



SELINUS UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCES AND LITERATURE

**EXPLORE THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS ON THE INSTRUMENTS
OF FOREIGN POLICY: IS TECHNO-NATIONALISM EMERGING AS A NEW
INSTRUMENT?**

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To

Beloved Wife, Heng Somoly, My Beloved Daughter, Prak Sovidyanusharita

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ABBREVIATIONS

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asia
AI	Artificial Intelligence
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
ERP	European Recovery Plan
GPNs	Global production networks
IR&D	Innovation, Research and Development
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IWA	International Wheat Agreement
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
ODA	Official Development Assistance
TSMC	Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company
PPP	Public-private partnerships
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
WB	World Bank
WTO	World Trade Organization

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ABSTRACT

Explore the Theoretical Frameworks on the Instruments of Foreign Policy: Is Techno-nationalism Emerging as a New Instrument?

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This study explores the emergence of Techno-nationalism as a popular strategic instrument in 21st-century foreign policy among countries, using conflict theory to analyze the cases of the United States, Japan, and China. The study found that Techno-nationalism is not a neutral or solely developmental phenomenon, but an intensely political and nationalistic retort to global power struggles and shifts. This study also found that the United States strategically uses Techno-nationalism to sustain and secure its global hegemonic status, while Japan is caught in a political alignment, reflecting a sturdy shift from innovation autonomy. China, in turn, carefully assumes a defensive model rooted in historical consciousness and strategic self-sufficiency. From a conflict theory perspective, Techno-nationalism reproduces and reinforces global inequalities, undermines multilateral norms, militarizes its technology, and demonizes its competitors' technology. This instrument becomes a modern mechanism of global power struggle, manifested in trade wars, sanctions, and digital infrastructure fights. The study concludes that without strengthening candid dialogue, reinforcing the true spirit of multilateralism and a free and open market, and inclusive and equitable global governance, Techno-nationalism risks deepening global disparities and destabilizing the international order.

Instead of enhancing techno-nationalism to the highest level and building technology walls, top tech countries should capitalize on strengthening inclusive and global governance and promoting the democratization of technology.

Author

Explore the Theoretical Frameworks on the Instruments of Foreign Policy: Is Techno-nationalism Emerging as a New Instrument?

CHAPTER I

In this chapter, I discussed the statement of problems in this study and how the study of foreign policy is significant to policymakers and researchers from an academic point of view. I also briefly discussed the features of the foreign policy of the two superpowers, the United States of America and the People's Republic of China. However, I have, for the benefit of the readers outside my home country, briefly discussed the main features of Cambodia's foreign policy. These discussions will serve as the guiding light toward understanding theoretical frameworks on foreign policy and how countries have a unique set of foreign policy criteria.

Statement of Problems

To meet the revolving trends of interdependence with one another and to solve the conflict, each nation considers its foreign policy as an irreplaceable option for this acquisition (Nuechterlein, 1976). Strong and effective policy guided by the sincerity of the national interests and an accumulation of soft power. The tactics used to successfully reinforce and execute their policy have become the instruments practiced for decades in many countries, from the smallest to the biggest one. For instance, Cambodia's constitution obliged this kingdom to adopt a neutral and non-alignment

policy in its foreign affairs. Article 1 of the constitution says, “The Kingdom of Cambodia shall be an independent, sovereign, peaceful, permanently neutral and non-aligned country” (National Assembly of Cambodia, 1993). The United States of America their foreign policy embraces the core and central missions to promote freedom and democracy and protect human rights around the world (U.S Department of State, 2008).

The instruments deployed to achieve national interests are not coherent among the countries. The approach may also be flexible. For instance, when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1990, many countries under the Soviet Union that declared independence began to prototype their economic and political strategies. America also began to modify its economic and foreign policy to encounter the new world order (Kenez, 2006). Condoleezza Rice, a former U.S Secretary of State, viewed the new prototype of political directions and economic strategies of the nations after the Cold War as a keen approach to responding to the new world order. Furthermore, she said, “powerful secular trends are moving the world toward economic openness and—more unevenly—democracy and individual liberty” (Rice, 2000). This comment reflected how countries’ involvement in formulating and readjusting their foreign policy in the post-Cold War era, regardless of their economic size and type of political regime.

The new foreign policy approaches eventually established additional instruments. By keeping in mind, the competition to achieve national interest is stiff and ferocious among nations that may face sanctions or harsh criticism, policy approaches are cautious moves. However, with the help of technological

convergence and globalization, more economically and militarily advantageous countries such as America, China, and Britain, among others, financially and politically possess more available choices in implementing their foreign policy. Dilatory in development goals and political reconciliation at home, some nations ridden by internal conflict failed to take advantage of these newly emerged phenomena.

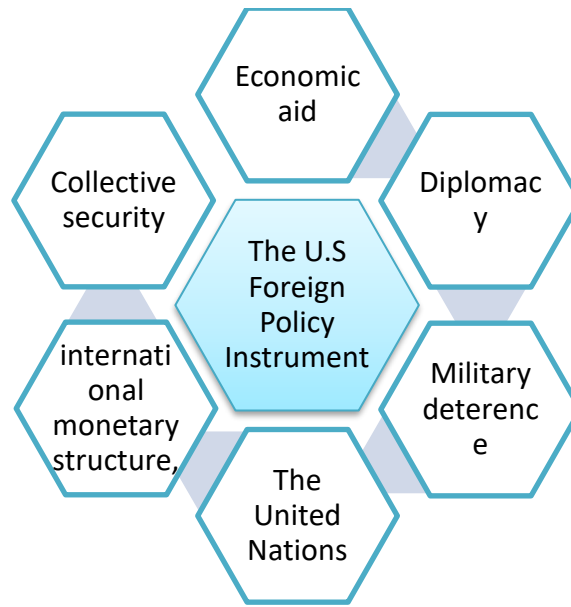
It is known that there are five common foreign policy instruments practiced by nations:

1. Economic instrument
2. Cultural instrument
3. Foreign Aid instrument
4. War or military instrument
5. Techno-nationalism

Foreign policy instruments and national resources are interrelated or interdependent. Therefore, those nations tend to take available national resources into serious consideration before adopting those instruments. The resources can be counted in terms of human resources, geography, level of development, economic size, military strength, and political type. More advanced countries like the United States of America identified the six primary instruments in modern American foreign policy, including diplomacy, the United Nations, the international monetary structure, economic aid, collective security, and military deterrence (U.S Department of State, 2008). Scholars

in international politics argued that the U.S.A. has spared no effort in pursuing its foreign policy using these six instruments.

Diagram. I.1. The U.S Foreign Policy Instruments:



Source: adapted from (U.S Department of State, 2008)

As one of the five superpowers, China has tried to secure its national interests and maintain its superpower status both militarily and economically, and to withstand the U.S. political and military expansion to the East. While some scholars argued that the historical bitterness inflicted on China by the Western powers during the 19th century, China has cautiously laid out its foreign policy instruments since 1949. Long-standing principles of Chinese foreign policy are articulated in the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence: mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality, mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence (Nathan & Ross, 1997). However, it is observed that the

Chinese Government, having learned from the current fragile world situation and historical points of view, is obliged to carry out three important tasks: economic development, assuring territorial integrity, and establishing national identity (Asia for Educators, 2023) (Nathan & Ross, 1997).

Diagram. II.2. Principles of Chinese Foreign Policy

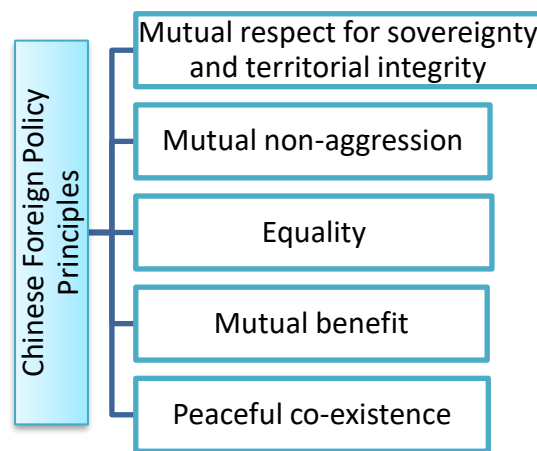
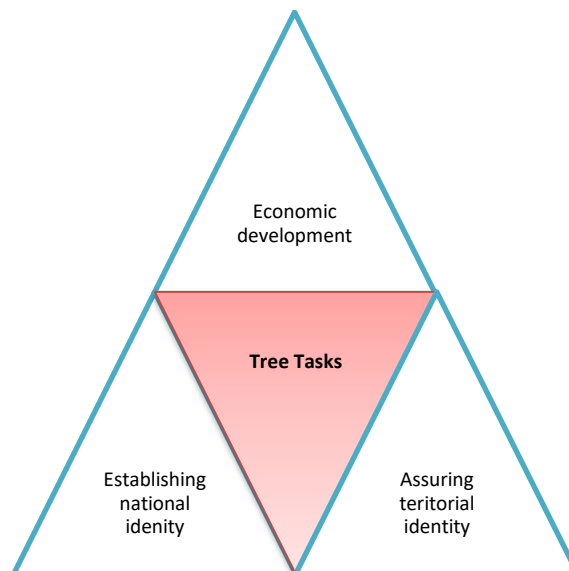


Diagram.III.3. Summarized tasks in Chinese Foreign Policy



Source: (Asia for Educators, 2023)

Facing the rapidly changing global economic and political transformation, especially after the downfall of the Soviet Union, Chinese foreign policy has drifted away from building soft power through economic, military, and development aid. There are a few factors, such as a shift. First, international relations observers argued that China has risen to global prominence. Second, geopolitical potential competitors with other superpowers and regional powers compel China to rethink its diplomatic approaches. And third, the enshrined principles of its foreign policy are mismatched with its ideal means of pursuing its national interest (Panda, 2014). China also sees the U.S. military expansion and presence in East Asia and Southeast Asia has triggered China to remodify its foreign policy instruments accordingly (Baldor, 2013). Moreover, China sees this military presence as a threat to its security, economic interests, and its territorial unification and integrity, as the U.S. military is stationed in some countries such as Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, the Solomon Islands, etc. (Baldor, 2013).

Thus, the competition for national interests among more powerful nations is fiercer than that of the smaller ones. Three literal short comparisons of foreign policy between the U.S.A., China, and Cambodia, shortly illustrated above, indicate how big and small countries lay out their foreign policy and what area in international politics each nation will pursue.

Study Context

The pursuit of foreign policy to achieve national interests has somehow destabilized international politics and, in some cases, has led to wars, clashes, and tensions. For instance, the pursuit of the US-China trade war has hurt both

countries' economies and hobbled economic growth. This trade war affected millions of working-class people (Politi, 2020). The Belt and Road Initiative of China was accused that China tried to be the center of power accumulation and viewed as the “disturbing expansion of Chinese power, and the United States has struggled to offer a competing vision. (McBride & Berman, 2023).

The tension resulting from geopolitical competition, trade rivalry, territorial disputes, ethnic and racial clashes, and religious conflicts has recently stirred up international politics, adding to current hot issues such as terrorism, political and ideological differences, and arms races. However, each country may view those threats differently from its national interest points of view. This means that the situation might be a threat to one country but not to other countries. Through this explanation, a country's foreign policy instruments might be potential threats to others while pursuing national interests. For instance, the Council on Foreign Relations pointed out in its Preventive Priorities Survey 2023 that the U.S.A.:

- An escalation of coercive pressure by China toward Taiwan, including heightened military activity involving the U.S. and other countries in the region
- An escalation of the conflict in Ukraine, resulting from the employment of unconventional weapons, spillover into neighboring countries, and/or direct involvement of NATO members
- A highly disruptive cyberattack targeting U.S. critical infrastructure

- Growing civil unrest in Russia and a power struggle in Moscow were stimulated by popular dissatisfaction with the Ukraine-Russia war and worsening economic conditions
- An acute security crisis in Northeast Asia triggered by North Korea's development and testing of nuclear weapons and long-range ballistic missiles
- A military confrontation between Israel and Iran over Iran's nuclear program
- A migration surge to the U.S. was pushed by rising violence, political unrest, and declining economic conditions in Central America and Mexico (Stares, 2023).

For China, as one of the superpowers that is more regularly diplomatic tensions with the U.S including recent communication breakdown and military affairs where the expert pointed out "There's just so much suspicion of intentions on each side", China positions itself in its sole national interests and take threats to its national interests seriously (Luce, 2023; Overly, Kine, & Palmer, 2023). China views any stand against the One China policy and its economic interests as a great threat. In this connection, Sinkkonen, and Elovainio (2020) categorized potential threats for China as material and Ideational, which are further divided into foreign and domestic factors. The material includes the adversary country's military power, offensive capability, and geographical proximity. Ideational factors contain the adversary country's aggressive intentions.

Table.I.1. Factors contributing to threat perceptions in China

	Material	Ideational
Foreign	Adversary Country's Military power Offensive capability Geographical proximity	Adversary country's aggressive intentions
Domestic	Domestic capability to counter external threats	Shared identity and value Media environment Responsiveness to external influence at the individual level

Source: Adopted from (Sinkkonen & Elovainio, 2020)

The factors influencing China's instruments in foreign policy center around self-preservation and self-sufficiency principles to keep itself safe from external interference and threats, as China has well learned from historical events, especially from the West during the 18th and 19th centuries (Asia for Educators, 2023). Some scholars argued that the current Chinese government spares no effort in bringing back China to an imagined glory past. (Frech, et al., 2017) argued that "it is the external manifestation of a broader effort to recreate past values, principles, and structures in Chinese society".

Significance of the Study

The 21st century is the century in which countries compete to save their core national interests using foreign policy instruments rather than means of war and

violence. Though this is a small analysis of the Foreign Policy Instruments, the researcher expected it to bear some significance as follows:

- This study will contribute to a pool of literature review in the field of international affairs on how countries deploy their foreign policy instruments.
- This study will deepen the readers' understanding of the theoretical frameworks and how each instrument can be explained by international relations theoretical frameworks.
- This study is also expected to give an overview of Cambodia's foreign policy and its directions, where it could greatly contribute to the literature of a Southeast Asian nation.
- Techno-nationalism is on the rise, and this study will exhibit the causes and consequences of such behavior, meant especially for students and policymakers.

Limitations of the Study

This study is a literature review, which helps guide researchers to systematically analyze cases. This study bears limitations as follows:

- This study is an analytical study lacking empirical data to back up and constitute any of the statistical analysis.
- Due to time constrain, the researcher selected only Techno-nationalism as an instrument of foreign policy that is increasingly and prevailingly used by major powers.

Emergence of Political System as a Foundation of Foreign Policy: Chieftdom and State

Studying topics on international politics, international relations, or political science will not be complete without discussing the origin of the chieftdoms and statehood; an early developing stage of the State where the national and international policy was born. More importantly, regardless of the structure or regulations of how foreign policy works, foreign policy would have existed at the same time as the establishment of statehood through the states' interactions with one another to negotiate and co-exist.

