

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Hamma Lakhdar University of El-Oued
Faculty of Arts and Languages
Department of Arts and English Language



**The US-China Relations after the Coronavirus Pandemic: Towards a
New Cold War**

**Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
Master's Degree in Literature and Civilization**

Submitted by:

CHAIA Hatem

GHEDEIR BRAHIM Mohammed

Supervised by:

Mr. SOLTANI Jalal

Board of Examiners:

Mrs. BERRA Yemina

President

University of El-Oued

Mr. SOLTANI Jalal

Supervisor

University of El-Oued

Dr. NESBA Kaouther

Examiner

University of El-Oued

Academic year: 2021/2022

Dedication

First and foremost, we dedicate this work to our beloved parents, who have helped and supported us throughout this long journey.

We also would like to dedicate this work to our friends, family, teachers, and everyone who has believed in us and helped and supported us.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Acknowledgments

Alhamdulillah, all praise to Allah, who gave us the strength and blessings to complete this dissertation. First and foremost, we offer our sincerest gratitude to our supervisor, Mr. SOLTANI Jalal, for his guidance and constant support. His invaluable help with constructive comments and suggestions throughout the work has contributed to the success of this research. We owe our master's degree to his encouragement and effort, and without him, this dissertation would not have been completed or written. We could not wish for a better or friendlier supervisor.

We would like to thank the administrative staff for their support and assistance. We appreciate the jury members' willingness to examine and assess our work.

We would like to use this opportunity to express our gratitude to all the teachers who taught us for their inspirational guidance, valuable constructive criticism, and friendly advice.

Abstract

COVID-19 pandemic has escalated hostility and rivalry between the United States and China, undermining the efforts to confront the virus and destabilizing the global order. Consequently, this study aims at analyzing the COVID-19 pandemic impact on US-China relations and the historical causes of their rising antagonism. Besides, the study examines American and Chinese media coverage and their roles during the pandemic in the context of the US-China media war. It is a qualitative research that relies on a historical, descriptive, and analytical method to effectively achieve the research objectives. The study reveals that the conflict between China and the United States had historical origins in addition to the COVID-19 pandemic. It concluded that the COVID-19 pandemic had negative repercussions on US-China relations as it caused an increase in hostility and conflict between them. The study also found that the spread of COVID-19 sparked a media war between the two countries over the virus's origin. In each country, the media sided with the official narratives and played the role of spokesperson for the authorities.

Keywords: China, COVID-19, media war, United States, US-China relations.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

BLS	Bureau of Labor Statistics.
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative.
CCP	Chinese Communist Party.
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CIPS	Cross-Border Interbank Payment System
DJIA	Dow Jones Industrial Average.
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment.
G20	Group of Twenty.
GDP	Gross Domestic Product.
ILO	International Labour Organization.
IMF	International Monetary Fund.
IP	Intellectual Property.
KMT	Kuomintang.
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.
PLA	People's Liberation Army.
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment.
PRC	People's Republic of China.

UN	United Nations.
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.
US	United States.
USIP	United States Institute of Peace.
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.
WHO	World Health Organization.
WTO	World Trade Organization.

List of Figures

Figure 2.1. Chinese Claims and Disputed Islands in the South China Sea.....	37
--	----

Table of Contents

Dedication	I
Acknowledgments	II
Abstract	III
List of Abbreviations and Acronyms	IV
List of Figures	VI
Table of Contents	VII
General Introduction	1

Chapter One: US-China Relations: A Historical Background

Introduction	5
1.1 Foundation of the PRC and the US Position	5
1.1.1. Foundation of the PRC.....	5
1.1.2. US Refusal to Recognize PRC.....	6
1.2. Normalization of Relations	7
1.2.1. Nixon's Visit and Early Normalization Attempts	8
1.2.2. Normalization Decision During the Carter Presidency	9
1.3. Global Financial Crisis 2008: Implications on US-China Relations.....	10
1.3.1. Global Financial Crisis 2008 Overview	10
1.3.2. Crisis's Impact on Both US and China's Economies	11
1.3.2.1. Impact on the US	11
1.3.2.2. Impact on China.....	12
1.3.3. Crisis's Geopolitical Implications on the US-China Rivalry.....	12
1.4. Belt and Road Initiative and Its Repercussions on US-China Relations.....	14
1.4.1. An Overview of the Initiative	14
1.4.2. Objective of the Belt and Road Initiative	15
1.4.3. BRI Repercussions on the United States	18
1.5. US-China Trade War.....	20
1.5.1. Trade Tensions.....	21
1.5.2. Tariff War	21
1.5.3. Technology War.....	22
Conclusion.....	23

Chapter Two: COVID-19 Pandemic's Repercussions on US-China Relations

Introduction	25
2.1. The US and China's Public Health Policies in Response to COVID- 19	25
2.1.1. China's Response to COVID-19.....	25
2.1.2. The US's Response to COVID-19.....	26
2.3. Political Repercussions of COVID-19	27
2.3.1. Blame Policy: US-China Battle of Accusations Over COVID-19's Origin.....	27
2.3.2. The United States and China Closing Consulates: A Diplomatic Escalation	29
2.3.3. Widespread Nationalism/Xenophobia and Racism Sentiments.....	30
2.3.4. The US Withdrawal from the World Health Organization	32
2.3.5. China's Rise in Southeast Asia	33
2.4. US-China Rivalry and Its Effect on Global Order	34
2.4.1. US-China International Efforts on Global Pandemic Recovery	35
2.4.2. US-China Military Tensions Over the South China Sea during COVID-19 Pandemic ...	36
2.5. COVID-19's Effect on Global Economy:	39
2.5.1. Global Growth	39
2.5.2. Global Trade	39
2.5.3. Global Energy Markets	40
2.5.4. Global Foreign Investment	41
2.5.5. Impact on Workers.....	42
2.5.6. Financial Markets.....	42
2.6. COVID-19's Impact on the US and China's Economies	43
2.6.1. COVID-19's Impact on US Economy	43
2.6.2. COVID-19's Impact on China's Economy.....	45
2.6.3. American and Chinese Shift Toward Localized/Regionalized Economy.....	45
Conclusion.....	47

Chapter Two: COVID-19 Pandemic's Repercussions on US-China Relations

Introduction	48
3.1. Analysis of Trump's Speeches.....	48
3.1.1. Media and Trump's Position Toward China.....	51
3.1.1.1. Press's Role.....	52
3.1.1.2. Social Media's Role.....	55

3.2. Analysis of Biden’s Speeches	56
3.2.1. Media and Biden’s Position Toward China	59
3.2.1.1. Press's Role	59
3.3.1. Analysis of Xi Jinping’s Speeches	61
3.3.2. Media and Xi Jinping’s Position Toward the United States of America	62
3.3.2.1. Press’s Role.....	62
Conclusion.....	65
General Conclusion	66
References	68
Appendices	75
Appendix A. Presidents’ Speeches.....	75
Appendix B. News Outlets Articles	78
Appendix C. Donald Trump's Tweets	82
ملخص	83

General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

The concept of the New Cold War refers to the growing tension and conflict between international and regional powers in the global order over interests and influence, especially between the US and China. Some analysts believe that the increased tension and conflict between the two countries over various issues and crises in recent years has contributed to the return of the Cold War atmosphere. In addition, the arms race between the US and China and their intense competition for superiority in many spheres deteriorated their bilateral relations. Furthermore, the idea of the New Cold War became more popular after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in December 2019. The pandemic marked a defining moment in world history because of the changes it caused in all fields, especially with attempts to politicize it and use it as a tool in the US-China conflict and the race to dominate the world order. On one hand, the US seeks to preserve its position at the top of this order as the only "global power" that dominates it and rejects the claims about its decline due to its failure to manage the health crisis. On the other hand, China aspires to strengthen its position in the world on the pretext of its success in overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic and presents itself as a role model to other countries. Moreover, COVID-19 brought the conflict between the US and China to the frontline due mainly to the latter's tendency to use it politically to strengthen its position and promote its development and political model in many parts of the world, as well as the US' move to contain China's ambitious plans and prevent it from gaining new areas of influence in the world.

2. Statement of the Problem

Historically, US-China relations have gone through several stages, ranging from conflict to cooperation. However, with the election of Donald Trump, the US' policy toward China has become

radically hostile, and the trade and economic competition between the two countries has turned into a fierce confrontation on all fronts. In the midst of this rising tension, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic came to exacerbate the conflict between them, especially after the devastating human and economic losses it caused. As a result, the relations between the two countries deteriorated significantly. Based on these facts, it has become crucial to conduct a study to explore and discuss the COVID-19 pandemic's repercussions on US-China relations and the reasons behind this rising tension.

3. Research Questions and Hypotheses

The current study seeks to provide conclusive answers to the following questions:

- 1- What were the causes of tensions between the US and China in the pre-COVID-19 era?
- 2- What are the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic on US-China relations?
- 3- How did the American and Chinese media cover the COVID-19 pandemic and what role did they play in light of the escalating tension between the two countries?

To answer the questions of this research, the following hypotheses are suggested:

Hypothesis 01: A series of historical events from the post-World War II period to the present day have contributed to the deterioration of relations between the US and China.

Hypothesis 02: The COVID-19 pandemic had severe repercussions on US-China relations. It prompted both countries to adopt different foreign policies in response to the crisis, which exacerbated the pre-existing tension.

Hypothesis 03: The US and Chinese media coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic was biased towards the official narrative in both countries. They have played a major role in the battle of accusations between the US and China over the pandemic.

4. Aims of the Study

The current study aims to explore the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic on US-China relations and discuss the historical reasons for the state of hostility between the two global powers. In addition, the study seeks analyze the media coverage of the pandemic in the US and China in light of the rising conflict between the two countries. The study aims to also examine the official discourse issued by the US and China's presidents regarding the pandemic.

5. Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative method based on secondary data such as articles, reports, newspapers, books, journals, speeches, TV interviews, etc. All data are collected from various sources. In the first chapter, the historical method is used to present the historical context of the US-China conflict by providing a timeline of events that have heightened tensions between the two countries throughout history, which helps in acquiring a deep understanding of how past events have influenced the present and future occurrences that are relevant to the current study. In the second chapter, the descriptive, specifically content analysis, method is used to explore the COVID-19 pandemic and its repercussions on US-China relations. For the third chapter, the analytical method is followed to analyze the media coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic by the American and Chinese media in light of the conflict between the two countries.

6. Significance of the Study

The significance of the current study stems from the fact that the US and China are the most powerful actors in the global order and that the state of their relationship has a direct impact on the rest of the world, especially during one of the world's most severe crises, such as the COVID-19

pandemic. Therefore, it is crucial to conduct a study that traces the course of this historical relationship and understands its dynamics in light of the pandemic.

7. Structure of the Study

This dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first two chapters are theoretical, while the third one is practical. The first chapter provides a historical overview of the US-China relations, focusing on the different historical stages that the two powers' relations went through, which contributed to the pre-COVID-19 era's increase in tension. The second chapter explores the COVID-19 repercussions on the US-China relations, as well as how the pandemic escalated already-existing tensions. Besides, the chapter discusses the different policies applied by each country in dealing with the health crisis. The third chapter analyzes how the American and Chinese media covered the COVID-19 pandemic and their position on the official narrative during the crisis. The chapter also examines the discourse issued by presidents in the two countries regarding the pandemic. It also analyzes the media's role in the US-China media war over the virus's origin.

CHAPTER ONE

US-China Relations: A Historical Background

Chapter One: US-China Relations: A Historical Background

Introduction	5
1.1 Foundation of the PRC and the US Position	5
1.1.1 Foundation of the PRC.....	5
1.1.2. US Refusal to Recognize PRC.....	6
1.2. Normalization of Relations	7
1.2.1. Nixon's Visit and Early Normalization Attempts	8
1.2.2. Normalization Decision During the Carter Presidency	9
1.3. Global Financial Crisis 2008: Implications on US-China Relations.....	10
1.3.1. Global Financial Crisis 2008 Overview.....	10
1.3.2. Crisis's Impact on Both US and China's Economies	11
1.3.2.1. Impact on the US	11
1.3.2.2. Impact on China.....	12
1.3.3. Crisis's Geopolitical Implications on the US-China Rivalry.....	12
1.4. Belt and Road Initiative and Its Repercussions on US-China Relations.....	14
1.4.1. An Overview of the Initiative	14
1.4.2. Objective of the Belt and Road Initiative	15
1.4.3. BRI Repercussions on the US.....	18
1.5. US-China Trade War.....	20
1.5.1. Trade Tensions.....	21
1.5.2. Tariff War	21
1.5.3. Technology War.....	22
Conclusion.....	23

Introduction

The US-China relationship is the world's most significant bilateral relationship. This relationship traces its roots to the eighteenth century. Since then, their relations have passed through several phases throughout history, particularly since the 1949 revolution, which represents the separation moment between the US and the new communist leadership in China. Such a long history of disagreement and confrontation has intensified their state of hostility. Therefore, the first chapter aims to shed light on the history of US-China relations as well as the controversial issues between the two countries that have exacerbated their disagreement. It is composed of five sections, starting from an overview of the PRC establishment and the US refusal to recognize it, moving to the normalization of the US-China relations in 1979. The third section discusses the global financial crisis of 2008 and its repercussions on the US-China rivalry. The fourth section highlights the Belt and Road Initiative 2013, exploring its geopolitical impacts on the US-China relationship and how it threatens US foreign interests. Finally, the fifth section discusses the trade war that emerged in 2017 between the US and China as well as Trump's hostile policy toward China.

1.1 Foundation of the PRC and the US Position

The victory of the Chinese Communist Party in the civil war and then the foundation of the People's Republic of China are milestones in the history of US-China relations. The US, driven by its concerns about a global communist spread, took a hostile position toward the new Chinese leadership, leading to a diplomatic rupture between the two countries for decades.

1.1.1. Foundation of the PRC

Succeeding the Manchu dynasty's fall in 1911, China underwent political unrest due to the new republic's failure to control and enforce the order. As a result, foreign powers continued to exploit China since there was no strong central authority to deter them. The new leaders'

incompetency led to the deterioration of the economic situation and an increase in protests and disturbances. Consequently, a civil war emerged in 1927 to seize power in China between two ideologically opposed parties, the Kuomintang Nationalist Party (KMT) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

After decades of warfare, the Communist Party led by Mao Zedong defeated the Nationalists and forced them to retreat to Taiwan, declaring the foundation of the People's Republic of China (PRC) on the mainland on October 1, 1949. Despite the KMT's defeat, the US continued to recognize the Nationalist Government of Taiwan as China's legitimate government, leading to the suspension of diplomatic relations with the PRC for decades (The Office of the Historian, n.d.)

1.1.2. US Refusal to Recognize PRC

In the aftermath of World War II, the US found itself involved in a cold war with the USSR consisting of largely political and economic confrontations. It attempted to contain communism's expansion by surrounding it at the lowest possible cost to preserve its national security by peaceful measures and to prevent the USSR from expanding its influence in countries considered vital to the US at the time. Therefore, the CCP's victory in China was regarded as a shift in the balance of power in the Cold War in the USSR's favor. Consequently, following a lengthy period of recognition of the KMT as China's legitimate government and its concern about the global Communist spread, the US refused to recognize the PRC as a legitimate state. Furthermore, the US stance has become more problematic as a result of the Korean War (1950–1953) and its repercussions, in which the US and PRC armed forces clashed. Therefore, for both internal and external reasons, the US declared that the PRC was not a trustworthy member of the international community and thus undeserving of recognition, a position that the US had taken for more than two decades to impede China's presence in the United Nations (Gunter, 2020).

