vigorous responses to them of African Americans confronting “Separate but Equal”, and one of the most important achievements of desegregation of schools. The march towards equality was realized in 1963 through march on Washing D.C. In August of 2023 sixty years of the achievement in equality was widely celebrated in the U.S.

Keywords: Civil rights, march on Washington, equality, reconstruction, segregation

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Introduction

In this article we follow the history of civil rights in the United States, a history that began only in the second half of the nineteenth century, when the nation, regaining strength from destructive civil war, attempted to reach equality under the constitution. But real change did not occur until nearly a century later, thus the March on Washington on August 28, 1963 was the pivotal event in the history of Civil Rights movement, that has been celebrated in August of 2023, when thousands of American supporters in Washington D.C. met to mark the 60th Anniversary.

60th Anniversary of the March on Washington

On August 26, 2023 Americans joined thousands of advocates in Washington D.C. for the 60th Anniversary of the March on Washington.

The March on Washington for jobs and Freedom, also known simply the March on Washing or the Great March on Washington, was held in Washington D.C., on August 28, 1963. The aim of the march was to support civil and economic rights of African Americans. At the march, Dr. Marttin Luther King Jr., standing in front of the Lincoln Memorial, delivered his famous, historic “I have a Dream” speech in which he requested forcefully to end racism.

The march achieved helping to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1965. So, there is no doubt about the enormous adherence to civil rights topic by the American people representing different layers of the society, as to authentically advance towards democracy, it is necessary to abolish unfair discrimination, that is unequal treatment based on race, ethnicity, gender, and other differences. To achieve equal treatment is to guarantee for protection of civil rights, constitutionally as ensured and protected rights that may not be unreasonably taken away by the government.

These rights are often ascribed to a personal, natural or inalienable right. They are considered to be granted by God or nature to all human beings. Thomas Jefferson had these rights in mind when he wrote in the Declaration of Independence, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and pursuit of Happiness” (Berman, Bruce, Murphy, 2007, p. 498).

Some groups within the U.S. population have suffered from discrimination at different periods in the American history, and many still do today. Not all of these groups are minorities.

Women, for example, are not a numeric minority, but they have undergone discrimination and continue to face unequal treatment in the workplace or somewhere else.

Civil Rights are tightly linked with the ideal of equality. There are two basic forms of equality: equality before the law (legal equality) and actual equality. Equality before the law, also called *de jure* equality, needs no legally authorized obstacles to equal treatment, such as laws that prevent people from voting, living where they want to, or taking advantage of all the rights procured to individuals by the laws of the federal, state, and local governments. Actual equality, also called *de facto* equality, observes the results: Do people live where they choose? Do they work under similar conditions? In a variegated and compound society like that of the United States, it is not easy to balance circumstances leading to *de facto* equality. Although *de jure* equality has been reached in a certain number of aspects throughout the nation's history, *de facto* equality is still challenging objective (ibid,499).

Establishing Constitutional Equality

To produce a constitution that would be ratified by a majority of the states, the framers had to compromise. To maintain the economic position of the southern states, the framers permitted slavery to continue. However, in doing so, they provided future battles over slavery. Even for free African Americans, legal status didn't spread in all regions of the country. By 1804, many northern states had abolished slavery, or passed laws under which the children of slaves would be free. Although, the right to vote, normally conferred on the basis of property capabilities, was still unobtainable for most African Americans as well as landless white males. In the South, authorization of measures made freeing of slaves enormously difficult. (Donald G. Neiman, 1991). At the federal level, Congress enacted the Fugitive Slave Act (1793), which made possible runaway slaves to be captured (even in places where slavery was abolished) and brought back to slave owners. Paradoxically Article VI, Section 2, of the Constitution authorized the return of fugitive slaves. African Americans were by law denied access to a procedure that gave chance to become citizens (1790), to service in militias (1792), and the right to carry the mail (1810).

In 1820, the "Missouri Compromise" was passed when the proposal to introduce Missouri as a slave state risked upsetting the equal division of slave and free states. Missouri was admitted as a slave state with the free state of Maine, and slavery was prohibited in the rest of the Louisiana Purchase territory north of Missouri's southern border.

Notwithstanding some African Americans' submission to their condition, a number of

others did not. The most prominent slave uprising happened in August 1831, when Nat Turner led a rebellion of approximately seventy slaves in Southampton County, Virginia. In twelve hours of agitation, Turner's men assassinated dozens of whites. Finally, the rebels were beaten by soldiers and militiamen, and Turner was put to death together with many other slaves.

The "Compromise of 1850", which admitted California as a free state, banned the slave trade in the District of Columbia, although allowed slavery there while the territories of New Mexico and Utah were given no federal limitations on slavery. As a part of compromise, Congress enacted a more powerful Fugitive Act. The political perspective for egalitarianism appeared to be more far off than ever.

The Dred Scott Case

In 1857, the Supreme Court considered a case with a radical inference for the civil rights of African Americans. A slave Dred Scott had been taken by his master from Missouri in the free state of Illinois and the free territory of Wisconsin. When his master died, Scott was returned to Missouri; he tried to assert that because he had lived in the states, where slavery was illegal, he was now free.

The case of Dred Scott V. Sandford went to the Court, when the justices were trying to formulate the legality of slavery as the way to solve the political controversy between the North and the South. The Court adjudicated a highly debatable decision; Scott could not take legal action to federal court as no African Americans, free or enslaved, could ever become a citizen of the United States. Even if Scott were free, he could not appeal as African Americans were "not included, and were not intended to be included, under the word 'citizens' in the constitution" and therefore had no rights under that document. Consequently, the chief justice ruled that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional because Congress could not deny people of their property rights, in this case their slaves, under the due process clause of the Fifth Amendment (19 Howard 393, 1857).

The Civil War and Reconstruction

The Dred Scott case eliminated the chance for African Americans to look for legal protection. Although political solutions were still not shut. By freeing the slaves still in the insurrection, President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 renewed the possibility of "equality for all". However, Lincoln's executive order to be enacted, the Union had to win the Civil War and Congress had to apply legal justification to support freedom for slaves.

So, after the Civil War, Congress played crucial role in establishing equality for African Americans. The Thirteenth Amendment, abolishing slavery was ratified in 1865.

Congress had already enacted legislation giving the right to African Americans to testify against whites in federal courts (1864), granting equal pay and benefits to all soldiers (1864), and establishing the Freedman's Bureau (1865), an agency of the War Department to assist the newly freed slaves in making the transition to freedom.

However, southern states were already passing laws – black codes, that restricted the civil rights of blacks keeping them working on plantations. Congress decided to contradict these measures.

Over President Andrew Johnson's veto, the Radical Republicans bestowed the Freedman's Bureau additional powers to settle labor disputes and abolish tyrannical labor contracts. It also passed the Civil Rights Act of 1866, which made African Americans U.S. citizens. Congress drafted the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, making African Americans citizens. The new citizens were supported to have the same rights as others, as well as be handled with equally under law. Congress acted quickly. It needed southern states to ratify this amendment, and later the Fifteenth Amendment, before they could rejoin the Union. The Fifteenth Amendment would grant African Americans suffrage, the right to vote. Again, Congress was given the power to implement this article through appropriate legislation. To Shatter the might of the Ku Klux Klan and other terrorists who attacked, beat and at times killed African Americans who attempted to vote or otherwise alleged their rights, Congress passed the Ku Klux Klan Acts of 1870 and 1871 making it a federal offense for two or more persons to hatch a plot to deprive citizens of their equal protection and voting rights.

However, the legislative branch of government could only prepare the ground for instituting legal equality. It remained to be seen whether the executive branch would effectuate them and how the judicial branch would interpret them.

Creating Legal Segregation

After the Civil War, the Supreme Court showed little concern about the rights of African Americans. In "United States vs. Cruikshank" (1876), the Court recognized the constitutionality of the Ku Klux Klan Act of 1870. William Cruikshank was part of white mob that had murdered sixty African Americans in front of a courthouse. As murder was not a federal offense and the state authorities had no desire to prosecute anyone for the crime, mob members were not accused of crime. The Court ordered that under the Fourteenth Amendment only state action, or action by the state government was accountable for the decisions by the federal court

(United States v. Cruikshank, 1876). It means, the federal government could not execute private individuals.

Separate but Equal?

By the end of the 19th century, southern elites had driven many black gains and inflicted an oppressive system of legal segregation. The Supreme Court administered a new state-action doctrine to cancel the Civil Rights Act of 1875, which banned racial segregation in transportation, inns, theaters and other places of public accommodation and amusement (Civil Rights Cases, 1883). Besides the southern states enacted a series of Jim Crow Laws which separated the races in public places in 1877.

Jim Crow person is a theater character-developed and popularized by entertainer Thomas D. Rice (1808-1860) in his minstrel shows. However, this separation was challenged in the 1896 case of Plessy v. Ferguson (Plessy v. Ferguson, 1896).

Homer Adolph Plessy, who was one-eighth African American, decided to ride in a railroad car meant for “whites only”, instead of riding in a car at the end of the train entitled for “coloreds only”, as implied by law, and had been asserted. The Supreme Court confirmed the arrest, observing that the Fourteenth Amendment provided only political equality and not social equality.

The results of the Plessy ruling were observable in Cumming v. County Board of Education (1899), in which the Court supported “separate but equal” public schools in Georgia. Although the amenities were not in reality “equal”, by maintaining that public schools were a topic for state rather than federal jurisdiction, the Court authorized the continuation of segregation (Cumming v. County Board of Education 1899). Shortly legally empowered segregation embraced every area of social life.

The Disenfranchisement of African American Voters

To disenfranchise African American voters, southern legislators created means of escape for evading the Fifteenth Amendment. A many freed slaves owned no land, “property qualification” prevented them from voting; “literacy tests did the same for those who could not read. Another loophole was the “grandfather clause” which freed from property or literacy tests anyone whose relations could have voted in 1867, thus excluding the freed slaves. Some southern states also implemented a plot tax – a fee for voting, which would rule out poor African Americans. Consequently, the law deprived African Americans, although citizens of the United States, of a voice in its government.

Establishing Legal Equality

African Americans reflecting the discrimination responded in different ways. In 1895, Booker T. Washington, a former slave, who had founded Tuskegee Institute, private coeducational, historically black institution of higher education in Tuskegee, Alabama U.S., argued – that racism would end if African Americans would work hard, and improve their education.

Meanwhile, W.E.B. Dubois, the first African American to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard maintained that all form of racial segregation and discrimination should be aggressively ambushed and eliminated.

In 1909, Dubois, with other African Americans and worried white people, established the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). NAACP opposed Oklahoma's law exempting whites from the literacy test required for voting. In *Guinn v. United States* (1915), the Supreme Court repealed it using the Fifteenth Amendment. Afterwards in 1927 the Court found the Texas's white-primary law violated the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Nevertheless, the southern states continued to disenfranchise blacks by issuing the offending laws.

The White House and Desegregation

During World War II new efforts were made to achieve equality. This time the White House took the initiative. President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued an executive order banning discrimination in defense businesses. He established a temporary wartime agency, the Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC), to investigate accusations, and afford compensation for such discrimination.

In 1946 President Harry Truman formed a panel of citizens to examine the problem and try find the key.

However, Truman's most important measure in connection with desegregation was initiated in 1948, when he enacted an executive order banning segregation in the military and in federal employment. Truman also asked Congress to ban discrimination by private employers and labor unions, outlaw poll taxes, pass a federal anti-lynching law, create a permanent civil rights commission, and necessitate fair elections. Nevertheless, these attempts were condemned by the opposition of conservative southerners who had separated from the Democratic party under the leadership of South Carolina's Strom Thurmond to form Dixiecrats (short-lived segregationist political party in the United States, active in the South).

Seeking Equality in the Schools

In 1950, under the leadership of Thurgood Marshall, the NAACP confronted the university of Texas law school's separate but equal plan, in which African American students were taught in basement of an Austin office building instead of at the highly regarded state university. The justices agreed that the two "separate" schools were not "equivalent" in any way, and for the first time the Court pointed out the constitutional importance of the intangible psychological differences represented by the differing academic environments, like differences in the prestige of the faculty, the students, the library (Berman & Murphy, 2007).

On the same day, the Court authorized that Oklahoma could not meet its separate but equal requirements for graduate schools by compelling an African American student to sit in the doorway during class, study in a special section of the library, and eat at a table in the cafeteria labeled "For Colored Only" (Ibid, p. 504).

After these Court rulings Marshall and the NAACP decided to overturn the separate but equal doctrine by suing the segregated school districts of four states (Kansas, Delaware, South Carolina, and Virginia) and District of Columbia. The NAACP's goal was to attach the Plessy decision.

The most impressive strategy to persuade the Court to change its disposition was to introduce the proof of social science research on the ramification of segregation. An example was a number of researches by psychologist Kenneth Clark, who investigated that when African American schoolchildren were shown white and black dolls and inquired which one they would prefer to be, they without exception chose the white doll. Depending on such finding, Marshall maintained that segregation had a catastrophic influence on African American children's self-esteem.

In 1952, the Supreme Court determined to combine the four state cases and consider them under *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*. Chief Justice Fred Vinson, who was absolutely unsympathetic to the assault in segregation, died all of a sudden. The new chief justice, former California governor Earl Warren, who was appointed to the Supreme Court as part of an election deal with President Dwight D. Eisenhower, was much more inclined to persuade all of the justices to adjudicate against segregation.

On May 17, 1954, Warren announced the Court's unanimous decision that the separate but equal standard was unconstitutional (Ibid, 2007).

State and Federal Responses

State governments reflected on the Brown decision in different ways. Washington, D.C., Kansas and Delaware banned authorized segregation. However, in the Deep South, assaults intensified against African American activists who intended to put into effect this decision. In some places, mobs tried to prevent African Americans from attending formerly segregated public schools and universities. State authorities also took measures to block the Brown ruling.

President Dwight Eisenhower decided, only reluctantly, to send federal troops to Little Rock, Arkansas, to help nine African American students desegregate the region's Central High School against strong opposition, which involved the deployment of State National Guard units to block the students' entrance.

President legalized the Civil Rights Act of 1957, which gave the Justice Department the power to initiate lawsuits on behalf of African Americans who were rejected the right to vote. Later, in the Civil Rights Act of 1960, the attorney general was accredited to summon federal officials to investigate voter registration in places where discrimination might be happening (Ibid, 2007).

In 2002, the American Studies program students at the International Black Sea University were fortunate to be introduced to the United States Ambassador to Georgia Richard Miles and his spouse Sharon Miles. This was the first year of the BA American Studies program establishment, that was highly stimulated by the Ambassador. We must proudly remark, that Mrs. Miles kindly accepted our invitation to deliver lectures on elections during 1960s in Alabama as she had been an active fighter for Civil Rights and took part in the pivotal elections.

Conclusion

Civil Rights and equality issues are major components of democracy. It's always crucial to trace the history and measure the range of civil rights and equality, like it is important to measure the distance between the real lives of Americans and their American Dream, the process that is constantly engaged to have better lives.

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The Role of the United States in Modern International Politics Taking into Account the Russia-Ukraine War

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Abstract

In modern international politics, confrontations between states have given rise to several global problems in the geopolitical, economic, and cultural spheres. The major role of the United States of America in the above-mentioned areas has been decisive and is one of the major roles from the Cold War to the present day. The USA's influence in international politics stems from its economic power, which has made it a superpower in military power, trade, and all political aspects. US hegemony in the world was carried out mainly through soft power, as a result of which its influence became more and more extensive. The paper develops and applies a methodology that is mainly based on data analysis, historical facts, and the fundamentals of policy research.

Keywords: USA, Foreign Policy, International Politics, Power

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Introduction

In modern international politics, confrontations between states have given rise to several global problems in the geopolitical, economic, and cultural spheres. The main role of the United States of America in the above-mentioned areas has been decisive and has been one of the main roles since the Cold War until today. US influence in international politics derives from its economic strength, which has made it a superpower in military power, trade, and all political aspects. US hegemony over the world was mainly exercised by soft power, and as a result, the influence was more and more extensive. During the Cold War, US-USSR relations were crucial for both the world economy and geopolitics. These states have changed the structure of the world, the political course of states, the world economy, and other global issues. Several agreements and treaties have been developed and signed, both from an economic, geopolitical, and military point of view. The paper presents US relations and its role in modern international politics from the Cold War to the present day.

US foreign policy changes and major challenges in the post-bipolar period

The main political tools of US foreign policy (Nye's theory)

Three decades ago, American political scientist and former Clinton administration official Joseph Nye published an idea in the pages of *Foreign Policy*. He called it "soft power," a concept that went on to define the post-Cold War era. Nye describes soft power as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion." First of all, he was interested in highlighting the obvious advantages of soft power over other types of power. He sees strong relationships with allies, economic aid programs, and vital cultural exchanges as examples of soft power. Soft power is generated by three main components: culture, ideology, and institution.

Americans must now use force to shape institutions that serve long-term national interests in promoting international order. Multilateralism is often the best way to achieve long-term goals. Promoting an open international economic system is good for American economic growth and good for other countries as well. The openness of global markets is a necessary condition for reducing poverty in poor countries. In addition, in the long run, economic growth will contribute to stable, democratic middle-class societies in other countries. Nye also sees American cultural exports such as movies, soft drinks, and fast-food chains as an element of soft power. US international trade and business policies allow for cultural exchange. Cultural exchanges with the freedom and openness of US business and communication dynamics make impressions on foreign countries (Thoughtco, 2019).

The United States should aim to work with other countries on global issues. It must develop multilateral laws and institutions that implement international action in a variety of areas—not just trade and the environment, but also arms proliferation, peacekeeping, human rights, terrorism, and other issues. In Hart-Rudman’s words, “America cannot protect and advance its interests in isolation.” As the 9/11 attacks showed, even a superpower needs friends.

Joseph Nye applies the theory to a specific case study in the United States. Because an increasing number of issues are global, a multifaceted approach is needed in international relations. Therefore, it is soft power that comes in handy in this situation, not hard power. Indeed, issues such as global warming, space, and cyberspace are more likely to be resolved through soft power, while military power will be ineffective or insufficient. Nye justifies the use of multilateralism in US foreign policy because it allows other countries not to feel threatened by its supremacy.

He proposed the concept of smart power, “the ability to effectively combine hard and soft power.” He argues that soft power is always more important, in the long run than hard power. Therefore, it is legitimate to use military force in exceptional cases, but it should mainly focus on soft power. American power is enhanced if the US is perceived as a moral actor, as in the real-world moral considerations play an inevitable role in shaping foreign relations (Nye, 2019).

A classic example of American soft power is the Marshall Plan. After World War II, the United States transferred billions of dollars to war-torn Western Europe. The plan included humanitarian aid such as food and medical aid; Expert advice on rebuilding destroyed infrastructure, such as transport and communication networks and utilities; as well as direct cash grants. There is also an element of soft power in all kinds of disaster relief programs, such as flood control in Pakistan; earthquake relief in Japan and Haiti; Tsunami relief in Japan and India; and alleviating hunger in Africa.

Since the United States won the Cold War, American liberalism has had unparalleled appeal around the world. Everyone wanted to vote, everyone wanted jeans, and everyone wanted freedom of speech. For Nye, the basis of US soft power was liberal democratic politics, free market economics, and fundamental values such as human rights.

In international relations, as Nye advocated, the United States initiated the establishment and expansion of international institutions that would support its new order, such as the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund. He also expanded his system of alliances.

After 9/11, the use of soft power by the United States decreased. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the Bush Doctrine's adoption of pre-emptive war and unilateral decision-making have obscured the value of soft power in the minds of people, at home and abroad. After the US invasion of Iraq and the military occupation of the country, attention has been focused on the importance and tools of soft power, especially in the context of US foreign policy.

Soft power is the opposite of "hard power". Hard power includes the more visible and predictable power associated with military force, coercion, and intimidation.

The proof that Nye defends the United States and tries to find the best solution for it is that he sometimes departs from neoliberal assumptions. He recognizes that military force is sometimes useful when the state is threatened. This may call into question his theory of complex interdependence, the main condition of which is the abandonment of military force. Thus, he sometimes sheds the clothes of a theoretician to put on the clothes of a politician, noting: "As a former assistant secretary of defense, I would be the last to deny the continuing importance of military power. Our military's role is essential to global stability, and the military is part of our response to terrorism" (Nye, 2002).

Effect of soft power: USA-Georgia relations

For the United States to advance its foreign policy goals, it must strengthen its partnership with democracies and democratizing countries. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Moscow considered the South Caucasus important for Russia's stability, although Georgia, which sought to escape its influence, took advantage of Washington's efforts to spread its liberal values in the post-Soviet countries.

After gaining independence in 1991, the US helped Georgia in state-building and democratization. Georgia turned out to be a loyal partner for America in Iraq and Afghanistan. At the end of the 20th century and after the relative consolidation of state institutions, Georgia's geostrategic location at the crossroads of East and West attracted the attention of the United States. After the September 11 attacks, Georgia joined the global war on terror. At the beginning of the partnership with the US, Georgia received significant military assistance through support funds and GTEP. The military professionalism of the Georgian Defense Forces has been significantly strengthened by the bilateral assistance of the USA and Georgia's involvement in NATO international training programs, exercises, and missions (Zabakhidze, 2020).

USAID (US Agency for International Development) started operating in Georgia in 1992. Based on this partnership, the US government annually allocates approximately 40 mil-

lion USD for 50 large-scale programs that support Georgia's democratic, free market economy and Western orientation of development. Programs stimulate economic growth, develop democratic institutions, enhance energy security, mitigate climate change, and improve education (USAID, 2022).

Georgia is a key US ally in the Caucasus region and a gateway for energy resources from the Caspian Sea to Europe and beyond. They discussed several options for improving economic cooperation and bilateral trade, ways to improve the business climate in Georgia to attract more investments, emphasized the importance of improving the rule of law, respecting labor rights and effective implementation of newly adopted labor reforms, protecting intellectual property rights and resolving business disputes (Department of State, 2021).

The August 2008 war and its aftermath did not represent a clear turning point in US-Georgia relations, but it was important in some ways, Washington's verbal support was unwavering throughout the conflict, and huge funds were allocated for reconstruction. Washington has become more cautious about military cooperation, especially on aspects of strengthening Georgia's defense capabilities. The August War has raised questions about Washington's willingness to support Georgia against its powerful neighbor — not just rhetorically, but also in practice — and to respond effectively to Russia's actions against Georgia.

The strength of the US-Georgia relationship is codified in the 2009 US-Georgia Strategic Partnership Charter. Strategic partnership confirms the importance of friendship and relationships between strategic partners. This cooperation between the two democracies includes shared values and common interests, such as the expansion of democracy and economic freedom, security, the rule of law, and respect for human rights. After signing the Charter, the United States and Georgia strengthened cooperation based on US support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity (US-Georgia Charter, 2022).

USA - superpower and security guarantor

US-Terrorism Force: 9/11

In the early 1990s, things were going well for American foreign policy in the Middle East. The end of the Cold War meant the end of the Soviet threat in this geopolitically and economically crucial region. September 2001 changed the foreign policy strategy. Terrorism was relevant before 9/11, but then it became a central issue in American foreign policy.

On September 11, 2001, 19 militants affiliated with the Islamic extremist group al-Qaeda hijacked four airplanes and attacked targets in the United States. Nearly 3,000 people died

in the 9/11 terrorist attacks, prompting major US counterterrorism initiatives (9/11 Memorial, 2022).

President George W. Bush declared war on terrorism. Within a month, the United States retaliated by leading an invasion of Afghanistan aimed at killing or capturing Osama bin Laden, destroying his al-Qaeda terrorist network, and overthrowing the Taliban regime that had ruled Afghanistan and given bin Laden a haven. It was just the beginning: the war on terrorism “will not end until every terrorist group on a global scale is found, stopped and defeated,” Bush said. The war in Afghanistan has shown that American military power has reached more dominant levels than those seen in the wars in Kosovo and the Persian Gulf. It demonstrated a wide range of new technologies. Less than two years later, the United States went to war in Iraq. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were part of the global war on terror (Jentelson, 2021).

These attacks were a turning point for global extremists and terrorists. The horrors of 9/11 united the world to defeat terrorism. To counter a common threat, military forces, law enforcement agencies, and intelligence services have created common databases, exchanged personnel, conducted joint exercises and operations, and shared intelligence, technology, expertise, and experience.

After the attacks of September 11, 2001, Georgia provided appropriate assistance to the US, and after the Rose Revolution, Georgia’s contribution to international missions increased and strengthened, in particular, by participating in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. During this time, the United States strengthened bilateral defense ties with Georgia through training and infrastructure development, leading to a major reconstruction of Georgia’s armed forces. Although Georgian international peacekeepers were called into the 2008 Russia-Georgia war, Georgia remained committed to its international responsibilities. Since 2004, Georgia has deployed more than 20,000 military personnel through ISAF and then the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission (RSM), becoming the leading non-member contributor. Georgia remains a loyal partner of the United States through the US and NATO peacekeeping missions in Iraq and Afghanistan (Ministry of Defense, 2022).

War on Terror is a term used to describe the global anti-terrorist campaign launched in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The war on terror has been a multidimensional campaign of almost unlimited scope. Its military dimension has included major wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, covert operations in Yemen and elsewhere, large-scale military aid programs for cooperative regimes, and large increases in military spending. Its intelligence dimension included institutional reorganization and significant increases in US intelligence fund-

ing, expanded cooperation with foreign intelligence agencies, and tracking terrorist financing. Its diplomatic dimension included building a global coalition of partner states and organizations and a broad public diplomacy campaign to combat anti-Americanism in the Middle East. Bush signed the Patriot Act, a law intended to strengthen the federal government's counterterrorism response. The extensive bill includes provisions to strengthen cooperation between law enforcement and intelligence agencies; strengthen banking regulations against terrorist financing; create new definitions and punishments for terrorist activities; and dramatically expand domestic surveillance (Patriot Act, 2021).

America established a special Department of Homeland Security, bringing together its domestic intelligence and law enforcement agencies. It also successfully deterred and prevented attacks on the US. The United States has spearheaded global counterterrorism programs (Homeland Security, 2022).

The Homeland Security Act of 2002 created the Department of Homeland Security. Today, the Department of Homeland Security is the cabinet responsible for preventing terrorist attacks, border security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and disaster relief and prevention.