When the first states emerged in the prehistoric period about 5,500 years ago, the chieftdom was believed to have emerged thousands of years earlier before statehood (Kottak, 2010). Being known as archaic states, or nonindustrial states, Carneiro (1970). argued that such a state was just an autonomous political unit comprising few or many communities within a defined territory, governed or controlled by a centralized government to collect taxes, draft men or people for work or war, enact laws, and enforce them. This argument gave the idea that such a state had just transformed itself from a chieftdom or a politically organized governing tribe, where their social and political structures were reorganized according to the social and political changes.

The first ancient state formation was believed to begin in Mesopotamia (currently Iran and Iraq) about 4000-3000 BCE. (Kottak, 2010). However, the population was as

small as 150 people (Sanderford, 2018). For the early ancient state, according to Sanderford (2018), the size of the stable egalitarian social groups is not only limited but also discrete, self-similar, and hierarchical. Yet, from time to time, the state's size expanded, and its population's occupation began to diversify.

Sanderford has put forward theories on the categories of the oldest states that emerged around the world in their paper as follows:

This archeological evidence tells us that the expansion of the villages and population growth, and their transformation into a chiefdom, contributed to the definite emergence of statehood, where the governing structure was born. Merging many villages into one community with thousands of people requires common interests among them and strong leadership. However, it is obviously correct to say that governing thousands of people who aim at bringing peace, security, and well-being requires a complex hierarchy and state-steering visions.

According to Kottak (2010), rank, power, prestige, and resources during the chiefdom came through kinship and descent and were passed on to the next generations.

Some chiefs handed over power to their successors after careful consideration, since it would be a matter of their existence. Some chiefs would trace their ancestry back 50 generations in this regard. In the governing structure, the chiefs were full-time political specialists in charge of regulating and overseeing the economy, including seasonal production, distribution, or redistribution, and consumption (Kottak, 2010). They were also in charge of laws and order, and their people and community. In addition, they were also overseeing the security within their territory and outward relationships with other chiefdoms. At this point, external relationships with other

chiefdoms or tribes became essential to allocate equal shares of the forest by-products and agriculture. On the one hand, it helps maintain peace and tolerate co-existence. It should be highlighted that heads of the chiefdoms were not subjected to answering any public questions; they are the divine-ordained.

Table.I.2.Timeline of First Ancient States

State	Region	Approximate date
<u>Susa</u>	Mesopotamia, southwestern Iran	ca 4000-3000 BCE
<u>Uruk</u>	Mesopotamia, southern Iraq	ca 4000–3000 BCE
<u>Hierakonpolis</u>	upper Egypt	ca 3500–3100 BCE
<u>Harappa</u>	Indus Valley, western India, eastern Pakistan (Punjab, Rajasthan, Sind, Gujarat)	ca 2600–2000 BCE
<u>Erlitou</u>	Central China (Shanxi and Henan)	ca 1900–1500 BCE
<u>Monte Albán</u>	Oaxaca valley, southern Mexico	ca 300 BCE–200 CE
<u>Teotihuacan</u>	Basin of Mexico, central Mexico	ca 100–1 BCE
<u>Virú</u>	Virú valley, coastal northern Peru	ca 200 BCE–200 CE
<u>Tiwanaku</u>	Lake Titicaca, northern Bolivia	ca 300–600 CE
<u>Hawai'i</u>	Hawaiian Islands	ca 800–1800 CE

Adopted from Stanford (2018)

The transformation of the chiefdoms into states must not be ignored. Archaeological evidence indicated that chiefdoms are the intermediate between the tribes and the state, which chiefdoms come — Tribe - Chiefdoms - State (Elman, 1976). Such social and political changes set the scene for the early formation of Statehood, where formal governing and systemic structures were created.

By keeping social and structural changes in mind, having established the governing structure within the defined territory, larger and more powerful chiefdoms transformed themselves into more politically and economically organized chiefdoms with different leadership styles. Agricultural products increased accordingly, powered by newly invented agricultural tools and the domestication of animals. In this aspect, Fletcher (2016,p.30) maintained that “technological innovation always precedes political change and diplomacy. The sickle and plow allowed settled living and the domestication of animals. Social structure and a basic rule of law followed, creating more space and time for innovation”. Similarly, in the words of Carneiro (1970, p.733), the origin of the state was the “outcome of a regular and determinate cultural process” and a “recurring phenomenon”. There is no single factor in the formation of the states. Scholars have discussed various types of theories that were used to explain factors contributing to the formation of the state. The following are the dominant theories that scholars have discussed on the origins of the State:

- **Hydraulic system:** scholars, including Elman (1976), Kottak (2010), and Wittfogel (1957), asserted that the hydraulic system creates a higher chance of forming a state. In early states such as ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, archeological evidence suggested that states began to manage irrigation systems, drainage, and Flood control systems for the benefit of agriculture and animal domestication. These scholars asserted that the irrigation system strengthened the capacity to feed more people, which led to population growth at the time. Moreover, it can sustain the towns and cities. Some scholars have

argued that the hydraulic system enabled people to initiate long-distance trade, as most of the population chose to live near water-accessible locations.

- **Voluntaristic theories:** The Voluntaristic theories point out that, although human nature is selfish, at some point in history, they were ready to give up their sovereignties and interests and came together to form a bigger, more powerful, accountable, and responsible political unit called the state. They consigned their well-being and safety to the political units. Similar to what Fletcher (2016) argued on the technological innovations leading to political change and state formation, Carneiro (1970) viewed the invention of agriculture and cultivating methods as having brought surplus food production, which allowed other sections of the population to look for alternative occupations. This phenomenon induced a greater division of labor. The growing specialization of labor, at the same time, built up political integration among communities (Childe, 1958). The voluntaristic theory rejected the proposal of war and force as the factors contributing to the formation of the first state. However, one cannot ignore the discussion of war and force when talking about the formation of the first state.
- **Population, war, and circumscription:** Scholars have not agreed on a single cause that contributed to the formation of the state. For Carneiro (1970), the formation of the state resulted from population, war, and circumscription. He said, "Force is the mechanism by which political evolution has led, step by step, from autonomous village to the state". Carneiro (1970); Kottak (2010) are of

the view that powerful villages conquered the weaker ones. The weaker ones have submitted to more power by accepting political domination and paying tribute. Thus, those villages had to figure out how to intensify their agricultural production, harvesting, and hunting. However, others rejected this theory, including Steveson (1968), who argued that in cases such as Papua New Guinea, the circumscribed environment did not play its role, and in many cases, warfare was present, but the state did not emerge.

These three theories have been discussed to explain how the state emerged, although there are controversial arguments. Supported by the agricultural economy, the state gave birth to central political control, which later became an important bureau to decide internal and external policy. Most states adopted expansionist politics to secure good locations for resources, population, and existence.

Emergence of Modern Foreign Policy in Context

Although early states have politically, economically, and culturally interacted with one another, foreign policy was debated on how it structurally emerged about 4 centuries ago. It was the time of the emergence of the modern political system, prompting modern states to foreign policy and prioritize its pursuance vigorously. Some nation-states have invested great effort and huge amounts of resources to amplify and produce decisive effects. Owing to that view, some scholars asserted that modern states gave birth to foreign policy in broader ways. By arguing that foreign policy is a bridge connecting the inside and the outside, (Campbell, 1998, p. 60) also saw foreign

policy as the division of the inside, as how statesmen steered their respective nations' wheel on the international stage.

Foreign policy was founded in institutionalized settings and structurally emerged around the 17th century (Halvard, 2019, p. 187). Foreign affairs scholars saw foreign policy as a producer, product of modern states and state systems. The 20th-century scholars in international politics looked at foreign policy as an identity and the boundaries of foreign policy (Michael, 1988; Walker, 1993). In Great Britain, foreign policy emerged around the 17th century or around the first industrial revolution that gave birth to the press and newspapers. "The establishment of newspapers made possible a more consistent discourse on matters taking place outside of the immediate vicinity of the readers, including what went on abroad, and this is the period when an English public sphere emerged" (Halvard, 2019, p. 190). This assertive argument pointed out that the press had informed not only the public but also government officials about the national and international affairs of Britain. This led to self-consciousness among the public to learn about other countries' political systems, cultures, and religions. To meet this demand, the press industry and academic institutions explored a wider perspective in the relevant domains and exposed it to the public. For these reasons, British Foreign policy was known as an outstanding and unmatched policy from the 18th century to the 20th century. However, the British foreign policy was invested mostly in economic matters, comprising industry, finance, shipping, and trade that largely dominated the world, especially during the colonial period (Black, 1996). It is worth noting that the economic interest of foreign policy compelled the UK to pursue its colonial conquest strategies around the globe. The

pursuit of such a foreign policy was defined as the national interests of the time, although there is a multiplicity of explanations on the causes of colonialism, with the conclusion of a zero-sum game approach. The following are some of the historical events that gave birth to modern foreign policy:

1. The Peace of Westphalia (1648): The Birth of the Nation-State System established the principle of state sovereignty, where nations were allowed to exercise their independent rights to govern and exist without external interference (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2025). This treaty also concreted the foundation for modern international relations and diplomatic norms, as states had independent status and began engaging in formalized foreign policy.

2. The Rise of Great Power Diplomacy (18th–19th Century): it is also known as the Congress of Vienna (1815) after the Napoleonic Wars, introduced balance-of-power politics, where major European powers (Britain, France, Austria, Prussia, Russia) worked together to prevent any single state from dominating the continent. Leaders like Otto von Bismarck took advantage of this political juncture to establish alliances and diplomacy to unify Germany (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2025). Historians acknowledged that colonialism and Imperialism shaped foreign policy, as European powers competed for global dominance through economic and military expansion (Go, 2024).

3. The 20th Century, Wars and the Establishment of the Cold War and Institutional Diplomacy: World War I (1914–1918) led to the establishment of the League of Nations in 1920 to promote and safeguard collective security and prevent

such devastation (Scientia Educare, 2025). However, historians argued that the failure of the League of Nations resulted from the lack of enforcement mechanisms and U.S. isolationism, which induced the limits of early multilateralism.

4. World War II (1939–1945) and the United Nations: After WWII, the United Nations (1945), a continuum of the League of Nations, was established, promoting international cooperation, human rights, and conflict resolution (Lynch & Fomerand, 2025). The Bretton Woods System (1944) was also created and gave birth to institutions like the IMF and World Bank, aimed at integrating economic policy into foreign relations.

5. Cold War and Post-Cold War Era: The Cold War (1947–1991) created bipolarity and Ideological Conflict. The U.S. (capitalist democracy) and USSR (communist) actively engaged in proxy wars, nuclear deterrence, and espionage, shaping foreign policy around containment (U.S.) and expansionism (USSR). To protect their national interests, developing countries came together to establish the Non-Aligned Movement (1961), seeking neutrality in the Cold War (Luthi, 2016).

5. Other Emerging Factors: factors such as economic statecraft, climate diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, technology, cyber security, populism, and nationalism play significant roles contributing to modern Foreign Policy trends.

Modern foreign policy has evolved from Westphalian sovereignty to complex multilateralism and globalization. Today, the foreign policy of each nation seeks to balance national interests, economic competition, security threats, and ethical concerns, including human rights, climate change. It should be noticed that

digital diplomacy, great-power rivalry, and transnational challenges are restructuring international relations.

Cambodia's Modern Foreign Policy

Cambodia's foreign policy has shifted from time to time since it fully gained independence from France in 1953 (Church, 2009). The shift in Cambodia's modern foreign policy was greatly influenced by domestic politics. To accommodate its position on the international stage, Cambodia rethinks and reshapes its foreign policy wisely in alignment with the Law of the land and international political situations.

In the constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia, Chapter I was devoted. Article 1 says, "Cambodia is a Kingdom with a King who shall rule according to the Constitution and to the principle of liberal democracy and pluralism. Article 1 further guided Cambodia's foreign policy that "The Kingdom of Cambodia shall be an independent, sovereign, peaceful, permanently neutral and non-aligned country".

Chapter IV of the Constitution consists of 6 Articles, but 5 of them direct Cambodia's foreign policy in detail as follows (National Assembly of Cambodia, 1993):

Article 53

- *The Kingdom of Cambodia adopts a policy of permanent neutrality and non-alignment.*
- *The Kingdom of Cambodia follows a policy of peaceful co-existence with its neighbors and with all other countries throughout the world.*

- *The Kingdom of Cambodia shall not invade any country, nor interfere in any other country's internal affairs, directly or indirectly, and shall solve any problems peacefully with due respect for mutual interests.*
- *The Kingdom of Cambodia shall not join in any military alliance or military pact which is incompatible with its policy of neutrality.*
- *The Kingdom of Cambodia shall not permit any foreign military base on its territory and shall not have its own military base abroad, except within the framework of a United Nations request.*
- *The Kingdom of Cambodia reserves the right to receive foreign assistance in military equipment, armaments, ammunitions, in the training of its armed forces, and other assistance for self-defense and to maintain public order and security within its territory.*

Article 54:

- *The manufacturing, use, and storage of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons shall be absolutely prohibited.*

Article 55:

- *Any treaty and agreement incompatible with the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, neutrality and national unity of the Kingdom of Cambodia shall be annulled.*

To conclude, Cambodia's foreign policy is guided by the principles of:

- **Non-alignment:** Cambodia remains a non-aligned state, in other words, is not formally allied with any major power bloc. Cambodian leaders viewed that due to

the fragile international peace and current uncertain international politics, Cambodia is better to strictly follow the non-alignment policy and promote multilateralism (Sok, 2024). During the Annual Review Conference of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Cambodia's Prime Minister also reaffirmed Cambodia's commitment to an independent foreign policy of permanent neutrality and non-alignment. He also cited that this foreign policy stands on the principles of international law, the UN charter, the Constitution of Cambodia, and Cambodia's core interests (Fresh News, 2025).

- **Sovereignty and Non-interference:** Guided by the constitution, Cambodia places its emphasis on national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other friendly nations (Samban, 2023). Cambodia's non-interference foreign policy is also in line with the ASEAN principles and China's Principles of Peaceful Co-existence.
- **Peaceful Coexistence:** Cambodia promotes peaceful relations with all countries, particularly its neighbors and regional partners.

Cambodia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation is also undertaking five other main tasks (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, 2025):

- Protect national independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and neutrality; maintain peace, security, stability, order, and social unity
- Foster more friendships abroad based on the spirit of national independence
- Promote economic diplomacy

- Continue to support and strengthen multilateralism
- Enhance the quality, efficiency and capacity of Cambodian diplomats

In recent decades, Cambodia's foreign policy has been shaped by its historical context, geographical factors, culture, world politics, and economic needs. As a small country in Southeast Asia, Cambodia is deploying a hedging approach; it seeks to balance its relationships with major global and regional powers while promoting and protecting its national interests, particularly hard-earned peace, economic development, and regional stability. The following is an overview of key aspects of Cambodia's foreign policy:

CHAPTER II

Meaning, Definition, and Theoretical Models

This chapter will be devoted to explaining the theoretical viewpoints and the concrete understanding of the models of Foreign Policy. As the foreign policy theories indicate, foreign policy works differently among nations based on their geopolitical situation, culture, population, development levels, and even political types. The theories will be explained based on the foundation of the models. Capturing the essence of each model, this chapter will be one of the most significant parts in the dissertation in connecting to build literature reviews.