Furthermore, the "China lobby" in the US played a significant role in mobilizing American public opinion against the CCP, influencing US foreign policy towards China, and preventing the US from recognizing its Communist regime. In this context, Blackwell (2010) claimed that the "China lobby" was a broad network of individuals unified by a common objective: communism's overthrow in China. It was formed by nationalist Chinese leaders and right-wing politicians in the US to support the KMT in reclaiming China from the CCP. The lobby consisted of powerful figures from the private sector, the press, and politicians who had major influence over the US foreign policy toward China.

The Chinese lobby used the widespread anti-communist sentiment to pass its political agenda in favor of Taiwan's nationalist government, particularly through media propaganda. Astarita, as cited in Quesnel (2015), stated that back in the early 1950s, the primary depiction of China provided to American readers was that of the communist nightmare. Given the absence of direct contact, the PRC was seen as a hostile and arrogant regime. It became clear that the media participated in firming China's negative image.

To sum up, over more than two decades, the two countries had scant contact, limited trade, and no diplomatic relations. The PRC and the US's capacity to reach an agreement was obstructed by both internal politics and global tensions.

1.2. Normalization of Relations

During the 60s, with conflict intensifying with the USSR, the US sought to bring the PRC into the fold. Their first step toward this was the normalization of relations. They saw this as a way to bring the PRC closer to their side. They also thought that by being more open toward the PRC, the PRC would be more open toward them, and thus, the US would gain more influence over them.

1.2.1. Nixon's Visit and Early Normalization Attempts

The state of turmoil between the PRC and the US continued up until the late 60s when President Richard Nixon was elected to office. President Nixon looked at the growing rift between the USSR and the PRC, he determined that now was the moment to try to mend the relationship. In an article published in *Foreign Affairs*, Nixon (1967) stated that they do not have the luxury of simply leaving China out of the family of nations forever, where fantasies and hate could grow, and impose a threat on its neighbors. With that, he tasked, the National security Council Advisor, Dr. Henry Kissinger, intending to approach relationship-building proposals. The latter utilized a slew of American ambassadors to pitch the concept to PRC officials. On July 21, 1969, the Nixon Administration announced that American citizens would be allowed to buy Chinese goods for up to \$100 and that automatic passport validation would be granted for Americans visiting China; additionally, the \$100 limit on Chinese goods was lifted in December of the same year. (Chang, 1986).

Kissinger traveled covertly to Beijing from Pakistan on 9 July 1971 after receiving an invitation from the PRC on 2 July 1971. During his two-day visit, Kissinger and PRC Premier Chou En-lai discussed concerns that would be addressed later. Nixon ultimately announced the visit on national television six days later, on July 15th (Chang, 1986).

On February 21st, 1972, President Nixon landed in China for a visit that would last eight days. During those days, various talks, between the American convoy and the leaders of the PRC, were held. The Americans reaffirmed their stands on issues of freedom of choice and maintaining peace both in Asia and the world as a whole. They also maintained their support for South Korea and friendly relations with Japan. The Chinese, on the other hand, maintained their support for the people of Vietnam and Cambodia, as well as North Korea's goal of reunifying the Korean peninsula,

and they reiterated their firm opposition to nuclear weapons (US Office of the Press Secretary, 1972).

The discussions eventually lead to what came to be known as "The Shanghai Communiqué of February 28, 1972". According to the statement released by the US Office of the Press Secretary, the communiqué stated that the US-China Normalization of relations is of interest to both countries; And that they both wish to avoid military conflict, and that neither should negotiate on behalf of a third party. Furthermore, they should not try to acquire hegemony over the Asia-Pacific region and they both oppose any other country trying to do so, which was directed toward the Soviet Union.

To conclude, with the promise of establishing full diplomatic relations from Nixon and official normalization, relations between the US and China appeared to be improving. However, with Nixon's abrupt resignation in 1974 as well as the establishment of diplomatic relations between the USSR and the US, US-China relations started to deteriorate.

1.2.2. Normalization Decision During the Carter Presidency

President Carter's predecessor, Gerald Ford, was determined to fully establish normalization with the PRC. As soon as the Panama Canal Treaties were approved by the senate he turned to China. Furthermore, due to President Carter's views on human rights, the relations with the USSR deteriorated, and negotiations between the two countries were about to begin. According to Chang (1986), on the 19th of September, 1978, President Carter met with Chai Tse-min, the Chief of the Chinese Liaison Office. During that meeting, he set some conditions for normalization, including the continued unofficial presence in Taiwan by the US, the continuation of sales of selected defensive arms, a public statement from the US expressing hope for a diplomatic solution to the Taiwan issue, and the abrogation of the Taiwan defense treaty. After extensive and secretive

meetings between representatives of the two governments, the normalization agreement was finally announced on December 15th, 1978. Diplomatic connections were thus established.

After the normalization of diplomatic relations, the US passed the US-China Relations Act of 2000, providing the People's Republic of China with permanent normal commercial status and setting the framework for China's entrance into the WTO in 2001. It concludes more than a decade of bilateral and international debates and opens a phase of stronger collaboration with China to aid it in achieving its economic reform pledges in full. In 2004, China became the second-largest commercial partner of the US (Council on Foreign Relations, n.d.).

1.3. Global Financial Crisis 2008: Implications on US-China Relations

The global financial crisis of 2008 is one of the worst economic crises that the world has ever encountered. It had severe economic and geopolitical repercussions, particularly on US-China relations.

1.3.1. Global Financial Crisis 2008 Overview

In 2008, the global economy encountered a devastating financial crisis, commonly regarded as the worst since 1929's Great Depression. The crisis originated in the US because of the collapse of the mortgage market and rapidly evolved into a global financial crisis, which initially occurred as a lack of liquidity. Therefore, multiple banks, stock markets, and many companies have declared bankruptcy. Due to the openness and interconnectedness of global markets, all economies have been impacted directly or indirectly by this crisis. However, the extent of the impact varies according to their connections with the US economy.

The relationship between the US and China, as the world's two largest economies, has a direct impact on global commerce and financial institutions. Thus, the economic crisis impacted both economies because of their deep links through trade, financial capital, and individuals,

inflicting significant losses and escalating tensions between the US and China. According to Prasad (2009), before the crisis, the trade volume between the two economies reached a massive amount, and the US became one of China's primary export customers. Exports of Chinese goods to the US increased from \$100 billion in 2000 to \$338 billion in 2008. Remarkably, China's exports to the US have dropped from 22% in 2000 to 19% in 2008. The Chinese trade deficit with the US increased from \$84 billion in 2000 to approximately \$266 billion in 2008. Additionally, in 2008, China became the major foreign holder of US government debt, displacing Japan as the US's biggest foreign creditor.

1.3.2. Crisis's Impact on Both US and China's Economies

The global financial crisis of 2008 had devastating economic consequences on the US economy. As a result of the close economic link between China and the US, the Chinese economy was affected by the crisis, though not to the same severity.

1.3.2.1. Impact on the US

The global financial crisis had a profound impact on the US economy since it originated in the US due to its imbalanced fiscal policies, which had disastrous impact on the US economy, affecting both individuals and institutions. Duignan (2019) stated that leading American financial institutions and corporations were obliged to reduce expenses and investments, resulting in enormous job losses and a severe economic downturn. Other institutions, such as the Lehman Brothers Bank and General Motors Corporation, could not withstand the crisis and declared bankruptcy. Further, with millions of people losing their houses, jobs, and investments, the poverty rate in the US reached more than 15 percent by 2010, in which Americans lost \$16 trillion in net worth between 2007 and 2009. Moreover, real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) dropped by 4.3

percent, whereas unemployment rose from 5 percent to 9.5 percent, reaching its highest level of 10 percent in October 2009.

1.3.2.2. Impact on China

Although China is the biggest foreign holder of US treasuries, its exposure to the subprime mortgage crisis was limited. China's severe capital flow regulations prevent many Chinese individuals and corporations from investing in foreign countries. Most Chinese investment flows are managed by state-owned banks. These organizations have kept to cautious investing policies. However, certain Chinese institutions have declared their purported exposure to the crisis. The Chinese economy, which relies heavily on trade and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), was not immune to the repercussions of the global recession. Many industries were strongly affected. In several Chinese cities, the housing market has been impacted, with growth slowed, prices falling, and unsold houses accumulating, pushing financial institutions to ensure market stability by lowering interest rates. In addition, the amount of foreign direct investment into China decreased by about a third by January 2009 (year-on-year basis). Besides, the Chinese economy suffered from a severe recession, resulting in a substantial shortage of production and employment opportunities, which resulted in the loss of 20 million jobs (Nanto, 2009).

1.3.3. Crisis's Geopolitical Implications on the US-China Rivalry

The 2008 global economic crisis has been compared to the 1930s Great Depression .As a result of the financial crisis that occurred in 1929, the global economy went into recession, and fascist regimes rose to power throughout Europe and Asia. Consequently, WWII broke out, changing the global order and marking the decline of the classic great powers such as France and Great Britain. It also marked the rise of new ones, such as the Soviet Union and the US. Similarly, the 2008 global financial crisis certainly altered the world order's geopolitical dynamics, as it

contributed to the increase of Chinese influence at the expense of the US. It revealed the weakness of the liberal economic model promoted by the US.

Therefore, the crisis increased enthusiasm for China's economic model, which was mostly unaffected by the crisis. Paradoxically, according to Dollar (2018), the crisis hastened China's progress toward parity with the US, which had always been expected. China's economy soon recovered to double-digit growth rates due to China's enormous economic stimulus program. On the other hand, slow development in the US lasted a decade. According to Zhao and Dan (2019), China also used the crisis to promote its economic model and its capacity for crisis management. Zhao and Dan asserted that the global financial crisis of 2008 changed everything. After successfully overcoming the crisis, Chinese officials began publicly criticizing Western powers' flawed macroeconomic policies and unsustainable growth models. The Chinese government has started to promote a state-capitalist model to challenge market-driven capitalism. The Chinese President proclaimed China's approach a new choice for other countries and nations seeking rapid growth while preserving their sovereignty.

Furthermore, China's power in the international order expanded significantly as a result of the global crisis, to the point that the US withdrew its charges that China manipulated its currency to avoid a potential major confrontation (Özkan, 2010). Moreover, the crisis led to the escalation of the US-China tension, as it entered a new phase of competitiveness that has the potential to reshape the world's power balance. Friedberg (2010), argues that as a result of the crisis, there will be more friction and conflict in Sino-American relations than there was when trade served to stabilize those relations. Similarly, Friedberg stated that the crisis has escalated the US-China trade war, which is the most probable approach toward a more antagonistic political relationship and open strategic

competition. Rising trade tensions may also encourage China to exploit the potential influence gained by being the US's largest creditor.

Jacques, as cited in Özkan (2010), believes that the crisis has shifted the world order. He claims this has been going on for 30 years, dating back to the start of China's rapid economic development. He asserts that China's massive current account surplus and the US trade deficit demonstrate and symbolize the shift in economic power between the two nations.

The current trade war between China and the US is nothing but the consequence of the global financial crisis. In the wake of it, China was swiftly approaching the US at a rate no one could have predicted. Further, China's economic power has grown significantly, with the country's capacity to project military strength in the Indo-Pacific region and finance infrastructure projects in developing nations through the Belt and Road Initiative.

1.4. Belt and Road Initiative and Its Repercussions on US-China Relations

China's Belt and Road Initiative is the world's largest economic and geostrategic project in human history. The project is an embodiment of the Chinese strategy that aims to expand China's global influence and strengthen its economic position. On the other hand, the initiative poses a major threat to the economic and political interests of the US and undermines its global influence.

1.4.1. An Overview of the Initiative

In 2013, the Chinese president announced the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), through which China aims to revive what was called the ancient Silk Road established nearly two thousand years ago. The BRI initiative is implemented by the PRC allocating billions of dollars to spend on infrastructure investment projects, including building a massive network of railroads, energy pipelines, highways, and streamlined border crossings in the countries through which the new silk road crosses (Djankov & Miner, 2016). These projects will result in a network of corridors linking

China with Europe, Asia, and Africa. The initiative consists of two parts, the overland Silk Road Economic Belt, and the maritime Silk Road of the twenty-first century. Accompanied by infrastructure facilities, the PRC intends to establish 50 special economic zones designed like the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone, which was established in 1980 during Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms (Dunne, 2021). The initiative covers more than 65 countries with more than two-thirds of the world's population and nearly half of the global GDP. Further, estimates of investments related to the "Belt and Road" initiative indicate that the PRC allocated about \$60 billion at the start of the initiative's launch in 2013, but the allocations for this initiative are expected to reach \$1.3 trillion by 2027 (Chatzky & McBride, 2020).

The US-China strategic competition intensified as a result of changing power balances and the race for global leadership. The BRI serves as an important indicator of China's global aspirations. The initiative's purposes have generated considerable concern in the US. While the PRC promotes the infrastructure building program as an investment and development project that benefits all parties economically, there are strategic manifestations that contradict this portrayal (Cau, 2018). The project is seen as a threat to the current global order since it seeks to undermine the US's hegemony, and it is one of the embodiments of Beijing's new Greater China policy, which aspires to establish a new global order led by the PRC. Therefore, the US is concerned about the program, citing potential dangers to the recipient countries and damage to the US's foreign geopolitical interests.

1.4.2. Objective of the Belt and Road Initiative

According to the official announcement of the National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China (2015), the Initiative's objective is to enhance interconnection among the Asian, European,

and African continents and their coastal regions, to establish and increase collaboration among countries along the BRI, to develop multi-dimensional, multi-tiered, and composite connectivity networks. The BRI also tends to achieve diversified, self-sufficient, balanced, and sustainable growth and development in these regions. The Initiative's connectivity projects would also assist nations along the BRI in aligning and coordinating their growth strategy, leveraging market competitiveness in this region, promoting investment and consumption, creating employment opportunities, enhancing people-to-people and cultural exchanges, as well as knowledge exchange among their peoples, allowing them to comprehend, appreciate, and respect one another in order to live in peace, tranquility, and prosperity.

Despite the project's stated objectives, there has been considerable debate over the primary purposes of the BRI, namely whether it targets economic gains or whether it wants to achieve geopolitical and military ambitions. Several participant countries are concerned about the project's geopolitical role and its possible influence on their sovereignty. In this context, Chinese authorities, as cited in Jacob J, Roughead, Roughead, Hillman, & Sacks (2021), claim that the BRI's primary aim is to promote growth in the host countries, while also recognizing the initiative's extra benefit to China's economic progress. They deny any geo-strategic motives behind the BRI, with the Chinese president declaring that China would not engage in archaic geopolitical maneuvers in promoting the program. Additionally, he said that the BRI is an economic cooperation project, not a geopolitical alliance or military coalition. The PRC rejected any similarity between the BRI and the Marshall Plan.

Nonetheless, the BRI has unstated geopolitical objectives that the PRC seeks to accomplish through the project. One of the initiative's primary geopolitical objectives is to expand the PRC's sphere of influence as a geopolitical strategy to compete with the US for global supremacy. Jacob J

et al (2021) claim that PRC envisions that the new BRI trade networks will allow it to dominate global trade and supplant the US. They believe that the project will improve economic development in China's rural areas, thus improving domestic political stability. Furthermore, the BRI provides the PRC with political and economic leverage, allowing it to exert pressure on BRI countries to support its strategic and foreign affairs. Besides, the initiative grants the PRC worldwide intelligence capabilities and access to global ports and other infrastructure, which it may employ for military objectives in the future.