Russia is still a dilemma for the USA: from the reset policy to the Ukraine crisis

There have been two periods in recent history when the US and Russia have cooperated on several issues. First, in the post-9/11 period, when Russia helped the United States in the first phase of the war in Afghanistan, and secondly, during the 2008-2012 "reset" policy between President Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev, Moscow and Washington cooperated on arms control, Afghanistan, Iran, and other global issues. regarding issues.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia's goals and policies in the South Caucasus remained constant. Its power and influence began to decline with the onset of the Karabakh conflict. The low point of US-Russia bilateral relations was preceded by the 2008 conflict between Russia and Georgia. US-Russia relations had been in decline for several years before the conflict, due to differing views on strategic arms control, missile defense, and NATO's relationship with Ukraine-Georgia.

The Obama administration had a serious disagreement with the Russian government regarding Georgia. They urged Russia to end its occupation of Georgian territories - Abkhazia and South Ossetia and simultaneously worked with the Russian government to prevent further military escalation in the region.

The latest war with Ukraine, which has resulted in the interruption of natural gas supplies to Europe and pressure on the Kyrgyz government to close the US air base in Manas, shows that Russia's actions not only threaten the security and sovereignty of its neighbors but also often pose a challenge to the United States and its allies.

President Barack Obama tried to change the relationship with Russia. After the 2008 Russia-Georgia conflict, in February 2009 his administration announced the "reset", an attempt to move bilateral relations to a cooperative stage, which brought some successes, the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and enhanced cooperation in Iran and Afghanistan, although progress in 2011 slowed down. US officials have offered to help Russia join the World Trade Organization (WTO), which Moscow has sought for 15 years. They must secure a congressionally approved bilateral agreement on nuclear cooperation, which has stalled since the Russia-Georgia conflict (White House, 2010).

Russia joined the United States in the UN Security Council in passing a resolution on Iran that, among other things, imposed an arms embargo on Tehran, an important step given that Russia was Iran's main arms supplier.

Washington and Moscow continued to dispute the issue of Syria. Since the start of the civil war in early 2012, Russia and China have blocked UN Security Council resolutions criticizing Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. In December, the United States joined Britain, France, Turkey, and the Gulf states in recognizing the National Coalition for the Syrian Opposition, further deepening the US rift with Moscow.

After Obama's re-election, his administration officials expressed hope that they might restore some momentum in US-Russia relations. High on the administration's list of goals was progress on further reductions in nuclear weapons, addressing missile defense, and expanding trade and investment relations.

In 2014, Russia's actions dealt another major blow to US-Russia relations. After prolonged protests in Ukraine, pro-Russian Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich fled to Russia and was replaced by a pro-Western government, followed by the invasion of Crimea by Russian military forces. Russia formally annexed the peninsula, violating the 1975 Helsinki Act, the 1994 Budapest Memorandum security guarantees, and the 1997 Ukraine-Russia Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. Since early April, Russia has been supporting armed separatists in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of eastern Ukraine. As a result, Ukraine has become a major issue between the West and Moscow. The United States and the European Union responded to this violation of sovereignty, and Russia's actions in eastern Ukraine by replacing the planned

June G8 summit with a G7 meeting and imposing visa and financial sanctions on Russia. This was followed by broader sanctions on the financial, energy, and defense sectors of the Russian economy. In Europe, Russia's actions have seriously damaged the order established by the Helsinki Final Act in 1975 (Pifer, 2014).

Despite the deterioration of the situation in Ukraine, the US-Russia continued to implement the New START treaty, which was related to the limitation of nuclear forces and ensuring transparency, thereby setting limits in the strategic nuclear field.

On February 24, 2022, the invasion of the territory of Ukraine by Russia and the implementation of large-scale military operations turned Russia into international isolation. Russia's military aggression brought the US and its allies together, which subsequently led to its isolation from international organizations and the imposition of sanctions. Since 2014, bilateral sanctions have been significantly expanded, which has particularly harmed the Russian economy (White House, 2022).

The ongoing military conflict in Europe led to geopolitical changes, as well as the unification of political interests among European states against the Russian Federation, which once again clearly showed us Russia's imperialist intentions.

Conclusion

Since the end of World War II, the world has undergone many changes. The geopolitical situation of states has changed, conflicts between different states have become more frequent, terrorism has taken root, human rights violations have taken place in various conflict wars, the use of military force has become the only alternative, and arming countries remains an unsolved problem. There are positive issues in the changes, such as the collapse of communist regimes, the unification of Europe, support for small and vulnerable countries, the positive effects of soft power, the creation of NATO, an incredibly growing rate of American-European cooperation, friendship, and trust, but all this could not prevent the imperialist desires of the Russian Federation and The evil intentions that succeeded and created problems in various countries, which are frozen for an indefinite period. Despite many efforts by the USA and several positive indicators, Russia remains the biggest challenge for both the USA and humanity, as in the past and today, Putin's Russia represents the biggest threat to the civilized world.

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Unravelling the Complexities: Iran's Influence in the Gaza Conflict and U.S. Diplomacy

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Abstract

The Gaza Conflict escalated dramatically on October 7, 2023, when Hamas executed a bold raid into Israeli territory known as Operation al-Aqsa Flood. This meticulously coordinated operation, involving air, land, and sea incursions, raised questions about the level of autonomy within Hamas and the external involvement. The Israeli response was swift and severe, marked by massive airstrikes on the Gaza Strip, resulting in civilian casualties and infrastructure damage. This incident not only reignited tensions in the longstanding Israeli-Palestinian conflict but also underscored the intricate web of geopolitical dynamics at play. This article delves into the complexities of Iran's influence in the Gaza Conflict and its implications for U.S. diplomacy in the region, considering the recent events that have reshaped the landscape of this enduring and profoundly entrenched conflict.

Keywords: Gaza Conflict, Hamas, Operation al-Aqsa Flood, Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Autonomy, External involvement, Geopolitical dynamics, Iran's influence, U.S. diplomacy

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Introduction

The Gaza Conflict, a perennial hotspot in the tumultuous landscape of the Middle East, rekindled global attention on October 7, 2023, with a stunning and meticulously executed raid by Hamas into Israeli territory—Operation al-Aqsa Flood. Yet, to truly comprehend the significance of this incident, one must delve into the historical tapestry of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a saga marked by decades of territorial disputes, ethnic tensions, and geopolitical intricacies (UN Report, 2023).

The roots of the Gaza Conflict trace back to the mid-20th century, with the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and the ensuing displacement of Palestinian Arabs. Over the years, the region has witnessed a series of wars, uprisings, and peace negotiations, each leaving an indelible mark on the quest for stability and self-determination. The complexities inherent in the conflict are exacerbated by the involvement of multiple actors, including state and non-state entities, each pursuing divergent political, religious, and strategic objectives (Muasher,2023).

This article aims to unravel the multifaceted layers of the Gaza Conflict, with a specific focus on the recent events that transpired on October 7, 2023. Operation al-Aqsa Flood not only showcased the audacity of Hamas but also raised pertinent questions about the group's autonomy and the external influences shaping its actions. As we navigate through the historical context and contemporary developments, it becomes evident that understanding the conflict requires a nuanced examination of the myriad actors involved, their motivations, and the intricate geopolitical dynamics at play.

Historical Background

The roots of the Gaza Conflict can be traced back to the mid-20th century when the State of Israel was established in 1948, leading to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians. Subsequent Arab-Israeli wars heightened tensions, and the Gaza Strip, under Egyptian control, became a focal point of the ongoing dispute. After the Six-Day War in 1967, Israel's occupation of the Gaza Strip, West Bank, and East Jerusalem marked a significant turning point, bringing large Palestinian populations under Israeli rule. The establishment of Israeli settlements in these areas further intensified hostilities.

In the late 1980s, amid Palestinian resistance, Hamas emerged as an Islamist organization initially focused on social services. The First Intifada (1987-1993) witnessed a surge in Palestinian uprisings against Israeli occupation (Araj. 2005). Despite the Oslo Accords in the 1990s aiming for a two-state solution, progress was hindered by events such as the assassina-

tion of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (Hedges,1994). Failed negotiations, continued settlement expansion, and contested Jerusalem contributed to ongoing strife. The Second Intifada (2000-2005) brought increased violence. In 2005, Israel unilaterally withdrew from Gaza, dismantling settlements. However, tensions persisted with Gaza under an Israeli blockade and the West Bank experiencing ongoing settlements. Hamas's victory in the 2006 Palestinian legislative elections led to tensions with Fatah, culminating in the 2007 Hamas takeover of Gaza. This internal division weakened the Palestinian position in negotiations with Israel. Military conflicts, including Operation Cast Lead (2008-2009) and Protective Edge (2014), resulted in significant casualties and infrastructure damage in Gaza. The region faced humanitarian crises, including challenges related to access to essential services.

Recent developments, such as the 2023 Hamas incursion into Israel, underscore ongoing volatility. Regional players, particularly Iran, play complex roles, impacting the diplomatic landscape in pursuing a peaceful resolution. The historical trajectory of the Gaza Conflict reflects a series of complex developments, internal divisions, and regional dynamics that continue to shape the current state of affairs in the region

Iran's Historical Involvement in the Middle East

Iran's role in the Middle East has been deeply rooted in its historical and cultural ties to the region. From ancient Persia to the Islamic Republic, Iran has played a pivotal role in shaping the political and religious landscape of the Middle East. The 1979 Islamic Revolution marked a turning point as Iran shifted towards an Islamist government led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. This ideological shift significantly impacted Iran's foreign policy, introducing a fervent commitment to anti-imperialism and supporting movements aligned with its revolutionary ideals (Abrahamian, 1982).

Iran's influence expanded through strategic alliances and proxy relationships as it sought to counter the influence of regional rivals. The geopolitical chessboard of the Middle East became a battleground for influence, with Iran supporting various groups that shared its anti-Israel and anti-Western sentiments.

Iran's Relationship with Palestinian Factions in Gaza

Iran's engagement with Palestinian factions, particularly in Gaza, has been a consistent aspect of its regional strategy. One of the primary recipients of Iranian support has been Hamas, the Islamist organization governing the Gaza Strip. Financial aid, military assistance, and po-

litical backing have solidified the relationship between Iran and Hamas, creating a dynamic beyond mere financial transactions (Levitt, 2006).

The rationale behind Iran's support for Palestinian factions lies in its opposition to Israel and its quest for regional dominance. By backing groups like Hamas, Iran aims to project power and influence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, using proxies to advance its geopolitical objectives. However, the extent of Iran's influence and the degree of autonomy granted to these factions are complex issues requiring a nuanced examination.

As we explore the historical ties between Iran and Palestinian factions, it becomes evident that this relationship is integral to understanding the dynamics at play in the Gaza Conflict. The evolving nature of these connections is crucial for comprehending the motivations and actions of these factions, especially in light of the recent events that have once again thrust the region into the global spotlight.

Iran's engagement with Palestinian factions is not merely a bilateral relationship but a geopolitical chess moves within the broader Middle Eastern landscape. By aligning itself with groups like Hamas, Iran seeks to extend its influence and establish a foothold in a region that has long been a crucible of conflict. This geopolitical maneuvering is driven by Iran's ambitions for regional hegemony and its desire to counterbalance the influence of its rivals in the area (Brandenburg,2010).

The connection between Iran and Palestinian factions transcends mere strategic interests and is deeply rooted in shared ideological objectives (Levitt,2006). Both Iran and these factions often espouse anti-Israel sentiments and resistance against perceived Western dominance in the region. This ideological alignment forms a crucial component of their alliance, shaping the narrative and actions of Palestinian factions in the broader context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The historical ties between Iran and Palestinian factions have not remained static; they have evolved, adapting to the changing geopolitical landscape and the shifting priorities of the involved parties. Understanding this evolution is essential for grasping the current dynamics of the Gaza Conflict. The nature of support, whether it be financial, military, or political, has undergone transformations that reflect the ever-changing nature of regional alliances and conflicts.

In light of the recent events that thrust the Gaza Conflict back into the global spotlight, a comprehensive understanding of the motivations and actions of Palestinian factions becomes imperative. Iran's historical support provides a lens through which we can analyze the decisions

and strategies employed by these factions in response to the evolving geopolitical situation. The nuances of this relationship shed light on the factors influencing the behavior of Palestinian factions, contributing to a more informed interpretation of their actions on the international stage.

Allegations of Iran's involvement in planning the 2023 Hamas incursion into Israeli territory, admitted by a former Revolutionary Guard (IRGC) officer, Ezzatollah Zarghami, underscore the substantive military support provided (Zarghami, 2023).

The impact of Iran's support on the Gaza Conflict is profound. It bolsters Hamas's military capabilities, altering the regional balance of power and influencing broader Middle East geopolitics. Symbolic manifestations of Iran's overt support include official statements from leaders like President Ebrahim Raisi and Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, publicly praising Hamas, and symbolic banners displayed in Tehran (Ewing, 2023). This overt support is not confined to symbolic gestures. Iran significantly contributes to Hamas's annual budget through financial aid and allegedly played a role in planning the 2023 incursion (Said, 2023).

This substantive support reinforces an anti-Israel narrative, aligning with the "Axis of Resistance" and serving Iran's geopolitical interests by disrupting regional normalization efforts, particularly the Abraham Accords (U.S. Department of State report, 2022). The impact extends beyond regional narratives, permeating global implications. Iran's overt support for Hamas poses challenges to international diplomatic efforts, complicating endeavors to address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Additionally, it strains U.S. diplomacy, raising concerns about broader geopolitical ramifications. The Iran-Hamas alliance, therefore, emerges as a significant factor in the multifaceted dynamics of the Middle East, influencing both regional and global geopolitics.

Iran's involvement with Palestinian factions, notably Hamas, has long been a focal point of its regional strategy. As Matthew Levitt asserts in "Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad," Iran's support transcends financial transactions, creating a multifaceted dynamic (Levitt, 2006).

The rationale behind Iran's backing of Palestinian factions, particularly Hamas, is implanted in its geopolitical objectives. By supporting groups opposed to Israel, Iran aims to project power in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and establish influence. However, the degree of autonomy granted to these factions remains a complex issue, demanding a nuanced examination (Farrell, 2010).

This relationship's historical evolution is integral to understanding the complexities at

play in the Gaza Conflict. Ervand Abrahamian's "The Iranian Mojahedin" emphasizes the geopolitical chess moves within the broader Middle Eastern landscape (Ervand, 1982). Iran aligns itself with groups like Hamas to extend influence in a region historically marked by conflict.

The connection between Iran and Palestinian factions goes beyond strategic interests; it is deeply rooted in shared ideological objectives (Levitt, 2006). Both Iran and these factions often espouse anti-Israel sentiments and resist perceived Western dominance. This ideological alignment forms a crucial component of their alliance, shaping the narrative and actions of Palestinian factions in the broader Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The historical ties between Iran and Palestinian factions have evolved, adapting to changing geopolitical landscapes and shifting priorities. The recent Hamas incursion into Israel highlights the ongoing volatility. A comprehensive understanding of this historical support is crucial for interpreting the decisions and strategies employed by these factions in response to evolving geopolitical situations. In light of recent events thrusting the Gaza Conflict back into the global spotlight, insights into the motivations and actions of Palestinian factions become imperative. Iran's historical support provides a lens through which we can analyze the decisions and strategies employed by these factions in response to the evolving geopolitical situation, offering a more nuanced perspective on the ongoing dynamics in this enduring and complex conflict.

Amidst the military tactics employed in the recent conflict, Iran's overt support for Hamas adds a layer of complexity to the geopolitical landscape. Iran's substantial financial backing and alleged involvement in planning the 2023 Hamas incursion into Israeli territory underscore its influential role in the ongoing conflict. This overt support has implications not only for regional dynamics but also for international diplomatic efforts, particularly in the context of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.

U.S. Diplomacy in the Middle East: Navigating Complexities

The historical relationship between the U.S. and Iran has undergone a complex evolution, marked by periods of cooperation, tension, and diplomatic challenges. Beginning in the early 20th century, the dynamics shifted significantly after the Iranian Revolution in 1979, leading to strained relations and the imposition of sanctions (Levs,2012). Recent U.S. actions in the Middle East complicates this intricate relationship. The freezing of funds, especially amid concerns about Iran's nuclear program, sets the stage for diplomatic efforts to revive the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The decision to facilitate the transfer of frozen funds involves potential benefits and risks, shaping U.S. foreign policy in the region. While signaling progress in JCPOA negotiations and fostering trust-building, critics argue it may face domestic opposition and raise regional tensions. This move represents a potential shift in approach, departing from previous administrations' policies and emphasizing diplomatic resolutions. The global perception of this decision influences international views of the U.S.'s commitment to multilateral diplomacy. In the realm of U.S.-Iran relations, Secretary of State Antony Blinken's sanctions waiver takes center stage. Signaling a commitment to the JCPOA, the waiver provides selective relief to facilitate diplomacy without abandoning broader punitive measures.

Blinken's sanctions waiver is not merely a diplomatic tool; it aligns with the Biden administration's broader approach of diplomatic outreach, fostering dialogue with Iran and building trust through measured economic concessions. This nuanced maneuvering directly impacts ongoing JCPOA negotiations, incentivizing Iran to engage constructively while providing the U.S. with diplomatic leverage. Potential outcomes range from the revival of the JCPOA to stumbling blocks intensifying regional tensions. In response to regional conflicts, particularly the Gaza Conflict, the U.S. holds Iran complicit in attacks, complicating Washington's strategy of isolating Iran and impacting its regional alliances (Reuters, 2023)

Analyzing military tactics and humanitarian impact in the Gaza Conflict reveals the region's intricacies. Israel's precision strikes in densely populated areas raise concerns about civilian casualties, straining regional stability and complicating diplomatic efforts. Global criticism against Israel for its military operations further underscores the geopolitical ramifications of regional conflicts, affecting its standing on the global stage. In this complex landscape, the U.S. navigates a delicate balance between historical relationships, diplomatic initiatives, and the broader geopolitical implications of regional conflicts (Turak,2023). The Biden administration's decision to transfer \$6 billion of frozen Iranian assets is pivotal in U.S.-Iran relations. Facilitated by waiving sanctions, it emphasizes nuanced engagement and multilateral diplomacy in the complex Middle Eastern landscape. Antony Blinken's sanctions waiver holds historical significance in reshaping U.S.-Iran relations, influencing regional stability, and potentially reverberating globally. This strategic diplomatic move exemplifies nuanced engagement, marking a pivotal step in reshaping dynamics with potential ripple effects in the Middle East (Hansler,2023).

Analyzing Power Dynamics: Theoretical Frameworks in the Hamas-Israel Conflict

The ongoing Hamas-Israel conflict is a multifaceted manifestation rooted in historical

tensions and territorial disputes. It involves a complex interplay of power dynamics among key regional actors, and two theoretical frameworks, the Balance of Power and Balance of Threat theories, providing insights into the intricate relationships shaping this conflict.

The Balance of Power theory suggests that stability is achieved when power is distributed among states to prevent dominance by any single state or coalition. In the context of the Hamas-Israel conflict, regional powers, notably Iran, play a pivotal role in shaping the balance. Israel, prioritizing its security, forms alliances and receives substantial support, particularly from the United States, potentially tipping the regional balance of power.

The Balance of Threat theory extends considerations beyond military power, incorporating perceived threats into strategic calculations. In this conflict, Iran's actions and perceived threats as a supporter of Hamas influence the strategic calculations of other regional actors, including Israel and its key ally, the United States. The perceived threat from Iran shapes alliances and responses in the region.

Ideological alignment, anti-Israel sentiments, and a broader regional strategy for influence drive Iran's involvement in supporting groups like Hamas. This involvement contributes to the balance of power by creating alliances that counterbalance Israel and its allies, simultaneously adding to the perception of threat and influencing the behavior of states in the region.

The consistent support of the United States for Israel, rooted in shared strategic interests, geopolitical considerations, and a historical alliance, plays a crucial role in the balance of power. U.S. support strengthens Israel's military capabilities and geopolitical position, impacting overall power dynamics in the Middle East.

In summary, the theories of balance of power and balance of threat provide analytical frameworks to comprehend the complex relationships and motivations in the Hamas-Israel conflict. Iran's involvement and U.S. support emerge as key factors influencing the delicate balance in the Middle East.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Gaza Conflict, magnified by the recent events of Operation al-Aqsa Flood in 2023, is a complex and enduring saga deeply entrenched in the Middle East's historical, geopolitical, and ideological fabric. The conflict's roots, dating back to the mid-20th century, are intertwined with territorial disputes, ethnic tensions, and the involvement of state and non-state actors.

Iran's historical involvement in the region, particularly with Palestinian factions like Hamas, emerges as a critical chapter in the Gaza Conflict. From ideological alignment to shared anti-Israel sentiments, Iran's multifaceted support extends beyond mere strategic interests, shaping the narrative and actions of Palestinian factions. This historical relationship, marked by financial aid, military assistance, and political backing, provides a nuanced lens to understand the motivations behind recent events, such as the 2023 Hamas incursion into Israeli territory.

The landscape is further complicated by U.S. diplomacy in the Middle East, characterized by a nuanced approach that involves thawing frozen Iranian assets and utilizing sanctions waivers to navigate the intricate U.S.-Iran relationship. The decisions made by the Biden administration hold significant implications for the ongoing Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) negotiations, regional stability, and the broader geopolitical landscape.

Analyzing power dynamics within the Hamas-Israel conflict through the lenses of the Balance of Power and Balance of Threat theories underscores the intricate relationships shaping the region. The influence of regional powers, notably Iran, and the consistent support of the United States for Israel contribute to the delicate balance in the Middle East.

In this complex tapestry, where historical ties, diplomatic initiatives, and power dynamics converge, the conclusion drawn is that a comprehensive understanding of the Gaza Conflict demands a nuanced examination. By unravelling the historical layers, dissecting recent events, and interpreting theoretical frameworks, we gain valuable insights into this enduring and intricate conflict's motivations, actions, and ongoing dynamics. The path forward requires diplomatic finesse, recognition of historical complexities, and a commitment to addressing the multifaceted challenges that define the Gaza Conflict.

Terms and Concepts Used in the Article:

Intifada: The Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The first intifada lasted from 1987 to 1993, and the second began in 2000.

Fatah, formerly the Palestinian National Liberation Movement is a Palestinian nationalist and social democratic political party.

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Center of Gravity of Ukraine in Current War and Lessons Learned

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Abstract

This research focuses on revealing Ukraine's Centre of Gravity, delving into the critical concept of the Centre of Gravity (COG) in the ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia, and employing Dr. Joe Strange's method of analyzing COG. By identifying the interplay between critical capabilities (CC), critical requirements (CR), and critical vulnerabilities (CV), the study seeks to pinpoint Ukraine's true COG in this war.

This study underscores the profound global implications of Ukraine's strategic goal to restore territorial integrity, peace, and security. The nation's significance as the "breadbasket of Europe" and its role in maintaining world grain and food security further magnify the importance of resolving the conflict. Based upon the findings, the research provides recommendations.

The research also provides key lessons learned from the ongoing conflict. It highlights the complexities of achieving political isolation of Russia due to its influences the evolving geostrategic environment and persistent veto power in the UN. Additionally, economic support for Ukraine proves instrumental in fortifying its resistance and resilience, emphasizing the need for comprehensive sanctions targeting Russia's GDP.

In the realm of information warfare, non-state actors, particularly social media platforms, wield considerable influence in shaping narratives. Acknowledging their significance as stakeholders is imperative in this domain. Leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) for identifying propaganda, misinformation, and internet bots proves invaluable in countering these threats.

Emerging technologies, such as Starlink, play a pivotal role in rebuilding communication networks and coordinating military operations. Private companies and industries equipped with advanced technology emerge as key players in the conflict. Furthermore, the military domain emerges as the decisive arena, necessitating proactive measures like acquiring NATO standard weaponry and conducting multinational training.

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In conclusion, this research underscores the pivotal role of international support in fortifying Ukraine's COG and recommends strategies to address the challenges posed by Russia's veto power, refine economic sanctions, enhance information warfare capabilities, and leverage advanced technology for military efficacy. These insights provide valuable lessons for shaping future responses to conflicts of this nature.

Keywords: Center of Gravity, Critical Capability, Critical Requirement, Critical Vulnerability, Strategic Goal, Strategic Objective.

Introduction

The fate of war depends on the center of gravity and its strength. Each conflict has its center of gravity (COG), and as Carl Von Clausewitz mentioned, it is the ‘hub of all power’ (Clausewitz, 1989, p. 595). Military campaign planners analyze the COG of the enemy, their own, and all key participants in the campaign to protect their COG and hit the enemy’s COG directly or indirectly. The COG helps planners to understand, visualize, and describe the ‘source of power or strength’ ((TRADOC), 2020, pp. IV-22). and it allows them to focus their efforts and resources effectively on the correct target.

Russia’s imperialistic ambitions have driven a pattern of territorial expansion, marked by the gradual annexation of neighboring territories to extend its influence and control over the region by using different means for expanding control over “the near abroad” post-soviet states. This aggressive stance was exemplified by the 2008 invasion of Georgia and the subsequent occupation of Crimea, Donetsk, and Lugansk in 2014. These actions have significantly heightened concerns among neighboring countries, as they witnessed Russia’s willingness to employ military force to achieve its objectives. (Mankoff, 2023). This behavior underscores Russia’s inclination to establish a buffer zone and highlights the enduring influence of its political culture, particularly in the context of its perceived sphere of influence, often referred to as the “near abroad.” The international community responded by condemning Russia’s actions and implementing economic sanctions, yet these measures proved ineffective in deterring Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

In February 2022, Putin said in his speech that he was starting a special military operation and urged the Ukrainian military to lay down weapons and go home. He also declared Ukraine’s democratically elected government to be a neo-Nazi regime (Spectator, 2023). All this followed full-scale military operations involving land, navy, air forces, space, cyber, and informational domains and targeted Ukraine’s government in Kyiv and many other critical cities. Following these instances, it is relevant to consider whether Russia’s strategists were aware of the traits, capacities, or sources of power that give Ukrainian freedom of action, physical strength, or will to fight.

