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Contents

Dear Readers,

I am pleased to present this latest issue of our journal, featuring a diverse range of articles that tackle critical issues in social science.

We begin with Shahzada Rahim Abbas's analysis of Russia's expanding influence in the Arctic, exploring the geopolitical dynamics in the North Pole. Yassine Ismaili then examines the impact of partisan media on minority groups in the United States, focusing on incivility and polarization in political discourse.

Our third contribution is a review of an article on migrant settlement dynamics in Istanbul's Beyoğlu district, authored by Esra Kaya Erdoğan, Hatice Kurtuluş, and Deniz Yükseker, and reviewed by Buket Özdemir Dal. This review offers valuable insights into urban migration in Turkey.

We conclude with a thoughtful book review by Zubeyde Aykaç, reflecting on a century of Turkish foreign policy and providing a critical analysis of the work's historical and theoretical significance.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our reviewers for their diligent and insightful evaluations, as well as to our authors for their contributions to this issue. My appreciation also goes to our editorial team for their hard work in bringing this edition to fruition.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement with our journal.

Sincerely,
Burak Yalım
Managing Editor
Journal of International Relations and Political Science Studies

Research Article - Araştırma Makalesi

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ULUSLARARASI İLİŞKİLER ÇALIŞMALARI DERNEĞİ

RUSSIA'S EXPANDING INFLUENCE IN THE ARCTIC: A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF THE NEW GREAT GAME IN THE NORTH POLE

ABSTRACT The undertaken research investigates the contemporary demonstration of the "Great Game" at the North Pole by considering Russia's expanding pivot towards the region. Over the past two decades, the Arctic region has experienced significant changes in its geopolitical and ecological landscape as a result of climate change. The rising global temperatures and the rapid ice-melting in the region are opening up new opportunities for the great powers including Russia and North Atlantic Treaty Organization members for maritime trade and economic opportunities. Unlike the NATO neighbours, the Russian involvement in the Arctic region both in terms of military and economic investment is unprecedented. By employing a theoretical framework based on the Realist School of International Relations, specifically the theory of geopolitics, this study analyses the various dimensions of Russia's involvement in the Arctic. The research examines Russia's two major strategic objectives: balancing geopolitical competition with aspirations for cooperation and assessing its implications for economic, geopolitical, and security landscapes. By carrying out a comprehensive investigation of diplomatic initiatives, strategic manoeuvres and military presence of Russia, the study aims to explore the motivations behind its expansion to the Arctic region. Finally, the research investigates the consequences of the Russian rapid expansion towards the Arctic region for geopolitical affairs and regional stability by emphasizing the sustainable security architecture to prevent a geopolitical turf between Russia and its NATO neighbours.

Keywords: Great Game, Arctic Security, NATO, Russia, Sustainable Security Architecture (SSA), UNCLOS

Introduction

The term "Great Game" refers to a long-standing geopolitical phenomenon that dates back to the 19th century, when the Russian Empire and Imperial Britain engaged in a fierce competition for dominance over Eurasia (Parker, 2010). Although the Great Game concluded more than a century ago, the concept has continued to play a significant role in geopolitical discourse up to the present day. In recent times, a new geopolitical landscape has been unfolding in the ice-covered Arctic region, which may potentially serve as a fresh arena for Great Power rivalry (Gabrielson & Śliwa, 2014). The accelerating pace of climate change and the melting of Arctic ice have made the North Pole a focal point for major powers, including Russia, China, and NATO countries (Michel, 2011). As a result, Russia increasing involvement in the Arctic region by establishing military bases and aiming for dominance over the area may initiate a new chapter in the Great Game with NATO. The huge amount of untapped energy resources such as oil, and gas and its maritime significance make the Arctic Ocean a new geopolitical ground for the major powers (Depledge, 2020). Russia has been concentrating on enhancing its Arctic strategy since 2010 by initiating the Drifting Station North Pole-38 in October of that year and launching the nuclear icebreakers Rossiya and the research ship Akademik Fyodorov in July 2011 (Sergunin & Konyshev, 2014). The increasing involvement of Russia in the form of significant investments in the LNG-1 and LNG-2 projects, as well as the development of three major ports in the Arctic ring, has attracted the attention of other Arctic coastal states, including those in the NATO alliance (Moe, 2020). Since 2010, Russian President Vladimir Putin made the development of the Arctic Sea maritime Sea Route a major objective of Russian Foreign Policy (Staun, 2017).