Moreover, through the BRI, Chinese policymakers intend to safeguard China's trade and energy security by creating alternative transportation paths for products and energy. They seek to minimize the dependency on energy supplies that are transported through strategically located sea lanes, which are usually vulnerable to disruption during conflicts. The PRC is worried about these routes since they are all protected and controlled by the US navy (US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 2018).

In addition, the PRC intends to use the BRI to minimize the risks associated with overdependence on US currency and Western-controlled payment systems. Due to the interconnection of payment networks and trade systems, the renminbi, the official currency of the PRC, may threaten the US dollar's dominance. The Initiative promotes renminbi globalization via payment settlement, financing, worldwide transactions, and foreign exchange operations. CIPS, China's cross-border payment system, is now competing with SWIFT. Thus, the increased usage of CIPS over the current SWIFT system would limit China's worldwide payments data's availability to the US, a move that the US views as reinforcing digital totalitarianism (Dunford, 2021).

1.4.3. BRI Repercussions on the US

Since the initiative's announcement in 2013, the US has opposed it, raising concerns about the initiative's undeclared geopolitical objectives and potential implications on US foreign policy interests. The US regards massive programs such as the BRI as a threat to the global order it governs. The geopolitical dimensions of the US-China relations have a considerable impact on US policymakers' views on the BRI. While the PRC advances toward becoming the world's largest economy, great nations such as the US will inevitably be marginalized. A large-scale project like the BRI will be assessed through the lens of these preconceived assumptions.

According to the US National Security Strategy, China's investments in developing countries intend to extend its dominance and obtain advantages at the expense of the US. In the same context, former US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson asserted that China is harnessing its capabilities to compete with the US on diplomatic, military, and economic fronts, stating that while the US does not intend to contain China's economic growth; it keeps a careful eye on Chinese policies regarding the BRI. Moreover, the US's opposition to the BRI is driven by two interrelated factors. The first is the BRI's anticipated impact on the global rules-based order's stability. Secondly, the US is concerned about its strategic relationship with the PRC, given the latter's capacity to be the US's strongest adversary. Also, it is believed that they construct all of these multiple projects not only to enhance trade networks, but also to make these countries economically, politically, and militarily reliant on and vulnerable to China (Young, 2018). Such reliance on Chinese infrastructure investments boosts China's influence and directly endangers US strategic interests in these regions. In 2017, the US National Security Strategy Report stated the following: "China's infrastructure investments and trade strategies reinforce its geopolitical aspirations. Its efforts to build and

militarize outposts in the South China Sea endanger the free flow of trade, threaten the sovereignty of other nations, and undermine regional stability” (The White House, 2017, p. 46).

The BRI, despite the PRC's official statements, has a damaging repercussion on the US economy. Through promoting Chinese firms' market access into several regions and reducing expenses, it confers privileges to Chinese firms, preventing the US and other foreign companies from competing in several BRI countries. Subsequently, Chinese enterprises, aided by government banks, might overtake US exports and pose a threat to US companies in those countries (Jacob J et al, 2021).

Furthermore, the BRI endows China with a high degree of control over critical maritime ports and infrastructures via the construction and operation of these facilities. As a result, such control threatens the US national security and military superiority in the Indo-Pacific and Eurasia regions. The US asserts that one of the project's goals is to bolster the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) control of the area and to erode the US military's dominance.

Beijing envisions a military in the future that is more capable of protecting its far-flung economic and political interests. However, a larger and more capable Chinese military presence enabled by BRI could also exacerbate friction and fuel geopolitical competition with the US or other regional powers. A more globally engaged PLA could have the practical effect of expanding areas of US-China military competition beyond East Asia, resulting in a more globe-spanning contest with the potential for linkages across and between theaters in the event of tensions or even conflict (US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 2018, p.288).

According to Russel and Berger (2020), the US Navy has been permitted to operate freely and uninhibitedly on international seas since the 1940s. Meanwhile, whereas China's influence

grows and it develops a strategic stronghold, the US may lose the level of unrestricted access it has always had. Russel and Berger also argued that the BRI projects and the PRC's political engagement aim to weaken or obstruct the US's geostrategic influence by complicating situations such as preventing port access, even in allied countries. A rising unwillingness on the part of regional governments to assist or even accept the movement of the US navy would be damaging to the US' security interests (Mirski, 2013). In this context, retired rear Admiral Mike McDevitt wrote of China's military leverage in the region, “The US authorities can no longer assume unencumbered freedom to posture US naval forces off the Middle East and East African hotspots if Chinese interests are involved and differ from Washington's” (McDevitt, 2016, p.13).

In summary, the initiative will boost China's influence and power worldwide, promoting the Chinese economy and enabling it to compete more effectively with other economies, particularly the US economy. On the other hand, many countries need massive funds to develop their infrastructure, and they may not be able to obtain alternative international funding for various reasons, some of which are political. The project also intensifies the tension between the US and China, which has been on the rise in recent decades.

1.5. US-China Trade War

The US-China conflict was not just political; it was also over economic gains. This Trade War saw the two global powers compete over control of the global market, and economic policies. It also came in the form of sanctioning each other, implementing tariffs on goods, and blacklisting companies.

1.5.1. Trade Tensions

With the ever-increasing influence of the PRC and initiatives such as the BRI, the US started to view the PRC as a threat to its global dominance. This was reflected in the drop in Chinese

favorability among Americans. Donald Trump, among many, shared these views of the PRC, which were evident in this campaign. Trump highlighted the issue of the trade deficit with East Asian countries, particularly the PRC. He stated that the deficit, and thus the PRC, is to blame for the lack of jobs and the US economy's never reaching full productivity and employment levels. He also accused the PRC of being a currency manipulator on numerous occasions, which is the practice of devaluing your currency to gain an advantage in trade. During his campaign, he promised that his administration would label the PRC as a currency manipulator on day one of his presidency (Noland, 2018). Trump also ran on the slogan "America First", and that was evident in his administration in the sense that most of its components were protectionist. Furthermore, the Trump Administration implemented harsh anti-dumping laws to make sure that imported goods are fairly priced in comparison to local ones, especially those that come from the PRC.

1.5.2. Tariff War

Trump moved toward imposing tariffs on imports in response to his campaign promises and constant attacks on open trade agreements that, in his opinion, only harmed the US economy. The first of these tariffs was on the imports of washing machines and solar panels. After that, Trump's trade policy shifted its focus to the PRC. On April 3rd, 2018, the first major tariff was imposed: a 25% tariff on \$50 billion in Chinese goods. China declared shortly after that it will react against the US tariffs by imposing the same percentage on US imports. As these threats became reality, the US and China engaged in additional rounds of protection and retaliation. The second set of US tariffs, which took effect in September 2018, placed a 10% duty on 6,056 HS 8-digit products worth \$200 billion in imports (Tankersley, Bradsher, 2018). In September 2018, China enacted its second set of tariffs in response to the US moves, placing fresh 5% and 10% tariffs on 5,207 HS 8-digit products worth \$60 billion in China's imports. In December of that same year, the US government declared

that they planned on further expanding those tariffs from 10% to 25% (Jain, Saraswat, 2019). The response from the PRC came shortly after. They stated that they, in part, would further expand their tariffs on those same products at the same percentage hike. However, a meeting during that same month between the US and Chinese presidents resulted in a cease-fire in the tariff war between the two countries. The next month, China dropped retaliatory tariffs on cars and car parts. But in May 2019, the US government decided to go ahead with the increase in tariffs, which resulted in the PRC retaliating in the same way shortly after. The last patch of tariffs came in September 2019, in the form of tariffs on \$112 billion in imports from the PRC. The PRC, of course, retaliated with tariffs on \$75 billion of imports from the US. Although the US had plans to further expand the last tariff from \$112 billion to \$300 billion, it never really came to pass due to the two countries' going into phase one of the trade agreement between the two in December of that year (Benguria, Choi, Swenson& Xu, 2022).

1.5.3. Technology War

Technology, and specifically intellectual property, or IP, is a different side of the trade war between the two economic giants. American genius and American IP are protected, that's why Trump assembled a cabinet of a group of projectionist personnel in the US intellectual property Commission. According to this cabinet, the estimated costs for counterfeited goods, trade secrets, and stolen and pirated software might range from 225 billion to 600 billion dollars in losses to the American economy. This number is usually mentioned in the media as \$600 billion and attributed to the PRC. The USIP Commission also believes that China targets American companies by relinquishing their IP for a share of the Chinese market. This is standard procedure for any company wishing to do business in China, including Chinese enterprises. Another aspect of this is Trump's targeting of Chinese giant tech companies such as Huawei, the world's second-largest smartphone

provider. Following major concerns over the security threat posed by Huawei 5G, the US, among many nations, implemented restrictions on 5G use. Huawei had close ties to the PRC government and, as a result, to the Chinese intelligence agency. Giving Huawei additional control over communication and data will expose these countries to political manipulation by the PRC and offer the Chinese intelligence agency direct access to their data. Despite these security risks coupled with the move toward protectionism, President Trump issued a ban on trade with companies deemed a threat to national security, which was targeted directly at Huawei on May 15th, 2019.

Conclusion

To sum up, the relationship between the US and China has historically been turbulent for several causes. The foundation of the People's Republic of China as a communist state resulted in a diplomatic estrangement between the two countries for nearly 30 years. However, despite the normalization of diplomatic relations in the 1970s, the relationship between the two countries remained tense and hostile. In addition, the 2008 global financial crisis and its devastating impact, especially on the US economy, escalated tensions between the two countries, as China emerged from the crisis with minimal damage and declared itself as the primary strategic competitor to the US. China's rise as a global rival to the US was manifested in 2013 through the BRI initiative, which the US considered a direct threat to its global influence, taking the US-China conflict to a whole new level. Then, in 2017, with the election of Donald Trump as President of the US and his declaration of an all-out trade war on China, relations between the two countries soured in an unprecedented manner and reached a dead end. Consequently, this long history of conflicts and disagreements on various issues led to the deterioration of US-China relations long before the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and its devastating repercussions.

CHAPTER TWO

COVID-19 Pandemic's Repercussions on US-China Relations

Chapter Two: COVID-19 Pandemic's Repercussions on US-China Relations

Introduction	25
2.1. The US and China's Public Health Policies in Response to COVID- 19	25
2.1.1. China's Response to COVID-19.....	25
2.1.2.The US's Response to COVID-19	26
2.3. Political Repercussions of COVID-19	27
2.3.1. Blame Policy: US-China Battle of Accusations Over COVID-19's Origin.....	28
2.3.2. The US and China Closing Consulates: A Diplomatic Escalation	29
2.3.3. Widespread Nationalism/Xenophobia and Racism Sentiments.....	30
2.3.4. The US Withdrawal from the World Health Organization	32
2.3.5. China's Rise in Southeast Asia	33
2.4. US-China Rivalry and Its Effect on Global Order	34
2.4.1. US-China International Efforts on Global Pandemic Recovery	35
2.4.2. US-China Military Tensions Over the South China Sea During COVID-19 Pandemic ..	36
2.5. COVID-19's Effect on Global Economy:	39
2.5.1. Global Growth	39
2.5.2. Global Trade	40
2.5.3. Global Energy Markets	40
2.5.4. Global Foreign Investment	41
2.5.5. Impact on Workers.....	42
2.5.6. Financial Markets.....	42
2.6. COVID-19's Impact on the US and China's Economies	43
2.6.1. COVID-19's Impact on US Economy	43
2.6.2. COVID-19's Impact on China's Economy	45
2.6.3. American and Chinese Shift Toward Localized/Regionalized Economy.....	46
Conclusion.....	47

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic is the world's most severe crisis since World War II, as many observers consider it a game-changer in international politics and the global economy because of its severe economic and political repercussions. It exacerbated the already-existing state of hostility and strategic competitiveness between the US and China. Therefore, this chapter highlights the COVID-19 pandemic and its repercussions on US-China relations, including how it escalated pre-existing tensions, and how each country attempted to capitalize on the pandemic to serve its interests. Additionally, the chapter explores the various policies implemented by each country to address the health crisis. The chapter also explores the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global economy in general, as well as the economies of the US and China in particular.

2.1. The US and China's Public Health Policies in Response to COVID- 19

The first case of COVID-19 was reported in late 2019 in Wuhan, China, and has since spread rapidly to all parts of the world, causing severe human loss, with more than 400 million people being infected by 2022. On January 30, 2020, with the increasing number of deaths and confirmed cases worldwide, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a public health emergency. In response to the crisis, due to the differences in population distribution, economic structure, and other factors, the US and China have adopted different procedures and measures to manage the health crisis.

2.1.1. China's Response to COVID-19

China is the first country to be affected by COVID-19, with the first case being reported in Wuhan in December 2019. Within a few weeks, the infection spread because of the people's movement associated with the Chinese Lunar New Year celebration. By May 2020, there were a total of 82,995 confirmed cases and 4,634 deaths. Moreover, as a result of global travel, other cases

were reported in other provinces and countries, such as Thailand and Japan. The fast increase in the number of infected people and death rate in China and worldwide prompted the Chinese authorities to notice the danger of the situation and take urgent procedures.

Since the beginning of the outbreak, each of the Chinese mainland's 31 provincial-level areas has begun the first-level response. China built a comprehensive joint preventive and control system to implement actions affecting the whole government and society. According to Jinghua and Pengfei (2021), Chinese authorities implemented strict measures in response to the widespread COVID-19. These measures included the complete shutting down of entire cities, employing a diverse group of volunteers, regulating the application of health codes, preventive case monitoring, enhancing detection capabilities, quarantining confirmed cases, treating severe cases, and quarantining high-risk populations. As a result of these steps, China was able to quickly control the pandemic and prevent it from spreading across the country.

Despite international condemnation of China's mishandling of the epidemic at the beginning of the crisis, it had successfully controlled the spread of COVID-19 by early March 2020.

2.1.2. The US's Response to COVID-19

The US was one of the first countries to report a COVID-19 spread since the first case was reported in China in December 2019. By March 2020, It surpassed China in terms of cases reported. The US is currently the global leader in COVID-19 cases and deaths. By May 2022, approximately 83 million cases of COVID-19 had been recorded in the US, with over 1.000,000 fatalities. The US government took proactive, though limited, measures in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. The Trump Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) applied distinctive procedures to prevent, contain, and eliminate the danger caused by COVID-19. These measures included spreading positive awareness by holding press conferences twice a day,

establishing the US COVID-19 task force, imposing travel restrictions, and enforcing social distancing rules nationwide. It also included setting guidelines to slow the virus's spread and declaring COVID-19 a national emergency. Additionally, the government sent CDC personnel to areas of infection, organized an awareness campaign on prevention methods, and provided financial assistance to those affected by the quarantine (Martin & Cooper, 2020).

However, the US was hesitant to act in response to COVID-19 at a time when each day of delay counted the most in terms of potential public health effects and severe economic costs. Additionally, the president and some of his closest senior officials propagated falsehoods that made the public feel less secure and more susceptible to underestimating the pandemic's seriousness. When it came time to reduce fatalities and economic damage, the US was excessively unprepared, had wasted critical time, and responded to the pandemic more leniently than public health professionals recommended.

To sum up, due to these shortcomings, the US was eventually forced to make more massive economic compromises to keep up with the pandemic's intensity than would have been required otherwise.

2.3. Political Repercussions of COVID-19

With the pandemic sweeping over the world, and isolating nations from each other, both global powers sized this opportunity to use this to their advantage. They both fed into conspiracy theories that pointed fingers at the opposite pole of the globe and blamed it for being responsible for the virus, and with that came repercussions both on a local sentiment and the global level.