This research is based on Dr. Joe Strange’s method of analyzing COG. COG and critical vulnerabilities (CV) were first identified by Carl Von Clausewitz, but this did not help military operation planners analyze COG. Dr. Joe Strange later conducted research and developed models that are still employed in modern military doctrine. What he accomplished was to establish a connection between COG and CV by determining that COG requires the possession

of critical capabilities (CC) and that for CC to be fully functional, they must also meet critical requirements (CR), which enable CC to do certain tasks or establish certain conditions. The gap between CC and CR is what constitutes a CV (Strange, 1996). Accordingly presented tools will be used to gain a thorough understanding of Ukraine's COG.

This analysis aims to comprehend Ukraine's COG in the ongoing war. One can gain a thorough CC, CR, and CV grasp of Ukraine's COG in the current war by looking at the four primary areas listed below.

research will answer the following questions:

1. What is the CC that enables Ukraine to pursue its strategic goals in the current war with Russia?
2. What is the CR that enables CC to be functional?
3. What is the CV of Ukraine's COG?
4. Where is the true COG for Ukraine in the current war?

Ukraine's COG is in allied support and encompasses aid from 50 nations, delivering advanced technology, specialized training, and a range of lethal and non-lethal equipment. Crucially, this support is positioned beyond the reach of Russia's artillery, thereby thwarting Russia's ability to achieve its strategic objectives.

The research in this paper reveals Ukraine's strategic goal, Ukraine's COG's critical capabilities to accomplish strategic goals, and the critical requirements for each critical capability, from which critical vulnerabilities are revealed. Additionally, this research specifically examines what makes vulnerabilities more likely to be mitigated and not used by Russians for their profit. Finally, research will define the true COG of Ukraine. Thus, research will provide readers with information and A tool to analyze, describe, and visualize COG.

Ukraine's Strategic Goal

When we start the analysis of the COG, it is necessary to find out: first, what is the goal of Ukraine, as well as what the consequences will be if Ukraine achieves the goal. The goal of Ukraine is to restore its territorial integrity and sovereignty to continue independent democratic reconstruction and development. Moreover, as Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in his speech, 'We must liberate our land and achieve victory, but faster. Much faster. This is our national goal, and we must work to achieve it on a daily basis. Not only the state but also every citizen-at the level at which it is possible' (Zelensky, 2023).

Second, we need to determine what the condition will be after the goal is achieved. If Ukraine achieves the named goal, Russia will certainly be defeated and will be forced to retreat from Ukraine; thus, Russia's influence on Ukraine will decrease and the West's influence will increase. Also, as many experts say, this war is not only a Russia-Ukraine war, but it is a war between autocracy and democracy, which imposes a moral obligation on the West and America to help Ukraine win the war. As stated in the Vilnius NATO samite 'We fully support Ukraine's inherent right to self-defense as enshrined in Article 51 of the UN Charter. We remain steadfast in our commitment to further step up political and practical support to Ukraine as it continues to defend its independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, and will continue our support for as long as it takes' (Vilnius Summit Communiqué, 2023) In order to restore peace and security in the region, prevent future aggression from Russia or its supporting states, such as Belarus, North Korea, and Iran, even show China the disastrous consequences of aggression, and protect democracy and peace (Blinken, 2023). So, it is not only a moral obligation to support Ukraine but also a pragmatic step. Successfully supporting Ukraine demonstrates a commitment and resilience on the part of the West – particularly for the US to regain some lost relevance and lost standing among the free community of the world.

It should be noted that the West and America should help Ukraine not only based on moral responsibility, but this is one the pragmatic issues that they should do to maintain regional security, as well as to prevent Russian aggression against EU or NATO member states and to suppress Russia's imperialist policy. Also, for the West, Ukraine is critically important in terms of resources and energy security, and if Russia can control the resources in Ukraine, it will continue to intensify pressure on the West (Daryna Lesniak, 2023). Therefore, the West and America must necessarily help Ukraine win, because this will have a great impact on the new world order; moreover, it is closely related to the security of the West, America, and world food security issues too.

From what was described, it is obvious that Ukraine's goal of restoring territorial integrity and sovereignty by creating a safe and stable environment in the region will also have a visible positive impact on the world, as mentioned in Vilnius Samite 'The security of Ukraine is of great importance to Allies and the Alliance' (Vilnius Summit Communiqué, 2023)

Critical capabilities for Ukraine COG

Ukraine's COG should be able to first repel the Russian attack; second, mobilize the elements of national power: diplomacy, information, the military, and the economy (DIME); third,

gain more international support; and fourth, isolate Russia from the civilized world. These four abilities are crucial for Ukraine's COG to effectively counter Russian aggression. By repelling the initial attack, Ukraine can secure its existence and protect its sovereignty. Mobilizing national power through DIME enables Ukraine to leverage all available resources and capabilities, ensuring a comprehensive response to the war. Gaining international support is essential, as it strengthens Ukraine's position on the global stage and increases diplomatic pressure on Russia. Lastly, isolating Russia from the civilized world serves as a deterrent and highlights the consequences of illegal war, which will weaken Russia's economy and military. All this will give Ukraine enough time to gain time for an effective counterattack in order to achieve Ukraine's strategic objectives of restoring Ukraine's border according to international recognition, which contributes to securing peace and stability not only in Ukraine but in the region, the EU, NATO, and the USA, and securing safe food delivery to Africa and the globe.

Critical requirements for critical capabilities to be fully operational

For Ukraine's COG, critical requirements include a credible military to repel the Russian attack and restore territorial integrity, and it has to have a land force, an air force, a navy with enablers, and a robust defense industry. The land force is crucial for maintaining territorial integrity, protecting Ukraine's borders, regaining lost territory, and enforcing counterattacks. The Air Force plays a vital role in ensuring air superiority, conducting reconnaissance missions, and providing close air support to ground forces. Furthermore, a well-developed defense industry is necessary to produce and maintain advanced military equipment and enhance self-sufficiency (Ivan Rusnak, 2023).

We should be aware that all those who support Ukraine right now are making political decisions based on what we mentioned above. and it is based on the security issues of Ukraine, the EU, and NATO. These political decisions are not only driven by the security concerns of Ukraine, the EU, and NATO but also by the shared values of democracy, sovereignty, and human rights. Support for Ukraine is crucial to ensuring regional stability and upholding international norms in the face of aggression. As it was mentioned in the G-7 Summit, 'We stand united in our enduring support for Ukraine, rooted in our shared democratic values and interests, above all, respect for the UN Charter and the principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty' (Miller, 2023). Furthermore, G-7 leaders decided to support Ukraine both militarily and economically by providing it with cutting-edge military technology. They understand how critical it is to develop Ukraine's economy and technological capacity to improve its defense capabilities. Additionally, they seek to establish partnerships that can aid in the transfer of military

support and help train personnel, boosting modernization and enhancing Ukraine's capacity to resist Russian aggression.

In this context, it is vital not to overlook the pervasive influence of the informational environment and cyberspace, strategically wielded by Russians to orchestrate extensive influence operations. Their tactics extend beyond targeting Ukrainian citizens alone, aiming to undermine Ukraine's government by manipulating not only its populace but also influencing allies. The Russians adeptly exploit social media platforms and online forums as potent tools for disseminating disinformation and purposefully sowing discord among diverse groups (Perez, 2023).

Additionally, they have also been accused of hacking into computer networks and stealing sensitive information for their own strategic advantage, as well as hindering critical infrastructure and undermining the Ukrainian government (Vasquez, 2023). They do this directly, but most aggressively through the encouragement or hiring of mercenary hackers and experts in cyber mayhem. They mainly target critical infrastructure which is significant for populace like governmental buildings, hospitals, financial system, power grids, media networks, mobile networks (Greenberg, 2023). So, it is a critical requirement for Ukraine to be resistant and resilient against Russian propaganda as well as defend its critical infrastructure from cyberattacks. To counter Russian influence operations, Ukraine should prioritize bolstering its cybersecurity and investing in cutting-edge technologies. Furthermore, Ukraine needs to collaborate with international partners and organizations to share intelligence and develop joint strategies against Russian propaganda. By taking these proactive steps, Ukraine can enhance its resilience against disinformation campaigns and protect its critical infrastructure from potential cyber threats.

Critical vulnerabilities and sources of power to minimize them

The CCs listed above are essential for Ukraine's COG to reach strategic goals, like mobilizing the tools of national power (DIME). Diplomacy serves as the cornerstone for Ukraine's engagement with the international community, enabling leaders to build alliances, garner support, and navigate complex geopolitical landscapes. Skillful diplomacy emphasizes mutual interests and shared values, forging stronger ties with like-minded nations and creating an environment conducive to achieving strategic goals. Informational, sphere involves shaping the narrative, countering disinformation, and effectively communicating Ukraine's perspective globally. By highlighting common values and adherence to a rule-based international order, Ukraine enhances its image, garners public support, and counters negative narratives. The military component executes strategic plans to safeguard national interests, aiming to deter aggressors, defend sovereignty, restore territorial integrity and contribute to regional security.

Coordination with diplomacy ensures a unified front. In order to support military operations while maintaining economic function, economic power, which is essential to national strength, entails mobilizing internal resources, luring foreign investments, and coordinating economic policies with diplomatic and strategic goals. This comprehensive approach enhances Ukraine's capacity to achieve long-term strategic goals. So, if Ukraine gets international support, it is not only due to effective government work but also to mutual and common interests with the West, G7 member states, NATO, and the USA, considering international law, principles of the UN Charter, Geneva Conventions, and other international treaties.

Starting with international diplomatic support for Ukraine not only strengthens Ukraine's position but also sends a strong message to Russia that its actions are unacceptable and will not be tolerated by the international community. For example, the UN General Assembly condemned Russia's illegal occupation of Ukraine's territory, and of the 193 UN member states, 143 voted favorable to Ukraine, and only 5 states voted in favor of Russia (Eleventh Emergency Special Session, 2022). In addition, Mr. Vladimir Putin is the subject of arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for allegedly committing war crimes in Ukraine (Abdallah, 2023). By diplomatically isolating Russia from the civilized world, it becomes increasingly difficult for them to sustain their war efforts and maintain their military capabilities, political influence, and economic pressure on Ukraine and its allies. Therefore, it becomes imperative for Russia to actively seek avenues for diplomatic engagement and bridge the gap to avoid further isolation. For that reason, Russia decided to look for alternative allies. Even in Africa, because Africa is the most welcomed region for Russia. In fact, 54 African countries are members of the UN. and they are dependent on Ukrainian and Russian grain, Russia is offering them cheaper grains to win their hearts and minds (Anna, 2023). This will give Russia more votes in the UN and diplomatic leverage.

To summarize, first, Russia is currently facing diplomatic isolation from Western countries and G7 member states, although it still maintains partnerships with other parts of the world. So, they are not completely isolated; second, all decisions the UN, EU, and NATO make are based on consensus, which takes time; also, Ukraine is not a member of the EU or NATO; it is a member of the UN, but it is not effective due to Russia being a permanent member of the UN Security Council and having veto power; third, all diplomatic decisions are implemented by international organizations and allies; they are the main doers, not Ukraine. And it is the same in the economic domain.

Undoubtedly, economics plays a significant role in war 'The amateurs discuss tactics: the professionals discuss logistics' (Bonaparte, 2023). Economics influences the strategies and

decisions made by nations involved in conflicts. It determines the allocation of resources, the financing of military operations, and ultimately the outcome of wars. Additionally, economic factors such as trade, sanctions, and access to vital resources can shape geopolitical dynamics and contribute to the causes and escalation of conflicts (Braddon, 2012).

After the war began in 2022, Ukraine's economy suffered the greatest fall since 1991, accounting for approximately 30% of GDP; thus, the World Bank mobilized \$38 billion in support of Ukraine (Ukraine In Numbers, 2023). In addition, the EU, its member states, and organizations mobilized €53 billion. In the Ukraine Recovery Conference, which was held on June 21–22, 2023, in London. The European Commission, the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the International Finance Corporation have reached an agreement worth over €800 million to bring in investment from the private sector for Ukraine's economic revitalization and reconstruction (Communication, 2023).

Also, it is important to mention that some states, like the USA, directly support Ukraine, and the USA is the biggest contributor to financing Ukraine with 75 billion USD since the war broke up (Jonathan Masters, 2023). Germany €619 million, and the United Kingdom €286 million, The EU, in particular, stated in the summer that the new financial package of €50 billion would be released before 2027, thereby doubling EU support (Trebesch, 2023). While none of the options outlined can compensate for Ukraine's financial losses, they do encourage Ukraine's perseverance and tenacity in recovering from economic shocks and fighting for freedom. A suspended war with Russia would not be conceivable without their assistance. However, without sanctions on Russia, just supporting Ukraine would be less effective.

On the other hand, we should see what sanctions Russia got from the West and Ukraine's allies. The EU and G7 countries blocked Russia's central bank reserves of €300 billion; 70% of Russian banks are under sanctions; and more than 1500 personnel are sanctioned with 20 billion assets. In 2023, according to the International Energy Agency, Russia's oil revenues dropped by over 40% (Council, Infographic - Impact of sanctions on the Russian economy, 2023). Now EU has sanctioned 49% of exports (€43.9 billion), and 58% of imports (€91.2 billion) (Council, EU sanctions against Russia explained, 2023). But it is also true that sanctions are not as effective as expected, and Russia's economy shows effective resilience against sanctions. (Lama El Baz, 2023).

Question is which Western approach will be most impactful in countering Russian aggression? The key lies in addressing Russian enablers or vulnerabilities. Efforts are underway to punish, isolate, and influence the allies on whom Russia relies heavily. However, these actions

also affect diplomatic initiatives and relationships that Washington, London, Berlin, and Paris seek with those governments. The challenge is to strike a balance between countering Russian influence and maintaining constructive diplomatic and economic engagements in the broader geopolitical landscape.

In the economic sphere, it is clear that Ukraine's economy is vulnerable, and without the West's and its partners' support, it would be far more difficult for Ukraine to resist Russia's war of aggression. Hence, the main doers of sanctions are the Alliance, the EU, and international organizations; they do have the capacity to impose sanctions against Russia and the will to support Ukraine. But it is a little different in the information environment.

After the economic domain, one of the tools of national power is the information domain. Information environment and information warfare were used all the time in the war, but social media, which was used especially in the current Russia-Ukraine war, played a greater role in shaping and influencing public opinion. With the rise of platforms like Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, and YouTube, and on the other side, Vkontakte, Telegram, and Yandex, information dissemination has become faster and more accessible to a wider audience. These platforms were utilized by both state-sponsored actors and non-state actors to spread propaganda, and disinformation, and manipulate narratives to further their agendas.

Because of that, Russia banned most Western social media. Similarly, Ukraine blocks Vkontakte and Yandex. The interesting thing is that YouTube and Facebook also take into account the EU's view on Russia's sanctions, and they have also started to control censorship by using AI, which plays a critical role in the information environment. For example, Twitter removed 310,000 pieces of content supporting Russian propaganda, YouTube removed 70,000, and TikTok removed 41,191. Likewise, bots and other marvels were used for promoting Russian propaganda; even deep faces were used. In the informational environment, it is obvious that Ukraine limited Russian social media, but in the informational environment, they got supported by private companies like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, which contributed greatly to countering Russian propaganda (Christian Perez, 2023).

Part of the Russian military strategy is destroying Ukraine's critical infrastructure, including TV towers, radio stations, and fiber optic cables. This strategy aims to disrupt communication networks and cripple Ukraine's ability to coordinate and respond effectively. By targeting these key infrastructure elements, Russia seeks to create chaos and hinder Ukraine's ability to mobilize its forces and maintain public order. Furthermore, blocking Ukrainian internet and telecommunications systems encourages Russians to implement Russian internet and

telecommunications systems in occupied territory. which are often used for propaganda, and if someone tried to search for alternative information or spread true information about war, he or she would be easily detected and eliminated (Zhyrmont, 2023).

In the first few days when the war started, internet, radio, TV, and phone communication were so hijacked by Russians that the minister of digital transformation in Ukraine, Mykhailo Fedorov, asked Elon Musk via Twitter for support ‘while you try to colonize Mars Russia try to occupy Ukraine! While your rockets successfully land from space Russian rockets attack Ukrainian civil people! We ask you to provide Ukraine with Starlink stations and to address sane Russians to stand’ (Fedorov, 2023).

In a few days, Elon Musk replied and donated 500 Starlink terminals; later, 6,000 were sent, and in July 2022, 15,000 Starlink terminals were operating in Ukraine, which enabled Ukraine to recover communication problems between key infrastructure, military units, people, and families. The Starlink terminals provided by Elon Musk not only helped Ukraine overcome communication challenges but also played a crucial role in enhancing national security and emergency response capabilities. Moreover, Starlink enabled Ukrainian military forces operating unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and uncrewed surface vessels (USVs) to reconnoiter deep in Russia’s positions, striking them even more at an unexpected time and place. For that, Elon Musk got a phone call from the Russian ambassador, which led him to limit Starlink’s operational range, despite the dissatisfaction of Ukrainians (Isaacson, 2023). This decision highlighted the significant impact that Starlink had on Ukraine’s not only military capabilities but also strategic communication, communication within critical infrastructure and families, and not letting Russian war machines win in the information domain. The incident also sparked a global debate on the role of private companies in national security and raised questions about the potential risks and benefits of such technologies. Also, private companies’ roles are important, like on Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, YouTube, and other social media. The vulnerability Ukraine had in the information domain was fixed by private company support, which highlights how important they are and also who has the ability to do things.

One of the most critical is military support for Ukraine. It is obvious that the Ukrainian soldiers, sergeants, officers, and civilians are very motivated, brave, and professional, but without Western support, they would reach their culmination point earlier, which would be used by Russia to reach their strategic objectives. Therefore, the military support provided by Western countries not only enables Ukraine to defend itself but also prolongs its ability to resist Russian aggression and restore its territorial integrity.

Military support for Ukraine began following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, although it was primarily limited to non-lethal equipment, training, and sharing experience, which was enhanced after 2014 in response to Ukrainian requests. After 2022, when the war started, NATO and EU member states began providing lethal military assistance to Ukraine. This support included the provision of advanced weaponry and intelligence sharing to help Ukraine defend its sovereignty. Additionally, NATO and EU member states have also increased their financial aid to assist Ukraine's armed forces and enhance its defensive capabilities (Mills, 2023). But it is also a fact that Ukraine's military requires more assistance.

Land Forces requires reinforcement by an air defense system, tanks and personal carriers, engineering assets for breaching operations, intelligence, as well as long-range artillery and missiles. As Volodimir Zelensky said in his speech in Congress, 'We have artillery, yes. Thank you. We have it. Is it enough? Honestly, not really' (Kevin Liptak, 2023). These additional assets are crucial in order to effectively counter and neutralize any potential threats or adversaries. The air defense system plays a vital role in protecting against aerial attacks, while tanks and personal carriers provide the necessary firepower and mobility on the ground. Engineering assets are essential for overcoming obstacles and creating breaches during offensive operations. Additionally, long-range artillery and missiles offer the capability to strike targets from a distance, ensuring a strategic advantage (Jamey Keaten, 2023).

The air force is important for offensive or defensive operations. It plays a crucial role in maintaining national security by conducting aerial surveillance, reconnaissance, and strategic bombing missions. Additionally, the air force is responsible for ensuring air superiority and protecting airspace from potential threats; it can also provide close air support to suppress enemy forces. Furthermore, it has a huge psychological impact on the enemy force and a very positive influence on the own force (Walsh, 2023). But that is a vulnerability Ukraine has and it is asking to be supported by international partners in order to strengthen its air force capabilities and ability to hit invaders' high-value targets day and night.

So, this accounts for almost all the vulnerabilities the Ukrainian military has, starting with the land force, with enablers and capabilities of mobility, firepower, force protection, intelligence, the air force, and its capabilities. We now see who is supplying Ukraine with this asset.

The USA is the overall biggest contributor, supplying Ukraine with air defense systems, Patriot air defense batteries and Hawk air defense systems; Surface-to-Air Missile Systems (NASAMS); and more than 2,000 Stingers, Avenger, and air surveillance radars; High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS); 155mm Howitzers; Remote Anti-Armor Mine; Abrams

tanks; Bradley, Stryker, M113 Armored Personnel Carriers, M1117 Armored Security Vehicles; Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicles (MRAPs); High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs); armored medical treatment vehicles; trucks and trailers; command post vehicles; UAVs, anti-armored and small arms like Javelin anti-armor systems, Tube-Launched Optically-Tracked Wire-Guided (TOW) missiles, grenade launchers and small arms ammunition; maritime capabilities, and other explosives or ammunitions for artillery mortars, air defense systems, etc. It is not all the capabilities listed here, but it is a significant amount when combined with other state's support (Political-Military, 2023).

The UK is the second-biggest contributor after the USA; they have provided lethal and non-lethal weaponry to Ukraine, like tanks, anti-tank weapons, the M270 long-range multiple launch rocket system, air defense, artillery guns, armored fighting vehicles, mine clearance vehicles, communication systems, electronic warfare equipment, counter-drone systems, as well as UK-train Ukrainian soldiers and F-16 pilots. In addition, the UK donates items like cold weather gear, night vision, slipping bags, ammunition, short- and long-range artillery shells, and rockets (Net, 2023). These contributions from the UK aim to enhance Ukraine's defense capabilities and support their efforts in countering Russian aggression. Furthermore, the provision of advanced training and equipment demonstrates the UK's commitment to strengthening Ukraine's military capabilities and ensuring their readiness in challenging environments.

According to the Ukraine Support Tracker, based on data from January 24, 2022, to January 15, 2023, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, Finland, Germany, Norway, Poland, the United Kingdom, and the United States totally donated approximately 305 tanks (Christoph Trebesch, 2023). Ukraine lost 470 tanks in combat from February 24, 2022, to February 21, 2023 (Bureau, 2023) This highlights the significant support provided by international allies to Ukraine's military efforts. Despite the losses, these donations have helped replenish and enhance Ukraine's tank fleet, contributing to their ongoing defense capabilities.

The Netherlands and Denmark are ready to donate their F-16s. Accordingly, 11 states agreed to support Ukraine to train Ukrainian pilots; even more, the US will head up the training of pilots (Joshua Posaner, 2023). This collaborative effort aims to strengthen Ukraine's defense capabilities and enhance its air force. The involvement of multiple countries, including the US, showcases the international community's commitment to Ukraine's security and sovereignty.

The biggest challenge seen in providing F-16s to Ukraine is time because training requires a lot of preparation to train pilots, technicians, and other personnel, as well as modernizing infrastructure to keep aircraft combat-ready. Not only is teaching flight challenging, but

teaching weapon systems and sensors is also challenging, and Ukrainians have to learn English and then all the technical things about aircraft maintenance, and tactics, which will take time (Here, 2023). But Ukraine will get it from the alliance and the vulnerabilities will be mitigated.

Conclusions and recommendations

Ukraine's strategic goal of restoring territorial integrity, peace, and security not only holds significance for regional security, the West, and NATO, but it also has far-reaching implications for global stability and rule-based international order. In addition, the resolution of the conflict in Ukraine is crucial to maintaining world grain and food security, as Ukraine is known as the "breadbasket of Europe" due to its significant agricultural contributions.

The CCs listed above are essential for Ukraine's COG to reach strategic goals, like mobilizing the tools of national power (DIME). Therefore, Ukraine mobilized all 50 Western and non-Western states due to the shared values, and rule-based international order was threatened. So, if Ukraine gets international support, it is not only due to effective government work but also to mutual interest and shared values with the West, NATO, USA, and G7 states based on international law, principles of the UN Charter, Geneva Conventions, and other international treaties.

Over a year and a half since Russia invaded Ukraine, the country continues to face challenges due to the war's economic, infrastructure, and security instability. The EU, G7 states, USA, UK, Germany, and 47 other countries have provided economic, diplomatic, and military support to Ukraine. They have also offered humanitarian assistance to Ukraine. Impose sanctions on Russia, aiming to empower Ukraine while highlighting the consequences of Russia's unprovoked war.

All vulnerability in Ukraine has been, is, or will be mitigated by aliens' support, and if we ask where the true COG of Ukraine is, it is support from its allies. That way, it is beyond Russian artillery reach, which is why Russia can't defeat Ukraine while the West perseveres in the will and ability to support Ukraine.

The best lessons learned are that:

The first political isolation of Russia could not be achieved due to the complicated, constantly changing geostrategic environment. Also, Russia still holds veto power in the UN. Before Russia has veto power in the UN, they will use it for their purposes and not to support UN principles, that is why it is recommended to restrain, minimize, or balance Russia's veto power.

Second, economic support for Ukraine is really helpful for Ukraine to strengthen resistance and resilience and rebuild critical infrastructure. However economic sanctions on Russia do not have the expected impact on the war. So, it will be helpful if sanctions are more comprehensive and target Russia's GDP, not just individuals, organizations, or industries.

Third, in the informational environment, non-state actors have significant roles, like social media and their owners. Most of them can spread propaganda and misinformation, promote narratives, and reveal and eliminate propaganda. As a result, it should be considered an important stakeholder in the informational domain.

Fourth, AI is an important tool for discovering propaganda, misinformation, fake accounts, or internet bots. nations, strategic communication should be reinforced with personnel and tools using AI.

Fifth, new technology like Starlink has had a huge impact on rebuilding communication and maintaining governmental and non-governmental organizations functioning, as well as enabling military operations to be coordinated. It is wrathful to consider some private companies and industries as key players in the war due to their new technology and abilities.

Sixth is a military domain that is most decisive in the war and one of the most complicated due to its comprehensiveness. Ukraine may have lacked some components and capabilities, but allies are and will support them, but then come up with challenges in implementing, maintaining, and using them properly. For that, it needs multiple month- or year-long training, which should be considered before the war by buying NATO standard weapons, ammunition, and technology, conducting multinational training, etc.

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Nuclear Weapon – The Curse or Sake

MAIA ANTIDZE^{5*}

Abstract

The nature of nuclear weapons is a complex and controversial topic. While some argue that nuclear weapons serve as a deterrent and contribute to global stability, others view them as a significant threat to humanity and the planet. The destructive power of nuclear weapons is immense, capable of causing widespread devastation and loss of life. The use of nuclear weapons has the potential to escalate conflicts and lead to catastrophic consequences.