Russian pivot to the Arctic region is primarily shaped by two dominant international relations (IR) discourses, which serve as guiding foreign policy directions. First, there is a discourse rooted in realism and geopolitics, which prioritizes security and often exhibits a strong sense of patriotism (Godzimirski & Sergunin, 2020). This discourse involves exploring, winning, or conquering the Arctic and asserting power, including military power, to protect Russian national interests in the region. The second discourse emphasizes cooperation and collaboration with other Arctic states, while also acknowledging the region's environmental and economic potential (Wilhelmsen & Gjerde, 2017). However, the existing security framework concerning the Arctic Region failed to develop an environment of cooperation and consultation between Arctic states. Russian involvement in the Arctic region stands out among other Arctic states, and it could potentially put the security of the region at risk in the years to come (Keil, 2014).

In this respect, a new security architecture in the Arctic region is needed to avoid a future confrontation between Russia and the NATO bloc. Without the development of a sustainable security architecture for the Arctic region, it is possible that the region could become a new ground for the Great Game between Russia and the NATO alliance (Blunden, 2009). By focusing on the intricate geopolitical dimensions of Russia's involvement in the Arctic, this study aims to uncover the economic, geopolitical and security implications of its assertive policies in the region.

Previous studies have only focused on the security paradigms of the Arctic theatre, however, this research aims to investigate the nature of geopolitical competition between Russia and NATO through the lens of the New Great Game. The paper employs a realist perspective to investigate tactical moves, diplomatic endeavours, and the military presence of Russia in the Arctic, to evaluate the possible consequences for regional stability and global relations. Contemporary geopolitical dynamics in the Arctic region, characterized by intense security competition involving NATO, are viewed through the lens of offensive realism in explaining the bellicose actions of Russia in the region. Since offensive realism is associated with the structure analysis of international system and states that states often pursue competition and confrontation to maximize their self-interest, power and fear of other states. In the case of Arctic region, the expanding influence of Russia in the North Pole is primarily triggered by security, economic and geopolitical interests with an aim of status-seeking in the global affairs (Lagutina, 2019; Grajewski, 2017). However, various Arctic scholars like Andreas Østhagen (2019) viewed the Russian aggressive push towards the Arctic region from securitization and new International Relations (IR) constructs such as 'security regions' to explore the role geography in the determing the state behaviour. According to Østhagen, the expanding pivot of Russia towards the Arctic arises from the 'security regions' viewpoint since the Arctic basin shares borders with the NATO countries (Østhagen, 2019). However, as per the offensive realism, the competition among the major powers in the strategic theatre is not limited to regional security framework. It also involves intense competition for maximizing power, security dilemma, strategic advantage, and resource domination.

In this respect, the major purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive Russia's strategic manoeuvres, diplomatic efforts, and military presence in the Arctic, and to evaluate the potential consequences for regional stability and global relations. For this purpose, the study uses qualitative research method that includes the content analysis of diplomatic strategies, military strategies and existing literature on Arctic geopolitics. The content of the research is based on the existing scholarly works and primary sources like Kathlein Keil's (2014) ' Arctic

Security Matters and Alexander Sergunin's Russia in the Arctic: Hard Or Soft Power. The paper consists of four major sections that underscore the direction of the research. The first section briefly discusses the history of the North Pole ranging from major exploratory phases and the evolution of scientific research to the geopolitical evolution of the region. The second section explores the contemporary geopolitical landscape of the Arctic region, while also considering the implications of the increasing Russian presence in the region for the global political order. The third section briefly discusses the expansive Russia's expansive territorial claims in the Arctic Ocean within the framework of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of Seas and its implication for Arctic governance. Lastly, the paper examines the potential geopolitical conflict in the Arctic region, seen through the lens of Russian strategy to assert dominance, in a manner reminiscent of the historical "Great Game" between Russia, China, and NATO.