2.3.1. Blame Policy: US-China Battle of Accusations Over COVID-19's Origin

With a combination of downplaying the severity of the virus and the American and Chinese governments entering phase one of the trade deal; unlike most of the world, sentiment toward China

and the virus was relatively normal. But that all changed with the publication of the opinion piece titled "China is the Real Sick Man of Asia" by the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) on February 3rd. This immediately aroused anger on the Chinese side, prompting the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs to respond, calling the author prejudiced, ignorant, and discriminatory, as well as mocking the WSJ for not having the courage to apologize through the Chinese media outlet, the Global Times, on February 18th. On the very same day, five Chinese media outlets were labeled as part of the Chinese government by the US Department through the Foreign Missions Act, subjecting them to the same treatment as Chinese diplomats. The WSJ was shortly retaliated against by the Chinese government in their way, by expelling three WSJ journalists from the country (Jaworsky & Qiaoan, 2020).

The narrative battle heated up even more when Chinese media outlets began spreading the conspiracy theory that the virus was created in a lab in the US and was brought to Wuhan during the Military World Games by the US army. This conspiracy was further fueled by Zhao Lijian, spokesperson for the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who tweeted, "Confirmed cases of COVID-19 were first found in China, but its origin is not necessarily in China" (Jaworsky & Qiaoan, 2020). Despite having previously expressed positive feelings toward China, even praising Chinese President Xi Jinping due to the ongoing talks with the trade deal, Trump began referring to COVID-19 as the "Chinese Virus" in a press conference on March 18, 2020, and on Twitter as soon as he learned of this conspiracy theory, which he justified by saying "I didn't appreciate the fact that China was saying that our military gave it to them, I think saying that our military gave it to them creates a stigma."

As a result, China's popularity in the US has declined, as have conspiracy theories on their side, one of which is that the virus was leaked through a high-security biochemical lab in Wuhan. When Trump was confronted about his use of the term "Chinese Virus", he admitted that he only did

it because they started spreading false rumors about the US Army. Furthermore, on April 23rd, he stated that he had proof that the virus originated in a lab in Wuhan. This claim was later backed up by US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo. This evidence never came to light.

2.3.2. The US and China Closing Consulates: A Diplomatic Escalation

Given the state of hostility between China and the US, which was already fueled by trade tension and the exchange of accusations about COVID-19's responsibility, the US ordered China to shut down its consulate in Houston, alleging the Chinese officials of committing economic espionage and attempting to steal scientific information. Morgan Ortagus, the spokeswoman for the state department, declared that the US will not allow any infringement of its sovereignty or any harassment of its citizens by China, just as it has not accepted China's biased trade practices, the stealing of its citizens' jobs, and other outrageous acts (Fifield, 2020).

On the other hand, China described the US's move as a political provocation and threatened it with retaliation. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin stated that the US's decision is a flagrant violation of international law and the bilateral diplomatic agreement between China and the US. He added that the Chinese diplomatic and consular employees in the US were harassed, intimidated, and interrogated, their personal digital equipment confiscated, and even detained without reason by the US authorities (Wong, Jakes, & Myers, 2020).

In reaction to the US's decision, China has closed the US consulate in Chengdu. According to China's Foreign Ministry, as cited in Feng and Lucas (2020), several consulate officials in Chengdu behaved inconsistently with their identities, intervened in internal Chinese affairs, and jeopardized China's national interests. Moreover, China viewed the move as a lawful and appropriate response to the US' one-sided and unreasonable order to close China's General

Consulate in Houston, blaming the US for the deterioration of diplomatic relations between the two nations.

As a result, the impact of this diplomatic crisis has become more difficult to overcome, foreshadowing the beginning of a larger diplomatic conflict between the two countries. Even as it announced the closure of the US consulate, China appeared to be aware of this danger, implying that the US could help restore stability in their bilateral relations if it instantly revoked its decision on the Houston consulate. Meanwhile, the Trump administration said that the Houston consulate's closure was essential because it had become known for illegal surveillance and propaganda activities, claims disputed by Chinese authorities.

2.3.3. Widespread Nationalism/Xenophobia and Racism Sentiments

A rise in nationalism became imminent as COVID-19 spread around the world and people were forced to be on lockdown. This was by no means the result of the pandemic on its own, especially in the US. President Trump's policy has always been a move toward protectionism and "America First," as he stated in his speech to the UN General Assembly on the 22nd of September, 2020. This feature was exacerbated by the travel ban's isolation from the rest of the world, as well as the temporary halt in numerous companies, including imports. But probably the most important issue was the narrative war between the two superpowers, China and the US. Both parties are on opposite sides, using each other as scapegoats for the public's uproar due to the catastrophic toll on the two nations (Jaworsky & Qiaoan, 2020).

According to Jaworsky & Qiaoan (2020), nationalism, on the Chinese side, came in the form of anti-imperialism. It is best seen in the "Fang Fang Incident" in April 2020. Fang Fang, a 65-year-old Wuhan-based writer, has been documenting the events in her city since late January and providing daily updates online during the lockdown her diaries were first well-received in China, but

once the English and German editions of her book were posted on Amazon in April, the public's perception of her shifted dramatically. Fang Fang was accused of "handing foreigners a dagger" by providing "false evidence" through her journal, and even her supporters felt betrayed. She went from being "one of us" by providing a voice to the voiceless sick people of Wuhan to being on the opposite side that tried to weaken China.

Due to the conditions imposed on people by the pandemic, the uncertainty of life, the sense of fear, and the rise of nationalism, the world witnessed an increase in xenophobia and racism, especially in China and the US. On the American side, especially with the president repeatedly using the term "Chinese virus," a wave of xenophobia swept over the country. Moreover, the spread of anti-Chinese rhetoric on social media, which was ignited by Trump's tweets against China, has led to a significant increase in the rates of hate crimes against them. In fact, 3795 hate crimes against Asian Americans were documented in the US from March 2020 to February 2021, which put the hate crime rate up by nearly 150% compared to 2019 (Hart, 2021). Such xenophobic remarks are not exclusive to Trump. Senator John Cornyn, in a press conference on March 18th, 2020, argued that China is to blame for the virus because "they are a culture where people eat bats and snakes and dogs and things like that". The public's xenophobia and racism were evident in the rise in hate crimes against Asian Americans, many of whom were fired, denied service, or avoided in public. On the Chinese side, a sharp increase in anti-African discrimination has been reported in the Chinese city of Guangzhou, where African residents have been subjected to evictions and service denials, as well as a racialized campaign to have them compulsorily tested for COVID-19, self-isolated, or quarantined (Human Rights Watch, 2020).

2.3.4. The US Withdrawal from the World Health Organization

The World Health Organization (WHO) is a United Nations (UN) agency founded in 1948 to coordinate global health policies within the UN system and organize unified health responses in the world. In addition, it implements a variety of programs aimed at preventing, controlling, and treating Ebola, measles, malaria, HIV/AIDS, and a variety of other diseases. Historically, the US has been the biggest supporter and financial provider of the WHO. According to Blyther, Blanchfield, Weed, and Gill (2020), the US contribution accounts for 22% of the organization's core expenditure. It also contributes funding to the organization's many activities and projects voluntarily.

Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Trump administration stated on May 29, 2020, that the US would terminate its partnership with the WHO and devote resources to the US global health interests. The US authorities informed the UN Secretary-General that they are going to withdraw from the organization by July 2021. This announcement came in the wake of a high daily rise in COVID-19 cases globally (Gostin, et al., 2020). The US decision to end the country's relationship with the WHO has outraged the scientific community. Experts emphasized that the decision would have an impact on the organization's work, which at the moment requires coordinated efforts to confront COVID-19 and develop a vaccine to defeat the virus. Additionally, the US withdrawal would erode the organization's limited resources and jeopardize its health programs in the world's poorest countries.

The Trump administration justified the decision by claiming that the WHO mishandled the crisis, arguing that it was pro-China and incompetent in its management of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, Trump described the WHO as a Chinese puppet and China-centric, accusing it of helping China in covering up the COVID-19 outbreak in its early stages. Moreover, Trump condemned the WHO for neglecting early reports of the rapid spread in Wuhan and refusing to

investigate, unreasonably complimenting China on its integrity despite China's inconsistencies in reporting to the WHO and providing massive incorrect or deceptive information about the virus ("Trump Administration Submits," 2020).

On the other hand, China viewed the US's withdrawal from the WHO as an opportunity to extend and strengthen its global influence. Immediately after the US withdrawal, China offered \$2 billion to the WHO to aid poorer countries in dealing with COVID-19. The sum nearly equals the WHO's total annual expenditure and covers the US funding of \$400 million (Nebehay & Farge, 2020). Furthermore, China has defended the WHO and criticized the US decision to withdraw from the organization, describing it as another example of the US adopting unilateralism, leaving partnerships, and breaching agreements. China also praised the WHO, calling it the world's most respected and qualified international organization in the domain of public health security (The Associated Press, 2020).

The US' withdrawal from the WHO will undermine its global influence while providing China with a great opportunity to gain greater control over the global political landscape, particularly given the organization's considerable geopolitical weight.

2.3.5. China's Rise in Southeast Asia

Southeast Asian countries were the first to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic because of their geographical proximity to China, with Thailand reporting the first case of infection outside of China. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the Southeast Asia region became a central focus of a strategic competition between China and the US. China's investments and policies in the region have raised US officials' fears that China is acquiring significant geopolitical influence over an area of strategic, political, and economic significance to the US. However, with the emergence of COVID-19 and its repercussions, the US adopted an "America First" foreign policy and withdrew

from many international agreements and organizations, such as the WHO, in addition to preventing the export of US-made medical equipment, even to its allies. As a result, the US retreat from performing its leadership role during the crisis created a leadership vacuum in the region that China thought it could fill (Bahi,2021).

Moreover, China seized on the US's failure to respond to the worldwide shortage of personal protective equipment and other medical kits necessary to confront the pandemic to present itself as a responsible international leader. Furthermore, according to a survey conducted by the ASEAN Studies Centre and the ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute (2021), China is regarded as Southeast Asia's most powerful political and strategic power. The survey also revealed that just 9.6% of respondents considered the US as the major support provider during the COVID-19 outbreak in Southeast Asia, whereas 44% perceived China as the main help provider.

The rise of China as the dominating power in Southeast Asia triggered by the COVID-19 outbreak indicates that China can lead a global response to an international crisis if the US fails to do so. Southeast Asia's case also demonstrates that the region's policymakers who owe loyalty to the US are prepared to look to China for leadership in times of emergency.

2.4. US-China Rivalry and Its Effect on Global Order

With the pandemic negatively affecting the whole global economy and driving certain countries' economies to the brink of collapse, many countries were in need of dire help. This presented the two global powers, the US and China, with an opportunity to gain influence and favor with them. They both employed different strategies to gain more weight and influence in the global order.

2.4.1. US-China International Efforts on Global Pandemic Recovery

Since the outbreak of the pandemic, China has seized the opportunity to gain favor and political influence over new countries and regions in Europe, Asia, and Africa. China's health diplomacy included providing medical aid to countries in Africa. As early as March, China shipped 5.4 million facemasks, over one million test kits, and thousands of protective garments to African countries. To help battle the COVID-19 pandemic, China deployed medical teams to Algeria, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Sudan, Djibouti, and Côte d'Ivoire (Gauttam, Singh & Kaur, 2020). It additionally provided online conferences with Chinese medical experts and their counterparts in the aforementioned countries on how to best face and handle the virus

Similarly, the aid was also extended to neighboring Asian countries such as Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar in the form of webinars, medical protective gear, test kits, and general medical supplies. China also pledged to provide the vaccine to all the countries in the region (Gauttam et al.,2020). European countries also had their fair share of Chinese aid, especially the Czech Republic, Spain, Italy, Belgium, France, Serbia, and Hungary; this aid came in the form of rapid test kits, masks, and protective gear (Gauttam et al.,2020).

The US, on the other hand, was slow to respond to global pandemic aid efforts after shifting to a more protectionist and isolationist stance. With the approach of "America first" and banning travel from China and then Europe, the US was at first disconnected from the world. However, following global outrage and criticism, the US pledged to offer funding in the form of donations of a total of \$174 million to 64 vulnerable countries around the world on March 16th, 2020 (Economic Times, 2020). The total of those donations has risen to amount to \$1.5 billion in 120 different

countries around the world in 2021. Additionally, earlier this year, President Biden announced that the US would donate 1.2 billion vaccination doses to countries around the globe.

2.4.2. US-China Military Tensions Over the South China Sea during COVID-19 Pandemic

The South China Sea is one of the controversial matters between the US and China because of its strategic location for trade movement in the region as well as its natural resources, which are estimated at 190 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 11 billion barrels of proven oil reserves according to the US Energy Information Administration (2013). The sea is located in the Western Pacific Ocean between Southeast Asia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Borneo. It is linked to the East China Sea through the Taiwan Strait and connects the Middle East to Northeast Asia's Indian subcontinent region. From a Chinese perspective, particularly in light of China's growing energy needs, the sea is its lifeblood since most of the country's energy demands pass through it, meaning that whoever controls it has influence over China's energy corridors and pipelines, threatening the country's energy and strategic security. The US, on the other hand, aspires to maintain its geostrategic influence by dominating the world's main waterways according to the naval power's policy of besieging naval forces and blocking navigation in the face of other countries during wartime and regional conflict.

Historically, China demands complete sovereignty over this sea and refuses to accept the 1982 Law of the Sea, claiming that its boundaries extend beyond that (see figure 2.1 below). On the other hand, to safeguard its political, security, and economic interests in the region, the US opposes China's territorial claims and land reclamation, deeming them a threat to freedom of navigation, which includes the unrestrained passing of commercial ships and other military ships and aircraft, across the South China Sea. (Lawrence, et al., 2019).



Figure 2.1. Chinese Claims and Disputed Islands in the South China Sea (Tangen Jr, 2020).

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, military tensions in the South China Sea have been escalating. The US and China have accused each other of exploiting the crisis to expand military activities in the Indo-Pacific. The US, for instance, has criticized China's deployment of coastguard forces to harass other states' oil and gas exploration activities in the South China Sea, as well as its increasing maneuvers and patrolling near Taiwan. China, on the other hand, has condemned the US for deliberately inflaming tensions in the South China Sea and other sensitive locations, including the Taiwan Strait, by boosting its military operations and drills in the region (Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, 2020).

In early 2020, China attempted to profit from the US nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt's departure from the South China Sea due to COVID-19 infection by deploying a task force to the northern South China Sea to perform a series of battles training. The US retaliated by deploying three Carrier Strike Groups, which was the biggest military deployment in the region since 2014. As a response to the deployment of US aircraft carriers, China sent four fighter

warplanes and four bombers to Woody Island in the Paracels. Subsequently, China carried out a series of maritime maneuvers in the Pacific Ocean in conjunction with the region's annual US military exercises (Thayer, 2021).

On a diplomatic level, the US condemned China's claims to territorial sovereignty over the South China Sea and its growing military presence there, urging China to respect international law. In a press release on China's expansion in the South China Sea, US Secretary of State Pompeo (2020) formally condemned China's expansion, stating that its claims to territorial waters across the majority of the sea are entirely illegal, confirming the US's support for the court decision by an arbitral tribunal in The Hague that rejected China's allegation. In response to the US accusations, China's Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian (2020) asserted that China's territorial sovereignty, maritime rights, and interests in the South China Sea are proven historically and legally and do not violate any international laws or treaties. Besides, he accused the US of destabilizing the region to preserve its interests, fueling unrest, and causing division between China and its neighbors, which undermines China's and Southeast Asian countries' endeavors to ensure solidity and prosperity in the region.