The United States of America is one of the countries that possess nuclear weapons. The U.S. has a long history of nuclear weapons development and has conducted numerous tests and deployments. The country's nuclear arsenal is considered one of the largest in the world. It is important to note that the use and proliferation of nuclear weapons are highly regulated and governed by international treaties and agreements, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons. The United States, like other nuclear-armed nations, maintains these weapons as a deterrent and for national security purposes.

Keywords: Nuclear weapon, Manhattan Project, types of nuclear weapon

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Introduction

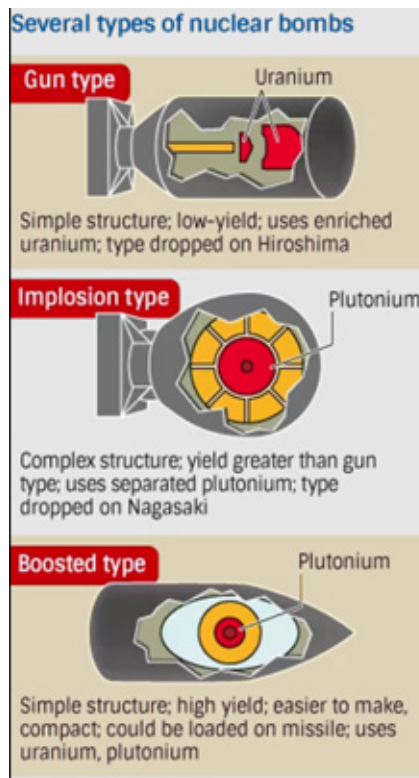
An atomic weapon is an unstable gadget whose disastrous power results from either atomic parting chain responses or joined atomic parting and combination responses. Atomic weapons whose hazardous force results only from parting responses are regularly alluded to as nuclear bombs, while those that determine a lot or the majority of their energy in atomic combination responses are named nuclear weapons (or on the other hand nuclear bombs) (Nuclear Weapons under international law: Overview, 2014).

A revelation by atomic physicists in a research center in Berlin, Germany, in 1938 made the main nuclear bomb conceivable, after Otto Hahn, Lise Meitner, and Fritz Strassman found atomic parting.

The Manhattan Project was the code name for the Americans, to foster a practical nuclear bomb during The Second World War. President Franklin Roosevelt made a council to investigate the chance of fostering an atomic weapon after he got a letter from Nobel Prize laureate Albert Einstein in October 1939. In his letter, Einstein cautioned the president that Nazi Germany was probably working on fostering an atomic weapon.

On December 28, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt approved the arrangement of the Manhattan Project to unite different researchers and military authorities dealing with atomic examination. The project was begun because of fears that German researchers had been dealing with a weapon utilizing atomic innovation since the 1930s. A significant part of the work in the Manhattan Project was done in Los Alamos, New Mexico, under the heading of theoretical physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer, the “father of the nuclear bomb.” On July 16, 1945, in a remote desert area close to Alamogordo, New Mexico, the primary nuclear bomb was effectively exploded — the Trinity Test. It made a gigantic mushroom cloud nearly 40,000 feet high and introduced the Nuclear Age (EDITORS, 2022).

Nowadays the USA is the only country that used nuclear weapons in warfare, and still, they try to prevent any other use or development of atomic weapons.



Retrieved from: <https://asia.nikkei.com/Business/Technology/Is-North-Koreaworking-on-more-compact-nuclear-weapons2>

Types of nuclear weapons

Atomic weapons, rather than ordinary weapons, resemble accurate instruments with complex designs. These bombs require advanced technology to develop, build, and maintain. To be pragmatic, these weapons should be tried to affirm whether they work and on the off chance that they yield as much power as estimated.

Implosion-type bombs are one of the earliest atomic weapons. It is a similar component utilized in the bomb dropped on Nagasaki. The design puts a mass of plutonium in its center. Traditional dangerous charges around this plutonium pit are set off simultaneously, making a collapse that wraps the plutonium and packs it until a splitting chain response is set off, causing an atomic blast.

Boosted fission bombs use a combination response brought about by tritium and deuterium in the gadget's center. This response radiates high-energy neutrons into an encompassing shell of splitting material, which helps the material's hazardous yield. The way to foster this kind of weapon is by dominating the atomic combination innovation.

The more seasoned sort of atomic weapons, for example, the collapse type, expect time to make weapons-grade advanced atomic materials, like plutonium. Helped types, nonetheless, can utilize even humble improved uranium. Besides, improvement is conceivable in offices sufficiently little to fit on a truck, mentioning simpler to sidestep objective fact (FURUYA, 2014).

Pros and Cons of nuclear weapon

From a humanitarian perspective, many consider nuclear weapons to be a curse due to their potential for indiscriminate harm and long-lasting environmental effects. The risk of accidental or unauthorized use, as well as the potential for nuclear proliferation, are also concerns associated with these weapons.

However, proponents argue that nuclear weapons have played a role in preventing major conflicts between nuclear-armed nations. They believe that the possession of nuclear weapons can deter aggression and maintain a balance of power.

Ultimately, whether nuclear weapons are seen as a sake or a curse depends on one's perspective and the context in which they are considered. It is a highly debated topic with no universally agreed-upon answer.

Nuclear weapons are often considered a curse due to several reasons:

1. **Humanitarian Impact:** The destructive power of nuclear weapons is unparalleled. Their detonation can cause immense loss of life, severe injuries, and long-term health effects. The indiscriminate nature of nuclear weapons makes them particularly devastating, affecting both combatants and civilians alike. The potential for catastrophic humanitarian consequences is a significant concern.

2. **Environmental Impact:** nuclear weapons not only cause immediate devastation but also have long-lasting environmental effects. The radioactive fallout from nuclear explosions can contaminate land, water, and air, leading to environmental degradation and health risks for generations to come. The long-term consequences of nuclear testing and accidents, such as Chernobyl and Fukushima, serve as reminders of the environmental risks associated with nuclear weapons.

3. **Risk of Accidental Use:** Despite stringent safety measures, the risk of accidental or unintentional use of nuclear weapons cannot be eliminated. Technical malfunctions, miscommunications, or human errors could potentially lead to a catastrophic event. The potential for miscalculations or misunderstandings during times of heightened tensions adds to the inherent

risks associated with nuclear weapons.

5. **Economic Burden:** The development, maintenance, and modernization of nuclear weapons require significant financial resources. The allocation of funds towards nuclear weapons programs diverts resources that could be used for other pressing societal needs, such as healthcare, education, and poverty alleviation.

The possession of nuclear weapons is a topic that elicits diverse opinions. Proponents argue that there are potential benefits to having nuclear weapons, although these arguments are often countered by concerns about their risks and consequences. Some perceived benefits include:

1. **Deterrence:** The possession of such weapons can stop other nations from initiating conflicts or attacks, as the fear of devastating retaliation acts as a deterrent. These weapons are considered by some as a means to ensure national security and protect a country's interests. They can provide a sense of security and strengthen a nation's defense capabilities.

2. **Geopolitical Influence:** Possessing nuclear weapons can enhance a country's geopolitical influence and status on the global stage. It can provide leverage in diplomatic negotiations and strategic decision-making.

3. **Arms Control and Disarmament:** Paradoxically, some argue that the possession of nuclear weapons can lead to arms control and disarmament efforts. The recognition of the destructive power of these weapons has prompted international agreements and treaties aimed at reducing their numbers and preventing their proliferation.

It is important to note that these perceived benefits are highly debated, and the risks associated with nuclear weapons, such as accidental use, proliferation, and environmental consequences, are significant concerns that must be carefully considered (McCain, 1991).

Conclusion

Taking into consideration, the fact that the possession of nuclear weapons is a complex and highly debated issue. Some argue that nuclear weapons can act as a deterrent and help maintain national security. They believe that possessing such weapons can prevent potential adversaries from attacking. On the other hand, the use of nuclear weapons can have catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences.

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SECTION II: CULTURE

Exploring Race in American Popular Culture: A Critical Analysis of Representations and Perceptions Through the Phenomenal Fantasy TV Shows ‘Game of Thrones’ and ‘House of the Dragon,’ and George R.R. Martin’s Literary Masterpieces ‘A Song of Ice and Fire’ and ‘Fire & Blood’

ARTIOM ARAKELIAN^{6*}

Abstract

This research paper explores how race is represented in popular American culture and how people perceive that. It focuses on the TV shows ‘Game of Thrones’ and ‘House of the Dragon’ and the books ‘A Song of Ice and Fire’ and ‘Fire & Blood.’ The objective is to understand how the fantasy genre addresses the issues of racial portrayal. The study also explores different aspects, including racial diversity, stereotypes, and how these portrayals influence American and global society.

As a passionate fan and young expert in the world of ‘Game of Thrones’ and high fantasy genre, this topic was chosen due to a deep appreciation for the huge cultural importance of the show. It also reconfirms the fact that Game of Thrones is truly an ‘American pop culture phenomenon’ described by the undergraduate researcher in the previous independent academic paper (Arakelian, 2022). The goal is to emphasize the influence of the fantasy genre and how it changes the way race and ethnicity is depicted in Hollywood. Moreover, it recognizes the huge impact that both the TV series and the books have had on American and global pop culture.

Furthermore, the research paper explores portrayal of characters, cultures, and storytelling choices in ‘Game of Thrones,’ ‘House of the Dragon,’ and the novels. It recognizes the fantasy genre’s power to address real-world issues and question social norms on race and ethnicity. Additionally, the academic work compares the TV shows and books and similarities and differences in racial depiction.

The study analyzes how these portrayals in media impact people’s opinion and beliefs. It em-

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phasizes that creators have a responsibility to be fair and make stories that include everyone, regardless of their race and ethnicity, to show the diversity of society. Besides, the research recognizes issues in discussing race in popular culture and analyzes problems and controversies. It helps to understand how race is connected to American pop culture, and it demonstrates its significant influence on what people in society believe about race. The study encourages people to talk more about media and suggests exploring this topic more in the future.

Keywords: racial diversity, stereotypes, fantasy genre, television shows, novels, popular culture, audience interpretations, societal perceptions, media analysis, Game of Thrones.

Introduction

Background and Context

In recent years, undoubtedly, Hollywood and viewers have shown a bigger interest than ever before in the history of modern cinematography in analyzing the portrayal of race in popular culture and its impact on people's attitudes. Especially since the anti-racism movements in the US and across the world, including Black Lives Matter (BLM) and the new rules for Oscars nominations based on inclusivity and representation that were introduced in 2020 by the Academy (Academy, 2020). The fantasy genre has significantly grown and become a crucial part of Hollywood that transports people from our world to another magical and different universe.

Objectives of the Study

This research paper's main objective is to critically analyze the representation of race in the fantasy genre and its impact on viewer's attitudes and perception with the focus on such 'American pop culture phenomenon' (Arakelian, 2022) as "Game of Thrones" and its spin-off "House of the Dragon," as well as the novel series "A Song of Ice and Fire" and "Fire & Blood" by George R.R. Martin. This study aims to examine how different races and cultures are represented and to understand the influence of popular culture on people's attitudes towards race.

Research Questions

In this research paper, the next important questions will be explored:

- How are race and ethnicity represented and portrayed in "Game of Thrones" and "House of the Dragon"?
- What are the racial and ethnic backgrounds of the characters in "A Song of Ice and Fire" and "Fire & Blood"?
- How do these stories explore power and different cultures?
- How do these portrayals affect how people view and react to them?

Significance of Analyzing Race in the Fantasy Genre

Analyzing race in the fantasy genre is very important for culture, cinematography and science for several reasons. Firstly, popular culture has a significant influence on changing people's attitudes and perceptions. This analysis of how race is depicted in the TV shows and

novels can show more information and important facts about how popular culture supports or questions racial stereotypes and biases that exist in modern society. Furthermore, the fantasy genre, as a genre with no limits, can pay attention to real-world issues. Such understanding is crucial undoubtedly in order to openly talk more about diversity, representation, and inclusivity in popular culture, including Hollywood.

Overall, the current research paper's goal is to make its contribution to such relevant issues of race and representation in American popular culture, including, exploring connections between fantasy stories and real-world issues. This study critically analyzes how race is depicted in such masterpieces as "Game of Thrones," "House of the Dragon," "A Song of Ice and Fire," and "Fire & Blood," and examines how these portrayals affect what the audience thinks. Certainly, the research paper also emphasizes the responsibility of showrunners and authors in ensuring that their stories include everyone, regardless of their racial or ethnic backgrounds.

Literature Review

Existing Scholarship on Race in Popular Culture

Many researchers, including prominent University of Michigan scholars, have examined the representation of race in popular culture, including films, TV shows and literature (Goodwill et al., 2019, 288). They have explored how race is portrayed, the impact it has on audience perceptions, and how it affects what people think, including existing racial stereotypes. This research paper helps us understand why it is crucial to analyze race in popular culture.

Fantasy Genre and its Potential

Fantasy genre is unique, and it helps film and literature creators to take us to an unlimited magical world and explore real-world issues in such imaginary universes. This type of genre has the power to talk about real-world problems. Scholars have noticed that fantasy stories can explore issues like race, power, and inequality. It is truly crucial to understand and acknowledge that the fantasy genre has such great power to address and challenge such important social issues.

The Connection Between Race and Media Representation

Race and media representation are connected, and how race is depicted in the media is

more than just an important topic of study. Starting from the late 1940s, watching TV became a popular activity for many Americans. It entertains, educates, and shapes our perspectives on the world. According to University of Arizona scholar Stephanie Troutman Robbins, it has also been ‘a primary source of America’s racial education’ (Harwood, 2022).

Scholars have explored how portrayals in films change perceptions of race, influence people’s attitudes, and form racial identities in society. Undoubtedly, the representation of race in popular culture can both support stereotypes or challenge them, to keep inequalities or promote inclusivity. Indeed, there is a very complex relationship between race and media representation, and it is crucial to analyze how race is shown in fantasy stories and how it affects what people believe.

Methodology

Analyzing Key Episodes

In this research paper, a qualitative analysis method will be used to explore important episodes from the TV shows “Game of Thrones” and “House of the Dragon,” and certain parts of the books “A Song of Ice and Fire” and “Fire & Blood.” It will focus on carefully studying and interpreting specific scenes, dialogues, and descriptions to understand how race is portrayed in the TV shows and books.

Focus Areas: Characters, Cultures, and Story Choices

The analysis will focus on three main areas: character representations, the portrayal of different cultures, and the choices made in the story. As for character representations, there will be examination of racial identifies, backgrounds, how they are developed, and what happens to them. Moreover, the portrayal of different cultures will include exploration of different cultures and societies in the stories and how they are presented, and how race is connected with these depictions. And for story choices, there will be analysis of the decisions made by the creators, showrunners, directors, casting directors and authors in terms of storylines, characters, and plot connected to race.

Criteria for Selection of ‘Game of Thrones,’ ‘House of the Dragon,’ ‘A Song of Ice and Fire,’ and ‘Fire & Blood’

Undoubtedly, the selection of “Game of Thrones,” “House of the Dragon,” “A Song of

Ice and Fire,” and “Fire & Blood” is based on their world-wide popularity, huge cultural impact and extraordinarily detailed universe. The American pop culture phenomenon (Arakelian, 2022) has an enormous number of fans all around the world across different cultures from the United States to Asia, Africa and Europe, including the Caucasus region. For instance, the first season of ‘House of the Dragon’ ended with a total of 9.3 million viewers on Sunday night, counting everyone who watched it on different platforms (House of the Dragon, 2022). Moreover, the author, George R.R. Martin is famous for exploring important topics like race, social inequality and politics. Therefore, analyzing these specific stories, will create a better understanding of how race is portrayed in the fantasy genre.

Race in American Popular Culture

The Connection of Race and Popular Culture

It is well-known that race plays a significant role in American popular culture, which includes movies, TV shows, music, books, and other forms of entertainment. Popular culture not only reflects what people believe about race but also changes that.

Popular culture is found everywhere in our lives, from music and movies to social media and fashion. It shapes how we think and act (often without us even realizing it). Nowadays, it is really important to understand how pop culture and society are connected. Whether it is the songs we listen to or the things we see on social media, pop culture can influence us in many ways. That is why it is crucial to look into how it affects what we think and value, so we can understand this relationship better (Forgeard, 2023).

Importance of Representations and Perceptions

Certainly, the representations of race in popular culture are truly crucial because they can support and keep stereotypes or question them. When popular culture accurately and respectfully represents racial or ethnic minorities, of course, it can promote understanding and empathy towards such discriminated people and improve inequality and injustice. However, it is really important to acknowledge that negative or stereotypical portrayals can worsen biases and discrimination.

According to the Perception Institute, the issue is that lots of times, many representations are based on cultural stereotypes based on unfair ideas about different groups. This can make people from these groups look less important or mock those characters. Therefore, people

end up seeing that it is not the whole truth about others. Films, entertainment, and different aspects of popular culture greatly influence how we see others. For many people, popular culture is the main source through which they can understand people different from themselves.

The Influence of TV Shows and Novels on Cultural Perceptions

By all means, TV shows and novels have a significant impact on cultural perceptions of race. Cinematic stereotypes reflect and shape common prejudices. Perceptions can be influenced by portrayals of Asians as nerdy, black men as dangerous and Latinas as fiery (Schacht, 2019). They can reach lots of people and have the power to change their ideas and beliefs.

When authors include different types of characters and stories, it can create a positive change in terms of inclusivity and equality. However, when they emphasize racial and ethnic stereotypes or there are limited representations, it can certainly create a more discriminatory society. People should acknowledge the connection between race and popular culture and understand the importance of representations, recognize the influence and power of TV shows and novels. As a result, it will help people to critically analyze race in American popular culture, be unbiased, and work on inclusion and equality.

Analyzing the TV Shows: ‘Game of Thrones’ and ‘House of the Dragon’

Overview of the TV Shows:

‘Game of Thrones’ and its prequel series “House of the Dragon” are both fantasy television shows set in the fictional world of Westeros. “Game of Thrones” is based on the book series “A Song of Ice and Fire” by George R.R. Martin, while “House of the Dragon” is based on Martin’s companion book, “Fire & Blood.” Both shows are famous for their complicated storytelling, complex characters, and political intrigue.

‘Game of Thrones’ universe is very similar to a European medieval world where noble families fight for power in order to control the Iron Throne. The show explores such themes as power, family, and politics. “House of the Dragon” is a prequel, and it is focused on the history of House Targaryen. It is a very powerful and famous family in the “Game of Thrones” universe, and they are famous for their dragons and their conquest and rule over Westeros.

Racial Diversity and Representation.

Both of the TV shows have sparked discussions and debates about racial diversity and

representation. ‘Game of Thrones’ has been criticized for having a mainly white cast, especially the lead actors and the supporting cast, with quite limited representation of racial and ethnic minorities.

In ‘Game of Thrones,’ one of the great examples of racial diversity and representation is the character Missandei, played by Nathalie Emmanuel. Missandei. She was a former slave from the region of Essos and who later became the most trusted advisor to Queen Daenerys Targaryen. Her character is a strong, extraordinary, very intelligent woman of color in a quite influential position alongside the Queen.

Another Excellent example is the Unsullied, an army of enslaved but extraordinary soldiers who are mostly shown as Black in the show. Grey Worm, a Black soldier, played by Jacob Anderson, is the commander of the Unsullied who also was a slave of cruel masters of Essos. Their storyline is about liberation, freedom and the impact of slavery on the people and societies.

Without a doubt, In “House of the Dragon,” the racial diversity and representation are better than in Game of Thrones. In the prequel show, Valryons, one of the most powerful and prominent families in Westeros, are depicted as a unique Black skinned racial group with silver or silver-gold hair (Fida, 2023).

Analysis of Stereotypes

Besides the challenges of racial and ethnic diversity and representation, the TV shows also provoked debates about cultural appropriation and stereotypes. For instance, the way the Dothraki and their culture are shown has been criticized for promoting stereotypes of nomadic and violent societies. The Dothraki people are a very important example of stereotypes and depicting people of color. They are a nomadic horse-riding culture and fierce warriors from Essos. The Dothraki are described as having dark skin, long hair worn in dreadlocks or matted braids, and they wear minimal clothing. Dothraki weddings, known as “wedding of the horse,” are depicted as extravagant and wild celebrations. They involve thumping drums, ululations, orgiastic public sex, passionate throat-slitting, and the presentation of a box full of hissing snakes (Rastogi, 2011).

Furthermore, there is a distinct ethnic group as the Dornish people with unique customs and traditions than the rest White and Black people of Westeros. The Dornishmen are described

as having dark features, including smooth olive skin and black hair. They are typically short and lithe in build (Dornishmen, n.d.). Their physical appearance is often associated with a more Mediterranean or Middle Eastern appearance, and sometimes even with Latin American people.

Overview of the Novel Series: ‘A Song of Ice and Fire’ and ‘Fire & Blood’

‘A Song of Ice and Fire’ is a popular series of epic fantasy novels by the American novelist and screenwriter George R. R. Martin (Martin, n.d.). The series consists of several books, including *A Game of Thrones* (1996), *A Clash of Kings* (1998), *A Storm of Swords* (2000), *A Feast for Crows* (2005), and *A Dance with Dragons* (2011). However, the last two books, *The Winds of Winter* and *A Dream of Spring*, are yet to be published, and their release dates remain unknown. Despite author George R.R. Martin stating he is almost finished *The Winds of Winter*, no specific release date has been confirmed. Therefore, the publication date for the final two books is uncertain (Weitzman, 2023).

“Fire & Blood” is an imaginary history book by the same author about House Targaryen within the well-known book series “A Song of Ice and Fire.” The first volume was published on November 20, 2018. The second volume does not have a release date yet. Martin plans to write it after finishing “A Song of Ice and Fire” and two more “Tales of Dunk and Egg” books. HBO made a TV show called “House of the Dragon” based on this book, which premiered in 2022 (Cole’s, n.d.).

Comparing the TV Shows and Novels ‘A Song of Ice and Fire’ and ‘Fire & Blood’

There are a lot of differences between the TV Shows and the book, including race, age, physical Appearance, storyline. However, the main differences are made by the showrunners in order to make the cast more diverse and support inclusivity.

A great example of inclusive representation is Corlys, the Lord of the Tides, Master of Driftmark, and the head of House Velaryon. He is depicted as a Black skinned man and richest person in Westeros with enormous power over the country. However, in the book ‘Fire & Blood’ there was no information mentioned of his black or white skin. However, his kids, Laenor is described as having “the aquiline nose, silver-white hair, and purple eyes that bespoke his Valyrian blood,” and Laena has “a great mane of silver-gold ringlets that fell down past her waist.” Though Targaryens have broadly been described as having pale skin, there is no mention of their skin color in the book, which has been the source of some controversy in the fandom (Bojarski, 2022). Therefore, it is not certain whether the character should have been black

or white. However, these white and purple-eyed Targaryens shared blood with Velyrions and they both had Valyrian origin, which would make a more logical explanation of them having light skin since all the Targaryens were white.

It is important to mention that, in the A Song of Ice and Fire books, it says Daenerys and other Targaryens have violet eyes. But when they made the TV show, they changed it. They decided not to use violet contact lenses for Daenerys, played by Emilia Clarke, because it was hard to show emotions well with them. Even though violet eyes would have looked good, they chose good acting over that for a better performance (Lewingdon, 2017).

There are many reasons why TV and book characters are different. According to Business Insider, 'House of the Dragon' showrunners reimagined some characters as Black because they didn't want it to be 'another bunch of white people on the screen' ('House of the Dragon' Creators Didn't Want Mostly White Cast, 2022).

Challenges and Critiques

When analyzing racial representations, it is important to know that our understanding of race is complex and subjective. Different people may have different interpretations and experiences.

Some people criticize racial representations in TV shows and books for not being diverse enough, supporting negative stereotypes, or misrepresenting some racial and ethnic group. Undoubtedly, a lot of viewers expect more original and inclusive portrayals of different races and ethnicities.

Discussions and hot debates about Game of Thrones often involve criticisms about how different races and ethnicities are represented. According to The Guardian, some main points of discussion include:

Lack of diversity: Many people have pointed out that Game of Thrones does not have enough racial and ethnic diversity. Most of the main characters are played by white actors, and characters of color often have smaller roles.

Stereotypical portrayals: Some viewers criticize the way certain ethnic groups are shown in the series. For instance, the Dothraki people are depicted as a violent and savage nomadic tribe, while the Dornish are portrayed as overly sexualized and aggressive (Jones, 2019).

Orientalism: The show has been accused of using orientalist ideas, especially in how it presents the Dothraki and the Dornish. These storylines are seen as supporting negative stereo-

types and making non-Western cultures seem exotic.

Furthermore, the Public Medievalist magazine also emphasizes the next issues:

Limited character development: Some people feel that characters of color in Game of Thrones do not get as much development and screen time as white characters. This lack of depth might make it seem like they are included just for the sake of diversity, without any meaningful storylines (Young, 2017).

Failure to pass diversity tests: Game of Thrones has faced criticism for not meeting diversity tests, like the DuVernay test. This test looks at how well characters from racial minorities are represented and developed.

Undoubtedly, controversies can arise when cultural depictions are seen as disrespectful or inaccurate. To address this, creators should listen to viewer's feedback, consult with experts, and try to portray the characters accurately and respectfully. It should also include diverse casting, and consulting with cultural experts can help. However, opinions on representation can be different, so such dialogue is very important.

Conclusions

In summary, this research paper has explored the portrayal of race in popular American culture in the TV shows like "Game of Thrones" and "House of the Dragon" and the American novels 'A Song of Ice and Fire' and 'Fire & Blood'. The goal was to see how the fantasy genre addresses racial issues and how it affects what people think about different races. The study explored different characters, cultures, and the choices the creators made in these stories.

The analysis has shown that these stories have a huge impact on how people perceive race and ethnicity. It also has emphasized the fantasy genre's unique power to address real-world issues, challenge societal norms, and encourage people to talk more about race and the existing problems. The study compared the TV shows and books to find similarities and differences of race representation.

Furthermore, the study has found that the people making these stories have a big responsibility to tell fair and inclusive stories. The analysis has demonstrated that showing different races positively can help people understand and feel empathy.