I.History of the North Pole: From exploration, Scientific research to Geopolitics
The Arctic region is a huge geographical landmass, which is the northernmost area of the Earth, extending from the Nordic coasts to the northern regions of Scandinavia, Russia, Canada, Greenland, and the U.S. state of Alaska. The earliest exploration of the Arctic region dates back to the 330s BC when the Greek voyager Pytheas travelled from the north to modern-day Britain (Roller, 2005, p. 60). Although the region was not of great geographical importance to the European Empires due to its topography covered in ice, it became significant in the 15th century when explorers sought to find the Northwest passage to connect Europe and Asia directly. In the late 13th century and early 15th century, two prominent European explorers, John Cabot and Martin Frobisher took various voyages to find the Northwest Passage (Costa, 1880). First, in the late 13th century, John Cabot from Italy took two major voyages in search of the Northwest route but remained unsuccessful. However, his exploratory voyages did discover North America, which motivated other European explorers (Skelton, 2017, p. 20). Likewise, in the late fifteenth, English explorer Martin Frobisher initiated his Arctic discovery expedition to find the Northwest Passage. He took three major voyages across the North Pole between 1576 and 1578 to study the chokepoints and general topography of the Arctic zone. In 1576, it is believed that he discovered gold on Baffin Island during his initial expedition, thereby attracting the attention of European empires to the area (Wheatley, 2009). However, later his claims turned out to be false, but his expeditions were notable for their groundbreaking exploration of the Arctic region, which led to the British territorial claims to Canada.
The expeditions undertaken by John Cabot and Martin Frobisher in the Arctic during the Middle Ages were pivotal in the colonization of the region during the 19th and 20th centuries (Auger, 2018).

The significant pivot towards the Arctic region began during the 19th century, which was motivated by national pride, colonization, scientific curiosity and imperial competition (Wheatley, 2009). In 1845, British explorer Sir John Franklin took one of the largest expeditions towards the North Pole with a crew of 128 men aboard HMS Erebus and HMS Terror. HMS Erebus and HMS Terror, along with their crews, vanished without leaving any trace, thereby giving rise to the enigma surrounding the great voyage (Zorn, 2023, p. 25). This major event marked a significant turning point in Arctic exploration by triggering one of the largest search manoeuvres in history. Throughout the 20th century, various expeditions were taken by voyagers to trace the wreckage of HMS Erebus and HMS Terror, which contributed immensely to the scientific study of the North Pole (Têtuet al., 2019). The wrecks of the Erebus and Terror were discovered in 2014 and 2016, respectively, which provided some answers but left many questions unanswered about the final days of the crew.

From the historical standpoint, the beginning of the 20th century marked a pivotal moment in the Arctic region's exploration, with Scandinavians, the British, Americans, and the Soviets embarking on expeditions towards the North Pole (Depledge, 2020). Moreover, in the past, the Arctic region was commonly referred to as the final frontier of humanity that had yet to be managed or controlled. This perception prevailed until the middle of the 20th century (Osherenko & Young, 1989, p. 11). Initially the nature of the Arctic exploration competition between the Soviet Union, Scandenavians, the U.S. and Britain in the arctic was purely focused on Scientific research (Doel, et al., 2014). However, the race of scientific research turned into geopolitical competition, when Russia discovered the Tazovskoye Oil and Gas Condensate Field in 1962, marking its initial significant Arctic energy exploration. After a few years, in 1968, the U.S. made its first Arctic oil and gas discovery in the Prudhoe Bay field situated on the North Slope of Alaska coast (Toker, 2014). The geopolitical importance of the Arctic region rose to prominence after the Soviet discovery of the large proportions of gas reserves, which forced the Europeans and Americans to stimulate their exploration process.

On the contrary, the latter half of the 20th century was a pivotal moment in the story of Arctic exploration, as countries surrounding the Arctic, including the Soviet Union, the United States, Canada, Denmark, Norway, and the United Kingdom, initiated offshore oil and gas exploration in the region (Depledge, 2020). After the Soviet discovery of a gas field at Tazovskoye, the U.S. also intensified its offshore oil and gas exploration by constructing artificial gravel islands on the Alaskan State waters (Toker, 2014). Likewise, Canada also followed suit at the beginning of the 1970s pursuing offshore oil and gas exploration in the Canadian Beaufort Sea on the coast of MacKenzie River.

In this regard, the Arctic region gained geopolitical significance in the 1960s due to the competition between the Western bloc and the Soviet Union over offshore gas and oil exploration (Marshall, 1986). Moreover, after the 1980s, the Soviet Union and its Western rivals during the Cold War began constructing major research stations often referred to as bases, which are largely distributed across northern polar parts of the Arctic. During the height of the Cold War in the early 1960s, the U.S. and the Soviet Union intensified the construction of secret military and intelligence stations in the Arctic region (Doel et al., 2014). Compared to the United States and other Western countries, the Soviet Union was more active in the construction of research centres, air bases and intelligence outposts in the Arctic due to its proximity to North America.