The importance of the South China Sea region has drawn China and the US into a bitter political and military conflict for dominance over this critical geostrategic region, with both sides attempting to prevent the other from dominating it in a manner that jeopardizes their mutual interests. Moreover, with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and its devastating repercussions, the confrontation between China and the US intensified, with the US trying to maintain a strategic presence in the area to protect its interests and China aspiring to dominate the sea and control the region's natural resources.

2.5. COVID-19's Effect on Global Economy:

When the pandemic hit the world, it crippled the global economy. With travel bans, transport limitations, implications of keeping safe with social distancing and lockdowns, workers being forced to quarantine if tested positive, and prioritization of medical needs every part of the financial sector was impacted.

2.5.1. Global Growth

The COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on the global growth rate, with lockdowns, travel bans, and disruptions in distribution cycles. At the beginning of the pandemic, all the economic experts predicted that it would hurt the global growth rate. That was the case when the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) both revised their forecasts from a 3.4% increase to a 3.5% deficit. In May 2021, the OECD assessed that global GDP had fallen by 3% in 2020, compared to a December prediction of -4.2%, and that it would rebound at a faster rate of 5.8% in 2021, rather than the 5.6% expected in March. The World Bank also lowered its global growth prediction from 2.5% to a negative 4.3% between January 2020 and January 2021 (World Bank, 2020). From 2019 through mid-June 2020, advanced economies were expected to face the sharpest decreases in economic growth, according to most predictions. In September 2021, the OCED updated its forecast. The new forecast showed an estimate of a decline in global growth in 2020 of 3.4%, but it also predicted that the global economy would increase by 5.7% in 2021 and 4.5% in the year after (Jackson, 2021).

2.5.2. Global Trade

Global trade also faced major disruption because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The World Trade Organization (WTO) on April 8th, 2020, forecasted a decrease of 13% to 32% in the trade volumes for that year, which would be more catastrophic than the effects of the financial crisis of

2008 (Khan, et al, 2021). In March 2021, the WTO released a revised forecast that stated that global trade didn't take as much of a severe hit as it had previously forecasted. The new forecast also indicated that global trade will witness a faster recovery than what they have previously projected. Global exports and imports declined by 7.8% and 6.8%, respectively, in the first quarter of 2020. They dropped by 11.6% and 11.1% in the second quarter. However, there was a rebound of 15.7% in exports and 12.9% in imports in the third quarter. They further increased by 6.1% and 7.2% in the fourth quarter. According to the new forecast, the GDP will fall by 3.8 percent in 2020 but rise by 5.1 percent in 2021. In its March forecast, the WTO said that further economic lockdowns due to a new wave of COVID-19 cases in the fall of 2020 might shave another 2% to 3% off the annual global GDP growth rate in 2021, negatively impacting global trade. In October 2021, the WTO forecast estimated that a larger impact on trade volumes occurred in 2020 than was previously forecasted, but growth of 10.8% was estimated for 2021, giving it a stronger recovery. The various forecasts by the WTO indicate an increase and a strong recovery in trade volumes globally in 2021 and 2022 (Jackson, 2021).

2.5.3. Global Energy Markets

The COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc on the world economy, particularly the energy industry. Personal automobiles and other major means of transport have been substantially decreased as a result of containment measures such as prohibitions on all essential travel, closure of international borders, shift to remote learning and working, and so on. As a result, energy production has decreased dramatically in response to decreasing global demand, as evidenced by lower output from nuclear facilities in Europe and the US in the first quarter of 2020. Natural gas demand fell by as much as 2% during the same period, with the biggest drops in China, Europe, and the US (Hoang et al., 2021).

Furthermore, there has been a major drop in the demand for coal and other fossil fuels. For example, the price of Brent crude oil on March 20th, 2020, fell to near \$20 per barrel. In April 2020, as a response to the decline in oil prices, oil producers agreed to cut the global supply by 9.6 million barrels per day, or 10%. On the 10th of December 2020, the Brent crude oil price went over the \$50 mark for the first time since March of that year (Jackson, 2021). As restrictions around the world began to be lifted and life somewhat became normal, the prices for oil and the energy markets witnessed a recovery, with the price of Brent crude oil breaching the \$100 mark earlier this year.

2.5.4. Global Foreign Investment

With the government posing restrictions and directing funds to urgent medical needs, the global foreign investments witnessed a decline. Inflows of direct global foreign investments declined by 42% in 2020 compared to the same period in 2019, according to United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), with an additional decline projected in 2021. The drop in foreign investment inflows to developed economies, which fell by 69 percent, accounted for a substantial portion of the global inflow totals. Inflows to Europe declined to a negative \$4 billion in 2020, indicating an outflow, compared to \$344 billion in 2019. Inflows to developing economies, on the other hand, fell by 12% over the same period, due in large to the positive inflows to China. Investment flows to developing Asia fell by 4% in 2020, to \$476 billion, accounting for over half of the total \$859 billion in global direct investment inflows (Takefman, 2021).

Except for Asia, all major geographic areas saw a decrease in foreign direct investment inflows in 2020 compared to 2019. Mainly, Cross-border investments, greenfield investments, investments in new company activity, and international project finance all saw a reduction in foreign investment. Global investment activity declined 10%, 35%, and 2% in 2020, compared to 2019. In

Asia and Transition economies, cross-border merger and acquisition activity surged by 31% and 147%, respectively, while in developed economies and Latin America, it decreased by 11% and 67%. International project finance, which is said to be a significant source of infrastructure financing, declined by 2% overall, but increased by 7% in developed nations, especially in Europe, and by 17% in Asia (Jackson, 2021).

2.5.5. Impact on Workers

With the business sector going on hold at the start of the pandemic, the labor market was due to be affected too. In a report published by the International Labor Organization (ILO), on January 21st, 2021, it was reported that about 9% of worldwide working hours were lost in the previous year, equating to 255 million full-time jobs. The worst effect of the pandemic will be a large loss of worldwide labor revenue, which would amount to roughly 4.4% of global GDP. In its annual report, the United Nations (2021) revealed that the global unemployment rate reached 6.5 percent, with 33 million people losing their jobs globally, in addition to another 81 million people who were forced to leave the labor market permanently. The report also revealed that, in comparison to their male colleagues, women and young workers are disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

2.5.6. Financial Markets

The financial markets experienced high volatility during the age of the pandemic, going up and down as news about the pandemic spread. The news dominated the financial sector and was at times a major factor driving market activity as one signal of the pandemic's economic impact. For example, between February 14, 2022, and March 23, 2020, the Dow Jones Industrial Average Index (DJIA), S&P 500, and other market indices lost one-third of their value. Between March and November, the index increased steadily, rising nearly three percentage points on Monday, November 9, 2020, purportedly in response to news that a COVID-19 vaccine had been produced.

The DJIA increased by more than 9% from November 3 to November 24. According to the article published by NPR, the index also increased by 1.5 percent on November 24, 2020, along with global equities markets, reaching a new high of 30,000 points for the first time, surpassing the previous high of February 14, 2020, before the pandemic-related economic shutdown (Zarrol, 2020).

Furthermore, the jump in market indexes reflected investors' favorable assessments of the news of successful COVID-19 vaccinations, political developments in the US, possibly additional fiscal stimulus measures by governments, and hopes for higher economic growth in 2021. The DJIA has been trending upward in 2021, breaking through 35,000 for the first time on July 23 and climbing by more than 14% between January 4 and September 17 (Jackson, 2021).

2.6. COVID-19's Impact on the US and China's Economies

In the US and China, the COVID-19 pandemic caused massive economic losses and an unprecedented drop in growth rates. These devastating repercussions made both countries realize the shortcomings of economic globalization and the importance of the local-based economy in the face of external crises and shocks.

2.6.1. COVID-19's Impact on US Economy

The COVID-19 pandemic had a devastating economic impact on the US, negatively impacting tourist revenue, the financial industry, labor, commerce, and other sectors. These impacts may be linked to the virus containment procedures that have been implemented, which have altered people's lives and caused the worst economic downturn since the 1929 Financial Crisis.

In the first quarter of 2020, the US GDP dropped by 5.1%. This drop is a result of business closures after the enforcement of curfew orders and the declaration of COVID-19 as a national emergency. Consequently, the economy shrank at a historically high rate of 31.2%. Furthermore, industries were forced to shut down, and people in multiple sectors lost their jobs, resulting in 6.1

million US citizens applying for unemployment insurance by March 2020. According to the US Department of Labor, there has never been a time in US history when such a large number of individuals applied for employment insurance (Amadeo, 2022).

In the US, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), 20 million Americans lost their jobs in April 2020 as a result of firm lockdowns, bringing the overall number of unemployed Americans to 23 million, 46 out of a total civilian labor force of 158 million. The increase boosted the national unemployment rate to 14.7 percent, the highest since the Great Depression of the 1930s. On the other hand, BLS reported on October 8, 2021, that nonfarm employment increased by 194,000 in September to 147.6 million, down from 366,000 the previous month; the total number of unemployed Americans was 7.7 million, down from 8.4 million the previous month; and the unemployment rate fell to 4.8 % (Jackson, 2021).

Furthermore, 43% of economic activities were temporarily shuttered, including major retailers, entertainment, clubs, restaurants, and personal care, such as hair salons. These activities were the most affected by the closure measures. Meanwhile, sectors that did not depend on on-site facilities to continue operating, such as professional services and housing, were not severely affected (Amadeo, 2021). In addition, the economic fallout caused by the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on financial markets, causing the US stock markets to crash. The 2020 stock market collapse occurred simultaneously with the WHO's formal declaration of COVID-19 as a global pandemic. Directly after the declaration, the Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA) index recorded its biggest loss, declining by 7.79%, in what some described as "The Black Monday," which is considered the worst drop for the Dow Jones index in the history of the US market (Amadeo, 2022).

2.6.2. COVID-19's Impact on China's Economy

China was the first country to be affected by COVID-19, pushing the Chinese authorities to implement extreme lockdown measures such as the closure of factories, transportation, trade markets, and other economic activities, resulting in a record recession in economic development that China has never witnessed.

The COVID-19 pandemic severely damaged China's economy, causing a decrease in production and a rise in unemployment, which rose from 5.3% in January to a record high of 6.2% in February 2020. The lockdown measures led to the cessation of most economic activities, impacting all sectors of the economy, including both the supply and demand chains, which has led to a decline in manufacturing and consumption. As a result, consumer spending has decreased considerably due to the severe constraints put on public life, which led to a decline in retail sales of 20.5% over the year, bringing down growth by 4.3 percentage points. Consequently, the pandemic resulted in China's worst-ever decrease in GDP growth and had a devastating impact on the economy much more than the 2008 global financial crisis. GDP growth declined to -6.8% in the first quarter of 2020, equating to a 216\$ billion yearly drop in GDP. Furthermore, investment in fixed assets initially declined the most, shrinking by 24.5%. Foreign direct investment also dropped by 10.5%, reducing the growth rate in the first quarter of 2020 (Amighini, 2021).

2.6.3. American and Chinese Shift Toward Localized/Regionalized Economy

The COVID-19 epidemic shook the global economic order, which is dominated by China and the US. The pandemic revealed the order's weakness and fragility in times of crisis, prompting a thorough investigation of the interconnected global economy that aided the spread of this dangerous disease and caused a severe economic crisis.

The pandemic revealed globalization's structural deficiencies, highlighting the shortcomings of a China-dependent supply chain. By virtue of being the world's largest supplier of intermediate goods and components required to manufacture finalized goods, the lockdown measures implemented in China severally affected the supply chain worldwide. This disturbance of China's supply chain has a severe impact on both manufacturing and market places in the US.

According to Liang (2020), numerous US policymakers believe that COVID-19 bolstered support for localized economies and exposed the dangers of overdependence on China for manufactured goods, with the US encountering shortages of crucial medical supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE) such as face masks and respirators. Moreover, US President Donald Trump has announced his intention to restructure the economy to turn the US into a manufacturing powerhouse and to terminate the country's dependency on China, either by decoupling or by imposing heavy taxes (Nelson, 2020).

Similarly, China has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown measures, resulting in significant economic disruption due to trade recession and lack of demand worldwide, which made the Chinese authorities realize the importance of the domestic market in the face of external turmoil.

Consequently, rather than relying on the rest of the world, China's new economic approach is more focused on the domestic market. China maintains an open investment policy while also preparing for the repercussions of a breakup with the US. The country places a strong emphasis on establishing self-sufficiency in vital sectors, including agriculture and technology (Bahi, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the risks of depending on a single country to secure the necessary inputs or finished goods, highlighting the need to regionalize or localize the supply chains as a primary priority for governments worldwide. To sum up, the rivalry between the US and

China, along with the COVID-19 outbreak, will not stop economic globalization, but rather it will encourage the emergence of alternative modes of production such as regionalization and localization.

Conclusion

In summary, the COVID-19 pandemic is a political and economic disaster as well as a health crisis. As the number of reported cases and associated economic and human losses increased, the US-China relationship worsened, and their hostility became more intense, destabilizing the global order and undermining efforts to control the pandemic. Each country sought to politicize the pandemic in light of the ongoing geostrategic rivalry between the two, which heightened further due to the pandemic's devastating repercussions. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic was a watershed moment in the history of the global order. The decline of the US's influence and the "America first" policy, followed by the US withdrawal from international institutions, led to an increase in China's global influence, as China positioned itself as a responsible global leader. Furthermore, both China and the US are concerned that one of them may use the pandemic to secure political, economic, or military advantages, enabling it to exert more control over the global order in the post-COVID world.

CHAPTER THREE

Analysis of the Repercussions of COVID 19 on US- China Relations: A Case Study of American and Chinese Media

Chapter Three: Analysis of the Repercussions of COVID 19 on US-China Relations: A Case Study of American and Chinese Media

Introduction	48
3.1. Analysis of Trump's Speeches.....	48
3.1.1. Media and Trump's Position Toward China	51
3.1.1.1. Press's Role.....	52
3.1.1.2. Social Media's Role.....	55
3.2. Analysis of Biden's Speeches	56
3.2.1. Media and Biden's Position Toward China	59
3.2.1.1. Press's Role	59
3.3.1 Analysis of Xi Jinping's Speeches	61
3.3.2. Media and Xi Jinping's Position Toward the US of America.....	62
3.3.2.1. Press's Role.....	62
Conclusion.....	65

Introduction

The emergence of COVID-19 has provided the US and China with a new field of conflict besides the military and economic spheres, which have historically been sources of confrontation. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, fake news and misinformation have dominated the global discourse about the virus's origin and who is to blame for its spread. Moreover, with the intensification of the health crisis and its economic and political repercussions, China and the US have engaged in an intense media war to dominate the global discourse on the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, this chapter aims to analyze and evaluate the official narratives issued by Chinese and US officials regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the chapter examines in further detail the media's position throughout the pandemic and how it defended and supported the official narrative in both countries.

3.1. Analysis of Trump's Speeches

The style and content of a politician's speeches and statements are crucial indicators of his rule and policies. Donald Trump's political discourse has distinctive characteristics. It is forthright and sometimes offensive; it clearly distinguishes between allies and enemies and does not hesitate to criticize allies; and it is an emotive language that employs the fewest words possible, so its phrases are rich in meanings, clues, and feelings. He sometimes used "crude" language that deviates from diplomatic protocol and amounts to blackmail.

In the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly held on September 22, 2020, Trump delivered a pre-recorded speech intended to promote his propaganda regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, which aims to inflame the international community against China and hold it accountable for the virus's spread.