Undoubtedly, race in popular culture is a very complex and subjective topic. Talking about race in popular culture is not easy, and various people have different opinions. The study suggests that having open conversations, giving constant feedback, and making sure characters

are shown correctly and respectfully are essential.

The enormous impact of 'Game of Thrones' and 'House of the Dragon' and the novels clearly shows that creators should be careful about the stories they tell and the characters they depict. This research paper, full of objective facts, also has deep admiration for the fantasy genre and will continue such open talk about different races that are shown in American popular culture and will strongly emphasize once again the importance of inclusivity and equality in Hollywood and world cinematography.

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Exploring Socio-Cultural Dynamics in the 19th Century America

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Abstract

This article delves into the intricate socio-cultural fabric of 19th-century America, unravelling the multifaceted dynamics that shaped the nation during this period. Employing a multidisciplinary approach, the study examines the interplay between social, cultural, and historical forces that influenced the development of American society. Key topics explored include the impact of industrialization, westward expansion, immigration, and civil engineering achievements.

By examining these key historical events, societal structures, and cultural shifts, this study aims to disentangle the complex interplay of factors

that influenced the development of American society during this critical century.

From the impact of westward expansion and industrialization to the challenges posed by the women's rights movement, the analysis navigates through the diverse tapestry of experiences that defined the era.

Keywords: Industrialization, Cities, 19th century America, Socio-culture

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Introduction

The American colonies, in many ways separated from the countries of Europe, developed differently in many fields of life.

18th-century American intellectual life was completely divergent in character from Europe, where traditional cultural values were prospering. The technology of applied science was a realm of interest of Americans, caused by environmental conditions. The best way to succeed was seen in the development of technology, and the minds of Americans were preoccupied with this topic (Britanica, 2023).

While colonial Americans did not reach high levels of traditional cultural achievement, they managed to guide their culture in a little more nondiscriminatory way than most countries in the world. In colonial America, the emphasis was more on science and technology than politics and metaphysics. Progress in the nonscientific area was less effective.

This emphasis on science and technology can be attributed to the practical nature of colonial Americans, who prioritized tangible advancements that could directly benefit their daily lives. However, this focus on progress in the nonscientific realm being less effective suggests that colonial America may have lagged in areas such as philosophy, art, and literature compared to other countries during that time.

Civil Engineering

Colonial America, spanning from the early 17th century to the late 18th century, witnessed the establishment of rudimentary civil engineering projects that were crucial for the development of the colonies. While the term “civil engineering” as we know it today did not exist, there were notable achievements in infrastructure and construction during this period.

America’s civil engineering accomplishments may not have been as complex or advanced as those of subsequent eras, but they did set the stage for the construction of infrastructure that was vital to the country’s expansion and long-term viability. These pioneering initiatives demonstrated how engineering ideas may be applied in real-world settings to fulfil the demands of a developing society. Building roads and bridges was crucial to tying settlements together and promoting trade and transportation. In New England, where rocky terrain posed challenges, colonists built unpaved roads using local materials. Bridges were constructed over rivers and streams, often using timber and stone. The Brooklyn Bridge (1883), designed by John A. Roebling and completed by his son Washington Roebling, was a groundbreaking

suspension bridge (McCullough, 1972).

The completion of the First Transcontinental Railroad (1869) at Promontory Summit, Utah, connected the East and West coasts (Ambrose, 2000). The Erie Canal (1817-1825), connecting the Great Lakes to the Hudson River, was a major engineering feat (White, 1905).

Although completed in the 20th century, planning for the Hoover Dam began in the 19th century. It stands as an impressive engineering achievement on the Colorado River (Stevens, 1988).

City Grow in 19th Century America

The 19th century was a transformative period for American cities, marked by significant growth and changes in urbanization. Several factors contributed to the expansion of cities during this time, such as Industrialization; immigration; and technological advances: innovations, such as the steam engine and later, the railroads, facilitated the movement of goods and people. This made it easier for industries to transport raw materials and finished products, and for individuals to relocate to urban centres; transportation networks; and economic opportunities. Cities provided a plethora of economic opportunities in the service, banking, trade, and industrial sectors, among others. Many people were drawn to urban areas by the possibility of finding employment and creating a better life; and technological infrastructure. Urban living became more appealing and sustainable with the advent of public transit, better sanitation, and water supply systems; cultural and social centres.

While the growth of cities in the 19th century brought about economic prosperity and cultural development, it also led to challenges such as overcrowding, inadequate infrastructure, and social inequalities. The urbanization trends of this period laid the foundation for the continued expansion and development of American cities in the 20th century.

The market revolution comprised three metamorphoses: advancement in transportation, commercialization, and industrialization. Each started in different periods. The transportation revolution began in 1825, coinciding with the launching the functioning of the Erie Canal, and speeding up with the construction of railroads in the 1830s and 1840 s. Commercialization started earlier, in about 1805, as a result of the restructuring of manufacturing through the putting-out system. After 1805, buying the items by cash time by time disintegrated the barter process. American industrialization started with Samuel Slater's little cotton spinning mill in Rhode Island in 1790, but most renowned was the mill town of Lowell, Massachusetts, with factories opened in 1823. These three changes accounted for the market revolution ((Sellers,

1994) . The market revolution refers to the major changes that occurred in the United States during the early 19th century, transforming the nation from a predominantly agrarian society to one focused on industry and commerce. These changes were driven by advancements in transportation, such as the Erie Canal and railroads, which allowed for easier movement of goods and people. Additionally, the restructuring of manufacturing through the putting-out system and the shift towards cash transactions further facilitated commercialization. The establishment of mills, like Samuel Slater's cotton-spinning mill.

in Rhode Island and the notable Lowell factories in Massachusetts, marked the onset of American industrialization, bringing about a significant shift in the economic landscape. The transformation was not only economic but also social, as it led to the emergence of a wage-based labor system, drawing individuals from rural areas to urban centers in search of employment opportunities in the burgeoning factories.

The transportation revolution, fueled by the completion of the Erie Canal and the subsequent expansion of the railroad network, played a pivotal role in connecting distant regions and fostering the movement of raw materials and finished goods. This connectivity not only stimulated trade but also spurred westward expansion, as goods and people could now traverse the continent more efficiently. The emergence of a national market, facilitated by improved transportation, contributed to the homogenization of economic activities across different regions.

Simultaneously, commercialization experienced a significant boost with the restructuring of manufacturing through the putting-out system. This decentralized production method involved distributing tasks to various households, creating a network of interconnected producers. As a result, the production of goods became more specialized and efficient, setting the stage for increased commercial activities. The shift from barter to cash transactions further streamlined economic transactions, providing a more flexible and standardized medium of exchange.

American industrialization, symbolized by Samuel Slater's cotton-spinning mill and the industrial hub of Lowell, propelled the nation into a new era of mass production and economic growth. The factory system introduced mechanization and mass production techniques, leading to increased productivity and the creation of a labor force concentrated in urban areas. This transformation marked the decline of traditional artisanal methods and the rise of large-scale industrial enterprises, shaping the trajectory of the American economy for decades to come.

The factory system also had significant social and cultural impacts. As rural workers flocked to urban areas in search of employment, cities experienced rapid population growth

and the development of new social classes. Additionally, the factory system created a division of labor, with workers specializing in specific tasks rather than producing goods from start to finish. This specialization increased efficiency but also led to a loss of autonomy for workers and a greater reliance on their employers for income.

Moreover, the factory system triggered profound social and cultural shifts that reshaped the fabric of American society. The influx of rural workers into urban areas, drawn by the promise of employment in the burgeoning factories, resulted in unprecedented population growth within cities. This demographic transformation not only altered the physical landscape of urban centres but also gave rise to new social classes and dynamics. Urbanization fostered the emergence of a distinct working class, often concentrated in crowded and industrialized neighbourhoods, juxtaposed with the affluent industrial elite.

The factory system's introduction of a division of labour further deepened these social changes. Unlike traditional artisanal methods where individuals crafted entire products, the factory system compartmentalized production, assigning workers specific tasks within a larger production process. While this specialization significantly increased overall efficiency and output, it came at the cost of individual autonomy. Workers, once accustomed to the independence of crafting entire goods, now found themselves confined to repetitive, specialized tasks. This shift in labour dynamics marked a departure from the traditional craftsmanship that had characterized pre-industrial economies.

The loss of autonomy for workers was compounded by a growing dependence on employers for income. Unlike the more self-sufficient agricultural lifestyle, where families could produce much of what they needed, factory workers became reliant on their wages to purchase goods and services. The employer-employee relationship became more formalized, with factory owners wielding significant power over the lives of their workers. This economic dependence created a sense of vulnerability among the labour force, leading to the rise of labour movements and the call for workers' rights in subsequent decades.

Culturally, the factory system contributed to the emergence of a new work ethic, emphasizing punctuality, discipline, and conformity. The structured and regulated nature of factory work imposed a rhythm on daily life that contrasted sharply with the more flexible and seasonal nature of agricultural work. Additionally, the factory environment facilitated the standardization of goods, contributing to a more uniform material culture.

In essence, the advent of the factory system not only revolutionized the economic land-

scape but also ushered in a new era of social, cultural, and economic relations in the United States. The profound changes brought about by industrialization laid the groundwork for ongoing debates about labour rights, the role of government in the economy, and the broader implications of rapid technological advancements on society.

These debates continue to shape the modern world as we grapple with issues such as income inequality, worker protection, and the ethical implications of automation. Moreover, industrialization also sparked urbanization as people flocked to cities in search of employment opportunities, leading to the growth of urban centres and the development of new social dynamics.

In conclusion, the market revolution in the early 19th century encompassed the intertwined metamorphoses of transportation, commercialization, and industrialization. These changes laid the foundation for the United States' evolution from an agrarian society to an industrial and commercially driven nation, setting the stage for further economic and social transformations in the years ahead.

Conclusion

To summarize, the study of sociocultural processes in 19th-century America reveals a fascinating tapestry of change, resilience, and identity building. By analyzing historical events, societal structures, and cultural shifts, this study aimed to pinpoint the several factors that shaped American culture throughout this crucial period.

As we reflect on this pivotal century, it becomes evident that the socio-cultural dynamics of 19th-century America were not merely a series of isolated events but a continuous narrative of adaptation, and resilience. The lessons learned from this era contribute to a deeper comprehension of the roots of contemporary American society, serving as a foundation for understanding the ongoing evolution of socio-cultural dynamics in the United States.

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SECTION III: LITERATURE, WOMEN'S ISSUES

Women's Role in Modern Wars - the US, Georgian and Ukrainian Case

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Abstract

The role of women is historically important and irreplaceable. Their involvement in various activities and fields is unlimited. Therefore, it should not be surprising that their role in modern conflicts is growing and is becoming more and more important. Although they were traditionally assigned by the society as mothers, teachers, doctors, actresses, etc. the role of women now play an increasingly important role in modern battlefields such as infantry and special forces. They also hold important positions in support areas such as intelligence, logistics and medical services. In addition to the military role, women are engaged in humanitarian work, peacekeeping and the promotion of peace and human rights. This article will take a close look at the role of women in the wartime particularly their involvement, benefit and new image in modern warfare. The ongoing Russia-Ukraine war once again made it clear that war has no gender and neither do the defenders of the motherland. We see how soldiers from Georgia as well as from Georgia's strategic partner - the US, are fighting alongside the brave and heroic Ukrainians to defeat Russian aggression. In this battle, women are always inferior to men and that is why their role is highlighted in this particular article.

Keywords: Hybrid warfare, war on terror, occupational forces, asymmetry, 5th generation warfare

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Introduction

The role of women in contemporary world, in modern conflicts has experiences notable transformation. Historically women's role was acknowledged as loyal mothers, housewife's, nurses however, they play an expanding part in combat roles, encompassing infantry and special forces. Furthermore, they contribute substantially in intelligence, logistics and medical services functions. Women extend their involvement beyond military capacities, participating in humanitarian endeavors, peacekeeping missions, and advocating for peace and human rights. These changes signify advancements in gender equality within the military, despite lingering challenges in various regions. The connection between war and gender has consistently existed. Societies have established specific gender roles, utilizing these constructs to rationalize and facilitate warfare, employing them as a strategic tool. War is traditionally perceived as a masculine activity, and despite a growing presence of women in the military, the majority of soldiers are still male, maintaining the notion that war remains a predominantly male-dominated sphere. In other words, men primarily make decisions in administrative matters like expenditures, as well as choices related to whom and when to engage in lethal actions. This dominance within the field establishes a perception of men as the "experienced professional" in violence, encompassing both domestic and military contexts. The gender aspects represented in the military can impact women's effectiveness, involvement and contribution in the field. From the pre-deployment training stage, women often receive only "safe" tasks, leaving them unprepared for more hazardous military tasks. The gendering of war is a global phenomenon that has existed throughout history. Some argue that patriarchal gender dynamics not only shape societies to engage in war, but act as a contributing factor to its occurrence.

Women's role in the US military service

Women played a crucial role as cooks and nurses in the US Revolutionary War. Notably, some went so far as to disguise themselves as men in order to actively participate in battle, a phenomenon seen by the hundreds during the American Civil War.

Currently, women make up 16.9% of the military, with a growing presence in various ranks and reaching historic levels of command. Unlike the past, modern progress is made without the need for disguise. The evolution of women's roles in the US military is evident through these changes over the years. Women were not allowed to serve in the armed forces or even on the battlefield, although it is worth mentioning that women during the war provided great help to the population in defeating the enemy in various ways, from different sides, even as we have already mentioned, they pretended to be cooks, tailors, laundresses or nurses who during

the war could set great examples to other women of self-sacrifice and heroism in the history of the US.

Opportunities for women in military careers has gradually expanded. In the beginning of 70s, women were admitted to all service academies, the disbandment of the Women's Army Corps by Congress in 1978 reflected the elimination of the need for a separate branch for women. In 1980, 119 women entered West Point as the first female cadets, 62 of whom successfully graduated and attained the rank of second lieutenant. The 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definitions and Assignments Rule states that "service members are eligible for assignment to all positions for which they are qualified, except that women shall be excluded from units below the brigade level whose primary mission is to engage in direct ground combat." As „Military Times“ informs by 2020 there will be more opportunities for women in the US military. For example, in the armed forces: army rangers, navy, navy, air force parajumpers, tank drivers , etc. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, which were orchestrated by al-Qaeda, more than 300,000 American women were sent to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan. A total of 166 women have lost their lives and more than 1,000 have been injured in the conflicts, according to the Washington-based Service Women's Action Network. In June 2005, during an attack on an American convoy in Fallujah, a suicide bomber killed 13 marines, 11 of whom were women. The incident was the deadliest day for American female soldiers since World War II. In addition, women participated in various roles in intense combat, engaging and neutralizing enemy insurgents, although some suffered casualties and injuries. Currently, women make up 16% of the United States Army, and more than 100 have successfully graduated from the Army's rigorous Ranger School. In 2021, a female sailor achieved the historic feat of being the first woman to complete the Navy's Special Combat Training Course, a rigorous 37-week program. Last but not least in 2022, the US House of Representatives unanimously approved legislation awarding Congressional Gold Medals to members of the Women's Army Corps, specifically those assigned to the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, also known as the "Six Triple Eight". "During World War II, this unit played a critical role both domestically and in Europe, where they diligently sorted and delivered mail for millions of American servicemen and civilians. It is important to note that the Congressional Gold Medal is the highest civilian award given by the United States Congress.

Georgian women in military service and their role in the modern Georgian army

Georgia is a country with a cult of women and an elevated role of women in society. In the Georgian language, it is emphasized by various expressions: mother-column, motherland,

mother-tongue and mother-fatherhood became isolated. The role of women in Georgia has been extremely important for centuries, that's why it was considered that to the education was essential factor for Georgian ladies. Women have been admitted to various European educational institutions and at the beginning of the 20th century, the first women's higher education institution in the Caucasus - "Women's Higher Courses" - was opened in Tbilisi. Since the establishment of the Soviet government, women have had the right to vote and be elected. This is the result of the fact that many highly successful women appeared in Georgia in various fields: it was the field of education, medicine, culture and art, science, etc. Even now, already in our modern times, the reality of Georgia represents a clear picture that women continue to occupy a leading position not only in their families, but also in the workplace. In spite of the fact that women in military service is a challenging aspect, as it is influenced by gender, even now, in our reality some people still have controversial attitudes to women's involvement in the military actions. In spite of all the above mentioned the reality reflects completely different picture of women who serve in the Georgian army.

Enhancing the substantive participation of women in the Georgian Defense Forces (GDF) is a global challenge and a critical aspect of advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Despite the progress achieved in Georgia in recent years, there are still some obstacles. Currently, women make up only 9 percent of the GDF, with a scant 1.5 percent holding decision-making positions.

Having a historical context of resisting foreign invasions for centuries, Georgians traditionally view men as warriors and protectors, a perception evident in various aspects of their culture, including folk dances and even societal norms like who covers the expenses during a restaurant dinner. The Georgian term for "soldier" directly translates to "jari." However, there is a shift as Georgian women are now actively participating in armed forces and engaging in warfare. The best example of Georgian women's crucial role is represented in their participation of the international missions where young Georgian ladies are fighting bravely among Georgian men soldiers. Among the 1,561 Georgian soldiers deployed to Afghanistan since 2009, 33 have been women. Although Defense Ministry regulations limit women to administrative, medical, and humanitarian roles, Georgian women who served in Afghanistan contend that they actively participated in patrols, base security, and played a role in fostering military relationships with NATO and local communities, akin to their male counterparts. Sequence of UN Security Council mandates advocating for the heightened involvement of women in security missions, conflict resolution, and peace keeping. The significance of these recommendations for Georgia, a nation aspiring to join NATO, was amplified when, in 2009, the alliance urged its member

states to align their military practices with the standards outlined in Resolution 1325. As about the modern attitudes towards women in Georgian Army, it has to be mentioned that numerous trainings are planned particularly for them in order to improve their positions, knowledge and experience. National and international experts lead the training sessions. These training programs not only share exemplary approaches but also aim to encourage the execution of the Ministry of Defense of Georgia's 2023-2024 Gender Equality Action Plan. This plan was developed with active support from UN Women. Additionally, the initiative seeks to advance the implementation of Georgia's 2022-2024 national action plan on women, peace, and security. This endeavor is part of UN Women's project, "Accelerating the Implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda in Georgia." The project is generously funded by the Conflict, Stability, and Security Fund (CSSF) of the UK Government and the UK Ministry of Defence.

Ukrainian women in military service

Women have been part of Ukraine's armed forces since the nation declared independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, primarily serving in support roles until the outbreak of the war in 2014. It wasn't until 2016 that they commenced active combat roles, and by 2022, all military positions became accessible to women. A major research project, Invisible Battalion, began in 2015 and shed light on the conditions of Ukrainian women's military service. Led by a team of Ukrainian sociologists, identified legal barriers to women's employment in the defense and security sector, as well as obstacles to access to military education and training. These regulations did not prevent military women from occupying technical and leadership positions. Thousands of women have volunteered to join the Ukrainian armed forces since 2014, when Russia began its occupation of Crimea and eastern Ukraine. Over the past nine years, the number of women serving in Ukraine's military has doubled, with another wave of women joining after Russia's full-scale In 2020, she presented Ukraine's second national action plan, which included measures to improve the conditions of women's military service and offer assistance to women veterans. The plan aims to provide "service women with custom-fit uniforms, equipment and armor" and free legal aid to women veterans and their families. The collective experience of war provides insight into the substantial and varied contributions of Ukrainian women to the defense and defense of their nation. This shared understanding, reinforced by daily interactions with female veterans who are friends, neighbors, and family, suggests that these women's experiences will be treasured for years to come invasion in February 2022.

Since the commencement of hostilities in eastern Ukraine in 2014, women have played a crucial role in the Ukrainian Armed Forces and volunteer battalions. However, following the

initiation of the full-scale war in 2022, there has been a significant increase in the participation of the nation's most dedicated daughters.

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Nurturing Adolescent Health: Addressing Drug Abuse and Promoting Well-being Introduction

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Abstract

Many insalubrious behaviors often start during adolescence and represent major public health complaints. Substance use has a major influence on individuals, families, and communities, as its effects are cumulative, promoting to costly social, physical, and mental health problems. Adolescence is a critical stage of human development characterized by significant physical, emotional and cognitive changes. It is a time when young people form their identities and make choices that can fundamentally impact their future. Adolescence is a period between 10-19 years where sexual maturity develops but comes in with social demands (WHO, 2016).

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What is Good Health?

Health means as free from all diseases and infections, both physically and mentally. Health is an energetic condition, which results from a body's constant modification and the possibility to deal with stress and changes in the environment (Fisher, 2011).

Being healthy is required for an individual at any age, mostly during juvenile. Because of a person needs to be not only free from illness, but he/she should be physically as well as mentally fit healthy. A hygienic life is an entrance to in good physical condition body and mind. Bad habits such as smoking, drinking, and dangerous drugs use often begin during pubescent; they are associated to increased morbidity and mortality and appear for major public health challenges. Unemployment, illness, injury, suicide, mental illness, and decreased life hopefulness all have drug misuse as a major common contributing factor. Substance abuse has a major effect on individuals, families, and communities as its effects are increasing, contributing to costly social, physical, and mental health problems (Dr. Ashish Bhatt, 2023).

What is Reproductive Health and teenager? Reproductive health is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the total well-being in all aspects of reproduction, i.e., behavioral, emotional, physical, and social. For a healthy society or population, it is necessary to maintain reproductive health. Adolescence is the stage of growth and sexual maturity. Thus, it is essential to practice good hygiene habits at this stage itself. For being healthy, one must keep hygiene at a personal level (personal hygiene) as well as at the community level (social hygiene) necessary to be hygienic during adolescence.

Below are some topics to maintain reproductive health during juvenile:

- **Balanced nutrition**
- **Sanitary measures**
- **adolescence gestation**
- **The absence of substance use**

As we know, awkward age, the changes to hormone levels will be high, which has a great effect on our intellectual and emotional maturity, sometimes leading to impoverished decision-making. During this period, teenager become more prone to bad habits like drinking, smoking, taking drugs, etc. Once they obsessed to these habits, it becomes very difficult for them to get well easily. These drugs also affect their reproductive health, causing delayed puberty and both physical and social outcomes.

Unfortunately, the frequency of drug abuse among adolescents is a pressing concern, posing serious risks to their health and overall well-being.

Biological Changes:

Puberty: Adolescence marks the onset of puberty, a period during which the body undertakes rapid physical changes, including growth spurts, development of secondary sexual characteristics (like breast development in females and facial hair in males), and hormonal fluctuations.

Brain Development: The adolescent brain goes through substantial changes, particularly in the prefrontal cortex is control of for decision-making and impulse control. This can lead to increased risk-taking behavior.

Hormonal Changes: change to hormonal levels can lead to mood swings, increased sexual desire, and changes in emotional intelligence.

Physical Growth: Adolescents typically experience a significant increase in height and weight as their bodies fully development. This growth can vary widely among individuals.

Psychosocial Changes:

Identity Formation: Adolescents explore and establish their sense of self-identity, including their values, beliefs, and self-concept. This can involve experimenting with different roles and identities.

Peer Relationships: Adolescents often place a greater emphasis on peer relationships and freedom from their parents. Social pressure becomes more prominent during this stage.

Emotional Regulation: Adolescents may fight managing intense emotions and mood swings as they develop emotional regulation skills.

Cognitive Development: There is significant growth in abstract thinking, analytical and the capacity for introspection during adolescence.

Social Norms and Values: Adolescents develop an understanding of social norms, ethics, and moral values, which can affect their decision-making.

Sexuality and Relationships: This is a period of analysis of one's sexuality, establish romantic relationships, and learning about permission, boundaries, and healthy relationships.

Independence and Autonomy: Adolescents seek more independence and autonomy in decision-making, which is a guide to conflicts with parents.

Identity Crisis: Some adolescents may experience an identity crisis, characterized by hesitation and uncertainty about their future goals and roles.

It's important to note that these changes can vary greatly from one individual to another, and the experience of a teenager is influenced by cultural, social, and familial factors. Adolescence is a critical period of development that lays the foundation for adulthood, and supportive guidance from parents, caretakers and educators is crucial during this time. Drug abuse can have profound and far-reaching consequences on individuals, families, and communities. Here are some of the dangers associated with drug abuse:

Physical Health Risks: Drug dependence can lead to a range of physical health problems, including heart failure, liver disease, respiratory issues, and infectious diseases like HIV/AIDS (often associated with intravenous drug use).

Mental Health Issues: Substance abuse is associated to mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, and increased risk of suicidal thoughts and behaviors.

Addiction: Continued drug abuse can lead to addiction or substance use disorder, characterized by a compulsive need to use drugs despite negative solution.

Impaired Judgment: Many drugs damage judgment and cognitive function, leading to risky behaviors such as driving under the influence, which can outcomes in accidents and fatalities.

Social and Relationship Problems: Substance abuse can tensity relationships with family and friends, leading to separation and social withdrawal. It can also Fail to look after of responsibilities, including work or school.

Legal Consequences: The possession, distribution, or sale of illegal drugs outcome is in criminal charges, leading to legal troubles, fines, and imprisonment.

Financial Impact: Drug abuse can be financially draining, as individuals may spend significant amounts of money to acquire drugs. This can lead to financial instability and debt.

Education and Career Obstacles: Substance abuse can interfere with educational attainment and career growth; it may lead to dropping out of school or job loss due to poor performance or absenteeism.

Health and Safety Risks: Overdose is a significant risk, especially with opioids and certain other drugs. Overdoses can be fatal or outcome in long-term health issues.

Family Disruption: Families often suffer when a member is struggling with drug abuse. The stress and turmoil can throw into disorder family dynamics, leading to conflicts and emotional distress.

Community Impact: Drug abuse can contribute to increased crime rates, violence, and instability in communities. It can also strain health maintenance and social services.

Weakened Immune System: Some drugs weaken the immune system, making individuals more susceptible to infections and sickness.

Risk of Accidents: Impaired coordination and cognitive function can lead to accidents and tears, both at home and in the workplace.

Transmission of Diseases: Sharing needles or engaging in risky sexual behaviors while under the influence can increase the risk of contracting and spreading infectious sicknesses like HIV and hepatitis.

Risk of Lethal Combos: Combining drugs with alcohol can have unpredictable and dangerous effects on the body, often increasing the risk of overdose.