Meanings and Definitions of Foreign Policy

Foreign Policy, as a diplomatic tool to navigate the violence and acts of war to achieve national interests at the highest possible means, is a political strategy deployed to achieve its ends. It is not about an absolute self-interest, as scholars agreed, it is a quid pro quo deal of the states. The instruments of foreign policy show that nations do not try to interfere in the hostile or controversial affairs unless their national interests are highly met. Thus, the instruments of foreign policy are the outcomes of rational decisions of the political leaders.

By saying so, the foreign policy embraces two broad meanings.

- a) In a taken-for-granted term, foreign policy is the “sum of official external relations conducted by an independent actor “state” in international affairs (Hill, 2003). With these definitions, both (Hudson, 2012) and (Leira, 2019) agreed

that such “*understanding underpins most foreign policy analysis, regardless of whether the focus is on studying the content of foreign policy, the pursued policy, or the process leading up to such policy*”.

- b) The encyclopedia of International Relations gives two comprehensive meanings to understand the meaning of foreign policy. First, it identified foreign policy as an interlacing material driven by official decisions, actions, and principles undertaken by a state relating to its position, status, and interests in world affairs, especially those actions and positions governing relations with other states’ behaviors and international politics. Second, the goal and the strategy to achieve foreign policy’s goals must be followed and implemented by the state actors or via the conduct of its diplomacy (Nolan, 2002).
- c) The driving forces and the contributive factors of the foreign policy has been shifted over the years. This is the influence of the shifting paradigms in international politics and the objectives of the foreign policy itself. While defining the foreign policy as the “general set of principles which its decision-makers adopt towards their external environment,” Nicholson (1998) argued that the foreign policy has been the political and strategic tool deployed between state and states. Thus, the internal and external aspects formed as the actors are always influential factors in establishing the foreign policy.
- d) Similarly, looking at the Encyclopedia of Britannica, it elaborates that Foreign policy has certain general but political objectives that usher in the acts and relationships of one state in its interactions with other states. Moreover, it

highlighted how the development of foreign policy could be influenced by domestic considerations, the policies or behavior of other states, or even specific geopolitical designs (Encyclopaedia of Britannica, 2025).

- e) Professor George Modelski, one of the prominent scholars in conceptualizing Foreign Policy, argued that “Foreign Policy is the system of activities evolved by communities for changing the behavior of other states and for adjusting their own activities to fit the international environment.” (George, 1962). To him, the foreign policy that states deploy is the political activity that they try to change their counterparts’ behaviors on the international stage. However, foreign policy also presents itself as a political tool to maintain other nations’ behavior for nothing but to secure the national interests, as nations uphold their national interests at the highest level.

To conclude, the meaning of foreign policy, foreign policy is a set of principles and practical means by which a nation defines, justifies, and secures the objectives of national interests. These can be put as follows:

- A set of international policies established by politicians and policymakers. This can be changed from time to time, but the core principles lie in the law of the land.
- The principles and guidelines are to conduct political negotiations for national interests with other nations.
- Foreign policy is formulated, stated, and operationalized by the influence of the external milieu and the domestic environment.

- The levels of success and failure of the foreign policy are measured by how much the national interests are achieved.

Elements and Approaches to Foreign Policy Making

International affairs scholars have categorized the elements in the process of foreign policy decision-making. The decisions are under the mounting pressure or the influence of the 1) external factors and 2) the domestic factors (Ghai, 2009; Rosenau, 1974).

External factors

- **International system:** Tanter (1972) highlighted the significance of the international system in foreign policy decision-making that “International system approaches may imply interaction models, whereas foreign policy approaches may suggest decision-making models”.

Obviously, although the modern state system was argued to have existed since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, but current world system lies under the umbrella of international laws and orders. Mainly, the UN plays a significant role in this context. The rise of multiple political blocs, the experience of two world wars, and the experience of colonial power expansionism have greatly determined how each nation should guide its external policy to meet and to protect its national interests. The adoption of foreign policy as such has also triggered changes in international power structures.

- **International law:** the relations between states have been determined and closely watched by a set of rules called “International Law”. As a system of rules voluntarily or willingly followed by states, states look forward to them¹. The notable examples of the Iran Nuclear Deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine, and the 2011 military intervention in Libya 2011, reflect how international law shapes decisions in foreign policy decisions (Editoria, 2024). In this context, theoretical verification from previous studies pointed out that the “decision-makers prefer legal justifications, pursuing foreign policies over other options. In addition, decision-makers appear to prefer legal arguments built on codified laws (Rapp, 2022). This means international laws influence every principle of the foreign policy and its decision-making. These principles are intended to establish parameters for state behavior, ensuring that actions taken on the international stage are just and lawful to every state (Editoria, 2024).

The principles or the practices of international law stand as the parameters of each country’s foreign policy. Foreign policy of each nation often exhibits a nation’s dedication to international legal norms while endeavoring to assert national interests (Editoria, 2024). The interrelationships between international law and foreign policy are essential for world peace and stability. Although the core objective of foreign policy is to safeguard national interests, failure to balance international law (international

¹https://www.academia.edu/7072829/International_Law_and_Foreign_Policy_a_mutual_influence

obligations) and foreign policy applications may lead to sophisticated international tension, diplomatic failure, and war.

- **International organizations:** international organizations play their roles as the social, economic, cultural, and political watchdogs of the world. They have a profound impact on the determination of the foreign policy of the member states. These organizations are strategic, fair, professional, and powerful. Reputed International organizations not only facilitate interactions between states at the global level but also observe justice among states (Ghai, 2009). Having used the international theories to analyze the functions and roles of International Organizations in world politics, Crockett (2012) argued that it is the “theory holds that the role of international organizations is to uphold their carefully constructed values and ideologies to States, determining their behaviors”. Similarly, As (2018), influenced by the constructivist theory, views that international organizations such as the European Union, ASEAN, African Union, OPEC, ECOWAS, and others serve as modifiers of state behaviors and as independent actors. This implies that International Organizations also work on their recognized values and rules, in which they assist and contribute to world peace, stability, and order.
- **Alliances:** alliances among the states have become the strategic tools used in foreign policy when the world is increasingly fragile to conflict and crisis. As (2018) argued that the states’ alliance serves three objectives. First,

states use foreign policy to pursue goods and maintenance. Second, states choose the best strategies in alliance pacts to guarantee the most achievable interests for their nations. Third, an alliance requires resources. This means states must have resources to offer to one another, or areas of cooperation. Fourth, states' decisions in alliance partnerships is rational in their allocation of their resources.

It is observed that post-1945 is the era of the emergence of alliances among states to counter their geopolitical and ideological rivals. The states, to play superior and secure political favor, use not only their foreign policy tactics but also their alliance's foreign policies to fulfill their interests and objectives. For instance, "in the post-1945 period, the United States and Soviet Union had recognized and used policies of their alliance as effective means for consolidating their respective political favors (Ghai, 2009).

- **International politics:** Current or past issues in International Politics influence the Foreign Policy formulation. research in international politics pointed out four factors in international politics that are postulated to have an influence on foreign policy. First, **Global Power Shifts**, where the rise of emerging powers like China and India, and the relative decline of traditional powers like the United States and Europe, always give attention to foreign policy makers' attention (Center for Military Studies, 2012). Second, the ongoing conflicts in regions like the Middle East, tensions between major powers, and the threat of nuclear proliferation play significant roles (Gareis, 2012). Third, once the **economies of countries in interdependent**,

countries will examine carefully the challenges, opportunities of their foreign policy (Cooper, Economic Interdependence and Foreign Policy in the Seventies, 1972). More importantly, the impact of globalization on trade, investment, and economic policies, as well as the challenges of economic inequality and protectionism, are factors that cannot be ignored in foreign policy decisions. (Franks, 1980; Tanious, 2018). Other factors include climate change, the need for international cooperation to address environmental challenges, the promotion of sustainable development, and human rights, as well as issues related to refugees, migration, and humanitarian intervention. They also exert their crucial influence on foreign policy formation patterns. For instance, some countries or world organization have prioritized their foreign policy to defend and protect human rights and uphold it as the core of the EU foreign policy (Nooke, 2021).

Diagram II.4. Summary of External Factors in Diagram



Internal Factors

- **Size:** The size of the state is an important factor in foreign policy as it influences the psychological and operational aspects. Recently, there has been an increasing amount of attention on the size of a nation, as it enhances a country. The practical observations pointed out that the countries with large populations always have better positions to become a recognized power in the region (East, 1973). "The foreign policy of a large-sized state is bound to be different from a small-sized state." (Ghai, 2009). However, although the size of a country contributes significantly to foreign policy making, the specific resources of the country also play their big part.

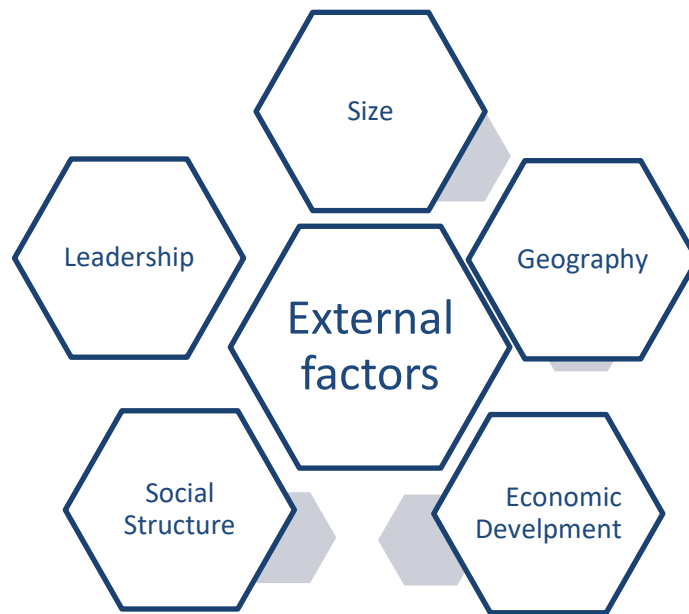
- **Geography:** Geography plays a crucial role in formulating foreign policy as it shapes a nation's strategic interests, security concerns, economic opportunities, and diplomatic relationships (Ghai, 2009). During the formulation of the foreign policy, policy makers take strong consideration of geography as it is one of the significant factors that influence the effectiveness and the success, or the challenges and opportunities in executing the foreign policy. The geography bears 8 factors, they are strategic and security, resource, economic strength, climate and environment factors, cultural and historical ties with other countries, geopolitical alliances, maritime and territorial disputes, and transportation and connectivity. Those countries that possess these factors are most likely to have far more effective foreign policy than others. For instance, the **United States'** geographic isolation has historically allowed for a focus on both Atlantic and Pacific interests, shaping its role as a global power, while the Vast landmass and resource wealth of Russia drive its focus on territorial security and energy diplomacy (Miller, 2023). China's Geographic proximity to contested regions (e.g., South China Sea) influences its maritime and trade policies, where **Middle Eastern Nations are known for rich oil reserves**; such opportunity serves their great interests, and their strategic waterways shape their global influence extensively. Thus, in summary, geography provides the foundational context for a nation's foreign policy, influencing its priorities, challenges, and opportunities on the global stage.

- **Economic development:** The linkage between economic development and foreign policy making is a critical aspect of modern governance, as the two are deeply interconnected (Kutlay & Karaoguz, 2023). Economic development influences a country's foreign policy, and conversely, foreign policy decisions can significantly impact economic growth and stability (Chaterjee, 2020). Economic Development has become a driver of Foreign Policy, as the former shapes a country's foreign policy priorities and capabilities in several ways. Economic growth often defines a country's national interests, such as securing access to resources, expanding trade, and attracting foreign investment. For example, resource-rich countries may prioritize foreign policies that protect their energy exports. Furthermore, economically powerful nations (e.g., the U.S., China, and the EU) have greater leverage to shape international norms, institutions, and agreements. Their foreign policies often reflect their economic strength and ambitions. It is observed that wealthier nations often use foreign aid as a tool of foreign policy to build alliances, gain geopolitical influence, and promote stability in regions critical to their economic interests (Romanuk, 2024). Thus, the linkage between economic development and foreign policy is symbiotic. Economic strength augments a country's ability to pursue its foreign policy goals, while effective foreign policy can create opportunities for economic growth. In an increasingly interconnected world, governments must carefully balance these two domains to achieve sustainable development and global stability.

- **Social structure:** The social structure of a country can significantly influences its foreign policy making in various ways (Hermann & Hermann, 1989). Social structure refers to the organized pattern of social relationships and social institutions that together compose society. This includes elements such as class, ethnicity, national identity, religion, gender dynamics, historical and cultural Factors, economics structure, education and intellectual, and other forms of social stratification. Here are some ways in which social structure can impact foreign policy (Chaterjee, 2020). In summary, the social structure of a country can have a profound impact on its foreign policy by shaping the interests, values, and priorities of its citizens and leaders. Understanding these social factors is crucial for analyzing and predicting the foreign policy behavior of nations.
- **The values, talents, experiences, and personality of leaders:** leaders of the country play a crucial role in shaping, formulating, and executing foreign policy, and their values, talents, experiences, and personality traits significantly influence how they approach international relations. Previous scholars suggested that the values, talents, experiences, and personality of leaders are not to be undervalued, as these factors influence how the foreign policy is formulated and executed to a great extent (Maoz & Shayer, 1987). Some scholars even contended that it is individuals (leaders) who make decisions, not states (Smith C. , 2012). This means the values such as moral and ethical beliefs and ideological alignments of a leader, talent factors such

as diplomatic skills, strategic thinking and crisis management of the leaders, experiences including personal backgrounds and international exposure, personality factors such as risk tolerance, charisma and persuasion, authoritarian vs collaborative and emotional intelligence of the leaders that influence the foreign policy making. Thus, the chemistry of a leader's values, talents, experiences, and personality creates a unique strategy for foreign policy.

Diagram II.5. Summary of Internal Factors in Diagram



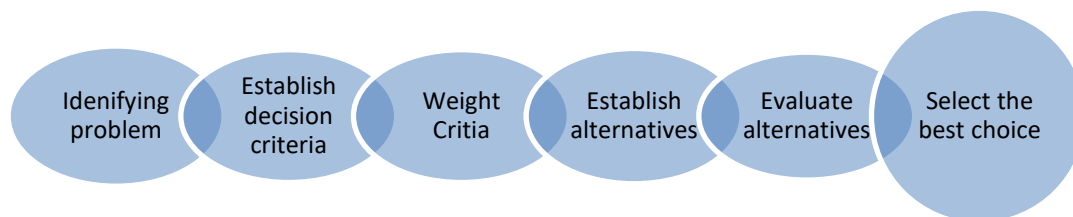
Theoretical Frameworks of Foreign Policy

This study can never be completed without discussing the theoretical models of foreign policy. These models are deployed to understand and analyze how nations interact with one another and with other international actors. As international politics play to ensure, protect, promote, and achieve the national interests at all costs, foreign policy stands to embrace every possible means to achieve such national goals. The following models help explain how motivations and strategies work and the means to accomplish the outcomes of foreign policy decisions. Below are some of the key models of foreign policy:

Rational Actor Model in Foreign Policy

The rational actor model assumes that states are unitary and states carry out rational decisions to maximize their national interests. This implies that the actors, which are the state itself, are calculative in the costs and benefits of the foreign policy, strongly influenced by internal and external factors. The chosen policy is designed to achieve outcomes consistent with the national goals and interests. Stantchev (2005) put forward that “the rational actor model treats foreign policy choices as products of the following idealized sequence”. In his personal views, the states choose the option that stands the highest chance to achieve national interest among others. However, the option could be the choices influenced by international and national factors.