However, the end of the Cold War and the breakup of the Soviet Union shifted the geopolitical landscape of Arctic exploration. The breakup of the Soviet Union shifted the power dynamics on the world stage as Russia could not catch up with the superpower status due to economic and political bankruptcy in the 1990s (Hansen-Magnusson, 2019). The economic turmoil of the late 1990s drove post-Soviet Russia to shutter its foreign bases, including those in the Arctic, which remained closed for over a decade and a half. The Russian loss of focus in the Arctic region also led to the decline of Western interest towards the Arctic region despite its potential geopolitical imperative (Depledge, 2020). The geopolitics of the Arctic region remained the least discussed issue in mainstream global politics until 2007, despite its significance. In 2007, Russian President Vladimir Putin reinitiated the Russian pivot to the Arctic region as a vision to restore Russian global power status. Nonetheless, exploring the Arctic strategic potential has remained a major geopolitical ambition of the former Soviet and New Russian political elites (Hansen-Magnusson, 2019). President Vladimir Putin is deeply invested in the Russian aspirations in the Arctic and endeavours to capitalize on the Arctic theme of human triumph over nature, which is a prominent aspect of contemporary Russian nationalism (Laruelle, 2013). Since Russia holds a significant portion of the Arctic coastline, which is over 53%, and the construction of offshore gas fields provides Russia with an advantage in the region, it is clear that Russia has a strong presence in the Arctic (Keil K., 2013). Moreover, since 2007, Russia has significantly revitalized its position in the Northern Polar region by establishing Northern Naval Fleet and Arctic military brigades along with the establishment of major military bases concentrated around Murmansk Oblast (Boulègue, 2019).

The Russian expanding influence in the Arctic region in the last decade and a half became a major geopolitical concern for NATO members such as the United States, Canada and other Arctic coastline states in Europe (Depledge & Kennedy-Pipe, 2018).

From the perspective of NATO, the Russian militarization of the Arctic region seeks to accomplish three goals. First, Russia by militarizing the Arctic region wants to augment homeland defence, particularly a frontline defence against foreign invasion in the wake of growing economic investments in the region (Depledge, 2020). Second, the Arctic region contains huge oil and gas reserves, which are essential for the economic future of Russia. Last, by expanding its presence in the Arctic region, Russia wants to revive its global power status by projecting its powers in the North Atlantic (Laruelle, 2014). Moreover, the United States and its NATO allies in Europe have a clear understanding of Russian grand strategy regarding Arctic domination, and they are also actively involved in the region. As a result of heightened tensions in the Arctic region attributed to NATO claims, Russia started closely collaborating with China, a non-Arctic country, to jointly invest in the Arctic development process (Tabachnik & Miller, 2020). Today China is a major economic and strategic partner of Russia in the Arctic geopolitical race because the development of the Arctic route is geopolitically and geoeconomically significant for the global economic domination by China (Rainwater, 2013). Hence, the growing expansion of the Russian pivot towards the Arctic region with a close partnership with China threatens the geostrategic interests of the NATO bloc, which ultimately altered the geopolitical landscape of the Arctic region (MacDonald, 2021). From a modern historical perspective, the current geopolitical power dynamics in the North Pole indicate the commencement of a New Great Game between the West and Russia in the Arctic.

I.Contemporary Geopolitics in the North Pole and Russian Arctic Policy

Due to the climate, the Arctic ice is melting at a faster pace making the region more accessible to resources and economic opportunities (Ebinger & Zambetakis, 2009). According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the Arctic Oceans contain approximately 13% (90 billion barrels) of untapped oil reserves and 30% of undiscovered gas reserves of the world (EIA, 2012). The accessibility to the Arctic region might trigger competition between the great powers such as Russia and NATO, which ultimately will determine the future security prospects at the North Pole (Østhagen, 2019). So far, the Arctic ecosystem seems vulnerable due to the lack of sustainable security architecture and the expanding influence of Russia in the region (Pilyasov et al., 2015). As the largest Arctic coastal state, Russia holds 52% of the hydrocarbons in the Arctic, which makes it a major power in the region from the empirical estimation, and the distribution of estimated Arctic oil and gas resources among the five coastal states (Keil K., 2013) is illustrated below in Figure 1.
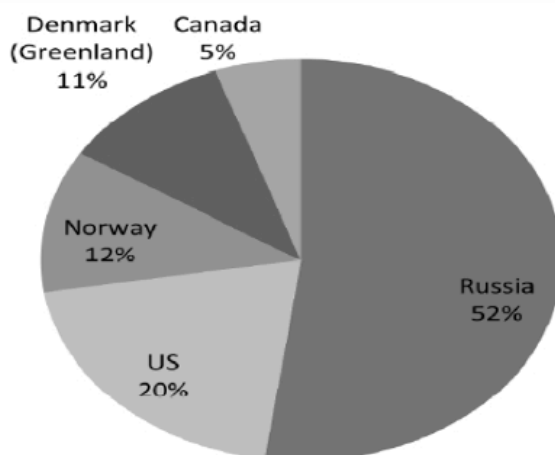
Note: This figure shows a rough estimate retrieved from Keil K., "The Role of Arctic Hydrocarbons for Future Energy Security", NAPSNet Special Reports, January 07, 2013https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-special-reports/the-role-of-arctic-hydrocarbons-for-future-energy-security/