It's crucial to recognize the dangers of drug abuse and seek help if you or someone you know is struggling with substance abuse. Treatment and support services are available to help individuals overcome addiction and regain their health and well-being. Early intervention is important in preventing many of these dangers from becoming severe or irreversible (Handbook of Adolescent Drug Use Prevention: Research, Intervention Strategies, and Practice, 2015).

Preventing and intervening in adolescent drug abuse is crucial for the well-being of young individuals.

Here are some strategies for prevention and intervention:

Prevention Strategies:

Education and Awareness: Elevate drug education programs in schools and communities to inform adolescents about the risks and results of drug abuse.

Parental Involvement: Instigate parents to engage in open and helpful communication with their children about the dangers of drug use. Parental collaboration can act as a protective factor.

Peer Resistance Skills: Teach adolescents strategies to hold out peer pressure and make informed decisions about drug use.

Mental Health Support: Identify and address underlying mental health condition early on, as they are often connected to substance abuse. Promote access to counseling and support services.

Positive Role Models: Provide adolescents with good examples and mentors who can guide

them toward healthy behaviors and activities.

Community Involvement: The alternatives approach to drug abuse prevention is based on the concept that individuals provided with healthful, nonchemical ways of gaining rewards and pleasures will be less likely to engage in drug or alcohol abuse.

School-Based Prevention Programs: Device evidence-based prevention programs in schools that focus on building life skills, coping mechanisms, and resilience. (Jr., 2014)

Intervention Strategies:

Early Detection: qualified teachers, healthcare providers, and parents to recognize signs of drug abuse, such as changes in behavior, academic performance, and social relationships.

Screening and Assessment: Use validated screening tools to estimate the extent of drug use and identify any co-occurring mental health issues.

Counseling and Treatment: Offer advising, and treatment services tailored to the individual's needs.

This contains cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), motivational interviewing, and family therapy.

Support Groups: Encourage adolescents to participate in support groups or 12-step programs to provide peer support and responsibility.

Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT): In cases of opioid or alcohol addiction, MAT can be an effective intervention method when combined with consolation and therapy.

Family Involvement: To take part in the family in the treatment process, as family dynamics can play a significant role in recovery.

School-Based Interventions: Device school-based programs that identify and provide support to students at risk of drug abuse, such as counseling services and peer mentoring.

Legal Consequences: In some cases, legal effect may be necessary to intervene and encourage treatment for adolescents involved in drug-related criminal activities.

Continued Monitoring: Recurrent inspection and follow-up care after treatment to prevent relapse and provide ongoing support.

It's important to tailor prevention and intervention strategies to the specific needs and circumstances of each adolescent. Early intervention is key to preventing drug abuse from escalating into more severe problems. Additionally, a collaborative approach involving parents, schools,

healthcare providers, and communities can be highly effective in addressing adolescent drug abuse (Mahmood, 2019).

Conclusion

Protecting adolescent health and battle against drug abuse require a multi-faceted approach require education, support systems, mental health services and community engagement. By understanding the unique challenges faced by adolescents and execute effective strategies, we can help them navigate this censorious phase of life with resilience and make choices that contribute to their long-term well-being. Adolescent youth experience huge changes in every single aspect of their lives as they move from childhood into adulthood. The purpose of this article was to supply parents and other caretakers the foundational information needed to recognize and to admire the normal developmental progression of adolescents.

Even so, the process of adolescent development can become quite challenging and sometimes overwhelming for both youth and their families (Erin, 2023).

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The Effects of Income and Education Levels on Divorce in the United States and Georgia

TAMAR MGELADZE^{10*}

Abstract

The main goal of research is to understand the effects of income and education levels on divorce in the United States and Georgia. This research aims to enhance the understanding of why divorce rates have been changing during the past decades.

The purpose of this study is to improve our knowledge on why divorce rates are fluctuating by examining two fundamental elements of the contemporary family that have evolved over the last century – educational attainment and income.

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Introduction

Over the past 50 years, family formation has undergone major and important changes in the events that occur as well as in the timing and order of these events. Family is a very important topic of study in the social sciences. Important Topics such as marriage, family formation, divorce, parental influence on children's outcome and wellbeing, female labor force participation and its effects on family life are common objects of researches.

We've all heard it on the radio, TV, or seen it on the news and statistics that – 50% of marriages will end in divorce. The goal of this research is to better understand why divorce rates vary by looking at two key components– education and income. These two components have changed for both partners in wives and husbands the family over time, but greater change has occurred especially for the wives.

Divorce is difficult for all members of the family especially for partners and children, trying to understand the changing dynamics of family may live them distract and confused.

Throughout human history, the family had a main role as the basic socio biological. institution. The family is the first important environment that every human being connects with at birth. Moreover, the family is the basic, and most important, unit in the life of a human being: formation of the individuals, continuity of ethnicity, maintenance of social stability and establishment of nationhood are all based on the family unit. The family unit provides important emotional support for the children in that unit. On the other hand, the family unit provides a safe place and a foundation for the establishment and development of necessary values. such as family values and necessary values, in its children. On the other hand, the family helps to provide life. experiences and opportunities, both of which are important for personal growth and development in children.

two important components of the modern family that have changed over the past century – education and income levels. These are two key main components that have changed for both partners in the family during this time, but greater and important changes have occurred for the wives especially.

If the education is one of the main components behind this process, persons who are highly educated will be more prone to individualism than those with lower education.

Literature Review

Educational attainment has significantly risen over the past few decades in many Western countries, with a particular emphasis on the advancement of women's education. Historically, men typically had more advanced degrees than women, but starting in the mid-1980s, women began to outpace men in educational attainment.

Marriage stability is found to be associated with some of components, age of first marriage, (Kenney, 2011) husband and wife income, (McIntyre, 2006) husband and wife unemployment (Jalovaara, 2001).

Research focused on educational gradient of marriage outcomes made the main comparison between college graduates and non-college graduates. The effect of education attainment on divorce is theoretically unclear.

Women's educational level has risen dramatically in the past decades, with the yearly number of American women awarded a 4-year college degree now exceeding men by over 10% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2010). The correlation between women's education and divorce should be negative, not positive; as women have access to more resources, they should be less reliant on their husbands due to having more appealing alternatives. The link between education and divorce may vary depending on the happiness of the marriage, which is a statistical interaction. Education may contribute to divorce in cases where unhappy marriages are involved. Women who are not happy in their marriages may be motivated to consider and explore other options, and if they are well-educated, these options are likely to be more appealing.

Data

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, in fall 2022

Divorce is the most common event in the United States; an estimated 50% of marriages end in divorce last decade. With so many divorces year by year, a substantial number of children are impacted. Divorce might have big negative effects socially, behaviorally, emotionally, and academically, in both the short term and the long term too. According to the CDC, the current divorce rate is just 2.3 per 1,000. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's 2017 data, there were about 787,251 divorced couples in the United States. As opposed to the divorce rate in 2004, for example, which peaked at roughly 879,000.

National statistical office of Georgia

23,155 marriages, 10,654 divorces - 2021 data

In 2021, the number of divorced people in Georgia increased by 40 percent compared to the previous year 2020 - the National Statistics Service of Georgia has published the main demographic indicators for 2021.

According to the data, 2021 year, 23,155 marriages were registered in Georgia, which is 41.5% more than the corresponding indicator of the previous years.

The average age of first marriage is 29.0 years for women and 31.5 years for men.

In 2021, the number of registered divorces is 10,654, which is 39.4% more than the corresponding indicator of the previous years.

In 2022, 26,048 marriages were registered, which is 12.5 percent more than the corresponding indicator of the previous year. The number of marriages has increased in Kakheti as well. The average age of first marriage is 29.4 years for women and 31.9 years for men.

Number of marriages in the U.S. 1990-2021

Published by Statistical Research Department, Aug 30, 2023 (retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/marriage-divorce.htm>)

- Number of marriages: 1,985,072
- Marriage rate: 6.0 per 1,000 total population
- Number of divorces: 689,308 (45 reporting States and D.C.)

Divorce rate: 2.5 per 1,000 population (45 reporting States and D.C.) (National Marriage and Divorce Rate Trends for 2000-2021).

Results

Studies have shown that couples in the United States are increasingly postponing marriage, and that a record number of current youth and young adults are projected to forego marriage altogether.

Divorce Rate and Education

The relationship between divorce rates and education is a complex study for researchers, and it can vary depending on many factors, including cultural, socioeconomic, and regional

differences and etc. Here are some key points to consider:

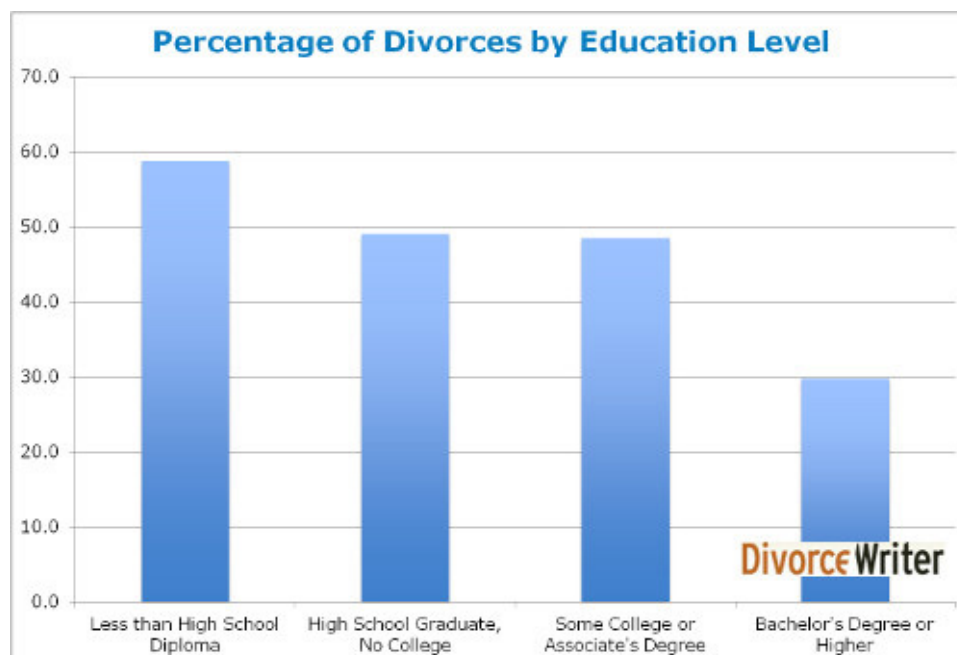
Inverse Relationship: Some studies have shown an inverse relationship between education and divorce rates, it means that individuals with higher levels of education may be less likely to divorce. This inverse of such kind of relationship is often attributed to several factors:

Economic Stability: Individuals with higher education levels have a chance for better job prospects and higher income, which can contribute to greater financial stability. Economic stability can decrease the level of stress or stressors that often lead to marital conflict and divorce.

Delayed Marriage: Highly educated individuals mostly delay marriage and childbirth to pursue their educational and career goals. Delaying marriage status means that couples are more mature and financially secure when they do get married, which can contribute to marital stability.

Access to Resources: Education can provide individuals with easy problem-solving skills, better communication skills, and access to resources like couples counseling, which can help them navigate challenges in their marriage.

Married couples by the age of 46, who have had higher levels of education, are less likely to divorce than less-educated couples in both developing and development countries, according to a 2013 study by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.



Retrieved from: <https://www.divorcewriter.com/divorce-rate-usa>

Divorce Rate and the Economy

divorce rate generally goes down during economic recessions, and increase again as soon as economic recovery begins. It is hard to determine is whether the percentage of couples who decide to be together during economic recession do so because economic hardship and problems brought them closer, or if it is just because they just could not afford a divorce. Many researchers agree that financial crises change the timing and percentage of divorce, they don't prevent them.

In conclusion, while there is evidence to suggest that there may be a huge correlation between education and divorce rates, but also, it's important to approach this topic with nuance and recognize that many factors are at play in determining divorce outcomes. People's decisions about divorce are influenced by a wide range of personal, cultural, and economic factors, and education is just one piece of the puzzle of such imports part of our life as a family.

The divorce rate in developed countries can depend on a range of factors, including cultural, economic, legal systems, and social attitudes toward marriage and divorce. Developed countries are often characterized by higher levels of education, greater economic stability, and more progressive legal systems, which can influence divorce rates than in developing countries.

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“If I Was A Man Then I’d Be The Man” – What It’s Like To Be A Powerful Woman From The United States In The Twenty-First Century

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Abstract

Women have always possessed enviable greatness, whether it was seen through scientific or creative inventions or through the ability to masterfully multitask in the household. For centuries, through the wilderness of constant criticism, they kept moving toward their goals. With this they achieved the most rewarding result: new generations of young women unafraid to leap over barricades and reach the highest peaks in their various journeys.

It is important to note that, though every decade brings more freedom and opportunities to those less fortunate to have them, there are still issues that keep women from moving forward as effectively as possible. In some cases, these issues may be calculated and intended to cause harm, but in others – they are the cause of deep-rooted prejudiced beliefs. Every century brings with it new movements and changes in society, especially in terms of how it treats women. Many times, the trends on equality are set by countries like The United States which is why it is important to analyze how powerful women are treated there. This article argues that attitude toward successful women, in particular, is the most revealing aspect of humankind’s views on women. The article would like to discuss the turbulent life of a woman aiming for happiness and success in a world that does not profit off of women’s satisfaction with their life, through the example of one of the most influential persons of this century: Taylor Alison Swift.

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Introduction

Throughout history women all over the world were generally raised and taught to make themselves feel smaller and less important than their male counterparts or partners. Thus, even the most intelligent woman would have been unable to accomplish extraordinary feats for fear of being shunned from their community. In the twenty first century, with the rise of equality women are feeling more empowered than ever which is why we see so many achievements made by them. However, these achievements could sometimes be tarnished or belittled by society to make women who take up space feel smaller.

Although any professional field could have its way of treating women in a certain specific manner, the most evident cases are shrouded in fame. Additionally, they might even influence the lives of ordinary people. Therefore, the article would like to discuss one such case.

The article has chosen Taylor Swift as the example for these reasons: 1. Her achievements in her professional field, 2. Her influence in fields other than her own professional field, 3. Constantly evolving public perception of her and how she responds to that.

Achievements

The number of records Miss Swift has attained throughout her career is remarkable, but to count them out in a simple list would not serve the purpose of gaining clarity on the legacy she has already left for the world in the span of a 17-year long career. One does not need to be a connoisseur of poetry in order to understand her genius, one must simply be enamored with life itself. Swift has the ability to make even the most ordinary objects and routines deliver the most heartfelt truths. For example, in her song “gold rush” a “day old tea” becomes a symbol of the hardship of escapism and the time it takes a person to drag themselves back into reality. She allows people to feel a wide variety of emotions in a healthy manner without feeling judged and instead finding solace in the fact that no one is ever alone in what they feel. For her achievements in songwriting, she received an honorary doctorate from New York University in 2022 and gave a commencement speech at the graduation ceremony. Thus, the article would like to argue that her success mainly stems from her natural talent in songwriting and more specifically her storytelling.

The public, for the most part, declared her album “folklore” as the record with her best songwriting. Although, writing in general is in reality a very subjective field, it is easy to make the case for this album perhaps being her best work. In a song titled “epiphany”, for example, she compares the hardships of nurses and doctors with that of soldiers fighting battles. This

song can also be taken as a thank you letter to healthcare workers all around the world during the pandemic; To portray her mastery over the English language one could look no further than solely the title of the track five on the album – “my tears ricochet”. With only three words the author manages to capture the uncanny feeling of betrayal. The duality of the meaning of the title is also very fitting to the theme of the song. Whether one considers it as gaining freedom through releasing hurt into the world and letting it shape its own path away from a person or a form of self-punishment by letting the pain go only for it to come right back, it gives the audience a chance to predict and analyze the story before they even hear it. One more example of Swift’s creativity is a song called “mirrorball” where she compares the life of an entertainer to a mirrorball, broken into tiny pieces but still shining for the people around them.

As another major reason for Swift’s unparalleled status in her field, the article would like to state her business and marketing decisions. First and foremost, she makes her album releases a personal moment between her and her admirers by planning special concerts or listening parties and participating in conversation both face-to-face and online. This is not only a wonderful way for her to connect with the people who are interested in her work, but also a smart business move. By giving the audience a chance to be a part of the process she lets them be personally invested in her art.

Listeners can get overwhelmed by a discography being too complex or be underwhelmed if an artist constantly creates the same type of music. Taylor Swift found the middle ground in multiple areas for this to never become an issue for her audience. Firstly, she changed genres three times (country, pop and folk/indie) and has experimented with many types of sounds. Secondly, her albums are very distinct from one another by their aesthetic, themes and sounds. In addition to this, she gave the albums they own “eras” by the way she styled her clothes or hair, the color schemes she chose and the way she portrayed the records in promotional content and concerts performances. With this she gives people with all kinds of tastes a chance to explore her work and find something they might be interested in. The best way to understand exactly what she did is to watch Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour, her latest tour, where she combines all the eras/albums.

Most of all, her success is greatly impacted by her ability to connect with people with different backgrounds and give them a sense of belonging or understanding they otherwise would have lacked. A man from prison wrote in a New Yorker Article that “There was, in her voice, something intuitively pleasant and genuine and good, something that implies happiness or at least the possibility of happiness. When I listened to her music, I felt that I was still part of the world I had left behind” (Garcia, 2023).

Influence

It is easily understandable that entertainment takes up a lot of space in the field of economics. However, its stakes are usually not as high as they have been in 2023, specifically by the influence of one person, Taylor Swift. This is of course because of a few reasons such as: effects of the pandemic, the successes of recent Taylor Swift albums and the brilliant marketing strategy.

In March of 2023 Swift began her Eras Tour and since then the “tour is in a league of its own, even among legendary groups like the Rolling Stones who have been touring for decades, other major touring artists... and contemporaries... as the singer-songwriter brings her mega tour directly to her dedicated fans in various cities for multiple nights (Kopstein & Espada, 2023).” As mentioned before one reason for this is that for a couple of years during the pandemic people were unable to attend social gatherings especially something as big as a stadium tour. “We are in an experience economy where people crave going out and participating in social events,” says Alice Enders, a music industry analyst at Enders Analysis and a former senior economist at the World Trade Organization” (Kopstein & Espada, 2023).

As for the success of Swift’s albums the pandemic was unexpectedly not a negative aspect. She announced and released both “folklore” and “evermore” during the pandemic as surprise albums. They both highlighted her lyricism more than any other album before. Later, in 2022, she released her 10th original album “Midnights” and returned to her pop sound. Since 2018 she had not toured any albums, but her musical catalogue had gained four new members. Therefore, her audience as well as the general public was very enthusiastic to see her perform live again.

The Eras Tour marketing is simple and effective. It involves the promotional teams encouraging people to come in costumes related to their favorite album and bring friendship bracelets, a new concert tradition that brings people closer to one another.

Taylor Swift is a role model to many people all over the world. What she advocates for normally gets a lot of attention right away. She is well aware of that power and has used it to promote social changes. For example, according to vote.org, after Swift posted about registration for voting, more than 35,000 people registered to vote.

What it’s like to be a powerful woman

As observed from all of the abovementioned instances where Taylor Swift has proven

herself to be a professional in her field and the examples of her achievements one would think she would be unanimously respected. Unfortunately, in a society that thrives on ignoring and belittling women's interests a basic human decency such as respect is not always granted to those who unarguably deserve it.

As a young woman she was discredited and accused of not writing her own songs. As a response she wrote her album "Speak Now" without any cowriters. Later, the public decided that her "songwriting was a trick rather than a skill and a craft... It's a way to take a woman who's doing her job and succeeding at doing her job... [and] completely minimize that skill (Swift, 2019)". This is one example of a woman never being able to do enough to be accepted.

Additionally, there is another reason as to why the society would dislike a woman doing her job successfully. The order in most states envisions a man as the breadwinner and a woman as a homemaker. Even when women are encouraged to work, many times they are told to prioritize home life over work life which puts them at a disadvantage against their male coworkers. On the other hand, men are expected to prioritize professional advancement and achieve their goals. In such conditions, a woman unapologetically pursuing a passion and doing it better than most of their counterparts seems "unladylike".

Although Taylor Swift has been in the public eye for 17 years, she has never stopped working hard. She constantly betters herself, breaks her own records, reinvents herself and her style, creates diverse genres of music and creates art. Currently she is on a global tour (One of the most successful tours of all time) and her shows last for about three and a half hours. The amount of preparation for the tour and the performances she gives are comparable to that of an athlete. Swift is a singer, songwriter, producer, performer, director. Male artists do not usually work this hard, but they get more public support.

In her song "The Man" Swift imagines what her life would have resembled if she was the same exact person who made the same exact choices, the only difference being that she was a man. In both the song and the music video (which she directed herself), Swift displays gender stereotypes and how tiring it is to continuously fight them. One specific lyric holds great significance. "When everyone believes you what's that like?" At first glance it is a simple line and one may not even understand what it refers to. The power of this line is in its broad nature. It can refer to a woman at work not having a voice and being underestimated. It can also refer to sexual assault victims (statistically majority of them are women) not being believed when they have the courage to make a statement.

Conclusion

When the society seeks to diminish women's motivations and ambitions, one way to defy them is to be unafraid. This gives women the power to overcome challenges and disregard efforts made to stop them from achieving their full potential. An example of a woman achieving incredible success despite constant scrutiny is Taylor Swift. Her story inspires many women to never let misguided beliefs rule their lives.

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How the Frontier Shaped American literature of 19th Century (Forefathers of the Frontier literature: Mark Twain, James Fenimore Cooper)

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Abstract

Westward expansion of the United State at the end of the seventeenth century termed the Frontier marked the significant period in U.S. history. This active expansionist movement highly influenced the formation of truly American character that found its manifestation in literature that instigated the emergence of a new American school of authors among whom were James Fenimore Cooper, Washington Irving, Mark Twain, Bret Harte, and many others. Their literary works were not limited to only providing valuable historical insights of that period but rather perfectly reflected the defining elements of the Frontier that included unique qualities of the American West, relationship with wild nature, interaction of diverse cultures, and life challenges and hardships of the Frontier era people. The article argues how the literature reflected the Frontier spirit coded in the national character of the American people and its profound influence on culture.

Keywords: American Frontier, National character, literary works, culture

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Historical context

American Westward expansion is indeed the defining theme in the country's 19th-century history marked by tensions, challenges, and hardships. History of the Western Frontier traces back to the so –called Manifest Destiny that turned out to be a major driving force for continental expansion. The ideology implied white supremacy and superiority giving them a sense of duty to explore, expand and most importantly prosper the whole North American continent. Such a stance is sometimes seen even as a selfish feature of America by some historians.

Louisiana Purchase in 1803 (during Thomas Jefferson's presidency) being the milestone of the history, that doubled the country in size, gave an impetus to the continual process of expansion across the continent. The American Frontier was an evolving and dynamic process from the early 17th to late 19th century characterized by massive immigration, adaptation to the new lands, gold rushes, and complicated interactions with Native Americans. This was exactly the time when a purely American character of self-sufficiency and independence was being molded.

The Frontier in Literature

Frontier being at the core of the history of the United States became a major and inexhaustible source for the unique folklore and literature permeated with resilient and adventurous American spirit. It created a solid foundation for shaping American identity and culture that found its expression in literature offering a broad historical landscape. There are a plethora of literary figures to this regard who managed with their uncanny ability to draw a portrayal of the period in a thought-provoking way.

Among great literary works of the Frontier era includes Mark Twain and James Fenimore Cooper whose names are always associated with the period. They provide explicit depictions of the early Frontier reflecting broader cultural shifts of that time.

Mark Twain- The Mississippi Muse

Mark Twain – A Founding Father of American humor and Tall Tales -gives an insightful look of the Western Frontier through his dynamic and interesting story-telling. His prominent works hold a special place in American literature. Among them is Jumping Frog of Calaveras County – humorous short story entertaining in nature reflecting very typical characteristics of the people in an exaggerated way. The story and such like works laid the foundation forming American humor. His Frontier-era writings may not be considered as moral-lesson but rather

their point is to engage readership through simple and dynamic narrative structure in which lies the uniqueness of the author. *Jumping Frog of Calaveras County* is one of those short stories portraying the period of California Gold Rush of the 1850s and features typical characters being fond of gambling and fierce competition. The story is a masterful combination of regional dialects, geographical elements, and specific names of the characters for humorous effect. The author here underlines those personal characters of people typical to the region. He puts more emphasis on people who massively left their home to travel in camps in quest of fortune even at the expense of their lives; in this respect, the story is a great example of local color literature marking the common hardships people had to undergo as they ventured in new territories westward. Another interesting point is the competitive spirit and rough individualism of the people to somehow survive unbearable conditions and circumstances accompanying the period as they were navigating through a way full of challenges of the Frontier life. An author in an exaggerated way conveyed defining features of people with expectations of acquiring wealth.

The style of the narrative is another important aspect to be mentioned. Twain's usual wit and satire is a way to narrate the story. The fact that the narrator embarks on a journey after hearing the story from someone else indicates the tradition of transmitting information and tales by word of mouth. Overall, the story represents insightful reflection of the Western Frontier capturing challenges, agile spirit, and entertainment of the frontiersmen as they were furthering their way beyond the borders. Along with westward movement Mark Twain also ventured westward and reflected his recollection in another great work titled *Roughing It*. In his semi-autobiographical memoir, he shares his experiences in Nevada, California, and Pacific Islands in great and explicit detail. He addresses outlandish people, places, events he'd faced during his journey and suggests detailed observation of ongoing social and cultural shifts of that time in a humorous way. Applying his unique and rough humor as well as rich imagination, Twain portrays ordinary situations with laughter containing metaphors. This great comedic and informative narrative helps a reader navigate through the wild and violent west and provides vivid and detailed pictures of how nature is being affected by humans as the country ventures far away in the west. Those observations and accounts of the Frontier era greatly contributed to the wider exploration of the initial American culture, identity, and perception being molded in that period under those changes. Saying all above justifies the claim for Mark Twain being called the first American Writer.