In his speech, Trump used the phrase “the China virus” instead of COVID-19 to inculcate in the people's minds that China was responsible for the health crisis, not the US health measures or the government's response, forgetting his early underestimation of the virus's severity and disregarding all medical reports and warnings. Since the beginning of the crisis, Trump's hostility towards China has been evident. In the early days of the pandemic, Trump insisted on referring to COVID-19 as a “foreign virus” that started in China, a significant US strategic rival. In his first address after the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic, he stated, “This is the most aggressive and comprehensive effort to fight a foreign virus in modern history.” Moreover, Trump’s attempts to label COVID-19 as the "Chinese virus" in all his media statements are one of his strategies in the escalating confrontation between China and the US, which has already been exacerbated by the repercussions of the pandemic.

Trump has repeatedly attempted to depict China as the primary epicenter of the virus and therefore responsible for its spread. Despite the efforts of the WHO, which officially named the disease "COVID-19" to avoid associating the virus with the Chinese or any other ethnicity, Trump insisted on using it, arguing that the virus came from China. He also considered the use of this term as a reaction to Chinese propaganda, which claimed that the virus was a biological weapon made by the US military. However, Trump's associating COVID-19 with Chinese ethnicity or identity is mainly an attempt to avoid responsibility in front of American public opinion by blaming a foreign enemy and using it as a justification for his failure in dealing with the health crisis.

Furthermore, in his speech, Trump blamed China for the virus's spread, claiming that they allowed it to spread and infect the rest of the world. He said: “In the earliest days of the virus, China locked down travel domestically while allowing flights to leave China and infect the world.” He went further and directly accused China of being responsible for the COVID-19 pandemic, calling

on the international community to hold China accountable and impose severe sanctions on it, as illustrated in the following quote: “As we pursue this bright future, we must hold accountable the nation which unleashed this plague onto the world: China.” However, these allegations were not totally true and were denied by Chinese officials. Further, the Chinese authorities have implemented the most wide-ranging and strict measures possible to stop the cycle of infection. They have put Wuhan under shutdown since January 23, 2020, resulting in the suspension of international flights. Consequently, inhabitants of Wuhan were unable to go overseas during this period. Moreover, Andrew Cuomo, the governor of New York, confirmed that most of the reported cases in his state were strains of the newly introduced Coronavirus, which came to the US from Europe and not China (Layne & Resnick-Ault, 2020). In addition, since the early stages of the pandemic, China has regularly updated the World Health Organization and the US on the virus's progression, prevention and treatment measures.

Additionally, Trump accused the WHO of releasing false information about the virus and its mode of transmission, describing it as “virtually controlled by China” and demanding that the United Nations hold China accountable for its behavior regarding COVID-19. As a counterpoint, China's ambassador to the UN Zhang Jun called Trump's allegations “baseless and cannot fool anyone”, and stated: “lies repeated a thousand times are still lies...when the international community is going all out to fight COVID-19, the US is spreading a political virus. The US is abusing the platform of the UN to provoke confrontation and create division.” In the same context, Xi Jinping indirectly criticized Trump's statements, calling for a unified global response to COVID-19 and a prominent leading role for the World Health Organization, from which the US President had declared his decision to leave. Xi stated the following: “We should enhance solidarity and get through this together, we should follow the guidance of science, give full play to the leading role of the World Health Organization and launch a joint international response ... Any attempt of

politicizing the issue, or stigmatization, must be rejected.” Therefore, Trump's effort to blame China and accuse it of causing the spread of the virus is nothing but a desperate attempt to politicize the pandemic and exploit it to undermine China politically and economically. In fact, Trump viewed China as a strategic rival for global leadership, and he has taken a hostile stance toward it since taking office.

On January 19, 2021, Donald Trump delivered his last speech as US president. His farewell speech was not much different from his previous speeches, which were loaded with falsehoods, twisted facts, and accusations against China. In the speech, he commended his firm stance against China, claiming that he had exerted intensive global pressure on it, which indicated that he had undermined China's rising geopolitical influence. He said, “We have revitalized our alliances and mobilized the nations of the world to stand up to China like never before.” Notwithstanding his claim, Trump's isolationist approach and withdrawal from international organizations and agreements during the health crisis indirectly helped China expand its global influence. Consequently, China had the opportunity to present itself as a responsible global leader by donating medical assistance, vaccinations, and financial support to international organizations. Such an effort boosted China's global influence.

3.1.1. Media and Trump’s Position Toward China

The media is an essential weapon of confrontation between great powers, especially in times of crisis. With the intensification of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting significant economic and human losses, Donald Trump engaged in a media war with China in which he charged it the responsibility for the virus's spread. Even though Trump has a strained relationship with the US media, they adopted his anti-Chinese rhetoric and promoted his allegations against China over COVID-19.

3.1.1.1. Press's Role

The US press played a major role during the US-China media war over COVID-19. Moreover, rather than covering the pandemic objectively as a public health emergency, the US press has taken a biased and antagonistic stance against China. In other words, they have exploited the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan to serve Trump's nationalist "America First" policy through coordinated reporting that seeks to promote Trump's narrative and blame China for the pandemic.

On February 3, 2020, the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) published a controversial article titled "China is the real sick man of Asia." The article discussed the COVID-19 pandemic, criticizing Beijing's response and its attempts to cover it up, which caused it to spread. It also discussed the potential economic risks to the Chinese economy and their impact on the US economy. The article received furious criticism from the Chinese side, the international community, and a significant number of Americans. The WSJ also claimed that one of the most logical reasons for the Chinese government's motivations and efforts to cover up the outbreak is that the virus leaked from the Wuhan research lab, which requires an international investigation. This explanation is consistent with Trump's claim that the virus leaked from The Wuhan Institute of Virology. Therefore, the article was a concealed appeal for the world to restrict or confine China until it quits the race for worldwide leadership with the US, thus ensuring the implementation of Trump's "America First" agenda.

Following in the footsteps of WSJ, Foreign Policy published an article titled "The Chinese Virus Spread along the New Silk Road." in which it directly linked China to COVID-19, accusing it of not learning from the mistakes of the past, such as the sars-cov-1 epidemic in the early 2000s. The article included harsh criticism of the Chinese and their eating habits, referring to the Wuhan animal market and its unhealthy conditions. In addition, the author insisted on using the term

"Chinese virus" and promoted the theory that the virus was created in China. The article states, "Viruses may be forces of nature, but the coronavirus epidemic clearly seems to have been China-made." However, this kind of news will not confirm anything. Instead, it will increase anti-Chinese sentiments, leading to increased racist violence against Chinese people. The emphasis on calling COVID-19 "the Chinese virus" was direct support for Trump's narratives, who often argues that he does not differentiate against the Chinese, but simply underlines the fact that the disease was initially detected in China. Furthermore, in another report, Foreign Policy raised doubts about the validity of China's statistics by examining and reviewing a leaked Chinese virus database, which included thousands of patients in several Chinese cities. Even though it is unclear how this data was collected, the report makes it seem more reliable than the official one released by the Chinese officials due to concerns over China's integrity (Jia & Lu, 2021). Throughout Foreign Policy's coverage of the pandemic, the main theme was that China should be blamed and held responsible for the spread of the virus.

Moreover, The Atlantic magazine has published several articles that blame China directly and accuse it of mishandling the outbreak of the virus. As stated in one of its articles, "This is what allowed the virus to spread across the globe. Because the Chinese Communist Party was pretending that there was little to be concerned about, Wuhan was a porous purveyor of the virus. But is this a time for blame? Yes, it is. Accounting for responsibility when a disaster happens—particularly one likely to devastate entire countries, leaving thousands dead—is not beside the point."

Even pro-democratic newspapers, such as The New York Times, indirectly supported Trump's views regarding China. It published a conspiracy theory-based news article titled "Chinese Agents Spread Messages that Sowed Virus Panic in the US." Although the White House has clarified that the message "The Trump administration is going to shut down the whole country" was

fake, the newspaper continues to publish such headlines to attract readers and shape their perception of China.

In the same way, TV news channels, particularly Fox News, which is well-known for its right-wing bias and support of the Republicans, have taken an anti-Chinese stance that backs up Trump's accusations against China about the pandemic. During Fox News' show "The Five", the presenter Jesse Waters, sarcastically, asked China for an official apology explaining that the virus originated from the Chinese who eat bats and raw snakes because the Chinese Communist government can't feed them, describing them as desperate. He said, "I expect a formal apology tomorrow. Doesn't matter if it comes from [President Jinping] Xi or the embassy". Also, when he was trying to explain how the virus began spreading, he said, "Because they have these markets where they're eating raw bats and snakes. They are very hungry people. China's communist government cannot feed the people." In addition, Watters accused China of providing false and misleading information about the virus, which according to him, spread the infection to the rest of the world. He said, "And according to The New York Times, Dana, the Chinese government has been very deceitful and deceptive in communicating the extent of the infections to the world." Such irresponsible claims that have not been scientifically proven are not just racist, but also consistent with Trump's narration and efforts to stigmatize China with COVID-19.

The US press's promotion and support of Trump's accusations against China have affected Americans' views and attitudes towards China. In a poll conducted by YouGov America, 47% of respondents believed that it was either definite or probable that a lab in China was the origin of the COVID-19 virus, and 64% of them agreed that China's response to the COVID-19 outbreak caused the global pandemic (Jaworsky & Qiaoan, 2020).

In summary, the US press has consistently and directly supported Trump's foreign policy regarding China and its responsibility for the pandemic. Despite disagreeing with him on many domestic policies and criticizing him on many occasions, the US media sought to serve Trump's national security strategy, which regards China as a rival and strategic competitor, even in times of humanitarian crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.1.1.2. Social Media's Role

Social media is one of the alternative media's most important tools because of its ability to influence the attitudes and beliefs of its users. With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of home quarantine measures, social media has become the primary source of information about the epidemic. However, instead of using it to manage the health crisis and raise awareness about the virus's dangers, Trump decided to move his media war against China to social media platforms, particularly Twitter.

Throughout the pandemic, Donald Trump used Twitter to mobilize American public opinion and the international community against China with a series of anti-Chinese tweets blaming China for the virus's spread. On March 16, 2020, Trump tweeted: "The US will be powerful, supporting those industries, like Airlines and others, that are particularly affected by the Chinese Virus. We will be stronger than ever before!" This was the first time that Trump used the term "Chinese virus" which he used frequently from then on to refer to COVID-19, in an attempt to stigmatize China with the virus. In response to Trump's tweet, a spokesman for China's foreign ministry stated that the United States should take care of its problems before stigmatizing China with COVID-19. He also demanded that the US has to fix its mistakes and stop making false accusations against China (BBC News, 2020). In his tweets, Trump repeatedly referred to the virus as the "China virus," the "Chinese virus," or the "Chinese coronavirus" until he was banned from the platform in January of 2021.

On March 18, 2020, Trump tweeted again: “The onslaught of the Chinese Virus is not your fault! Will be stronger than ever!”. By using such offensive terms, he tried to indicate that the pandemic was the fault of China and that it should be blamed. In another tweet, he made a similar accusation about China's responsibility, stating: “Some wacko in China just released a statement blaming everybody other than China for the virus which has now killed hundreds of thousands of people. Please explain to this dope that it was the "incompetence of China", and nothing else, that did this mass worldwide killing!”. This is indeed a serious claim to be made by a president on a Twitter account. It reinforces the belief that the virus is the fault of the Chinese and maintains the concept that viruses are ethnic rather than biological in nature. Thus, it threatens to spread feelings of hatred and inflammatory rhetoric against Asians in general and the Chinese in particular.

To conclude, social media platforms, especially Twitter, played a major role in Trump's propaganda campaign against China. He took advantage of the popularity of social media and the fact that it drew many users to promote his claims regarding China's responsibility for the pandemic. Trump's tweets affected the attitudes and perceptions of numerous users of these platforms regarding China and its responsibility for the virus. Consequently, this led to the spread of anti-Chinese sentiments and increased rates of violence against them.

3.2. Analysis of Biden’s Speeches

With the democrat and Joe Biden seizing power over the white house, the language used in press briefings and speeches shifted drastically. Although Biden’s speech was on the less extreme side, coming from the Democratic Party as opposed to Trump’s and the republican extremism. Despite that, there was still a clear hostile tone toward China, and China was still labeled as the number one global competitor and threat, which was evident in Biden’s speeches.

In all of Joe Biden's speeches to the American public, there is an emphasis on unity and being American. The words "we" and "Americans" are used frequently to emphasize that. Another aspect that Biden tries to make clear in his speeches is the role of America as a leader in the world, especially when it comes to issues like the pandemic, democracy or climate change, and the global good man in contrast to Russia and especially China. In his speech on September 22, 2021, where he announces that the US is committing to donating half a billion doses of vaccine he says "the US is leading the world on vaccination donations, as we're doing that, we need other high-income countries to deliver on their own ambitious vaccine donations and pledges." This overtly implies that the US is doing all it can to help, and simultaneously, covertly, implies that China is not. In this current administration's attempt to create a sense of unity, they needed an outside other to point fingers at, which happened to be China.

Joe Biden's speeches are used as a tool to illuminate how democratic the US is, and how important democracy is. In a speech he delivers about human rights on October 15, 2021, Joe Biden talks about how America is committed to preserving and protecting human rights, and he illuminates how democracy is under threat by saying "And as we look around the world today, we see human rights and democratic principles increasingly under assault. We feel the same charge of history upon our shoulders to act. We have fewer democracies in the world today than we did 15 years ago, fewer, not more, fewer". Later on, in a speech delivered on January 6, 2022, he directly talked about how China is betting against democracy by saying "From China to Russia and beyond, they're betting that democracies' days are numbered. They actually told me democracy is too slow, too bogged down by division to succeed in today's rapidly changing and complicated world. They're betting, they're betting America will become more like them and less like us".

Another incident where China is directly mentioned in a speech Biden delivered at the G20 summit on October 31, 2021, where he talked about the important role America is playing in preserving the climate and combating climate change; Biden said “The disappointment relates to the fact that Russia and including not only Russia but China, basically didn’t show up in terms of any commitments to deal with climate change. And there’s a reason why people should be disappointed in that. I found it disappointing myself”, this directly accused China of not being committed to solving global issues, at least not in the same way America is. In another speech for the intelligence community, delivered on July 27, 2021, Biden talked about the possibility of war and how it will be the result of a cyber breach. During that speech he also talked about his experience with the Chinese president, Xi Jinping, and how he is determined for the Chinese military to become the number one in the world, Biden said “He is deadly earnest about becoming the most powerful military force in the world, as well as the largest and most prominent economy in the world by the mid-forties.2040s. It’s real”. And later on in that same speech, Biden talked about how the US should fight to stay on top, especially in the technology field, he even directly named China as the number one competitor when he said “As good as everything is, as we compete for the future of the 21st century, with China and other nations, we have to stay on top of the cutting-edge developments of science and technology. This is all used to paint a picture of America as the savior and protector while China is the threat that all American and citizens of the world should rally against and stand behind their leader, America.

3.2.1. Media and Biden’s Position Toward China

There was a major shift in the narrative and direction the press and TV outlets took after Biden came to office. It was no secret to anyone that Trump was not the media’s friend, and they were at clash most of his time in office. So, when Biden took office, there was a shift in press and

media discourse. With less time invested into attacking the president, they had more time to attack outsider threats such as China, further feeding the US-China propaganda war.