Russia is significantly more active in the Arctic than other Coastal States, as evidenced by the approval of a $300 billion incentive program in 2020 by the Russian government for the development of infrastructure, industrial zones, and oil and gas fields in the region. On the other hand, the total amount of investment by Western countries in the Arctic, including the U.S., Canada and Europe worth less than $250 billion, which demonstrates the slow pace of the Western coastal states in the Arctic. The investments in Arctic energy projects are a fundamental part of Russian grand strategy towards Europe and the U.S. From the Russian viewpoint, investments in the Arctic are essential to reduce its dependency on Europe and boost its defence capabilities in the face of hostile NATO near its borders (Tabachnik & Miller, 2020).

The foreign policy strategies of the Coastal states on both sides of the Arctic Ocean are guided by a unique spatial logic that influences their actions in the context of an indistinct Arctic territory and takes into account the most recent developments in regional construction (Knecht & Keil, 2013). To fully comprehend the strategic importance of the Arctic region, it is necessary to view it through the prism of the intensifying geopolitical rivalries among the major powers, several of which are now actively engaging in the area (Depledge, 2020). Geopolitics is at the heart of the new great power competition for the spatial and economic domination of the Arctic region. The contemporary nature of power dynamics in the Arctic region can be distinguished in terms of the geopolitical interests of the individual Arctic coastline states. When Russia placed its flag on the North Pole in the summer of 2007, the Western mainstream media reacted with alarming headlines to draw the attention of the public.

The popular headlines included catchy phrases such as New Cold War, New Great Game, Arctic Meltdown and Arctic Land Grab referring to the Russian growing influence in the Arctic region coupled with the forthcoming confrontation with NATO (Antrim, 2010). Moreover, the narratives concerning the Russian expansion towards the North Pole were constructed upon geopolitical beliefs of the 20th century concerning Russian history dating from the imperial and Soviet times (Laruelle, 2012). The major objective of the construction of these narratives was aimed at refurbishing the geopolitical rivalry between the Eurasian heartland and the Western Maritime heartland (Antrim, 2010). The melting of ice in the Arctic region due to climate change has made it possible to access fishing and sea routes, attracting the attention of major powers such as Russia, NATO countries led by the U.S., and other nations (Ebinger & Zambetakis, 2009). This development opened a new geopolitical frontier for the possible confrontation between the Russian Federation and NATO countries.

i.Russian Official Policy Towards the Arctic

The Russian focus at the state level towards the Arctic officially began in 2006 that marked the beginning of the new geopolitical race in the region. Within two years, on September 28, 2008, the Russian president Dmitry Medvedev approved first state-level strategy consist of six pages towards the Arctic entitled 'The Foundations Of The Russian Federation's State Policy In The Arctic Until 2020 And Beyond'[1] (Medvedev, 2008). The six page document consists of six major sections outlining the Russia key focus in the Arctic that includes Russian national interests in the North pole: extraction of the resources in the Arctic; turning the NSR into a unified national transport corridor and line of communication; and maintaining the region as a zone of international cooperation (Arctic Portal , 2010). The document was amended and approved on February 20 2013 by Russian president Vladimir Putin under the New title "Strategy for Development of the Russian Federation's Arctic Zone and Ensuring National Security until 2020", which made the development of the Arctic region as fundamental component of national security strategy of the Russian Federation (Russian Government, 2013). The new Arctic strategy further emboldened Russian geopolitical and security maneuvers in the Arctic region. Under the new Arctic strategy on December 1 2014, the Northern Fleet Joint Strategic Command was established to enhance the Russian military presence in the Arctic (Tass, 2014). The establishment of the Northern Fleet Joint Strategic Command under the 2013 Arctic strategy clearly demonstrated the Russian military ambitions in the Arctic region.

[1] This document laid the foundation of Russia state-policy towards the Arctic region, which was revised in 2013 and finally in 2013 susequently by Russian President Vladimir Putin.