"It was a splendid population - for all the slow, sleepy, sluggish-brained sloths stayed at home - you never find that sort of people among pioneers - you cannot build pioneers out of that sort of material. It was that population that gave to California a name for getting up astounding

enterprises and rushing them through with a magnificent dash and daring and a recklessness of cost or consequences, which she bears unto this day - and when she projects a new surprise the grave world smile as usual and says, "Well, that is California all over."

— Mark Twain, *Roughing It*

James Fenimore Cooper- Pathfinder of the Frontier wilderness

Another prominent author of the Frontier was James Fenimore Cooper whose talent found manifestation in indigenous materials. Cooper placed special emphasis specifically on Indians and their complicated relationship with Americans. His novels include one of the very famous *The Last of the Mohicans* belonging to his *Leatherstocking Tales* published in 1826. Other stories include his well-known works- *The Pioneers* and *The Spy* that was followed by immediate popularity which represent detailed portraits of the Frontier life.

The Last of the Mohicans captures the essence of the American frontier during a pivotal period in history. It reflects the complexities, challenges, and conflicts inherent in the clash of cultures and interests on the edge of civilization. The novel's portrayal of the frontier has made it a classic in American literature and a lens through which readers can explore the historical and cultural dynamics of that timeframe.

The general cultural attitude prevailing during the Frontier is especially reflected in one of the pivotal scenes of the novel centering upon the surrender of Fort William Henry marked by killing of a mother and her baby. The portrayal of the victimized and defenseless mother and a child showcases the harshness and brutality of the time people had to endure. Witnessing all of that, the thing making the reader's blood boil is the apparent unwillingness of the heroes of the novel to protect these helpless pawns of the wilderness. This is a scene dimension having great importance where the dynamics of the Frontier unfolds as women are taken in a wilderness subjecting to the peril and extreme hardship with no slightest hope of escaping potential threats coming from Indians. The ongoing clashes between European settlers and Native Americans accompanied by the uncertainty, danger, and isolation in untamed landscapes led characters to the harsh solitude while being apart from the civilization. This very specific passage is demonstrative of the innermost core of the Frontier life lying into extremely unbearable pain.

"... As for me, I taught the lad the real character of a rifle; and well has he paid me for it. I have fought at his side in many a bloody scrimmage; and so long as I could hear the crack of his piece in one ear, and that of the Sagamore in the other, I knew no enemy was on my back.

Winters and summers, nights and days, have we roved the wilderness in company, eating of the same dish, one sleeping while the other watched; and afore it shall be said that Uncas was taken to the torment, and I at hand - There is but a single ruler of us all, whatever maybe the color of the skin, and him I call to witness - that before the Mohican boy shall perish for the want of a friend, good faith shall depart the 'arth and 'Kill-deer' become as harmless as the tooting we'pon of the singer!"

— James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*

Conclusion

Frontier gave rise to the emergence of two prominent figures of the new kind of American Literature as Mark Twain and James Fenimore Cooper who with their usual uniqueness provided a look in this transformative era. Their true masterpieces serve as a way to explore and delve into deep contemporary people, their ideals, morals, and pursuits that greatly contribute to one's knowledge of America.

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SECTION III: EDUCATION, ART, ECONOMICS

Empowering Education through International Partnership (Case Study of Harvard Graduate School of Education, US, and Guivy Zaldastanishvili American Academy in Tbilisi)

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Abstract

In a rapidly-evolving world, boosting a qualitatively new knowledge has become a crucial aspect of governments' national policies which aims to enhance global competitiveness. The theory of internationalization of higher education is entering a new age with a stronger focus on incorporating international and global elements into the goals and functions of a higher education institution. International partnership and collaboration in education is acknowledged as an effective tool for improving the quality of teaching-learning process, upgrading the curriculum in compliance with the international context, expanding research capabilities, addressing the pressing issues, and driving progress towards the overall goals. There are successful examples of educational partnerships in Georgia, but there is still untapped potential to build robust and sustainable international higher education partnerships. Strong relations with the United States have made possible for Georgia to implement fast changes in many areas including higher education.

This article examines one of the successful cooperation started at the turn of the 21st century between the US and Georgian educational institutions which ultimately resulted in establishing

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of Guivy Zaldastanishvili American Academy in Tbilisi (GZAAT) with active support of the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE). The article delves into the history of foundation of American Academy which is a high school from 9th to 12th grade in Tbilisi and mention major aspects of collaboration which laid a solid foundation for effective, sustainable and mutually beneficial partnership between the two educational institutions. The school curriculum will be analyzed.

Research methods applied in this qualitative study are as follows: secondary sources, including books and articles, internet materials, and primary sources, such as archival documents, curriculum and textbooks, the research describes and analyzes aims, goals and curriculum of Harvard Graduate School of Education; the article offers the analysis of interviews obtained from Georgian teachers who have been offered a wonderful opportunity to get Master's Degree from Harvard Graduate School of Education, and also, presents an interview with the Georgian students, who after successful graduation of GZAAT, continued their higher education at Harvard University, MA, US.

Keywords: international higher education partnership, curriculum development, internationalization, Harvard Graduate School of Education, US, American Academy in Tbilisi

Introduction

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are getting more globalized as they have sought to strengthen ties and establish long-lasting partnerships aimed at accelerating sustainability in the education field. Internationalization of higher education is recognized as a key modern trend, and is being used as framework for higher education.

The internationalization of higher education at national and institutional levels in any country has to be acknowledged as the process of bringing international and intercultural dimensions into the programs in education. Professor of the University of Toronto Jane Knight regards the internationalization of higher education as the process of incorporating the international, intercultural and global dimensions within the key functions of education (Knight, 2002). The process of Internationalization encompasses intercultural and international dimensions that have straight influence on both research and teaching processes (Paulo Santiago, Tremblay, Basri, & Arnal, 2008). As every country is diversely impacted by the nation's history, traditions and culture, smooth internationalization process necessitates pursuing compatibility and harmonization in higher education area (Dabijia, Postelnicu, & Pop, 2014).

Methods

Statistical data obtained from different universities of Georgia which have established close cooperation with, and/or were founded by international partners, including the Guivy Zaldastanishvili American Academy in Tbilisi which has been a valuable source for the present research. The methods applied in this qualitative study are as follows: secondary sources, including books and articles, internet materials, and primary sources, such as archival documents, curriculum and textbooks. The research describes and analyzes aims, goals and curriculum of GZAAT. Also, it presents an interview with the Georgian person who graduated Harvard University, US, School of Education successfully.

Internationalization of higher education is the planned process which shapes a factual frame for future work and is developed to enhance HEI's performance and quality within and beyond the institution. The more internationalized the higher education institution is, the more competitive it is across the world. Interestingly, international competitiveness of higher education institutions is increasing that poses a challenge for them to deal with the coming changes, and also to maintain its national traditions and culture of teaching/learning. The ways to attain this goal may vary depending on the country.

There are various ways of improving competitiveness through productive human capital consisting of administrative, academic, and technical staff, also through science development, and attraction of international students coupled with introduction of innovative methods. One of the best ways to become more competitive globally is building up international partnership with other higher education institutions. This is useful not only in terms of enhancing the institutions but from economic and social perspectives as well, because it creates new pathways for countries to achieve sustainability in educational institutions. Introducing the idea of sustainability at every level of the education system requires active participation of all relevant stakeholders in the process. Promoting and testing collaboration, concentrating on personal and social sustainability, integrating plans and strategies, as well as focusing on frameworks and evaluation, a combination of research, service and teaching have been highlighted for their importance when a university is introducing a sustainable model (Moore, 2005). For this purpose, international partnerships, collaborations and peer-to-peer connections are the strongest ways to remodel their strategies with the aim to make students ready for future employment and social integration.

International educational institutional partnerships provide a huge number of opportunities for students and staff respectively. Along with research opportunities and cultural awareness, institutions can offer international experiences, including study abroad programs and staff exchange. In terms of teaching, benefits include curriculum development, advanced and dual degrees formed in collaboration with partner institutions. In the globalized society we live in, international education partnership programs help students to study, travel and work abroad.

The United States and Georgia have a long history of successful cooperation in science and education to support Georgian universities through exchange programs for students, teachers, professors and researchers. Within the scope of the US-Georgia Strategic Partnership, the number of agreements is signed to enhance cooperation in education sector. These agreements create an opportunity to exchange ideas, knowledge, expertise, as well as information and education technologies, and implement joint projects which contribute to the development of the country, and in the long-run which will become the basis for public welfare and economic growth.

Examples of Successful Cooperation between the US and Georgian Education Institutions

This section presents the different examples of effective partnership between the US-Georgian education institutions.

A few years ago, San Diego State University, US (SDSU) came to Georgia with the purpose of imparting U.S. accredited STEM Bachelor Degree programs in Georgia. **SDSU Georgia** project has been launched at the initiative of the Georgian Government and carried out through the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA)-Georgia, with generous financing from the U.S. Millennium Challenge Corporation. The aim of the project was to overcome the severe lack of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) professionals in the country and to share achievements of American university education in technical fields that would enhance human capital in the Georgian workforce. SDSU has built partnerships with three Georgian universities, including Tbilisi State University (**TSU**), Ilia State University (**ISU**), and Georgian Technical University (**GTU**) to propose an American-type education that make graduates ready to be employed in their corresponding study field. Since 2020, Georgian partner universities have offered their own US accredited STEM degree programs to the students, and continue collaboration with SDSU to guarantee those programs fulfill the same high standards or requirements in education as the present joint degree programs do.

Starting in 2020, TSU currently offers its own US accredited STEM degree programs in Bachelor of Science (BS) degree in Electrical Engineering, and BS in Computer Sciences.

At Ilia State University (ISU) campus, a new four-story 4,890 m² building was constructed and equipped with research and science labs and state-of-the-art equipment, also reading rooms and student learning space have been added to the facility.

Georgian Technical University (**GTU**) is characterized by massive facilities that covers 777 m² of labs rehabilitated in cooperation with the US the U.S. Millennium Challenge Corporation, Millennium Challenge Account (MCA)-Georgia, together with a modern electrical engineering power electronics lab. This is another example of the support to enhance the quality of education and researches at Georgian Technical University extended by the US which ultimately resulted in institutional capacity building.

Another perfect illustration of US-Georgian educational partnership is the establishment of **Georgian American University (GAU)** in 2005 by Georgian and American investors, based upon the expertise of the famous scientists, leading professionals and top education managers. These investors owned a broad range of skills, insight and experience such as: experience with the United States, Georgian and International Law, Business, Banking, Finance and Management sectors, Public Relations, and Education systems. The University administers programs at all three levels of higher education, and today it is presented by five major educational schools, such as Law, Social Sciences and Diplomacy, Business, Informatics and Engineering, Human-

ities and Liberal Art, and Medical School.

Webster University Georgia is another example of the US-Georgia fruitful collaboration. The university is located in Tbilisi and offers many ways to get American degrees that are entirely accredited in the United States and Georgia, and acknowledged globally. The university proposes undergraduate and graduate programs in Business, International Relations, and Media and students can take internationally recognized American diploma.

Besides the above-mentioned study programs, there are trainings and workshops conducted within the framework of different US-funded projects throughout Georgia. For instance, in **2023 USAID and Kutaisi International University (KIU)** launched new partnership to found Cyber Security Training Center in Georgia. This cooperation will make its contribution to upskill workforce in the cyber security field of Georgia ensuring improved and secure employment of the trainees which undoubtedly decrease unemployment.

This non-exhaustive list of productive partnership is a clear demonstration of mutual interest, benefit, effort, and willingness of allied countries to explore new ways of working and collaborating in education sector and moving forward together.

Successful Example of Cooperation: Foundation of Givi Zaldastanishvili American Academy in Tbilisi with support of American partners.

The Academy, a Private High School, was founded in 2001 in Tbilisi, and the first senior class graduated in 2005. The applicants are required to pass school entrance exams in: English, Math, Georgian, and the final stage is an Interview. American Academy mission statement says that it is committed to development of knowledge and of compassionate individuals who are at the same time lovers of their homeland and responsible citizens of the world are valuable for the nation and also for all mankind. The American Academy is dedicated to making quality education available to talented and promising students from a broad range of backgrounds. Tuition abatement is granted to 26% of the entire student body. Because of the highly competitive admissions process and the outstanding reputation, the school attracts the most talented students in Georgia.

Class size in High School is 12-15 students, and Student-Teacher Ratio is 1-to 10. Technical equipment of the Academy is noteworthy: it has the Donald Thomas Library with over 15.000 volumes, scientific labs, sport ground, meeting rooms, and other facilities to support high quality education.

Academic subjects are taught in English language, and each one is taught for five academic hours per week. Besides core courses, some interdisciplinary courses are offered: History of Arts; Religion history, music, physical education and other electives. One of the elective courses - Great Ideas is a team-taught interdisciplinary course designed to prepare students for college-level studies; readings include original sources (Plato, Leonardo, Galileo, Darwin, Freud, Einstein, etc.) and related literature. A wide range of elective courses, such as History of Western Philosophy, Film Making Fundamentals in Sociology, Computer Science Principles, Utopias and Dystopias, Introduction to Organic Chemist, How to Think about Investing, and the Language of Story-telling, meet the students' interests in different areas, revealing their hidden talents and aspirations. Besides, extra curriculum activities are also very popular, the students can be enrolled in different clubs, such as: Debate; The GZAAT Gazette; Arts and Crafts; Gardening; Physics; Choir; politics, and different sport activities.

The faculty of the Academy (total number 40, % with MA/MS or Ph.D.) is responsible together with the school administration for high quality of teaching -learning and for the graduates' level of knowledge, which should be in full compliance with American high school graduates.

The Academy implemented a Harkness Method of teaching learning based on students' active participation approach - sitting round seminar table. Graduation Requirement is 25 credits. Though no class ranking is required, Juries, oral exams are assessing students' abilities to respond to a set of questions about material they have never seen before. Freshmen and sophomores undergo juries in all six of their subjects at the end of the year.

It is noteworthy that the school has been gaining popularity among Georgian citizens and for present, total student body amounts to 300 out of which 98% are Georgian Citizens.

The graduates from the Academy continue their higher education in the US and European Universities and colleges. A list of the higher education institutions is very long, among which can see the US most popular and notorious ones, such as Columbia, NY, Harvard, George Washington University, Clark and Brown universities, in EU: City University of London, Amsterdam University, Architectural University in Prague, Bard College Berlin, and many other.

The popularity of the school during its 22 years of functioning, and the achievement of the school graduates in different American and EU Colleges, is a result of successful cooperation between the US and Georgian educational institutions reflected in its high quality of teaching-learning.

The article offers the analysis of interviews obtained from Dr. Marian Japaridze, who has been the vice Director of American College, since its foundation till present, is a Harvard Graduate School of Education graduate. Founded in 1920, it was the first school to grant the EdD degree and the first Harvard School to award degrees to women. In her interview, she talked about the Harvard School which is committed to expand the opportunities for every learner and prepare them to face challenges and bring change in education. “The learning experience was particularly interesting from this point of view”, she continued, “ I knew, we, the staff of the Georgian Academy had to play a pivotal role of reformers, therefore I chose the subjects which would teach decision making and problem solving mechanism, e.g. School Reform.” Besides, in her interview, she talked about the specificities of American school and its different aspects, such as role of leadership and management, different sources of financing of non-profit organization. “I was interested how American private school works, how it is planned, and how the quality of the school is achieved, so I registered for the subjects reflecting those aspects of school”. As the function of technologies was becoming more and more important, she focused on the course - Implementation of Technologies in School. Based on the experience gained in Harvard Graduate School, M. Japaridze, together with the school staff prepared Peer observation implementation scheme and introduced other innovations, which ultimately resulted in high academic achievements and popularity.

Conclusion

Nowadays, a cooperation between educational institutions has gained the status of a leading trend in modern society. Networking cooperation notably promotes opportunities for developing countries’ educational institutes and allows creating and carrying out innovative projects and innovative curricula in different fields of study. The fundamental reason for innovative educational network existence is the building-up principles of social structures with networking pattern of organization. The leading achievements of practical use of innovative networking technology are the acceleration of learning, a qualitative change of curriculum content, increasing the capabilities for continuing education, providing solid pedagogical results. Implementation of scientific research results and productive management models for educational systems which allow using the advantages of networking organization collaborate more effectively in order to improve quality, accessibility and competitiveness of the national education system.

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Philosophical Foundations of Open Education: An American Perspective

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Philosophical Foundations of Open Education: An American Perspective

Education is nowadays the most discussed topic and philosophical analysis of educational theories and their basics are essential for understanding educational discourse as its entity.

Foundations of Education refers to a broadly-conceived field of educational study that derives its character and methods from a number of academic disciplines, combinations of disciplines, and area studies, including history, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, religion, political science, economics, psychology, etc.

In the dynamic landscape of the 20th century, the field of education represented the area of the most complex changes. Navigating the difficult discourse of this new age is an almost imperative call to critically rethink the philosophy of education and see how it responds to the unique changes of the time.

In 1974 the State University of New York, at Buffalo, held a conference in which the subject of discussion was the new style of education- Open Education. The speakers were Philosophers, Psychologists, and educational, Social, and cultural study Professionals.¹⁶ After the conference, one of the organizers decided to create a project named: „*The Essential Concept of Open Education: Analyses of their Plausibility and Appeal* “. The goal of the project was to collect the essays created by the speeches from the conference and the result of the project was a book named: The Philosophy of Education.

This new style of education first appeared in Great Britain, the United States, Canada, and Australia. The main adjectives people were using to describe this new style of education were: open, humanistic, informal, but the most common one was “Open”.

There is no doubt that American philosophical tradition- including pragmatism, American transcendentalism, and democratic theory, has left an indelible mark on the educational landscape of the world over. The book ” *The Philosophy of Open Education* ” (2010) which is

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16 Information about the conference can be found here: <https://digital.lib.buffalo.edu/items/show/95273>

a collection of essays by various authors discusses the historical roots of Open Education and underlines that the concept of open education has its historical roots in the United States, starting with early pioneers of this discourse such as Horace Mann and John Dewey, and extends to contemporary developments in online learning, open educational resources, and open-access initiatives. By illuminating the philosophical foundations of open education, it offers valuable insights for the actors in this field who are interested in the transformative power of open and accessible education in the digital age, where we all face new educational ideals. To be more informative about these historical roots, Horace Mann emphasized the importance of education in fostering equality and social mobility, much like the ethos behind an open education¹⁷. As for John Dewey, his progressive views on education, emphasizing student engagement, real-world relevance, and the importance of learning through experience¹⁸, resonate strongly with the core principles of Open Education.

So Open Education is a new style of education that is based on the old ideas from earlier American thoughts and theories¹⁹.

To explain what this Open Education stands for, we need to answer some important questions. The first question is: what's open about Open Education?

According to Brian V. Hill, who is higher education consultant and professor of education in an Australian State University, there are three kinds of openness in this field: Procedural openness, Normative Openness, and Revolutionary Openness. Let's analyze all of them:

Procedural Openness gives students autonomous personal choices. That means that we need to create a rich environment for students in their possible activities. How can we create this rich environment? -With individualized procedures of instructions. We need to understand that all the children are individual human beings. "It emphasizes the enrichment of the student's capacity for autonomous personal choices" (Hill, 2010, p.17).

Normative Openness says that nothing has to be prescribed in advance. Any educational process has to be the process of re-discovery, re-examination..."Into this category fall those viewpoints which advocate that the choice of learning tasks and activities shall be entirely the prerogative of the students" (Hill, 2010, p.18).

Revolutionary Openness is standing on the idea that the first step of social change is the

17 ..The great doctrine which it is desirable to maintain, and to carry out, in reference to this subject, is, equality of school-privileges for all the children of the towns, whether they belong..." [Mann H., 1868:419].

18 "...developing into a plan through contributions from the experience of all engaged in the learning process. [Dewey J., 1938: 72]

19 We mean educational theories of Horace Mann and John Dewey, which are reflected in the following works: Democracy and Education (2004); Experience and Education (1938); Annual Reports on Education (1868) .

change in education. We need to lead the students to destroy every authority and create Open fields for education and development. “This is a normative posture derived from neo-Marxist presuppositions, which views the availability to oppressed classes of genuine openness in curriculum choices and learning procedures as a means of accelerating cataclysmic social change” (Hill, 2010, p.19).

These three concepts of Openness together create Open Education and none of them exist separately.

The second question is: Open to what?

There are some important aspects of what Open Education is open to. All of them individually are important parts of creating a healthy and innovative environment for students and everyone who wants to learn and develop. I suggest a list of aspects in the form below:

1. Individualization;
2. Freedom for children to explore;
3. Provision of rich environments for learning²⁰;
4. Children are encouraged to plan their own activities;
5. Interdisciplinary Inquiry;
6. Flexible scheduling, flexible groupings;
7. Open areas;
8. Talking, play, and Children’s interests determining activities;
9. Non-didactic teacher—rather, a facilitator of learning²¹;
10. Children are encouraged to learn by experience;

As we can see, Open education is optimistic, in the traditional sense, in its assessment of human nature, believing that children’s curiosity will lead them naturally towards things of educational value, so that if each child’s interests are allowed to determine his or her activities in school, they—better than any externally imposed scheme—will lead to the best education for that child” (Egan, 2010, p.30).

²⁰ „, School environment [needs] to balance the various elements in the social environment, and to see to it that each individual gets an opportunity to escape from the limitations of the social group in which he was born, and to come into living contact with a broader environment” [Dewey J., 2004:26]

²¹ That doesn’t mean that Open Education is decreasing the role of teachers. It’s actually the opposite, because being the facilitator of learning is much more than just helping children to develop, you need to create a rich environment for them with individualized assignments and never become an authority.

Furthermore, in relation to the mentioned issue, the philosophy of Karl Popper is also fascinating, particularly his concept of the Open Society. Popper's ideas regarding the value of openness, the quest for knowledge, and the tools against authoritarianism provide a contemporary philosophical framework for understanding and advancing open education.

According to Karl Popper in *Open Society, Education* is viewed as a fundamental tool for fostering democratic values, critical thinking, and societal progress. To my mind, the concept of Open Education and Open Society has very much in common with, for example:

1. Emphasis on Transparency;
2. Adaptability and Innovation;
3. Inclusivity and Access;
4. Open Access to Knowledge;
5. Critical Thinking and Dialogue.

These principles are working principles for both concepts but I am going to focus on the last one, which is the most important to implement Open Education in our educational strategies and discourses to create an Open Society where "Society and the individual are this independent" (Popper, 2012, p. 72).

For the implementation, we need to answer one last question, which is: What should we teach to our students?

Martha Nussbaum in her book: "*Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education*" (2003) underlines that the one thing we need to cultivate in humans is skills. The only kind of teaching that is truly nonauthoritarian is skill training, for competence, in general, it gives the individual more power and freedom of choice.

There are three main skills that we need to train and cultivate in students to change society and educational discourse for the future. These skills are:

1. Socratic self-reflection;
2. Narrative Imagination;
3. Global perspective.

The last one, the global perspective is important, because today's main challenge in the field of education is the globalization of knowledge and how to align with the global education-

al discourse.

Narrative imagination is a skill that helps children to understand the existence of other perspectives. There's never only one right perspective and all the different ideas have the right to exist.

Lastly, Socratic self-reflection is what we call now critical or analytical thinking which is essential for development. "From the Socratic idea that the unexamined life is not worth living for a human being, together with their belief that a certain sort of critical and Philosophy-infused education is both necessary and (if well done) sufficient for a Socratic examined life, the Stoics derive the conclusion that this sort of education is of essential importance for every human being" (Nussbaum, 2003, p. 30).

Conclusion

To summarize the main points of our research we can say:

- rooted in American history, the ethos of Open Education embodies Horace Mann's vision of universal, free education for societal progress and equality.
- student-centered, experiential methods (John Dewey) resonate with the flexible, personalized nature of open education, fostering practical, adaptable learning experiences.
- an open society (Karl Popper) advocating for tolerance, debate, and institutional adaptability, aligns with open education's emphasis on freedom, inclusivity, and the exchange of diverse ideas.
- The main path of an American version of philosophy of education represents a historical commitment to democratic values, promoting inclusivity, accessibility, and the continual pursuit of knowledge for societal advancement and innovation.

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Present Ethnic Conflicts in the Former Soviet Area

Russian – Ukrainian Conflict

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Present Ethnic Conflicts in the Former Soviet Area

Russian – Ukrainian Conflict

It can be said, that so called “Military operation” which Russia started and unleashed on the territory of Ukraine, is the most dramatic and large-scale military conflict of modern times, the results of which will largely determine the new world order.

Every military conflict has many reasons, be it geopolitical, economic, ethnic or religious factors. However, in this terrible bloodshed between Russia and Ukraine, there are also two other serious factors that I would like to talk about in this essay. These are cultural and personal ones.

In 1917, Sigmund Freud created a theory called “narcissism of minor differences”, where he claims that an individual or a community hates the person or group most of all who are very similar to him and differ only slightly from him. One of the reasons for this hatred and aggression between Russians and Ukrainians should be sought in this phenomenon.

The difference between Ukrainians and Russians is really so small that they still couldn't trace whose ancestor was the Yaroslavl the Wise. For centuries, Moscow Russians did not recognize Ukrainians as a nation. They used Ukrainian military potential for their imperial purposes. However, at the same time, they mocked Ukrainians made them the objects of the permanent scorn, which naturally increased the anger and aggression of the Ukrainians towards their northern ethnic ‘brothers’.

And, as for the beginning of the ongoing conflict, the main reason for this is most probably personal in nature and it is directly related to the phenomenon of Vladimir Putin. This

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person is obsessed with the delusion of grandeur and seeks to enter the history of Russia and the world with a name greater than Peter the Great.

The ancient Greeks taught us that a metaphor best and most visibly shows us the true essence of an event or human nature. Accordingly, I metaphorically called the act of military adventure carried out by Putin in Ukraine ‘Putanic’, drawing a parallel with the dramatic story of the Titanic.

The adventure of Titanic is well remembered by all readers. The captain of the newly built huge ship decided to break the record and get the ship from Britain to America in the shortest possible time, so he made his way north despite warnings that there were many icebergs and the ship would most likely hit one of them and sink.