Diagram II.6. Process of Decision Making in the Rational Model



Based on the cost-benefit analysis, and assumes that decision-makers have complete information and well-calculated decisions. Kahler argued that rationality and rational models have been deployed by state actors to under international politics and decide how foreign policy strategies should work (Kahler, 1998).

Therefore, there are three key features in the rational model: The key features in the rational model

- States make policy in their self-interest.
- Decisions are made based on the most logical and rational calculations.
- Foreign Policy is used in realist theories of international relations.

Conflict Theoretical Model in Foreign Policy

As a guideline of international relations and diplomacy, foreign policy is formulated on the notion that states have power, political and economic struggles with one another in terms of protecting, promoting, and achieving national interests. In this context, it denotes the possibility of conflicts occurring anytime and anywhere.

Rooted in the works of Karl Marx and later developed by scholars such as Ralf Dahrendorf and Lewis Coser, conflict theory underlines the role of coercion and power in producing social order. It postulates that society is in a state of perpetual conflict due

to competition for limited resources. In the context of foreign policy, conflict theory can be applied to understand the undercurrents of international relations, where states and non-state actors compete for power, resources, and influence (Turner, 2013). These three factors, power, resources, and influence, are crucial for national development, national stability, and international prestige.

The conflict in international relations among states can be grouped into power and dominance, economic interests, class struggles and global scare, ideological conflict, military-industrial conflict, and resistance to hegemony (Ghai, 2009). I would like to discuss the above key terms as follows:

- **Power and Dominance:** This category embraces two fields of conflict in nations' pursuit of power and dominance. First, hegemony, where powerful states (hegemons) dominate the international system, shaping norms, institutions, and policies to serve their interests. America, as the liberal and realists argued, has retained its "unipolar power" and "hegemonic status and exceptional and indispensable since 1945 (Reich & Lebow, 2017). However, realists also warned that unipolarity is a sustainable and self-defeating model for world order as revisionist powers are emerging, while others have started reactivating imperial traditions (Alonso-Tranbaco, 2025). Second, imperialism in Conflict theory views that the stronger states tend to exploit the weaker states for their economic and political gains. The exploitation of weaker states by more powerful ones, often through economic means (e.g., neocolonialism) or military intervention. Not to mention historical examples

include European colonialism and more recent interventions in the Middle East. Analysts argued that the 21st century has started to witness the returns of major power competitions; “propagation of interstate conflict, high-tech arms race, violations of territorial borders, proxy confrontations, unconventional security threats, among the issues the major powers are engaging with (Alonso-Tranbaco, 2025).

- **Economic Interests:** States often engage in foreign policy actions to secure access to critical resources such as oil, minerals, and even water. The competition for these resources can lead the direct and most possible way to conflict, as seen in the Gulf Wars (Ministry of Foreign Affairs "Japan", 1991).
- **Power Struggle in Global Politics:** drawing from world-systems theory by Immanuel Wallerstein, the better-off states tend to exploit or impose their political and economic will on the peripheral states for their political gains (Chirot & Hall, 1982). In this connection, the conflict theory highlights the division between core (developed) and periphery (developing) nations (Christtofis, 2019). Core nations exploit peripheral nations for cheap labor and resources, reinforcing global inequality (Wallerstein, 2004).
- **Global Elite vs. Marginalized Populations:** Conflict theory also examines how global elites (e.g., political leaders, corporate executives) shape foreign policy to maintain their power, often at the expense of marginalized populations both domestically and internationally.

- **Ideological Conflict:** The ideological struggle between capitalism (led by the U.S.) and communism (led by the Soviet Union) is a classic example of conflict theory in foreign policy. Both superpowers sought to expand their influence, often through proxy wars in regions like Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America as they divided and ruled. The world system today is the result of the conflicts and geopolitical competitions among superpowers (Amsler Montaudon, 2014).
- **Resistance and Counter-Hegemony:** Conflict may prevail to resist or counter the hegemony of the stronger powers. For the conflict theory, scholars see the weaker states and non-state actors resisting the dominant powers (Volgy, Kanthak, Frazier, & Ingersoll, 2006). Effective strategies that the weaker states have formed to resist and counter hegemony in many ways, including anti-colonial movements, the Non-Aligned Movement during the Cold War (Amaro dias, 216),

Although being criticized in its overlooking cooperation and mutual interests in international relations, such as alliances, trade agreements, and international institutions and ignore that the state actors, potentially underestimating the role of non-state actors like NGOs, multinational corporations, and transnational movements, conflict theory delivers us a critical lens for analyzing foreign policy, emphasizing power struggles, economic exploitation, and ideological conflicts.

Diagram II.7. Areas of Conflict in Foreign Policy



Bureaucratic Politics Model in Foreign Policy

Invented by the French economist Jacques Claude Marie Vincent de Gournay in the 18th century, German sociologist Max Weber elaborated and broadened its definition to take in any system of administration managed by trained and skilled professionals (Beetham, 1996).

These trained and skilled professionals play significant roles in formulating the foreign policy. Thus, the model pointed out that this is the role of bureaucratic organizations and their internal dynamics in shaping and guiding foreign policy. This model further points out that the foreign policy of each state is the result of rigorous bargaining and fierce

competition among different government agencies, such as politicians, political parties, and legislative bodies. (Enorcross, 2019).

Thus, the bureaucratic politics model embraces the perspective that foreign policy decisions are the product of political results or bargaining between individual leaders and several independent entities (Halperin & Allison, 1972). Durbin (2018) argued that the concerned actors “come to the game with varying preferences, abilities, and positions of power”. The actors adopt the strategies and policy goals based on different philosophies of what outcomes will best serve their national interests. It, Durben further argued, is the bargaining through a pluralist process of give-and-take reflecting the dominant rules of the game, power relations among actors. Therefore, I think one can categorize the process and its features as follows:

- Decisions are influenced by organizational interests and routines.
- Competing agendas and power struggles within bureaucracies shape outcomes.

Marxian Approach in Foreign Policy

The Marxist approach provides a complete explanation of international politics and foreign policy. The popularity of the Marxian approach gained momentum after 1917, when the socialist revolution came to Russia and the class struggle began. The Marxian approach to foreign policy is rooted in Marxist theory, which emphasizes the role of economic structures, class struggle, and imperialism in shaping international relations. (Ghai, 2009). This approach critiques traditional realist and liberal perspectives, arguing that they often ignore the underlying economic and class-based dynamics that drive

state behavior. (Teschke & Wyn-Jones, 2017). The Marxian view of foreign policy is identical to its views of international politics. The Marxian approach embraces the following features:

- **Material conditions as the determinants:** Marxian theory speculates that the economic base of society (four modes of production: land, labour, capital, and organization) determines its political and ideological superstructure, including foreign policy (DeHaven, 1991). Foreign policy is seen as a tool used by the dominant ruling states (the bourgeoisie) to protect and advance their economic interests, such as securing access to resources, markets, and cheap labor.

Marxists advocate the view that political relations, including domestic and international, are determined by material conditions or economic relations. The politics and foreign policy are a process of material production forces and economic powers (Chatterjee, 2020).

- **Class struggle between the rich and poor countries:** the struggle between the two countries is historically verified and proven. The nations are divided into the haves and the have-nots' nations where they are competing among themselves. Marxist scholars viewed that the haves' states are the dominant states controlling the economic powers and modes of production, therefore, their foreign policy is more effective and more powerful in terms of means to achieve their national interests. The have-nots' nations are the dominated, where they are forced to surrender their national interests

(Turner, 2013). In this connection, the powerful monopolize foreign policy using economic powers such as sanctions and international organizations. They are in a better position to negotiate for their interest under their protectionist policy.

- **Imperialistic Exploitation in International Relations:** The imperial-bourgeois state in Marxist theory is engaged in struggles and competition with one another, yet they manage to unite in maintaining and extending control over the poor and developing countries through means of economic assistance, military force, and other forms of soft power (Ghai, 2009). They appear to uphold and promote fair competition, respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and balance of power, but these are the political strategies to safeguard their interests (Teschke & Wyn-Jones, 2017).

Organizational Process Model in Foreign Policy

The organizational process model emphasizes how standard operating procedures (SOPs), organizational routines, and bureaucratic procedures inspire and guide foreign policy decision-making. In other words, Jones (2017) elaborates that the “bureaucratic politics model embraces the perspective that foreign policy decisions are the product of political results or bargaining between individual leaders in government positions”.

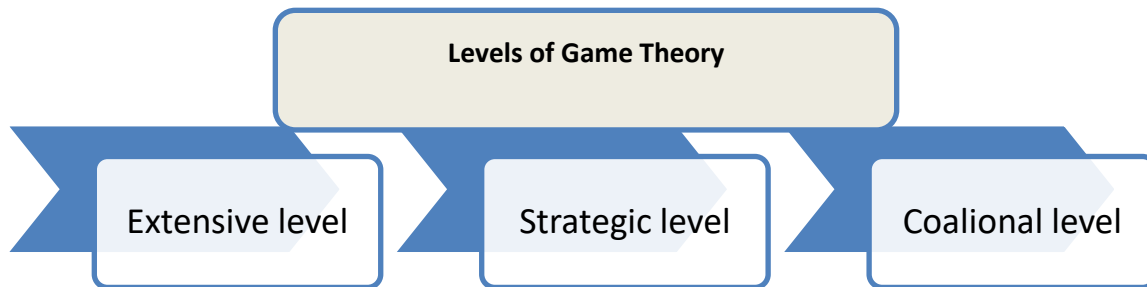
This model suggests that decisions are often made based on pre-established protocols rather than ad hoc analysis, which involves two significant steps. First, it focuses on the role of institutions and their processes, and the decisions are often slow-but-steady and

based on past practices, current political situation, and future prediction. Jones (2017) called this process the behavior of multiple bureaucracies, which hold different responsibilities and interests and strictly follow the standard operating procedures.

Game Theory

In game theory, the interaction in international politics is a continuous game of competing for national interests. The game theory takes three levels: extensive stage, strategic stage, and coalitional stage (Guner, 2012). According to the Game Theoretical analysis in an extensive model, the states are the players in foreign policy, where the players will compete for the desired outcomes using available actions, “policy options and opportunities” available to them (Guner, 2012). Second, the strategic stage where the players “state” strategies and preferences to achieve outcomes. The strategies of the states are influenced by a variety of factors. In this connection, the players' states must depend on the leaders and other players to wisely choose their strategies. Rationalism, observance of moral neutrality, tangible and intangible resources, and acceptance of interest clash, etc., must be taken into consideration during the formulation of foreign policy (Smith, 2011). The third stage is the coalitional stage, where the coalition and the values of the coalition come to the players as “a strategy of the states to protect, achieve and promote the national interest” (Guner, 2012). Treaty, cooperation, and community of one state to another or more states to others are the strategies of the coalition model in game theory (Smith, 2011). The coalition stands as a mutual assistance to one another during times of need and difficulty.

Diagram II.8. Levels of Game Theory



To have a deeper understanding of how game theory works, the five factors in game theory should be discussed as follows (Ghai, 2009):

- a. **Conflict:** International politics is a game, and foreign policy is the strategy. Relationship conflicts with one another. Each state wants to defeat another, making international politics a game between states.
- b. **Rules of the game:** Like every game, the opponents in internal relations observe certain rules or norms that condition their foreign policy behavior. In this context, states must observe every rule and every move of their opponents through various means such as media coverage, espionage, and diplomatic relations (Wendt, 2003). Ghai (2009) argued that the rules of the game are the equation between the states- the losses of one state are the gains of the other states.
- c. **Rational behavior:** the players (states) are guided by rational behaviors in the game, what they think are the best strategic cards to draw, and thus

choose the best course of action that will bring them maximum gains from the games.

- d. **Strategy:** Strategy is the most important feature in game theory. The skillful strategies in both formulating and executing the players' states can yield the most possible result (Guner, 2012). When one talks about the skillful players, the experience, talent, and knowledge of the leaders and diplomats in the fields should come to their mind. Values, talents, experiences, and personality traits are always valued when it comes to foreign policy making and executing (Maoz & Shayer, 1987).
- e. **Payoff:** payoff is the gain and loss in the outcome of the action. In international politics, the state engages in choosing the best alternative to achieve its favorable outcome. Each state tends to design its foreign policy to achieve the best payoff (Wendt, 2003)

Diagram II.9. Summary of Game Theory



In the conclusion of the theoretical part, one can observe that each model offers an exclusive lens for analyzing foreign policy, and no single model can fully explain the complexity of international relations. Scholars and policymakers often combine multiple models to gain a more comprehensive understanding of foreign policy behavior. The choice of model depends on the specific context in the setting, the actors to formulate and execute, and the nature of the issues being analyzed.

CHAPTER III

Literature on the Instruments of Foreign Policy

In this Chapter, I reviewed the previous studies to explore how each instrument was played in other countries. This chapter served as a guiding data for my discussion chapter.

Foreign aid as an instrument of foreign policy

Since the end of World War II in 1945, political blocs have utilized foreign aid as a tool in their foreign policy, employing diplomatic strategies available to them. This strategy has a decades-long history of shaping mutual relations between states and influencing the balance of international relations. (Sayamov, 2024). However, the history of foreign aid did not begin with the end of WWII, it started with the origins of statehood, where the bigger states used gifts and assistance to influence the smaller states' behaviors and to secure their interests.

Foreign Aid was first used in the 18th century when Prussia funded some of its allies. European powers during the 19th and 20th centuries provided large amounts of money to their colonies, typically to build and improve new and old infrastructure to increase the colony's economic output (Williams, 2025). The term was used extensively by scholars and politicians for centuries. However, at the end of the Cold War, Foreign Aid comfortably adjusted its name to Official Development Assistance (ODA) to fit the 21st century political trends and dynamism, as countries tried to mark the end of politically attached aid era in building alliance (though it is argued its latent functions remain little

changed). Foreign aid is the means, William (2025) argued, to promote development and combat poverty through international organizations and non-governmental organizations. Many have donated to the organizations under the umbrella of the UN, such as UNICEF, IMF, WB, and UNESCO etc.