3.2.1.1. Press's Role

During the Biden era, so far, the press has continued to play its important propaganda role in the US-China war. Despite Russia coming into the forefront of the media attacks, China continued to get its fair share of it. Although these attacks became less apparent and less frequent, with the current events, they were still there, and still loud and clear that China is the main enemy on the global battlefield.

On March 31, 2021, the news organization, CNN, published an article titled “14 countries and WHO chief accuses China of withholding data from pandemic origins investigation.” This article plays into the narrative that China is withholding information about the pandemic and the origin of the virus. It makes sure that the most prestigious organization in this matter and the global authority on it agree on the point that China is not being truthful. Later, on September 8, 2021, the news outlet published another article titled “Pro-China misinformation operation attempting to exploit US COVID-19 divisions, report says.” This article directly accused China of using misinformation to stir up the divisions created by the pandemic, similar to what the Russian did with the 2016 election. This according to the article came as a direct response to discredit Pro-Democracy protests in Hong Kong. Furthermore, on May 10, 2022, CNN published another article as a companion piece to a segment played on the news channel. The article titled “‘Stop asking why’: Shanghai intensifies Covid lockdown despite falling cases”, further attacks China on its handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, and specifically the Zero-Covid policy. The article highlights videos that were shown in the TV segment that shows the citizen of China being brutally forced to abide by the restriction and Zero-Covid policy.

Another news outlet, The Wall Street Journal (WSJ), which has already demonstrated that it is not a big friend of China, has continued to publish articles attacking China during the Biden era. On April 18, 2022, the news outlet published an article titled “China’s Covid-19 Restrictions Threaten Economic Recovery” that heavily criticized China’s handling of covid and its policies toward it. The article goes into detail on how the restriction implemented by the Chinese government, are crippling growth in the country. On May 11, 2022, the WSJ published another article titled “China Censors WHO Chief’s Call to End Covid-19 Strategy Dubbed Unsustainable”, talking about how China blocked a certain criticism of its policy coming from the director of WHO, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. This article illuminates that even WHO does not believe that China’s Zero-Covid strategy is sustainable.

Fox News, being the voice of the far-right, unsurprisingly did not waver on the attacks on China. On May 29, 2021, the news outlet published an article titled “Explosive study claims to prove Chinese scientists created COVID.” The article quotes a study done by British Professor Angus Dalgleish and Norwegian scientist Dr. Birger Sørensen, which states that, is very unlikely that the virus came out of a natural process. Furthermore, on February 13, 2022, Fox News published another article titled “10 reasons why scientists believe coronavirus originated from the lab in Wuhan, China.” This article explains that even after two years, there is no proof that the virus was the result of nature. Fox News tries to make its case using 10 different arguments.

3.3.1. Analysis of Xi Jinping’s Speeches

All politicians use speeches as a medium to rally their subject or target audience behind them to their cause, and the Chinese President is no different. Being the leader of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping often uses speeches to appeal to the nationalist sentiment of the Chinese people

and to reinforce the Chinese Communist Party values and principles. These are often directed toward the west, and more specifically the US.

Even though China uses a different method of communicating and responding to the world, through the spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese president has directly replied on a few occasions to accusations or discourse from the US. During the UN General Assembly, on September 22, 2020, at the height of covid, where trump delivers his “America first” approach to the pandemic, Xi Jinping said that China will not engage in zero-sum games, which was directed toward the US but a few days before that, he said that “no country has the right to dominate global affairs, control the destiny of others, or keep advantages in development all to itself”, which was a more direct response to the US and stated a clear point that China is better suited to be the world leader during this crisis over the US. Furthermore, On 1 July 2021, delivered a speech on the 100th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party, in which he said “we will never allow any foreign force to bully, oppress, or subjugate us. Anyone who would attempt to do so will find themselves on a collision course with a great wall of steel forged by over 1.4 billion Chinese people” as a direct threat to the US meddling in the Chinese affairs and Taiwan, which they consider to be part of China. Moreover, on July 6, 2021, at the World Political Parties Summit, Xi fired a more obvious shot toward the US in his speech there. During this speech, he stated that countries that take part in technology blockades should be rejected, which came as a direct reply to the US and its allies adding Chinese technology companies such as Huawei to a blacklist that would be limited in operation or banned. He also said, in that speech, that "Looking from the angle of 'My Country First', the world is narrow and crowded, and often full of fierce competition” Which was a direct response to trump’s “America First” slogan. Earlier this year, on April 21, 2022, during a Boao Forum for Asia opens in Hainan speech, he took further aim at how the US handles conflict on the international level by saying “stay committed to peacefully resolving

differences and disputes between countries through dialogue and consultation, support all efforts conducive to the peaceful settlement of crises, reject double standards, and oppose the wanton use of unilateral sanctions and long-arm jurisdiction” in which is talking about the current conflict with Russia, but overtly is talking about the tariff war and sanctions between the US and China that has been ongoing for years now and intensified during the first few months of COVID, with the conspiracy of China being the one that manufactured the virus.

3.3.2. Media and Xi Jinping’s Position Toward the US of America

The Chinese Communist Party maintains total control over the media, which is seen as an important aspect of the country's political system and a propaganda tool for advancing the party's ideology and strengthening its rule. It is founded on a communist mindset that views strict control over guns and pens as the most efficient way to maintain power. With the outbreak of COVID-19, the Chinese media lined up behind the official narrative of Chinese officials and their discourse about the pandemic. They countered Trump’s claims about the virus’s origin and China’s responsibility through organized propaganda campaigns. They went further and held the US responsible for the pandemic.

3.3.2.1. Press’s Role

With the spread of COVID-19 and the increasing number of cases worldwide, accusations and suspicions arose on social media platforms and in the international press that Chinese officials mishandled the crisis and concealed the disease's severity. Therefore, China has tried to control the narrative, and shift blame away from itself, domestically and abroad, by depending on its massive government-controlled press network.

Xinhua News Agency, the official state press agency of China, published an article criticizing Trump administration and accusing it of attempting to politicize the epidemic and

stigmatizing China with it to cover up its failure and mismanagement of the health crisis. It stated, “The US is continuously and wantonly attacking China, politicizing the pandemic and stigmatizing the virus in a bid to shift responsibility for their botched pandemic response and achieve the political motive of discrediting and suppressing China.” The article also claimed that China had made great efforts to identify the virus's origin and had shared all the information with the World Health Organization and the international community, which directly denies Trump’s allegation that China misinformed the world about the virus. Besides, the article raised questions about US biological laboratories and hinted that they probably had something to do with the spread of the virus, which supports the Chinese government's claim that the virus is US-made. As the following quote shows, “The US has remained silent on the serious concerns raised by the international community about the Fort Detrick bio-lab and the more than 200 biological laboratories overseas.”

Moreover, Xinhua continued to promote and use propaganda rhetoric against the US and the possibility of its involvement in creating the virus. Another article by the Xinhua agency directly accused the US of spreading the virus in China during the military games in Wuhan. According to the article, the virus's nature and widespread distribution make it an ideal weapon for striking and undermining the Chinese economy. However, these claims have been rejected by US officials, in addition to scientists, whose research confirms that the virus is of natural origin and not man-made. Furthermore, there is no chance that the squad that competed in the military games in Wuhan in October 2019 spread the infection. As the first case was reported in December, there is no evidence that any of the team members carried the coronavirus before the visit.

The People's Daily, which is the largest newspaper group in China, published an article titled “US. government sets bad example in global anti-virus fight” to condemn the US’ attempts to blame China for the pandemic and criticize its approach in dealing with the health crisis. The newspaper

stated that Trump's smear campaign against China would not undermine its success in containing the virus, nor would it help the US in managing the pandemic. It described the US officials who started that campaign as “ugly and unreasonable.” Furthermore, it criticized the US administration’s failure to play its role as a global power in facing the repercussions of the pandemic. On the other hand, it welcomed China's involvement and efforts in delivering medical aid to nations hit by the virus.

Moreover, the Chinese media have constantly depicted positive pictures of the epidemiological situation in China and focused on highlighting its efforts and assistance to the countries most affected by the virus. The official state channel, CCTV, has constantly broadcast videos of aid and medical teams sent to various countries, especially those that have been hit hard by the virus, such as Italy and Iran.

In summary, China tried to shift the blame to the US, accusing it of being the source of the virus through its government media network. The Chinese claim was a response to the US propaganda that the virus originated in a Chinese laboratory. In addition, the Chinese media's focus on showing off its role in confronting COVID-19 and sending aid to other countries is an attempt to divert domestic and international attention away from the US’ accusations and suspicions about China's misleading the international community about the outbreak, which many believe was a direct cause of the virus's spread.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we analyzed the official discourse of both US presidents, along with China’s president, during the COVID-19 pandemic. We found that both the Chinese and American sides engaged in a media war in which they exchanged accusations about who was responsible for the spread of the virus, which was clearly an attempt to export the internal crisis abroad. We also analyzed the Chinese and American media's coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic and their role in

this battle of conflicting narratives and propaganda in the context of the US-China rising conflict. The chapter concluded that the media in both countries supported and defended the official narratives issued by the authorities regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. The media further fueled the propaganda war by promoting conspiracy theories on both sides. It also played a major role in shifting the blame toward the other side and shaping the public opinion and perceptions of the other in each nation. Additionally, social media was weaponized in this media war to serve the authority's agenda.

General Conclusion

Historically, the relationship between the US and China has always been strained. Recently, with the rise of China as a global power, and the current ongoing pandemic, their conflict intensified to a cold war level. In this part, the findings of the study will be recapitulated.

Firstly, upon reviewing the historical origin of the US-China conflict, it was found that the tensions between the two global powers started as early as the foundation of the PRC due to the latter choosing to be a communist nation. The tensions were later intensified when China became a global power after the 2008 crisis, and essentially became a threat to the US dominance. These tensions were further escalated by Donald Trump being elected, and the Trade War that he initiated.

Regarding the repercussions that the COVID-19 pandemic brought upon the US-China relations, while the two had different approaches to confronting it, they exchanged accusations over the virus's origin. They employed conspiracy theories to shift the blame between them, which caused their relations to deteriorate even more. Additionally, their competition over the pandemic's global relief efforts made the tensions between them escalate to a new height, as they both regarded it as an opportunity to expand their global influence.

The study also tackled how both the US presidents in the COVID-19 era dealt with China and how their discourse toward it was, as well as the Chinese president's response to them. It concluded that Trump had a harsher, more direct, and hostile approach to China. His successor was more diplomatic and subtle in his discourse toward China, but he still viewed it as the number one competitor and a threat to the US. Their Chinese counterparts also used the same strategies, but perhaps less openly. He defended his nation from every accusation. This research also discussed how the media played a major role in furthering the authorities' discourse and narratives on both sides and how they contributed to the cold war state and tensions between the two countries. Both

the US and China are heavily reliant on discourse from their media to get their citizens on their side and to follow their agenda. Additionally, the media on both sides played a part in villainizing and othering the opposite side. Furthermore, social media was utilized as a weapon to disseminate false information about the opposing side or to explicitly criticize their approaches or policies.

Finally, we would like to recommend further studies on this topic, such as conducting comparative research on the Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union in the last century and the ongoing war between the US and China. It is also recommended to study the effects of this ongoing conflict between the US and China on the world order and the global political sphere.

References

- Allam, Z. (2020). The First 50 days of COVID-19: A detailed chronological timeline and extensive review of literature documenting the pandemic. *Surveying the Covid-19 Pandemic and Its Implications*, 1–7.
- Amighini, A. (2021). *China after Covid-19: Economic revival and challenges to the world* (1st ed.). Milan, Italy: Ledizioni.
- Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative. (2020, December 17). How Covid-19 affected U.S.-China military signaling.
- Associated Press. (2020, July 8). China defends WHO, lashes out at US move to withdraw.
- Bahi, R. (2021). The geopolitics of COVID-19: US-China rivalry and the imminent Kindleberger trap. *Review of Economics and Political Science*, 6(1), 76–94.
- BBC News. (2020, March 17). Trump angers Beijing with “Chinese virus” tweet. Retrieved May 18, 2022, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-51928011>
- Benguria, F., Choi, J., Swenson, D., & Xu, M. (2020). Anxiety or pain? The impact of tariffs and uncertainty on Chinese firms in the trade war. *SSRN Electronic Journal*.
- Blackwell, J. (2010). “The China Lobby”: Influences on U.S.-China foreign policy in the post war period, 1949–1954. *Forum: The Journal of Planning Practice and Education*, 2(1).
- Chang, J. J. (1986). *United States-China normalization: An evaluation of foreign policy decision making (G S I S MONOGRAPH SERIES IN WORLD AFFAIRS)*. Denver, Colorado: Univ of Denver Monograph Series.
- Chatzky, A., & McBride, J. (2020, January 28). China’s massive Belt and Road Initiative. Council on Foreign Relations.
- CNA analysis and solutions, & McDevitt, M. (2016, June). *Becoming a great “Maritime Power”: A Chinese dream*.

Council on Foreign Relations. (n.d.). U.S. Relations with China. Retrieved March 7, 2022, from <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/us-relations-china>

Lew, J. J., Roughead, G., Hillman, J., & Sacks, D. (2021, March). *China's Belt and Road implications for the United States* (79).

COVID-19 pandemic stalls global economic recovery: UN report. (2022, January 17).

Djankov, S., & Miner, S. (2016). *China's Belt and Road Initiative: Motives, scope, and challenges*. Washington, DC, The United States: Peterson Institute for International Economics.

Dollar, D. (2018, September 14). U.S.-China trade war has its seeds in the financial crisis. Retrieved April 15, 2022, from <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/09/14/u-s-china-trade-war-has-its-seeds-in-the-financial-crisis/>

Duignan, B. (2019). Great Recession. *Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc.* Retrieved April 16, 2022, from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/great-recession>

DUNFORD, M. (2021). China's Belt and Road Initiative and its implications for global development. *ACTA VIA SERICA*, 6(1), 91–118.

Enrico, C. (2018). Geopolitical implications of the Belt and Road Initiative: The backbone for a new world order? *Contemporary Chinese Political Economy and Strategic Relations: An International Journal*, 4(1), 39–105.

Feng, E., & Lucas, R. (2020, July 24). China Orders U.S. to close its consulate in chengdu. Retrieved April 28, 2022, from <https://www.npr.org/2020/07/24/894960595/>

Fifield, A. (2020, July 22). Houston's Chinese consulate ordered closed by Donald Trump administration. Retrieved April 28, 2022 from <https://www.texastribune.org/2020/07/22/houston-chinese-consulate-close-donald-trump/>

Friedberg, A. L. (2010). Implications of the Financial Crisis for the US–China Rivalry. *Survival*, 52(4), 31–54.