Putin did almost the same. He “built” a new ship - “Putanic”, which, in his deep belief, was stronger than the ships of the Ruriks, Romanovs and Stalin, set off to the West and decided to break the geopolitical record in the history of Russia - to create an empire from Serbia to Kamchatka.

He, too, was warned by well-wishers and opponents alike that there was a high probability that his ship would run into the great iceberg, the Ukrberg, but he did not heed any of them, since absolute power not only corrupts absolutely, as Thomas Jefferson said, but also absolutely blinds. Especially if he wants to maintain absolute power and does his best to achieve his goal.

To cut a long story short, Putanik has collided with Ukrberg and is sinking. If we recall the final scene of James Cameron’s genius film, we will see several parallels. An orchestra plays on the ship to cheer up the doomed passengers (in recent months there has been a boom in concerts on Russian TV channels), while some of the passengers try to jump into the sea and save themselves (the hysterical attempt of Russian men to save themselves by moving to neighboring countries).

It is difficult to say how long the sinking process of Putanic will take, however, that it will inevitably happen is an undeniable prospect.

However, before that happens, the world is facing the biggest threat - nuclear war. As US President Joe Biden himself noted, global security has not had such an existential threat since the Caribbean crisis.

The situation is further aggravated by another nuance of Vladimir Putin’s psychological state. He lives in Arabic time, that is, there is no past, present and future for him. Like Osama Bin Laden, he exists in the continuum.

When Al Qaeda blew up a train in Madrid in 2004, Bin Laden was asked why he carried out the terrorist act in Spain, which was not participating in any of the NATO peacekeeping operations in Muslim countries. Bin Laden explained that he took revenge on Spain because Queen Isabella I drove the Moors out of the Iberian Peninsula in the late 15th century.

Putin is in roughly the same situation. It is 1709 for him. He is reincarnated as Peter the Great and fights the King of Sweden, Charles the Twelfth (collective West), at Poltava.

Ergo, Putin is Osama bin Laden armed with nuclear bombs, who does not live in European time and, therefore, hates Europe, which is a factor to think about.

Armenian – Azerbaijanian Conflict

Currently, many interesting analytical and informative materials are being written about the geo-political, geo-economic, religious and cultural factors causing the ongoing conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

In the given essay, based on my empirical experience, I would like to talk about the endemic ethnic hatred that exists between our neighboring nations and which must be eliminated in order to establish stability and prosperity in the region.

For the first time, I personally encountered examples of the worst ethnic hatred between Armenians and Azerbaijanis in 1984 in the Soviet army. In that year, the USSR leader Andropov, scared to death by the US President Ronald Reagan, drafted us –students - into compulsory military service. For note, even Stalin himself did not do such a thing even during the Second World War. In short, a group of Georgian students was sent to a military unit in Saratov region.

There, in the barrack, we were met by Armenian and Azerbaijani soldiers who did not even speak to each other. During the year and a half that we spent there, they were just in constant, brutal physical fight with each other. However, at the same time, both sides were very friendly with us, Georgians, and our main task was to neutralize their conflicts. The leader of the Armenians, Aroyan and the leader of the Azerbaijanis, Hasanov, were my closest friends, but despite my efforts I still could not reconcile them.

Based on that experience, I was not very much surprised by the news that I heard, 20 years later, in Hungary.

On December 4-10, 2004, I attended an executive seminar of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation in Budapest. On the last day of the

course, our American host told me:

- Now, I will show you the bedroom of the students of our agency, where, a few months ago, a terrible incident took place. At night, in this room, an Azerbaijani cadet beheaded his fellow Armenian cadet with an ax. You live in the hardest region. I am showing this room only to you just to know what a dangerous environment you are destined to be in and what a big role you have in the stabilization of the region.

The host did not say anything about the details. I still remember his worried, pensive face when he told me that. Time passed and the Western media reported the following information on this story:

On January 11, 2004, Gurgen Margaryan traveled to Budapest to participate in a three-month English language course at the US Federal Bureau of Investigation's Defense Threat Reduction Agency as part of NATO's Partnership for Peace program. On February 19, while asleep, he was beheaded with an ax by a fellow participant of the program, Azerbaijani lieutenant Ramil Safarov.

Later, an autopsy revealed that Safarov had inflicted sixteen blows on Margaryan's face, severing his head almost entirely from his body. In a briefing held by the Hungarian police, it was also stated that, in addition, Margaryan had been stabbed several times in the chest as well. After killing Margaryan, Safarov decided to kill another Armenian student – Makuchyan - as well, but found that the latter's door was closed.

On April 16, 2006, the Hungarian court sentenced Safarov to life in prison without the right to appeal until 2036. The judge cited the premeditated nature of the crime, its brutality and the fact that Safarov had shown no remorse for his actions as reasons for his sentencing.

However, that dramatic story did not end there. In late August 2012, Hungarian authorities agreed to extradite Safarov to Azerbaijan to serve the remainder of his sentence in his homeland.

Although the Hungarian government said it had received assurances from the Azerbaijani government that the sentence would be carried out, President Ilham Aliyev pardoned Safarov upon his arrival in Baku and ordered that he be "released from his sentence". After that, Safarov was declared a national hero. The government of Azerbaijan awarded him the rank of major and provided him with housing.

Conclusion

History shows that all forms of hatred can be overcome if the right conditions are created. A good example of this is the short story “The Unconquered” written by the outstanding British writer Somerset Maugham. The plot of the story takes place during the First World War, in France occupied by Germany. A young French woman gets pregnant by the German occupier and gives birth to a child. However, her hatred for the Germans turns out to be so great that the mother drowns her newborn baby in the river with her own hands. It is the most terrifying drama, with which the genius writer meticulously depicted the unbearable ethnic hatred between the French and the Germans during the First World War.

However, time has passed and, today, the French and Germans are no longer separated even by a state border, and the story of the immortal love of Alain Delon and Romy Schneider is a visible epitomization of the reconciliation of these two peoples.

Ergo, I think that the same kind of ethnic reconciliation can take place in the South Caucasus as well. In order to achieve this goal, first of all, Georgia, the Georgian people, based on their huge cultural, humanitarian and educational resources and potential, should have a decisive say in the implementation of the historical mission of reconciliation of our brother Armenian and Azerbaijani peoples.

Advantages of Community Colleges in the U.S.

TEONA CHINCHARASHVILI^{22*}

Advantages of Community Colleges

Community colleges are especially popular and demanding in the USA. It has lots of benefits, and students can take advantage of them.

Community colleges offer many courses, such as 2-year associate degree programs, diplomas, and certification programs. Community colleges are placed all over the United States of America in rural settings, and college students are mostly locals.

There are more than 1000 community colleges in the USA, and they play a huge role in preparing students for the workplace. Community colleges know there is a demand gap and a supply gap. They offer the students the course, which directly helps them fill these gaps. This makes them special. Community colleges allow students to enter the working market sooner than they would at a 4-year university. A person's salary after having an associate degree is nearly 8,000 dollars. Because of all these factors, community colleges are supported by the government, and they really contribute to economic development (Flynn, 2024).

The article argues that the advantages of community colleges include giving students a chance to explore their options, a comfortable location, lower costs, smaller classes, the ability to transfer credits, flexibility in admission procedures, options for financial aid, flexible scheduling, a growing number of college amenities, and career-focused education.

Community colleges help students find what they really want. Some students are aware of the career they want to pursue but need some time to understand it. Students often make mistakes while choosing a profession. Later, they can have additional financial expenses because of that.

Location: One of the biggest advantages of a community college is that most of them are in states where students live. Students can stay at home, be close to their families, and also save resources (Flynn, 2024).

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Community colleges are affordable compared to universities, so students with insufficient funds can access them. The amount of tuition is different for in-state and out-of-state colleges. The average cost of studying at a private university is nearly \$38,000 annually, and the average tuition fee at community colleges is approximately \$5,000. In addition to this, if you study at a community college and, after some time, discover that a subject you have chosen is not interesting for you, you can take a new one, and this doesn't cost you a fortune. There are several colleges with tuition fees:

State	In-state tuition	Out-of-state tuition
Texas	3320\$	9110\$
Arizona	2540\$	8130\$
Florida	2940\$	10690\$
Alabama	5920\$	11830\$
Connecticut	5310\$	15820\$
Ohio	5180\$	9260\$
Louisiana	4950\$	7950\$

(Flynn, 2024).

Smaller classes: in community colleges, class sizes range from 25 to 30, while there can be 150 to 300 students in universities. Because of this, it can be especially convenient for students who need more guidance while studying. Small classes also make it easier to form close relationships with other students, which helps them socialize better and doesn't make them feel separated.

In addition to this, in smaller classes, the instructor has more chances to adapt classes to student interest. Besides, the instructors and teachers do not have to do as many research papers as they would in a university, which allows them to provide individual students with guidance and support.

Ability to transfer credits—not all, but many community colleges are the stepping stones for students who plan to continue their studies at university. It is well known that at universities, students are mostly required to get a general education in the first year of their study. Only after that period are students focused on subjects that are specific to their profession. Considering all these factors, some students prefer to spend these two years in college and then transfer to the university. Associate degree programs can be used as credits by students who want to continue studying in 4-year degree programs. Most community colleges have partnerships with nearby universities to ease the process for students who plan to continue studying at the university. As soon as the student meets the school requirements, she or he can transfer to the university of her or his choice. By doing this, students can save money and obtain a degree from a four-year

university (Flynn, 2024).

What is necessary to transfer credits?

During this process, we should know that if the community college is accredited by a regional or national accreditation body, then there is a high chance that your credits will be transferred to your chosen university program. We should also mention that if your previous college is not accredited by an accredited organization in the country, there is a chance that your course will not be eligible for credit transfer.

First, you need to speak to your counselor about the articulation agreement. An articulation agreement is an agreement between schools and shows how two programs match. Transfer students can use it as a map to decide which courses to take. There are several types of articulation agreements. I will speak about two of them.

General education articulation agreements: When a university signs this type of agreement with a college, it will accept all or most of the credits from the college.

Degree-to-degree articulation agreement: universities signing it accept all the credit hours without question. Unfortunately, this agreement is very rare. It is worth noting that articulation agreements vary state by state.

So, it is a good idea to ensure that the course you want to take is covered in the general articulation program. If we neglect it, we can spend additional money and resources. The following example proves this fact: According to U.S. news, many students are not aware of this fact, and they lost 43% of their credits while transferring to a university from a public college.

Besides this, it is also relevant to note that some colleges have a guaranteed transfer system. This means that some universities partner with certain community colleges, accepting transfer students if they have a certain GPA and also fulfill other requirements. This is appealing to students because, after two years, they have not gone through the transfer application process, which is tiring and stressful.

What happens if the articulation agreement doesn't exist between the two sides?

We should also consider the situation when the college and university to which you plan to transfer do not have an articulation agreement. In this situation, it will be difficult to transfer credits.

However, if a student wants to transfer, then she or he has to ask the university to look

through the materials from the college. The university should decide if they are suitable for their standards.

When you choose your university, it is time to start collecting documents for your application. It is better to do research and get information in advance about what you need exactly. If you need help, contact an admissions counselor.

Flexibility of admissions: Most community colleges have open admission policies. This means that no one will be denied the right to study, and if you apply, you will be accepted. Besides, we are informed that the admissions process at the university is stressful because there is competition between students. For instance, international students are required to have TOEFL scores. In community colleges, students do not have to fulfill any academic requirements, and we can say that anyone with a GED or high school diploma can attend there. They simply require some placement tests, such as freshman English and math, before taking the course. We should also take into consideration the fact that community colleges may have selective admissions to some programs. For instance: nursing. But if the student does not qualify for certain programs, there are many other programs that they can apply to.

Community colleges admit applicants year-round.

Can a person attend a community college while still studying in high school?

Most high school students can attend a community college within a dual-enrolment program. In this program, high school students can get high school and college credits. They have the possibility of attending it online or in high school. Most dual-enrollment classes take place at the student's high school.

Options for financial aid grants at community colleges are provided by the federal government. Those grants include the Federal Pell Grant and the Federal Supplemental Opportunity Grant. To get those grants, a student must complete the free application, also known as FAFSA. In this application, the student indicates information about their family, about their income, and about family members enrolled in college. This way, they can determine if the student is in need of help.

The Pell Grant is granted by the US Department of Education, and it assists low-income students to cover educational expenses, including housing, tuition fees, books, and the expected family contribution. It is a federal grant, and the student does not need to repay it later. To receive it, students must submit the application. It must be resubmitted annually because all those

Factors can be changeable. Besides, if students gain other grants, this will not influence the Pell Grant.

To be eligible for this grant, students must prove the necessity of this grant, as I mentioned above. A person who receives this grant can be a US citizen or an eligible non-citizen. A student must not have some sort of degree. Students who have been convicted of crimes are not able to receive it. Students also might lose this grant if they fail to make academic progress, withdraw from the course, or do not maintain their enrollment status.

The amount of the Pell Grant depends on the budget Congress passes annually. According to statistics, the maximum Pell Grant in 2023–2024 is 7395 dollars, and the minimum is 750 dollars. Students can expect the payment of this grant during the semester payment period. Payments through this grant depend on the college. Colleges may pay 10 days earlier before beginning the classes, or they may allocate a monthly payment.

The Federal Supplemental Opportunity Grant is additional financial aid for students who are in need of it. This grant also doesn't influence other grants, and there is no need to repay it.

Requirements for this grant:

- student has to submit the application.
- Be a US citizen or non-citizen who is also eligible for the grant.
- A student must not have a bachelor's degree.
- Satisfactory academic progress
- Attend at least six credit hours in a semester.

The amount of this grant can be between \$100 and \$4,000 per year. It is also worth mentioning that its amount depends on other financial aid, the availability of the aid at a college, and the application date.

Flexible scheduling: Community colleges offer a more flexible schedule than universities. Those options are part-time, full-time, evening, online, or hybrid. If you want to distribute your time between several activities, community colleges are the best option. Community colleges are especially comfortable for working professionals or parents. According to the American Association of Community Colleges, about 44% of college students are over the age of 22.

Online classes have become popular recently because technological progress has made digital learning more accessible to students. In the past, students had limited opportunities to

take classes online. The COVID virus also increased demand for online learning.

We should also mention that many community colleges also offer amenities. For instance, sports complexes, dorms for living on campus, student recreation centers, academic clubs, etc. Many community colleges have clubs that help students communicate with their peers. As for sports, it should be mentioned that competitions often take place between the colleges, and they are often members of the National Junior College Athletic Association. As I mentioned above, colleges also offer dorms, but most community colleges do not have housing for students. According to the statistics, only 28% of community colleges provide students with on-campus housing. College acceptance is not the same as it is in universities, but it still exists (Bengs, 2022).

Career-focused education: today we can see that not every career needs a bachelor's degree. Many jobs require a two-year degree. For instance, for radiation therapists, it is clear that progress in medical technology means that doctors use high-tech equipment to diagnose the disease. They need skilled workers to operate those machines. Radiation therapists are among them. After two years, they are capable of working.

A web developer-associate degree for this job is completely enough. You can also work remotely.

Fire inspectors and investigators: if you want to work out of the office, you can become a fire inspector and investigator.

Physical therapist assistant: in some states, physical therapists are required to have a doctorate. However, countrywide, the assistants only need an associate degree from an accredited program as well as a license or certificate.

MRI technologists need a two-year associate degree. Top-paying employers for this specialty include medical and diagnostic laboratories, hospitals, outpatient care centers, etc. High school students who plan to follow a career in this field can prepare by taking classes in mathematics and science, particularly biology, chemistry, anatomy, and physics (Bengs, 2022).

Conclusion

In conclusion, as I mentioned at the beginning of the theme, community colleges really play a huge role in the American education system and also contribute to economic growth. Exactly the key ways that community colleges contribute include: degrees in fields that are in high demand; collaborating with businesses to form training programs that meet specific

industry needs; providing career counseling services; partnering with local employers to offer internships; and other work-based experience. We can say that a student shouldn't miss the chance that community colleges offer them. They should try to consider all the benefits of it and make a decision.

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The Influence of Immigrants in the Growth of the American Economy

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Abstract

The paper explores the analysis of the greatest challenges to the growth and development of the early American economy and businesses. According to a review of immigration's effects on the US economy, immigrants may actually benefit native-born people in the long run by forcing them into higher-paying jobs and accelerating the rate of innovation and productivity growth, as the article explores.

The first part of the article encompasses general overview of Trade and Economy. How the trade is connected to economy. What has led to the success of the US economy? This part will consider the processes of opening world markets and expanding trade, initiated in the United States.

In the second part of the research, is fully considered about the effects of the immigration and also the influence of Europeans in the growth of American Economy.

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Introduction

The most powerful nations in the world are also those that frequently control news headlines, occupy policymakers, and influence patterns of international trade. Their military spending and foreign policy are closely monitored. At least some people in the international community fear—or trust—that they will honor their pledges. These nations project their might on the international scene.

Economically, the United State is one of the most powerful country in the world. Despite making up less than 5% of the global population, Americans produce and earn more than 20% of global income. The US has the largest national economy in the world and is the top trader internationally.

The majority of the population of the United States was rural and agrarian at the start of the 19th century. Ninety percent of the Northeastern and ninety-five percent of the Southern populations were farmers or lived in settlements with less than 2,500 residents. There were only 5.3 million people living in the country in 1800, compared to 15 million in Britain and 27 million in France. The population was dispersed over a large geographic area.

The development of American prosperity has been significantly influenced by the process of opening up international markets and increasing trade, which was started in the country in 1934 and has been continuously pursued since the end of World War II. Since 1960, European immigration to the United States has largely decreased after for a while making up the majority of migration. Arrivals from Europe slightly increased after communism ended in the 1990s, but more recently, the population has started to decline once more. Country quotas were abolished by the Immigration Act of 1965, but by that time, fewer Europeans were trying to emigrate to the United States because of communist governments that prevented them from leaving their home countries or because their economic situation had improved during post-war reconstruction. The majority of the first large wave of European immigration, which took place between the 16th and the 18th centuries, came from the British Isles and was drawn by the country's economic potential and religious freedom. Between 1880 and 1920, more than 20 million immigrants arrived in the United States, mostly from Southern and Eastern Europe, following a pause in immigration from Europe during the American Civil War. While Eastern European immigrants, mostly Jews, came to the United States primarily to escape religious persecution, most immigrants from Southern Europe did so because of economic opportunities.

The majority of Europeans who acquired lawful permanent residence (also referred to as a “green card”) in the United States in 2016 did so as close relatives of American citizens or

via employment-related pathways.

As graduates in science and technology, holders of senior positions at venture capital-funded companies, and filers of patents, immigrants lead the way in innovation and inventiveness in the US. Furthermore, the presence of immigrants frequently gives native workers with lower skill levels the chance to specialize in their line of work, which boosts productivity.

So, greater numbers of manufacturing facilities as well as larger facilities were developed with the help of immigrants. When considered collectively, our estimates offer proof that aligns with the widely circulated historical account of how the European immigration promoted economic expansion. To sum up,

Nonetheless, there are a lot of parallels between the current era and the era of mass migration. The historical immigrants differed greatly from the natives, just like the immigrants of today. Languages and religions varied among the newcomers from eastern, central, northern, and southern Europe. In both situations, the majority of immigrants are workers with lower levels of education, making up a smaller percentage of highly skilled workers. Furthermore, a large number of immigrants in both situations are “pushed” out of their home nations by political or economic upheavals.

Economy & Trade

Americans produce and earn more than 20 percent of global income despite making up less than 5% of the global population. The largest national economy in the world and the top trader internationally is America. American prosperity has largely benefited from the opening up of international markets and increased trade, which were started in 1934 and have been persistently pursued since the end of World War II. Trade liberalization since World War II has resulted in 9% higher real incomes for Americans than it would have otherwise been, according to the Peterson Institute for International Economics. Regarding the American economy in 2013, that 9% translates into an extra \$1.5 trillion in revenue for the country.

These benefits can occur in several ways. The United States’ incomes rise when its most competitive industries and products are produced more extensively and exported. The average American worker’s productivity rises when production is shifted to the most competitive sectors of the economy, increasing their income. Our growing export sectors encourage investment due to their capacity to service a worldwide market, and the increasing volume of output lowers average production costs. These outcomes support the US economy’s growth rate. Additionally, imports give customers more options and support low prices, which gives them more purchas-

ing power. Additionally, imports give American companies access to highquality inputs that help them and their American workers become or maintain a competitive edge in both home and international markets.

Restoring trade expansion will play a significant role in the recovery as long as policy measures implemented in the US and other nations continue to boost economic and job growth. The real GDP of the United States has increased by 2.3% annually over the last five and a quarter year of recovery (from the second quarter of 2009 to the third quarter of 2014), with exports accounting for one-third (0.7 percentage points) of this growth. From 2009 to 2013, the number of jobs supported by US exports of goods and services increased by an estimated 1.6 million, reaching an estimated 11.3 million. If further efforts are made to lower barriers and increase trading opportunities, rapid trade growth could serve as a vehicle for ongoing recovery and a global transmitter of economic stimulus. Key elements of the Administration's trade policy are the understanding of the long-term advantages of increased trade as well as the beneficial role trade can play in the current economic recovery.

European Immigrants in the United States

Since 1960, European immigration to the United States has largely decreased after for a while making up the majority of migration. Arrivals from Europe increased slightly after the end of communism in the 1990s, but the population has recently started to decline once more. Approximately 4.8 million European immigrants made up 11% of the approximately 44 million immigrants living in the United States in 2016 (compared to 75% in 1960).

Most of the settlers from the British Isles during the first major wave of European immigration, which took place between the 16th and the 18th centuries, were drawn by the region's abundant economic opportunities and religious freedom. Both wealthy people and indentured servants made up this group of early immigrants. The second wave of European immigration came from Scandinavian, German, and Irish immigrants who were fleeing political unrest, famine, and religious persecution in the 1840s and 1850s. In contrast to the original European settlers, who were predominantly Protestant, the newcomers were primarily Catholic. They were also younger and less experienced, and they came from much poorer backgrounds (Qian, 2017).

Between 1880 and 1920, more than 20 million immigrants arrived in the United States, mostly from Southern and Eastern Europe, following a pause in immigration from Europe during the American Civil War. While Eastern European immigrants, mostly Jews, came to the United States primarily to escape religious persecution, most immigrants from Southern Europe

did so because of economic opportunities. The Great Depression and the start of World War II combined with national-origin quotas set in 1921 and 1924, which gave preference to Western and Northern Europeans, caused immigration from Europe to virtually stop. World War I also slowed immigration from Europe.

Country quotas were abolished by the Immigration Act of 1965, but by that time, fewer Europeans were trying to emigrate to the United States because of communist governments that prevented them from leaving their home countries or because their economic situation had improved during postwar reconstruction. The most recent wave of immigration to Europe was brought about by the fall of the Iron Curtain in the early 1990s, and it was primarily composed of individuals from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Since 2000, there has been a minor decrease in the number of immigrants from Europe to the United States (Qian, 2017).

The majority of Europeans who acquired lawful permanent residence (also referred to as a “green card”) in the United States in 2016 did so as close relatives of American citizens or via employment-related pathways. European immigrants are generally older, better educated, and earn more per household than both native-born people and other foreign-born populations combined, but they are also less likely to be employed. However, the sociodemographic and economic traits differ significantly depending on the birth country in Europe.

The belief that immigrants are displacing Americans in the workforce is widespread. Although immigrants increase the labor pool, they also raise domestic demand by spending their earnings on homes, food, TVs, and other goods and services. In turn, this higher demand creates more jobs in order to build those homes, produce and market food, and ship TVs. Although some studies suggest that these gains come at the expense of short-term losses from lower wages and higher unemployment, the majority of empirical studies show long-term benefits for natives’ employment and wages from immigration. According to standard economic theory, while an increase in immigration may initially cause wages to decline, over time businesses will increase their investment to raise the amount of capital per worker, which will ultimately raise wages. Long-term declines in workers’ average productivity and, consequently, average wages are avoided by steady growth in the capital-labor ratio (Batalova, 2018).

Conclusion

Today, the United States hosts the world’s largest immigrant population. In America, immigration policy has become a hotly debated topic, despite the fact that immigrants assimilate more quickly here than in developed European countries. Despite the debate’s focus on cul-

tural issues, it is obvious how immigration has an economic impact: The argument that foreign labor inflows have resulted in fewer jobs or lower wages for Americans is not well supported by economic analysis. The majority of academic research and the predictions of economic theory support the idea that immigration has a net positive economic impact on native-born people as well as the economy as a whole, with wages remaining unaffected over the long run.

According to the data, businesses boost investment to make up for any decrease in capital per worker when immigration raises the labor supply, which prevents average wages from declining over time. Furthermore, in the US labor market, immigrants are frequently a poor substitute for workers who are native-born. This implies that they do not bid for the same jobs and that the wages of natives are not under much pressure to decline. This could help to explain why earlier immigrants, whose wages were significantly reduced by the immigration wave, have been disproportionately impacted by competition from new immigrants. However, research indicates that over the past few decades, immigration has actually increased the average salary of workers who are native-born (Qian, 2017).

Immigrants are at the forefront of innovation and ingenuity in the United States, accounting for a disproportionately high share of patent filings, science and technology graduates, and senior positions at top venture capital-funded firms. In addition, the presence of immigrants often creates opportunities for less-skilled native workers to become more specialized in their work, thereby increasing their productivity. In general, immigration also helps the government's finances because, on average, immigrants pay more in taxes than they use in government services during their lifetime. But because these immigrants pay less in taxes and are more likely to send their kids to public schools, native-born citizens of states with high concentrations of less educated immigrants may have to shoulder heavier tax burdens (Batalova, 2018).

Most economists concur that immigration has a largely positive impact on the American economy. Regardless of their status as legal or illegal, skilled or unskilled, immigrants are unlikely to eventually displace native-born workers or lower their wages, though they might temporarily disrupt labor markets. In fact, the experience of the past few decades points to the possibility that immigration may benefit native-born people significantly in the long run by propelling them into higher-paying jobs and accelerating the rate at which innovation and productivity growth occur overall. Furthermore, immigration is keeping America relatively young and lessening the burden of paying retirement benefits for an aging population as baby boomers start retiring in developed economies around the world. The provision of public services to immigrants and their families involves some upfront costs for natives, but the evidence points to a long-term net positive return on investment.

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