Reasons for the Increased Roles of Foreign Aid

World War II left behind the historical emergence of movements such as the independence movement, economic movement, and civil rights movement. These movements needed funds to survive, strategies to guide, and coalitions to support (Williams, 2025). Urgent funds have intensified the effective roles of foreign aid and opened wider doors for, especially superpowers, to rethink the significance of foreign aid in the context of the Cold War ideology. The following are some of the outstanding causes contributing to the rise and roles of Foreign Aid:

- a) **Shortage Created by the Two World Wars:** Both wars inflicted significant economic losses on all states, especially those that directly engaged in the wars. The European Recovery Plan (ERP) known as the Marshall Plan, was created in 1948 to provide U.S assistance to Europe. The program was to prevent further economic deterioration of postwar Europe, the expansion of communism, and the stagnation of world trade (Tarnoff, 2018). The ERP accomplished its ultimate goals. As the studies found higher European agricultural and industrial production, improvement of balance of trade, and a related “dollar gap,” significant steps toward trade liberalization and economic integration (Bachtler, Mendez, & Wishlade, 2020). By the mid-1950s, the

Soviet Union started providing foreign aid to promote its ideas and interests in international relations. The developments in foreign aid gave birth to the era of using foreign aid as an instrument of foreign policy (Ghai,2009). Also, there are recent changes in international systems; the collapse of the USSR and the rise of development models across the globe, foreign aid in international relations operates in wider perspectives.

b) **Emergence of Cold War and alliances:** Foreign aid became the most effective instrument in promoting political ideology, making alliances with other countries. The Marshall Plan by the United States was the means to protect democracy and counter the communists' expansion in Europe. Tarnoff (2018) argued that the establishment of ERP was the result of the U. S's main concerns about the growing threats posed by communism, even at its infancy stage. The two superpowers, namely the U.S and the USSR, used foreign aid to build strong allies in their respective political blocs (Crowley, 2017). Scholars observe that during the Cold War, the U.S used foreign aid to impress other states of the great benefits of the liberal democratic system, while the USSR demonstrated the benefits of a socialist system.

c) **Emergence of New States:** During the 20th century, the results of WWII gave birth to nationalism and movements for national independence. Thus, the emergence of a large number of independent but economically backward states in world politics contributes to the rise and role of foreign aid (Sayamov, 2024). As the UN targets spending 0.7% of GNI of each country on ODA, not many countries have achieved (OECD, 2024). The ODA given by stronger

economic states has contributed to maintaining social and economic stability, infrastructure development, health care, and peace restoration (Crowley, 2017). The ODA remarkably expanded its contributing roles in social and economic development projects and has become a new aspiration for collective socio-economic development and a higher standard of living.

- d) **Increased global interdependence:** The current global economic system is increasingly interdependent. Some scholars argued that the current global economic structure forces weaker countries to rely on stronger ones. Where the stronger ones exercise their influence and power to control the weaker countries' economic and political behavior (Ghai, 2009). Those countries, both rich and poor, are reliant on each other's assistance, either labor force, material resources, and other assistance.

However, studies have highlighted that foreign aid is the extension of colonial trade partners, a strategy to shape the economy and politics of the recipient country, and a tool to pressure recipients into espousing the political or economic policies preferred by the donor countries (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2024).

Kinds of Foreign Aid

Foreign aid given to recipient countries comes in many forms: humanitarian aid, military aid, development aid, loans, concessions, or in either in-kind or cash. Most foreign aid in modern times is meant for specific projects. For instance, on 28 February 2025, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the Embassy of Japan to Cambodia signed the grant agreement involving a \$2.9 million grant to Cambodia

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, 2025). This funding from Japan has indicated that it is designated for strengthening the training and research capacity of the Techo Sen Institute of Public Works and Transport (TSI) (Ben, 2025). In such an indication, the donor countries try to make sure the fund goes to the right project, while some scholars argue that it is a large set of common motives of the donor countries (Dreher, Lang, & Reinsberg, 2024).

Recent international practices, foreign aid can be bilateral aid and multilateral. There are some unique features in them. In bilateral aid, the negotiation on the terms, on the projects, and the time of the aid is directly involved among the recipient state and the donor state (Ghai, 2009). Multilateral aid is negotiated and regulated through international groups such as the IMF, the EU, OPEC, and ASEAN, and their motives are less political and foreign policy goals, rather than concentrating on humanitarian and development projects (Dreher, Lang, & Reinsberg, 2024). The latter is usually criticized by the recipient countries over the internal affairs inferences of the outsiders. The following are the six categories of foreign aid:

1. **Humanitarian aid:** humanitarian aid is allocated for humanitarian works during the time of crisis, such as natural calamities, such as floods, drought, earthquakes, or most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic (Marchillo-Degado, Guerra de Castilo, & Alvarez-Garcia, 2025). The Red Cross has been an outstanding organization in overseeing and allocating the humanitarian aid (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2008).

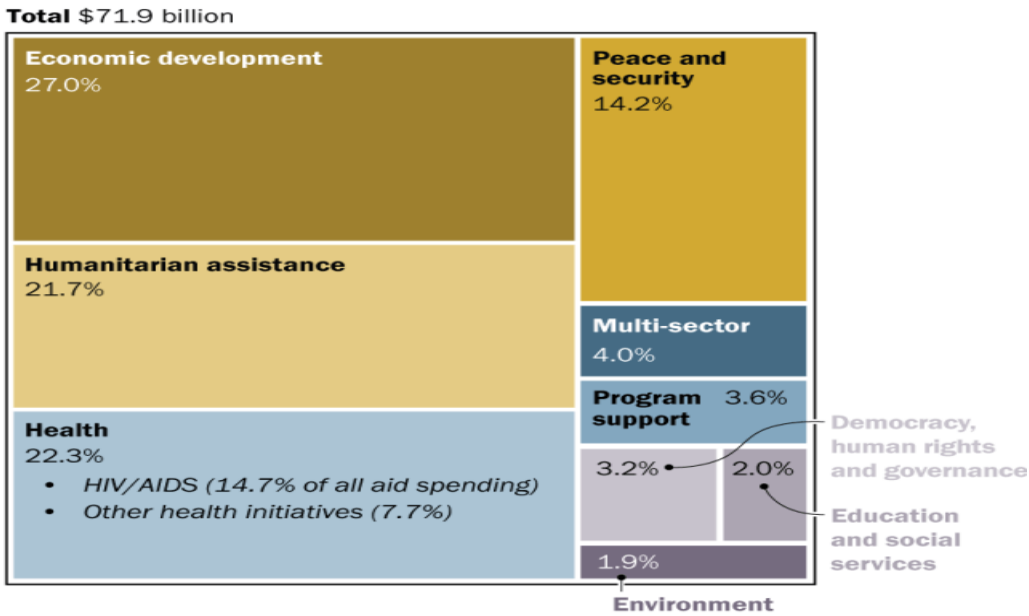
Countries around the world, both rich and poor, have donated to their friendly nations during times of crisis. The amount and equipment vary different on the times and the situations. The developing countries are observed to donate based on the circumstances, while the developed countries tend to set their humanitarian aid routine. For instance, during the fight against COVID-19, Cambodia donated cash and medical supplies to Myanmar (Sar, 2021). Cambodia also donated medical supplies to Nepal, including two million face masks, 100,000 fabric face masks, 20,000 N-95 masks, 20,000 goggles, 20,000 sets of personal protective equipment, 500 hand-held temperature scanners, and 20 sets of ventilator machines for Intensive Care Units, among others (Xinhua, 2021). After the earthquake hit Myanmar on 18 March 2025, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Cambodia promised to provide \$ 100,000 in initial emergency assistance to Myanmar and considered appropriate medical supplies (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, 2025). Although the assistance is relatively small but it is compatible with the donor's capacity, and the spirit of ASEAN working together to assist friends in need.

America stands as the number one country in giving humanitarian aid than any country, accounting for 40% of all aid tracked by the UN in 2024 (Desilver, 2025). This amount is allocated to 217% to humanitarian assistance. Pew Research Center reported that America donated \$71.9 billion in aid to other countries which 270% of foreign aid went to economic development, 21.7% to humanitarian assistance, 22.3% to healthcare projects, 14.2% to peace and security, 4.0% to multi-sector, 3.6% to program support, 3.2% to democracy, human rights and governance, 2.0% to education and social services and 1.9%

to environment (Desilver, 2025). The summary of the U.S. foreign policy can be shown in the following graph by Pew Research Center:

Table II.3. What U.S. Foreign aid money is used for

Share of U.S. foreign aid disbursed in fiscal 2023 for each category



Source: ForeignAssistance.gov (accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

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2. **Subsistence aid:** Subsistence aid is the fund or assistance given by rich or developed states to poor and vulnerable states to meet basic needs. Ghai (2009) argued that subsistence aid is significant for the state per se as it helps maintain the breakdown of the state system caused by poverty. Furthermore, subsistence aid helps build the social, economic, and political foundations of those nations. However, Ghai (2009) contended that subsistence aid appears to be humanitarian aid, but it is politically motivated.
3. **Military aid:** military aid is deployed more often since the Cold War, and after the end of the Cold War, for security, peace, and social stability are most

important for each country, their friendly or close allies tend to assist one another. This military aid is the product of political trust and political favor. The poor and developing countries receive military aid more than the developed countries. However, the military assistance could not have a political motive if the military aid is facilitated by the U.N., the world body to protect peace and international order (Ghai, 2009). Cambodia used to be a military aid under the U.N. umbrella during the peace negotiation process and the first election in 1993 (Findlay, 1995). There are also cases the military aid is given to respond to the humanitarian crisis, such as earthquakes, natural calamities, and disasters, to rescue and save civilian life (Bangkok Post, 2025).

Major and superpowers are most of the time observed to use military aid openly than smaller states. Especially America is openly using military aid, just like in the case of the Ukraine-Russia conflict, where America openly gives military aid in kind and cash (State Department, 2025). America also gives away military aid to its allies to counter regional hegemonism, which America feels threatens to strengthen their defense strategy through bilateral and multilateral pacts, in the case of \$ 500 million military aid to the Philippines (Royandoyan, 2025). It should be highlighted that military aid does not include only military assistance in kind and cash, but also includes the agreement to enforce the sales of military goods at lower prices or for the long-term purchase of any military goods.

4. **Economic aid:** Economic aid is one of the most effective tools to accelerate the social and economic development in developing countries. It comes in the form of grants or soft loans, which are seen in the field of health care,

sanitation, education, and infrastructure (OECD, 2023). Studies have pointed out the scientific evidence that economic aid has a unique and positive impact on the economic growth of developing countries and a great impact on economic stability. Empirical evidence pointed out that “economic aid has a U-shaped relationship with economic growth, has a positive moderating role” (Cao & Du, 2024). Scholars found out that economic aid has a strong relationship with economic freedom and growth (Vásquez, 2022).

Economic aid comes in three forms: aid or grants, loans, and technology aid. Aid or grant (economic aid) is the transfer of non-returnable capital from donor countries to recipients. This kind of aid or grant does not have strings attached conditions and can be used at the donor’s wish (Ghai, 2009). Loans, also known as foreign debt or external debt, are categorized in the form of specific motive, string-attached conditions, and could be no interest, low interest, short-term interest, or long-term interest. Lastly, technological aid is also a part of economic aid when developed countries provide technical assistance, such as in the scientific and industrial spheres. In many cases, developed countries send their experts, such as economists, doctors, military engineers, and academicians, to carry out feasibility studies on specific projects.

Evaluation of the Roles of Foreign Aid

- Means of domination of the rich over the poor:** as stated earlier, foreign aid is subjected to criticism over the way donor countries exert their economic power and political influence over recipient countries and show less interest in the recipient countries' interests. The recipient countries become the source of soft power of the donor countries to win their political favor and support in international politics. (Blair, Marty, & Roessler, 2022). Ghai (2009) viewed foreign aid as a tool to control the economies and policies of the recipient nations, a tool to extract raw material to feed their industrial market, and to ensure the continuation of endless dependence on the donors. Foreign aid is always in the strategic interests of the donor countries, whether the aid is string-attached or conditioned, the latent motives are always involved (Worden, 2025). This implies that foreign aid is an economic instrument with political goals; the goal is to perpetuate international relations and the international economy.
- Practical effect of foreign aid:** Foreign aid after the end of the Cold War became the instrument of neocolonialism. Foreign aid has failed in its functions to accelerate the economic development of underdeveloped countries, widen the development gap between the rich and the poor countries, and perpetuate developing countries' dependency upon the rich countries. Empirical results from previous studies pointed out that the higher aid levels bring more harm to the recipient countries' development strategies and governing systems. Knack (2022) indicated in his study that too much dependency on foreign aid decomposes the quality of government, weakening accountability, plummeting "government incentives to

collect taxes, and corruption”. Likewise, other scholars similarly stressed the failure of the objectives of foreign aid as it fulfills the political objectives rather than humanitarian ones (Kamguia, Tadadjeu, & Miamo, 2022).

- **The Political use of foreign aid:** The foreign aid motive was to perpetuate the economic growth of the developing countries, however, foreign aid was used to influence the domestic and international policies of the recipients tied with conditions. There is almost no unconditional foreign aid given (Ghai, 2009), where other scholars argued that such a type of aid may foster heterogeneity and reduce aid effectiveness (Wang, 2023). This shortcoming of the foreign aid appealed for non-interference and attention to aid rather than political conditions to enhance their security and to secure their military and political allies (Hodzi, Hartwell, & Jager, 2012). (Kim, Park, Rhee, & Yang, 2025) documented that “preferences of citizens in aid-receiving countries are shaped as strongly by the characteristics of the donors as by the specifics of the aid projects themselves”. This implies not only the political usage but also the influence inflicted by the donor countries.

To conclude, foreign aid is, although being criticized for domestic interferences, still the most effective way to assist developing countries in economic, social, and political development and change. To amplify the effectiveness of foreign aid, both donor and recipient countries should take the good governance of aid, transparency, and timely assessments of the projects, where the political motives of the foreign aid shall be reduced to a minimum.

Economic Instrument of Foreign Policy

An Economic instrument is one of the prominent instruments employed in foreign policy and diplomacy. The economic instrument becomes important because all nations use these economic means/strategies to promote their economic policies, applicable both in times of peace and war, to strengthen their respective positions, and to win political favor in the future.

The countries like Russia, America, and China have employed this instrument to gather influence, exert dominant strategies, and gain political favor. The superpowers, such as Russia and the U.S.A., used such economic instruments in their foreign policy than any other countries. The economic instruments in foreign policy include economic coercion, economic sanctions, economic aid, and free trade (Scheiber, 197). Such economic and trade instruments have been the strategies used in foreign policy since the 19th century , as sanctions to gain political and strategic goals. These strategies are to bring “an absolute isolation...that brings a nation to its senses just as suffocation removes from the individual all inclinations to fight” (Mulder, 2022, p. 1).