- Gao, J., & Zhang, P. (2021). China's public health policies in response to COVID-19: From an "Authoritarian" perspective. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 9.
- Gostin, L. O., Koh, H. H., Williams, M., Hamburg, M. A., Benjamin, G., Foege, W. H., . . . Kavanagh, M. M. (2020). US withdrawal from WHO is unlawful and threatens global and US health and security. *The Lancet*, 396(10247), 293–295.
- Hart, R. (2021, December 10). Trump's 'Chinese Virus' tweet helped fuel Anti-Asian hate on twitter, study finds. Retrieved April 20, 2022, from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/roberthart/2021/03/19/trumps-chinese-virus-tweet-helped-fuel-anti-asian-hate-on-twitter-study-finds/?sh=3de6833d1a7c>
- Hoang, A. T., Sandro Nizetić, Olcer, A. I., Ong, H. C., Chen, W. H., Chong, C. T., Nguyen, X. P. (2021). Impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on the global energy system and the shift progress to renewable energy: Opportunities, challenges, and policy implications. *Energy Policy*, 154, 112322.
- Hong, N., Gupta, S., Geraci, M., Zhang, Y., Martin, J. L., Cooper, A., & Dwyer, S. (2020, September). *U.S.-China relations in the age of COVID-19: Politics, polemics and pandemic response measures*. The Institute for China-America Studies.
- How COVID-19 Has Affected the U.S. Economy. (2021, December 24). Retrieved April 18, 2022, from <https://www.thebalance.com/how-covid-19-has-affected-the-us-economy-5092445>
- How Did the 2020 Stock Market Crash Compare With Others? (2022, May 4). Retrieved May 15, 2022, from <https://www.thebalance.com/fundamentals-of-the-2020-market-crash-4799950>
- Hswen, Y., Xu, X., Hing, A., Hawkins, J. B., Brownstein, J. S., & Gee, G. C. (2021). Association of "#covid19" Versus "#chinesevirus" With Anti-Asian Sentiments on Twitter: March 9–23, 2020. *American Journal of Public Health*, 111(5), 956–964.
- Human Rights Watch. (2020, May 5). China: Covid-19 Discrimination Against Africans.

- Jackson, J. K. (2021, November). *Global Economic Effects of COVID-19* (R46270). Congressional Research Service.
- Jain, M., & Saraswat, S. (2019). US–China Trade War: Chinese Perspective. *Management and Economics Research Journal*, 5, 1.
- Jaworsky, B. N., & Qiaoan, R. (2020). The Politics of Blaming: The Narrative Battle between China and the US over COVID-19. *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, 26(2), 295–315.
- Khan, A., Khan, N., & Shafiq, M. (2021). The Economic Impact of COVID-19 from a Global Perspective. *Contemporary Economics*, 15(1), 64–75.
- Lawrence, S. V., Campbell, C., Fefer, R. F., Leggett, J. A., Lum, T., Martin, M. F., & Schwarzenberg, A. B. (2019, August). *U.S.-China Relations* (R45898). Congressional Research Service.
- Layne, N. J. R., & Resnick-Ault, J. (2020, April 24). Coronavirus came to New York from Europe, not China, governor says. Retrieved May 15, 2022 from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-healthcare-coronavirus-usa-new-york-idINKCN2262MQ>
- Liang, Y. (2020, May 9). The US, China, and the Perils of Post-COVID Decoupling. Retrieved April 18, 2022, from <https://thediplomat.com/2020/05/the-us-china-and-the-perils-of-post-covid-decoupling/>
- M. Gunter, M. (2020). The US refusal to recognize China (1949–1979). *Cappadocia Journal of Area Studies (CJAS)*, Cappadocia University, 2(2 (1)), 3–19.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China. (2020, July 14). *Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian’s Regular Press Conference* [Press release]. Retrieved April 20, 2022, from http://asean.china-mission.gov.cn/eng/fyrth/202007/t20200714_8271786.htm
- Mirski, S. (2013). Stranglehold: The Context, Conduct and Consequences of an American Naval Blockade of China. *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 36(3), 385–421.

- Nanto, D. K. (2009, October). *The Global Financial Crisis: Analysis and Policy Implications* (RL34742). Congressional Research Service.
- National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China, with State Council authorization. (2015, March 30). *Vision And Actions On Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt And 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road* [Press release].
- Nebehay, S. E. F. (2020, May 18). U.S. savages WHO as it promises pandemic review, but China pledges \$2 billion. Retrieved April 23, from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-who-idUSKBN22U111>
- Nelson, S. (2020, September 8). Trump threatens to “decouple” U.S. economy from China, accuses Biden of “treachery.” Retrieved April 21, 2022, from <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/trump-threatens-to-decouple-u-s-economy-from-china-accuses-biden-of-treachery-11599553852>
- Noland, M. (2018). US Trade Policy in the Trump Administration. *Asian Economic Policy Review*, 13(2), 262–278.
- Özkan, G. (2010). Geopolitical Impacts of the Global Financial Crisis Within Context of the Power Transition Theory. *The Journal of Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences*, 15(2), 131–150.
- Prasad, E. (2009, February 17). The Effect of the Crisis on the U.S.-China Economic Relationship. Retrieved March 10, 2022, from <https://www.brookings.edu/testimonies/the-effect-of-the-crisis-on-the-u-s-china-economic-relationship/>
- Quesnel, A. (2015, April). *American Diplomacy Through The Lens Of Non-State Actors: The China Hands, The China Lobby, And The Chinese Civil War*. Acadia University.

- Seah, S., Thi Ha, H., Martinus, M., & Thao, P. T. P. (2021, February). *The State of Southeast Asia: 2021 Survey Report*. ASEAN Studies Centre at ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute.
- Sharaf, N. (2021, April 20). China's Belt and Road Initiative and US Middle East Policy.
- Suisheng, Z., & Guo, D. (2019). A New Cold War? Causes and Future of the Emerging US-China Rivalry. *Vestnik RUDN. International Relations*, 19(1), 9–21.
- Takefman, B. (2021, September 24). Global foreign direct investment fell by over 40% last year, what's next for 2021? Retrieved April 25, 2022, from <https://researchfdi.com/foreign-direct-investment-2021-global>
- Tangen, O. (2020, May 26). Chinese claims and disputed islands in the South China Sea. Retrieved April 20, 2022, from <https://www.dw.com/en/is-china-taking-advantage-of-covid-19-to-pursue-south-china-sea-ambitions/a-53573918>
- Tankersley, J., & Bradsher, K. (2018, September 18). Trump Hits China With Tariffs on \$200 Billion in Goods, Escalating Trade War. Retrieved April 17, 2022, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/17/us/politics/trump-china-tariffs-trade.html>
- Thayer, C. (2021, January 13). COVID-19 masks mischief in the South China Sea. Retrieved April 05, 2022, from <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2021/01/13/covid-19-masks-mischief-in-the-south-china-sea/>
- The Bureau of Economic Analysis. (2022). *National Income and Product Accounts*.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The People's Republic of China. (2020, September 8). Working together to Elevate China-ASEAN Relations to Higher Level. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www.mfa.gov.cn/ce/ceasean/eng/dshd/t1813086.htm>
- The Office of the Historian. (n.d.). The Chinese Revolution of 1949. Retrieved March 29, 2022, from <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/chinese-rev>

the U.S. Department of State. (2020, July 13). *U.S. Position on Maritime Claims in the South China Sea* [Press release]. Retrieved March 30, 2022, from <https://2017-2021.state.gov/u-s-position-on-maritime-claims-in-the-south-china-sea/index.html>

The US Energy Information Administration. (2013, February). *South China Sea*.

The White House. (2017, December). *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*.

Trump Administration Submits Notice of U.S. Withdrawal from the World Health Organization Amid COVID-19 Pandemic. (2020). *American Journal of International Law*, 114(4), 765–772.

United Nations. (2021). *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021*.

U.S. Office of the Press Secretary. (1972, February 27). *Joint Statement Following Discussions With Leaders of the People's Republic of China* [Press release].

U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission. (2018). *USCC 2018 ANNUAL REPORT*. U.S. Government Publishing Office.

Wong, E., Jakes, L., & Myers, S. L. (2020, July 23). U.S. Orders China to Close Houston Consulate, Citing Efforts to Steal Trade Secrets. Retrieved April 15, 2022, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/22/world/asia/us-china-houston-consulate.html>

World Bank Group. (2020, June 8). *The Global Economic Outlook During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Changed World*.

Young, J. (2018). Strategic Responses of Advanced Economies to the Belt and Road Initiative. *China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies*, 04(03), 381–399.

Zarrol, J. (2020, December 31). Stocks 2020: A Stunning Crash, Then A Record-Setting Boom Created Centibillionaires. Retrieved April 28, 2022, from <https://www.npr.org/2020/12/31/952267894/>

Appendices

Appendix A. Presidents' Speeches

Speeches	Title	Date	Link
Trump's Speeches	President Trump Addresses the Nation on Coronavirus	12/03/2020	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mii6NydPiqI
	Donald Trump's Speech During the United Nations General Assembly.	22/09/2020	https://www.voanews.com/a/episode_president-trump-addresses-un-general-assembly-4427661/6112451.html
	Donald Trump's Farewell Speech	19/01/2021	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6h5_d3DUdR4
Biden's Speeches	Joe Biden's Speech to Intelligence Community Workforce	27/07/2021	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AluqHhPX1QE
	Joe Biden Announces U.S. To Donate 500 Million COVID	22/09/2021	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MtGK1E0NWJ8

	Vaccine Doses Speech		
	Joe Biden Human Rights Speech at University of Connecticut	15/10/2021	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNnT8VVe4vE
	Joe Biden G20 Summit Speech in Rome	31/10/2021	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KaX42HgFWDM
	Joe Biden Speech on Anniversary of January 6 Capitol Attack	06/01/2022	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZpUj5Tq68hI
Xi Jinping's Speeches	China President Xi's Full Speech at U.N. General Assembly	27/07/2021	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Zm2dKMiWZM
	Xi Jinping Speech at 100th Anniversary of Chinese Communist Party	01/07/2021	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2gApVyE8HGM

	Xi Jinping Speech at the CPC and World Political Parties Summit	06/07/2021	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PdQ3Gu6ozbA
	China President Xi's Speech at Boao 2022 Forum for Asia Opens in Hainan	22/09/2020	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jYqaMv0pV0E

Appendix B. News Outlets Articles

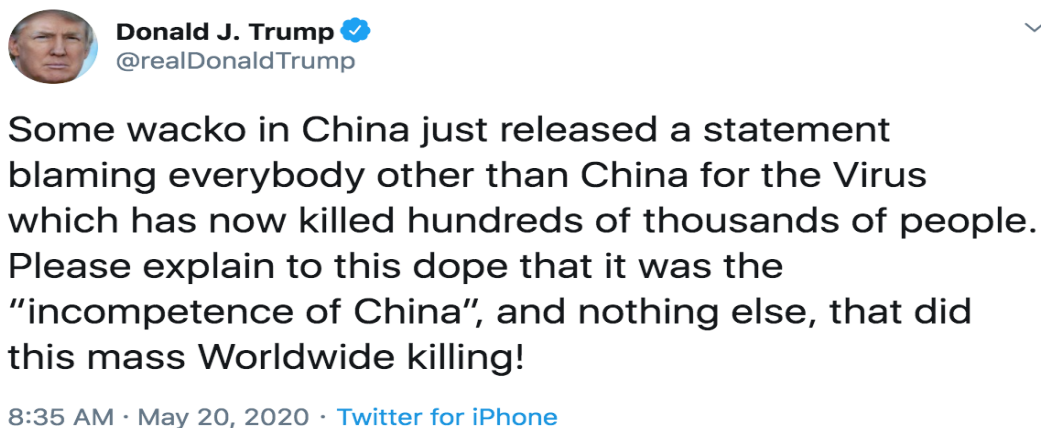
Outlet	Title of the Article	Date	Link
The Wall Street Journal	China Is the Real Sick Man of Asia	03/02/2020	https://www.wsj.com/articles/china-is-the-real-sick-man-of-asia-11580773677
	China's Covid-19 Restrictions Threaten Economic Recovery	18/04/2022	https://www.wsj.com/articles/chinas-covid-19-restrictions-threatens-economic-recovery-11650287954
	China Censors WHO Chief's Call to End Covid-19 Strategy Dubbed Unsustainable	11/05/2022	https://www.wsj.com/articles/china-censors-who-chiefs-call-to-end-covid-19-strategy-11652270048
CNN	14 Countries and WHO Chief Accuse China of Withholding Data from Pandemic Origins Investigation	31/03/2021	https://edition.cnn.com/2021/03/31/asia/who-report-criticism-intl-hnk/index.html

	Pro-China Misinformation Operation Attempting to Exploit US Covid Divisions, Report Says	08/09/2021	https://edition.cnn.com/2021/09/08/politics/pro-chinese-disinformation-operation-coronavirus-pandemic-protests/index.html
	'Stop Asking Why': Shanghai Intensifies Covid Lockdown Despite Falling Cases	09/05/2021	https://edition.cnn.com/2022/05/09/china/china-covid-shanghai-restrictions-escalate-intl-hnk/index.html
Fox News	Explosive Study Claims to Prove Chinese Scientists Created COVID	29/05/2021	https://www.foxnews.com/world/explosive-study-claims-to-prove-chinese-scientists-created-covid
	10 Reasons Why Scientists Believe Coronavirus Originated from Lab in Wuhan, China	13/02/2022	https://www.foxnews.com/politics/reason-scientists-believe-coronavirus-originated-lab-wuhan-china
	Jesse Watters Demands	02/03/2020	https://www.foxnews.com

	Apology from China Over Coronavirus Outbreak		m/media/jesse-watters-demands-apology-china-coronavirus
Foreign Policy	The Chinese Virus Spread Along the New Silk Road	06/04/2020	https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/04/06/chinese-coronavirus-spread-worldwide-on-new-silk-road/
The Atlantic	China Is Avoiding Blame By Trolling the World	19/03/2020	https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/03/china-trolling-world-and-avoiding-blame/608332/
New York Times	Chinese Agents Helped Spread Messages That Sowed Virus Panic in the U.S., Officials Say	22/04/2020	https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/22/us/politics/coronavirus-china-disinformation.html
Xinhua agency	U.S. Accusations Against China on COVID-19 Origins Tracing Totally Groundless: Chinese	18/08/2021	http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/northamerica/2021-08/18/c_1310133987.htm

	Consul General		
	U.S. Publisher Rejects Random Lab-leak Theory of COVID-19	09/07/2021	http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-07/09/c_1310051650.htm?bsh_bid=562226994 <u>7</u>
The People's Daily	US. Government Sets Bad Example in Global Anti-virus Fight	22/03/2020	http://en.people.cn/n3/2020/0322/c90000-9670968.html

Appendix C. Donald Trump's Tweets



ملخص

أدت جائحة كوفيد-١٩ إلى تصعيد كبير في حدة الصراع والتنافس بين الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية والصين، مما أدى إلى تعطيل جهود مواجهة الفيروس وزعزعت استقرار النظام العالمي. وبالتالي، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل تداعيات جائحة كوفيد-١٩ على العلاقات الأمريكية-الصينية والأسباب التاريخية لتزايد العداء بينهما. وعلاوة على ذلك، تستعرض الدراسة تغطية وسائل الإعلام الأمريكية والصينية للجائحة والدور الذي اضطلعت به في سياق الحرب الإعلامية بين الولايات المتحدة والصين. وتعد هذه الدراسة بحثاً نوعياً يعتمد على المنهج التاريخي والوصفي والتحليلي للإجابة على أهداف البحث بشكل فعال. وتوضح الدراسة بأن الصراع بين الصين والولايات المتحدة متجذر تاريخياً وليس نتيجة لجائحة كوفيد-١٩ بمفردها. وخلصت إلى أن جائحة كوفيد-١٩ كانت لها تداعيات سلبية على العلاقات الأمريكية الصينية باعتبار أنها تسببت في احتدام الصراع بينهما. وتوصلت الدراسة أيضاً إلى أن تفشي فيروس كوفيد-١٩ أشعل حرباً إعلامية بين الولايات المتحدة والصين حول منشأ الفيروس، حيث كانت وسائل الإعلام في كلا البلدين منحازة إلى ما تسرده الجهات الرسمية بالإضافة إلى اضطلاعها بدور المتحدث الرسمي باسم السلطة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الحرب الإعلامية، الصين، العلاقات الأمريكية الصينية، الولايات المتحدة، كوفيد-١٩.