The following are the features of the main Economic Instrument of Foreign Policy:

- **Trade Policies:** Cooper (1973), in his paper on Trade Policy as Foreign Policy, categorized the trade policies into 2. First, the height of foreign policy embraces the trade policy that deals with the matters of national security and the survival of their economy. Second, low foreign policy concerns a larger portion of subordinate issues revolving around relations among other

countries. Among the two, low foreign policy requires more resources but gives less high-level attention. The high-foreign policy requires high-level attention, and complications may arise from conflict over such trade policy (Cooper, Trade Policy Is Foreign Policy, 1973). Regarding trade policies, a part of foreign policy, countries have adopted this policy to pursue what new term called economic diplomacy. Cambodia has several government bodies such as the Ministry of Commerce, the Council for the Development of Cambodia, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, and even the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, where these four government bodies are responsible for adopting trade policy and attracting foreign investors (Council for the Development of Cambodia, 2025).

- **The tariff:** A customs tariff is the duty tax imposed on imported or exported goods. Sometimes a tariff is imposed to protect the infant industrial sector or to appeal for fair trade deals (Ghai, 2009). Pepelasis, Smith, Mclure, & Pava (2025) argued that Tariffs are to raise revenue, to protect domestic industries by exercising a strong protective influence. Ghai (2009) listed four important objectives of tariffs:

-  Tariffs are used to strengthen the economy by discouraging the imports of luxury goods or encouraging only necessary civilian goods.

-  Tariffs are used to advance military preparedness by adding to the profit margin on war.

-  Tariffs are used to restrict imports, just to conserve foreign exchange or reduce a balance of payment deficit.

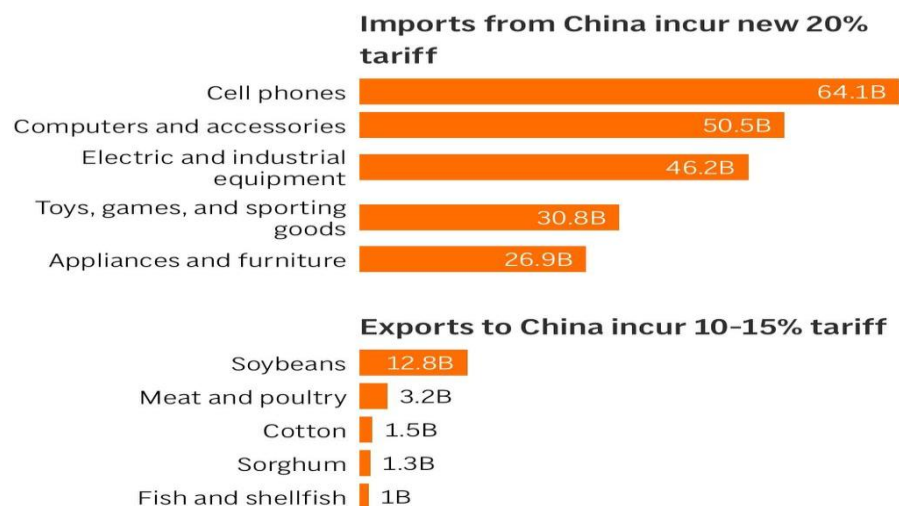
🚩 Tariffs are used as economic weapons of foreign policy and retaliation.

The harsh tariffs are normally retaliated against by other countries. Trump's current tariffs on China, Canada, and other countries have been retaliated by those countries. When Trump imposed 25% taxes on Mexican and Canadian imports and 20% on Chinese imports, China retaliated with up to 15% on American exports (Boak, Wiseman, & Gillies, 2025).

Table III.4. The U.S.-China trade affected by Tariffs

Top US-China goods affected by tariffs

Items by total 2024 value



Source: Census Bureau

AP

Source: Boak, Wiseman, & Gillies (2025)

- a. International commodity agreements:** This trade agreement between the governments of both countries or producers and consumers regulates international trade for a commodity. This agreement has been implemented since the mid-20th century. The 1949 International Wheat Agreement (IWA) was the first ever

agreement established under this kind of feature in an economic instrument (Gilbert, 2022).

By signing international community agreements, both can maintain a regulated production and distribution and fixed profit targets. It is worth noting that such a strategy does not work alone; this prevailing global trading system promotes a competitive market and is underpinned by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) (Rooper, 2024). Ghai (2009) advocates that the inter-governmental commodity agreements are a multilateral understanding securing a fair share of the world market and profits.

b. Economic Sanctions: practices of instrumentalizing the economic sanctions are seen in historical evidence, such as the economic sanctions by Athens in 432 BCE against the state of Megara before the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War. The economic sanctions of the time were to punish the Megarians who allegedly trespassed Athenian Sacred Land. Athens imposed the sanctions, blocking Megarians from conducting any business and trade within the Athenian Empire. The results devastated the economy of Megara and its allies, including Sparta (Metych, 2023). Such economic sanctions have been carried out many times in human history, but most effectively only those carried out by the stronger economic and military countries, with or without allies, against the smaller and weaker ones. In modern times, economic sanctions can be carried out alone against one or more countries or in conjunction with their allies and international organizations such as NATO, UN, EU, ASEAN, etc. To Koempfer & Lowenderg (2007), economic sanction is an alternative to military conflict. They argued that financial sanctions are theoretically

working by imposing some restrictions on the target country, and particularly on its ruling regime. This sanction is to alter its policies to comply with the sender's demands and thereby evade further and harsher sanctions and damage.

It is reported that the 21st century is the century of economic sanctions, where major powers have spent the most economic sanctions in human history on countries such as North Korea, Iran, and especially on Russia. It is found that the Russia-Ukraine war has led to approximately 13,000 sanctions, including restrictions on Russia imposed by the United States and the EU (Metych, 2023).

Economic sanctions, however, do not refer solely to the state's economic transactions; they can also impose economic restrictions, asset freezes, and travel embargos on the state, companies, or individuals. In conclusion, economic sanctions have negative impacts and bitter consequences for civilians and allies, rather than those in power and the wealthy. In many cases, targeted countries may respond with counter-sanctions. But, economic instruments are often more effective when combined with diplomatic or military strategies, offering states flexible ways to exert influence without direct conflict.

War as an Instrument of National Policy

War is one of the important instruments in foreign policy, in which states deploy to secure national interests and accomplish their political objectives. Ghai (2009) put down 7 features of war to broaden his readers' understanding:

- War is engaged in hostile relations between two or more states.
- War parties are opposed to the interests and the policy of others. This means they are enemies to each other.
- The goals of the war are to secure the national interests.
- War is the use of armed force.
- The war can be limited or total, or even general war.

By understanding what the author put forward, one can sum up the war as a hostile conflict involving the deployment of force to secure national interests and political goals. However, war has evolved its goals from the 17th century, where the war was fought for sovereignty and statehood rather than ultimate economic and national interests. This pursuance has also become the instrument of national policy (Frankel, 2025). The evolution of the war leads to broadening the war nature and the impacts of war are beyond simple calculation.

One of the oldest analyses of the war as an instrument of national policy is as early as found in 1992, by Shotwell. Shotwell analyzes the phrase “war as an instrument of national policy,” emphasizing that the treaty doesn't renounce all war, but specifically wars initiated for national policy goals, excluding self-defense. He stresses that every word in the phrase carries weight, and the idea marks a historic

shift in international law and diplomacy. He discusses three main reservations: (1) the right to self-defense, (2) protection of vital interests (like Britain's strategic regions), and (3) obligations under the League of Nations. However, the Pact is not a final legal document but a starting point for a dynamic process of peacebuilding, calling it potentially one of the greatest reforms in human history (Shotwell, 1929).

Causes of War

War has multiple interacting causes—no single fix exists to explain the causes of war. War is not the last resort in foreign policy and is not often seen being carried out easily due to its high cost and higher rate of damage to both sides physically and financially. The most urgent need is to establish a functional world order that replaces war as a means of resolving disputes. Though the total abolition of war may seem unlikely, the evolution of institutions and global cooperation could make it obsolete over time (Keeney, 1986). There are several outstanding causes of war. However, these causes are often indicated as the strategies to safeguard the national interests if the war is transnational. These causes can be discussed as follows:

- **Psychological causes of war:** Steve Taylor put forward two important causes of war. First, he agreed with William James, the first psychologist to study war, who explored its psychological and social appeal in his 1910 essay *The Moral Equivalent of War*. He argued that war is so persistent because it provides positive effects: socially, it unites people with a shared purpose and fosters discipline and cooperation; individually, it gives life meaning, excitement, and a sense of purpose. War, James believed, brings out noble

human traits—such as courage and self-sacrifice—that often remain dormant in peacetime. Taylor added that there are some of the variant of causes such as “wars to annex new territory, to colonize new lands, to take control of valuable minerals or oil, to help build an empire to increase prestige and wealth, or to avenge a previous humiliation, which diminished a group’s power, prestige, and wealth”. The present conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East can be partly interpreted in these terms (Taylor, 2014). Ghai (2009) pinpointed the right points that war is the product of humans’ fear and insecurity, as man is born a wild animal to dominate and to intermediate others for their interests. Thus, war and violence are inevitable.

- **Economic causes of war:** War is often a result of contradictions in political and economic interests. It challenges traditional views that war is an inevitable part of human nature, arguing instead that it is a social construct that can be addressed and prevented. The main economic causes are the economic inequality, where the global disparities in wealth and resources fuel tensions, especially in regions where population growth and poverty coincide. Resource competition occurred due to countries initiating the fight to gain access to valuable natural resources (such as oil, diamonds, and uranium), which often underlie conflicts, especially in the developing world. Scholars, however, contended that eliminating the causes of war requires continuous international cooperation, legal reform, economic equity, and the cultivation of a global culture of peace (Nikitin, 2000). War should be seen not as an unavoidable aspect of society but as a preventable and outdated institution.

- **Political causes of war:** Ghai (2009) views that the national interests among countries conflict with one another. Each country possesses the fear of insecurity, either in the context of national interest, political stability, sovereignty, or ideologies. Scholars pointed out that “fear is the chief cause of war” and political causes are the major causes among all the causes of wars. There is a complex and evolving relationship between war and politics, emphasizing that war is fundamentally a continuation of political activity by other means, aligning with Clausewitz’s theory (Kompan, 2022). However, research argued that war remains a method of resolving political disputes but should be a last resort. Modern strategies must bridge the gap between political aims and military operations to prevent failures in conflict resolution.
- **Cultural and ideological causes of war:** Cultural and ideological causes of war refer to conflicts motivated not by material interests like territory or resources, but by differences in identity, values, beliefs, or worldviews. Breakdown of these causes: First, **cultural causes of war** are rooted in ethnic, religious, or linguistic differences that can lead to tension or violence. These causes include ethnic nationalism, religious conflict, cultural supremacy, and identity crises. Each is driven by distinct motivations, values regarding human life, and attitudes toward war. Cota (2014) noted that historical and modern examples—from Sparta to World War II and the Cold War—illustrate how cultural norms influence strategic choices, acceptable levels of sacrifice, and the type of warfare employed. Second, **ideological causes of war** arise when competing political or philosophical

ideologies clash. Elements such as revolutionary ideologies often spark civil wars, and wars may be fought for ideological dominance, as seen in the Korean War and the Vietnam War (Ghai, 2009). Differences in belief systems and culture have prompted nations to go to war in pursuit of their respective national interests.

- **International systems:** historians viewed that the nature of the international systems is one of the causes of war, due to the absence or the weak existence of international systems. Jensen (2017) argued that the international system influences the occurrence, intensity, and distribution of warfare on three main factors: first, order – How global or regional political order (e.g., unipolarity, bipolarity, or multipolarity) affects state behavior, alliances, and conflict patterns. Second, geography – The impact of physical distance, borders, terrain, and spatial distribution of power on conflict, including how proximity or remoteness alters war dynamics. Third, networks – How interconnections between states (alliances, trade, communication, etc.) influence the likelihood of war or peace. This includes the role of network centrality and clustering in either deterring or escalating conflict. Furthermore, using the **network theory**, **international relations theory**, and **empirical data**, the same scholar pointed out that systemic features beyond individual state behavior significantly shape the global balance of war (Jensen, 2017).

To conclude the topic on the war as an instrument of foreign policy, one can say that unipolarity, bipolarity, and multipolarity have shaped the nature, scale, and objectives of war. Scholars contended that these factors can reduce large-scale wars due to overwhelming deterrence but may spark asymmetric conflicts.

Culture as an Instrument of Foreign Policy

Cultural instrument or cultural diplomacy formally emerged during the Cold War, gaining recognition in 1959 with a U.S. Department of State definition emphasizing international trust through cultural exchange. Despite early informal cross-cultural interactions, modern cultural diplomacy began as a strategic policy in the 19th century and became more institutionalized in the 20th century, e.g., British Council, Alliance Française (Grincheva, 2024). Late 20th century and early 21st century, there has been an emergence of non-Western cultural models played by countries such as South Korea, Japan, China, India, and other major economic and cultural powers.

Frode Liland (1993) explained well in his study on the functions of culture as a component of foreign policy, with a focus on cultural diplomacy—government-supported cultural activities aimed at influencing foreign audiences. He argued that traditionally marginalized in diplomatic studies, cultural diplomacy is gaining importance due to globalization and the rise of mass communication.

Liland outlined how major powers—especially France, Britain, and later the U.S.—have historically used culture to extend influence, particularly during periods of ideological conflict like the Cold War. The U.S. was initially hesitant but later institutionalized cultural diplomacy to counter fascist and communist propaganda, promoting American values globally.

The study draws heavily on Frank Ninkovich's work, identifying three key tensions:

1. **Public vs. Private Sector:** U.S. cultural efforts were initially driven by private foundations before government involvement expanded.

2. **National vs. International Aims:** While cultural diplomacy was once idealistically internationalist, it became a tool of national interest.

3. **Information vs. Propaganda:** There is a thin line between sharing values and engaging in propaganda, especially when a state dominates global information channels.

Liland suggests that while great powers use culture as a soft power tool, even small countries can wield cultural influence as a foreign policy asset, particularly when their culture has strong international appeal (Liland, 1993). Similarly, Kim (2022) viewed that Korea has succeeded well in playing the cultural instrument to culminate the soft power through what they call Hallayu, “the Korean Wave. For last two decades, South Korea has become a global cultural powerhouse through its “soft power,” driven by the popularity of K-pop, Korean dramas, films, and more. This rise is supported by government policies, rapid digital innovation, and creative content shaped by South Korea’s unique historical and economic development path. However, while soft power enhances the country’s image and economy, it has drawbacks in addressing serious geopolitical challenges, especially regarding North Korea and regional tensions. To strengthen its global influence, South Korea should utilize its soft power to take active leadership roles in global development, emerging tech, and human rights issues (Kim M. , 2022).

Culture as an instrument of foreign policy is used under the name of cultural diplomacy, where countries are trying to insert their values into recipient countries. This cultural diplomacy genuinely serves interests beyond national agendas. Cultural diplomacy is the government-led efforts using culture to promote national interests abroad, often

driven by ideals and practiced by non-state actors, and influence through attraction (culture, values, policies) rather than coercion (Gallortti, 2022). One should be aware that cultural diplomacy, in addition to its roles to both serve national interests and foster global harmony, is a paradox. It's often misunderstood as cultural exports mean the influence, ignoring the complexity of audience reception, efforts often emphasize image projection, not mutual exchange, and are more likely to act as cultural imperialism imposed by developed countries upon the developing or smaller states.

Techno-nationalism as an Instrument of Foreign Policy

Technology has been an enabler of globalization since its early starting point. Each country, in its own best interest, exploits this process by controlling and converging the technological system (TSs). The state takes on its broader roles as a regulator and a stakeholder of the TSs. As such, the strategic policy promotes local innovation and challenges transnational corporations and global production networks (GPNs) (Felker, 2009). Some directly pointed out that techno-nationalism is a manifestation of anti-globalization sentiment, but the globalization process will not be reversible (Lamb, 2019). Most recently, the world has witnessed the rise of protectionism, manifested in tech-nationalism and anti-globalization. Yet, this is simply what many see as politically motivated sanctions on some specific technology companies in the multipolar world. At the same time, there are arguments that techno-nationalism is nationalistic and patriotic, in which policymakers aim at containing the social and cultural identities of home countries.

The 4th industrial revolution rests upon science, technology, and innovation. A country strives to nurture its knowledge and economic system, and data is a powerful asset. Competition in technology is, thus, not only inevitable but most necessary. A country that is most capable of technological innovation and adaptation will gain the most from the 4th industrial revolution (Manning, 2019). The phenomena as such are leading to the technology race and techno-nationalism.

Defining Techno-nationalism

The term Techno-nationalism was found in the 1980s and used in foreign policy

(Renwick, 1995). The term is commonly understood that it was a refusal to export or import the advanced technology, as the term "techno-nationalism" had not been well defined until the 2000s. By the most common, understandable definition of the term, techno-nationalism is contradictory to techno-globalism and can be defined as an act of protecting and promoting local technology and science, especially motivated by the reinforcement of a sense of nationalism.

By the latest, techno-nationalism established a refusal or reluctance on the part of a nation to export or allow other nations to benefit from its advanced technology (Lexico, 2020). However, Capri (2020) has linked the core definition of Techno-nationalism to the political national security. Mercantilist-like behavior links tech-innovation and enterprise directly to the national security, economic prosperity, and social stability of the nation.

By going deeper into the politics, Rajan viewed that techno-nationalism is about the acquisition of national power through data by technology. He also added that techno-nationalism has risen due to the decline of the post-WWII Western-led world order (Rajan, 2018). Techno-nationalism clinches a strong sense of nationalism in technology in which a particular nation intervenes in the technological development process and means and challenges the MNEs' principles to control the technology, in a bid to acquire national power through data and technology.

Additionally, techno-nationalism is the growing protectionist behavior and politically attached policy that does not align with the concept of the Industrial Revolution 4.0. Most recently, technological competition among superpowers and major powers is on the rise and has political implications in nature. China has ordered public institutions

and agencies to stop using foreign-made computers and software, which Washington tries to block the Chinese 5G technology, Japan barred Huawei and Chinese-made drone are the concrete examples of the geopolitical competition in technology (Capri, Techno-Nationalism: What Is It And How Will It Change Global Commerce?, 2019). The refusal of foreign technology allows experts to view that its implications have already presented the rise of techno-nationalism and paved the way for global geopolitical alteration in the future.

Nationalism Vs Patriotism

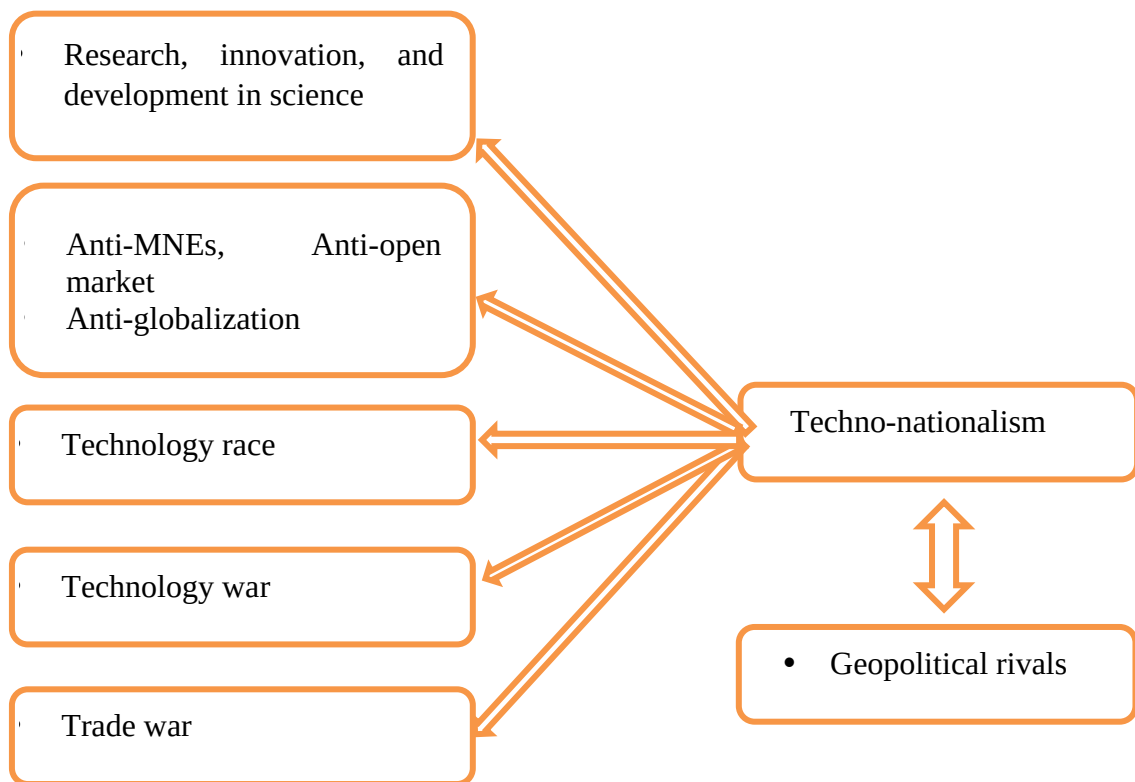
Nationalism places the nation as the central principle of political organization and goals. One also defines that nationalism implies its complete meaning that the nation is the master of its own (Heywood, 2017). The term nationalism is often confused with patriotism. But one should note that when nationalism is a belief that the nation is at the center of the political agenda, patriotism gives the affective basis for that belief and embraces all forms of nationalism (Heywood, 2017, p. 229). Two terms can be distinguished by separate features. Patriotism is to love the nation. The person takes actions to advance their national interests. For nationalism, culture plays a bigger part in defining national identity and growing a strong affection for their nation's superiority (Miller D. , 2006).

Chauvinism

In the contemporary world, patriotism is fueled by the commemoration of the past national glories and military victories. Such nationalism fabricates a sense of chauvinism and xenophobia and powers up imperialism. Even each country has a

unique quality of a superior sense about its nation; Chauvinism embraces extreme behavior in growing and enmeshing militarism and expansionism to underpin the belief in its superiority of the nation (Heywood, Global Politics, 2011). Thus, chauvinism is another bad side of extreme patriotism, where the consequences of such behavior can be used to navigate the national interests.

Diagram III. 11. Techno-nationalism Framework



In short, Techno-nationalism is not new, but it has escalated to a new level of tension and practices by countries. It became the strategy that a country's technology is closely tied to its national security, economic métier, and global power. It contains governments protecting and promoting their tech industries, often through strategies

like subsidies, export controls, and restrictions on foreign tech. These countries link critical technology to national interests/security, encourage domestic innovation, and self-reliance. More often, this strategy invites state intervention and protectionism that lead to global tech competition and geopolitical tension among nations, just like in the case of U.S.-China competition.

CHAPTER IV

Methodology

In this chapter, to guide readers to the sources of the methodology of analysis, first, I framed five objectives of the study and discussed research methodology. I also elaborate on the analysis technique, the details of the case recruitment.

Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the study and the research design. Based on the theoretical frameworks and the literature on the instruments of Foreign Policy, I set four objectives for this study:

1. Identify the five popular instruments of Foreign Policy.
2. Explore in detail the theories of International politics to explain the roots of Foreign Policy directions;
3. Compare top tech countries in how and what strategies they apply to promote Techno-nationalism;
4. Analyse the consequences of emerging techno-nationalism on international politics;
5. Determine whether Techno-nationalism is a new instrument of Foreign Policy.

Research Design

This study is a qualitative research using the Comparative Case Approach to analyze the targeted cases. “This Comparative Case Approach has been used dominantly in

Foreign Policy analysis, especially by comparative politics scholars, to conduct comparative investigations.” (Feng & He, 2023). This approach will help the researcher to answer “ Is Techno-nationalism emerging as an Instrument of Foreign Policy?” He (2012) argued that this comparative case approach will help me, as a researcher, answer the research questions and respond to the study’s objectives.

Context/Settings

According to the 2024 report, most advanced technology countries are categorized regardless of their political regime or economic policy. Choosing the country case in this study is based on this report. The qualifications to be selected are the top 10 tech countries, and also their competition among them. Due to time constraints, there are only two countries chosen for this comparative case approach:

- 1. America:** America was crowned number 1, as the most advanced country in the critical tech field of Artificial Intelligence, Biotechnology, software, etc. Silicon Valley is known as the headquarters of top tech companies such as Google, Apple, Tesla, and Microsoft. Moreover, the world’s best tech education institutions like MIT, Stanford, and Caltech are located in America, which produce cutting-edge research (SG analytics, 2024). Last but not least, America is a fierce competitor of China and an ally of Japan.
- 2. China:** Ultimately, China is one of the world’s most developed countries and also one of the most advanced tech countries. There is no doubt, China is ranked second to America. China invested heavily in quantum computing, AI,

5G, and space technology. The Chinese government is committed to its investment in technology and innovation to ensure that China remains a global powerhouse (Solis, 2024). China also dominates the market with E-commerce companies such as JD.com and Alibaba.

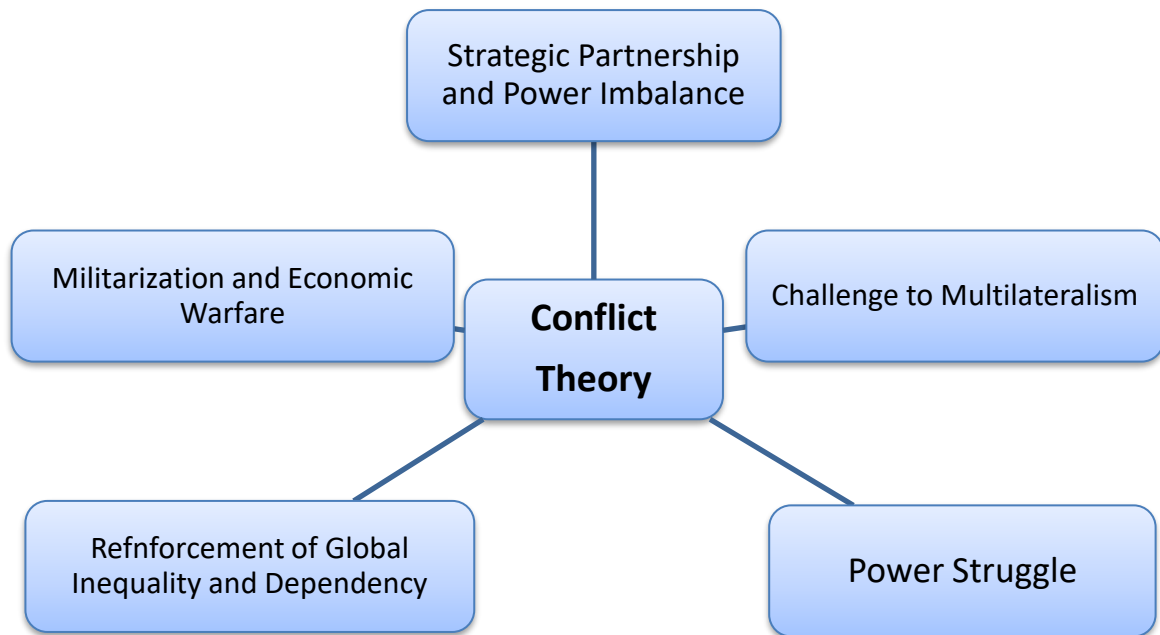
3. Japan: Japan is best known for its innovation and technology in robots and automation. Japan's advancement of AI has an inspiring potential to completely reshape the global landscape in areas such as healthcare, supply chain management, and logistics. Japan also commits to a better future by emphasizing advancement in sustainable technologies, such as electric vehicles and energy solutions.

Sources of Data and Data Analysis Techniques

The data used in this study is secondary available either for a researcher both open access or through purchase. The data was retrieved from books, edited books, research articles, news reports, reports, and opinion pieces. However, only those documents in the fields of International Politics and Foreign Policy are considered and analysed.

To meet the objectives of the study, I used the comparative case approach as a method to analyse and carry out the comparisons. I have used the five criteria set out by the Conflict Theory, derived from theoretical explanations, to answer the last objective of whether Techno-nationalism is emerging as an instrument of Foreign Policy.

Diagram III.12. Conflict Theoretical Perspectives on Techno-nationalism



CHAPTER V

Analysis and Discussion

This chapter is solely devoted to the discussion of Techno-nationalism as an emerging instrument of Foreign Policy among three countries- America, China, and Japan, which three countries are the top tech-countries. I also analyzed how the Conflict Theory perceives the current practices of Techno-nationalism and the political and economic consequences of such behavior, with reference to the second-hand data publicly available.

Techno-Nationalism-Case of America

The US has always been concerned about losing its hegemony in technology and innovation, since the 4th industrial revolution will be in favor of those who control science and technology. The US well understood that South Korea, China, Japan, and Russia could be its strong competitors in technology in the future. Hence, the US has adopted a hedging approach in these countries. The US government tries to promote its techno-nationalism through four major efforts. First, the US promotes public-private partnerships (PPP) by allowing its allies and government-funded initiatives to advance long-term innovation at home and in the EU. Second, the US tries to avoid the path of China's techno-nationalism and tries to turbo-charge the markets and entrepreneurial ecosystem. Third, the US promotes MNCs, markets, and

techno-nationalism by pulling them into the US-China technology war. Fourth, the US has teamed up with its allies, the EU, and other allies (Capri, 2020).

Most Americans are proud of America's identity, politics, military, and political hegemony, and development. the US's Techno-nationalism was born and powered up. The US's Techno-nationalism has turned into a strong chauvinism where most Americans think America is exceptional. In this context, the US's behavior on the international stage is defensive to protect its hegemony. The U.S feels threatened by any rising powers, especially China and Russia. It has been a triangular competition between China, the US, and Russia.

As the arch-rival of the U.S, China's fast-growing technological development after the U.S. poses a threat to the global hegemony that the US has been trying to indigenize since WWII. Citing national security and democratic values is the main source of resistance to China-made technology; the implication of such a policy reaches beyond its objectives (Gertz, 2019). The U.S has also convinced its allies to ban other China-made technologies, including recent 5G (BBC, 2020). Such geopolitical competition impacted those countries' independent decisions, pressured by the US (Helm, 2020). Thus, when countries came together to impose restrictions on one country-made product, it was a politically coordinated reinforcement of the global hegemony and unilateral protectionism rather than a national security concern. India and Australia, along with others, have followed the U. S's path in banning China's apps, citing concerns over national security (Bobb, 2020).

Additionally, the U.S.A. has also viewed that reliance on China should be largely reduced. But the US has attracted foreign direct investment in semiconductor

manufacture when the US-Taiwan deal was announced to build Taiwan's \$12 billion TSMC factory in Arizona (Shepardson & Nellis, 2020). Motivation behind the deal might be the US's attempt to bring TSMC to Arizona is an extra point in the US-Sino over US-Sino trade war. The deal will affect Huawei's product line, as most semiconductor parts of Huawei are supplied by TSMC.

Techno-nationalism-Case of Japan

Historically, techno-nationalism was an outcome of Americans' concerns over Japan's increasing role in scientific development and research that could overtake America in the 1980s. At that time, the U.S saw Japan's swift move in science and technology as a commercial race and should be slowed down before it became a world leader in the field. With its speedy growth in science, Japan was a new-product laboratory of the world (International Herald Tribune, 1990). In this context, America felt threatened by Japan's science development, especially when Japan had already taken a lead in some sectors such as automobiles and semiconductors.

More importantly, the US was more and more disturbed after learning that Japan invested \$750 billion in IR&D, whereas the United States invested only \$500 billion in 1989. One-third of Japan's investment went to new plant and machinery, and another third was in innovation and product development (Renwick, 1995). The clear motivation behind Japan's huge investment was to free itself from external dependency on technology. The behavior was tangible and underpinned the sense of Japan's techno-nationalism.

Having understood Japan's steadily rising leadership in science, the U.S put forward several attractive initiatives, such as bilateral government agreements, corporate collaboration agreements, and involvement in Japanese research institutions by stressing their aim to have a more balanced and reciprocal partnership in science and technology (US Department of State, 1988). These initiatives were successful as the U.S expected. However, many saw these agreements as the key strategies allowing the US to gain access to Japan's technology and production know-how (Renwick, 1995).

As a close ally of the US, Japan viewed Japan-US cooperation in technology, science, and development, bringing Japan one step closer to the U.S economically and politically. On the other hand, the Japan-US cooperation was geographically necessary to curb the rise of the communist bloc during the Cold War era (Schoff, 2020). Techno-nationalism, therefore, does not embrace its original objectives in connection with the promotion of self-innovation, research, and development anymore, but the politically oriented spirits.

Techno-nationalism-Case of China

During the 1990s and 2000s, China was heavily reliant on foreign supply, making China feel inferior to foreign countries in technology. Heavy reliance on foreign supply could jeopardize China's dream of rising as one of the superpowers. Furthermore, China realized that foreign countries had built backdoors in their technology device to access data from devices used in China (Ahmed & Weber, 2018).

Since then, China has set up a series of concrete master plans and laws to revive and promote its technology and science development via funding and partnering with technology enterprises what as pointed out since the 1970s (Suttmeier, 2004). China's dramatic growth in world-leading technology and science makes its competitors worried and uncomfortable (Schoff, 2020). Most recently, as reflected in its industrial policy Made in China 2025, China set clear objectives to become the global semiconductor powerhouse and wean off dependence on foreign countries (Kim & Verwey, 2019). The industrial strategy to techno-nationalism was announced when the U.S, Netherlands, and Japan held 90% of the semiconductor market (Rasser, 2020). It was also seen as a strategic ambition when the US-Sino trade war worsened. In recent decades, China has noticeably developed several applications and programs that successfully represent techno-nationalism, especially when these applications are the platform and infrastructure (PlantinJean-Christophe & SetaGabriele de, 2019). China has platformized Chinese Apps such as WhatsApp, TikTok, and WeChat, which are widely tethered to the spirit of Chinese techno-nationalism. Lately, China has strongly adhered to a sense of nationalism and pride in its technology and science development, especially the current Chinese 5G technology, AI, quantum computing, and genomics, serving China's advantages in economic, political, and military aspects that alarm America and European countries (Arcesti & Rasser, 2020). More importantly, big technology companies and enterprises are operated on behalf of the Government, which makes China easily establish nationalism in its Made in China products. The very attempt made by China was to promote China-made technology by reducing the foreign-made technology and

the usage of US currency. Although China has proved to the world that its rise is peaceful, the path of China's techno-nationalism poses strong challenges to America's hegemony and status quo. China has stood up to bid for respect and world recognition through many ambitious projects, including the Belt and Road Initiative and, most importantly, Made in China 2025. If there is no balance and check on China's dramatic rise in technology and techno-nationalism, China might be unstoppable and realize its 100-year dream by 2049.

As the Internet of Things will dominate the century, China's 5G has more than anything to scare the U.S and its allies. This excludes 43% of global smartphones functional in the world now are made in China: Oppo and Vivo (Counterpoint, 2020).

Responding to China's defensive techno-nationalist behavior, including the ban on Google and Facebook, the U.S feels uneasiness that leads to the issuance of the executive order by the Trump Administration to ban Chinese Apps, TikTok, and WeChat in the US, citing national security concerns. On the one side, it allows us to visualize how techno-chauvinism grows in American politics (Gertz, 2020).

It is observed that China's techno-nationalism works on three levels: policy, funding, and restrictions on foreign technology. China's efforts are defensive. Their behavior is more likely to reinforce the restoration of China's honor, which was humiliated during the 19th and early 20th centuries. China has interacted with others by drawing experiences from the Century of Humiliation "1839-1949" (Kaufman, 2010). China has utilized the event of the Century of Humiliation as a rhetorical tool to shape its nationalism, which translates into national and foreign policy. China has been demonized by the rising techno-imperialism of the U.S., the Chinese government has

ensured that its rise is peaceful and accommodated with others. Thus, the foreign policy of China has married up the peaceful rise and restoration of its honor.

How does Conflict Theory interpret Techno-nationalism?

Conflict theory, rooted in Marxist thought, sees techno-nationalism through the lens of power struggles, inequality, and struggle over resources and dominance. Based on these factors, conflict theorists typically construe techno-nationalism instrument of foreign policy among nations as follows:

1. In connection with the Strategic Partnership and Power Imbalance

The world trade system demands all countries to operate in the trading system with mutual respect, honest cooperation, and fair competition, however, the conflict theory reminds us to think put their interactions into two important questions:

- Who (the rich or the poor) benefits more?
- Who (the rich or the poor) establishes the terms of cooperation?

Being the world's second-largest economy, one of the most geographically advantageous countries, China, is believed to stand in a dominant position (Liu & Liu, 2025). This dominant is strongly backed by newly established initiatives such as the Global Development Initiative, Global Civilization Initiative, Global Security Initiative, Belt and Road Initiative, Cooperation with Shared Future, etc are realizing China's dream and also reproducing nationalist sentiment among Chinese. Lamb (2019) argued that such establishments disguise uneven dependence, particularly on

infrastructure, trade routes, and digital integration in the sense that the recipient countries view China as positioning itself in an area where China has superior capacity and aligns with techno-nationalist behavior.

Techno-nationalism is on the rise, reflecting the power imbalance among the nations when the owner countries of technologies, mainly America and China, have restricted and even demonized each other's technology, steering distrust among their allies. When the Biden administration imposed a ban in 2023 on U.S. venture capital investment in China's key technology sectors, foreign policy watchdogs were very clear that the ban does not link with the national security risk as cited by America, but is more like a mere result of techno-nationalism in America (The Guardian, 2023). The restrictions target military applications/technology with clear attempts to slow down China's expedition for technological supremacy, and the enforcement of export controls on advanced semiconductors earlier in 2023.

2. Techno-Nationalism as a Challenge to Multilateralism

Despite references to rule-based multilateralism, a principle based on cooperation, compromise, and coordination (UN Affairs, 2025), this multilateral platform has allowed countries to have equal opportunities in international affairs, being seriously challenged by tech-nationalism, or in other words, techno-protectionism, by some countries.

Under the WTO's free trade principles, countries, big or small, have enjoyed almost equal shares in the global trade order and redistribution of global wealth, as Marxist theories strongly expected to see. However, the aggressive stance of techno-

nationalism is declared through the lens of national security, and protecting domestic industries has grappled the expectations and induced the violation of the rule-based multilateralism and open trade (Forward Pathway, US College Database, 2024). The techno-nationalist behaviors, especially critical technologies and industries of the major capitalist countries, slow down their rivals' growth, yet bring more harm to developing countries. According to Li, Shapiro, Ufimtseva, & Zhang (2024), the adversary results are not only affecting the target country but also its allies.

Techno-nationalism has become Tech Cold War, sparked by the U.S.–China trade war and driven by competing visions for technological supremacy and national security, especially in sectors like semiconductors, AI, and 5G. This conflict is intensified and expanded, as (Tun , Zander, & Fang, 2023) argued that techno-nationalism has shifted from a U.S.-led unipolar world to a multipolar one with rising powers like China and coalitions such as BRICS challenging the dominance of G7 nations. The U.S ban on TikTok and the DeepSeek of China in America, South Korea, Australia, and Taiwan are good examples of techno-nationalism and techno-protectionism (AL Jazeera, 2025).

However, it is not only in America that witnesses the rising techno-nationalism, but China also has its agenda. China's techno-nationalist agenda remains central, even when dressed in multilateral language. Scholars have suggested that small developing countries like Cambodia and Vietnam should be strategically and carefully navigating techno-nationalism by balancing economic gain with political and technological concessions.

3. Techno-nationalism as a behavior of Power Struggle

Conflict theory argues that technology is not neutral — it is shaped and constructed by and reinforces existing power structures. So, when a state engages in techno-nationalism (prioritizing national control over critical technologies), conflict theorists would see it as a struggle for global dominance between elites or competing nations. Since the foreign policy is already an indication of the exhibition of power struggle among the states, techno-nationalism is not new, but a new element added to intensify the tensions and escalating struggle for digital supremacy.

Akhtar (2025) argued that the U.S.-China tech war indicates a global shift in which the digital infrastructure, AI, and quantum computing have become new frontlines. But techno-nationalism encompasses far beyond geopolitical contentions—it is disturbing the global supply chains at a time when industries like semiconductor manufacturing face rising costs, imposed high tariffs, and logistical challenges. These industries are forced to restructure production or manufacturing hubs. The move of Honda Motor production to the U.S is an example of this competition, where the company that is affected tried to mitigate the impact of the tariff policies (Takamura, Tanaka, & Shimbun, 2025). Trump also announced his attempt to buy the Chinese TikTok social media platform, citing national interests and security concerns is also another example of Techno-nationalism (Duffy, 2025). In this case, Technology companies are no longer seen simply as commercial players but as political instruments of power struggle, while surveillance, cyber coercion, and information warfare become the political instruments of statecraft.

4. Reinforcing the Global Inequality and Dependency

Techno-nationalism can widen the gap between developed and developing nations, or we can say it is a tool to reproduce and maintain the upper status of the developed countries to remain dominant and superior. Devi M, Mammen, & R (2023) pointed out from their case study's results that the Techo-nationalism led to the neo-mercantilist policies whose objectives are to protect the domestic industries, leading to a great reduction of foreign investment. This is now the poor and developing countries remain underdeveloped and technologically backward compared to developed ones, as the technology transfer is blocked. Some scholars argued that this strategy is nothing but making poorer nations dependent, with very limited access to cutting-edge tech, where the Conflict theory views such behavior as technological imperialism.

5. Militarization and Economic Warfare

Techno-nationalism more often ties closely to national security and core economic interests. Thus, semiconductor wars, bans on foreign software, or AI arms races are unavoidable. Conflict theorists view this as part of a broader military-industrial war, where technology is weaponized and used in the geopolitical battlefield (Luo & Assche, 2023). The militarization of Technology and the economic warfare in techno-nationalism have been reproducing and are widening the uncertainty of techno-geography among nations.

To conclude this chapter, Conflict theory regards Techno-nationalism as a manifestation of broader political struggles between powerful groups and nations and the inferior nations with clear objectives to make their inferior competitors remain

dependent and less developed. Techno-nationalism is about who controls invention, who owns technology, who benefits from it, and who is left behind. One most important objectives of the current Techno-nationalism is often the reinforcement of the existing global hierarchies and inequalities.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

In this concluding chapter, I provide a short summary of the analysis from Chapter Six with a short explanation and the Graph indicating how the Conflict Theory embraces the areas concerned in Techno-nationalism. Moreover, I also shared the views on how this study should be expanded through suggestions of studies in future studies in terms of areas of concentration and methodology

Conclusion of the Study

To conclude this study, Techno-nationalism is an emerging instrument in Foreign Policy in the 21st Century indeed. Moreover, the rise of techno-nationalism through the systematic outlines of conflict theory, applying the cases of the United States, Japan, and China to demonstrate how technology has become a central arena for geopolitical rivalry, power consolidation, power struggle, and strategic maneuvering. As pointed out, Techno-nationalism is not a neutral or purely developmental phenomenon; rather, it is deeply entrenched in nationalistic interests, security concerns, and the struggle for global supremacy and regional hegemony.

The United States is notoriously and historically known to use techno-nationalism to reinforce its hegemonic status, leveraging alliances and economic instruments to counter alleged threats from rising powers like China and Russia. Japan's experience demonstrates how Techno-nationalism can evolve from a self-reliant innovation strategy to a politically conditioned configuration with global powers. China's model

reflects a defensive form of techno-nationalism, rooted in historical memory and strategic determination, aiming to reestablish national pride and lessen dependency on foreign technologies.

From a conflict theory perspective, techno-nationalism imitates broader global inequalities and structural imbalances. It contests multilateral norms, reinforces global hierarchies, militarizes technology, and limits technology access for developing nations. Techno-nationalism has become a modern expression of power struggle, manifested through economic sanctions, trade wars, investment restrictions, and digital infrastructure controls.

Ultimately, Techno-nationalism is shaping a new world order where control over technology determines not just economic strength but geopolitical influence. As this digital cold war intensifies, it risks deepening dependency, cumulating global inequality, and hindering collaborative progress—unless carefully circumvented through inclusive, fair, and balanced global governance and rule-based international orders.

Suggestions for Further Studies

1. **Comparative Studies of Techno-nationalism Beyond the U.S., Japan, and China:** Future research could expand the comparative analysis by including other rising or middle powers such as India, South Korea, Germany, or Russia to explore different motives and political strategies based on historical, economic, and political contexts.
2. **Impact of Techno-nationalism on Developing Nations:** A deeper and broader empirical study should be conducted on how Techno-nationalism affects developing countries, especially in Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America.
3. **Techno-nationalism and Global Governance:** Future studies could explore how international institutions (e.g., WTO, UN, ITU) respond to or are challenged by techno-nationalist policies.
4. **Public Opinion and National Identity in Techno-nationalism:** Future empirical research should examine how citizens notice their country's technological rise or dependence could provide insight into how techno-nationalist opinions are formed and sustained.

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