On the contrary another major turning point it the Russia state policy towards Arctic occurred on october 26 2020, when the Russian President approved the revised version of Russian Arctic Strategy under the new title "Strategy for Developing the Russian Arctic Zone and Ensuring National Security until 2035" (Kremlin, 2020). The presendential decree No. 164 is displayed in the Figure 2 below, which details the Russian geopolitical, security and economic ambitions in the Arctic region by 2035. The new six page document contains updated Russian goals and objectives in the Arctic region reflecting current geopolitical, environmental, security and economic conditions in the region.

Figure 2 Russian Presidential Decree on Artic Strategy 2035
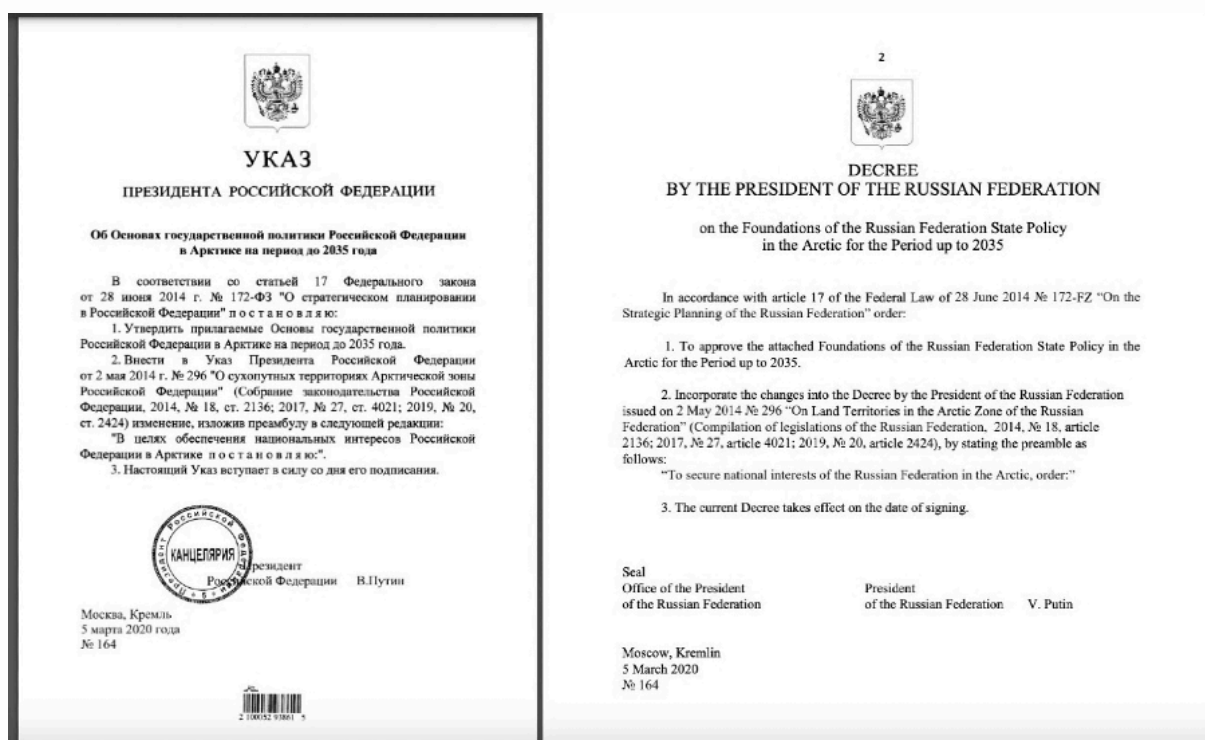
Note: This Presidential Decree No.164 was adapted from "On the Strategy for Developing the Russian Arctic Zone and Ensuring National Security until 2035", Kremlin.ru, October 26, 2020 http://www.en.kremlin.ru/acts/news/64274

Under the new revised strategy the core focus of Russian state strategy to develop the critical infrastructure ranging from highways, railways, industries and to new developed Northern Russia. Another key goal of the new strategy to improve the living standards of Russians living in the North pole. The document states "the government needs to improve the quality of life for people living in the North and members of indigenous communities, accelerate the region's economic development, take care of the environment, protect Russian national interests in the Arctic" (Arctic Russia, 2020).

However, the major Russian goal as mentioned in the document is the protection of Russian territorial integrity and soverignty in the Arctic region by preserving the Arctic as the "area of peace". In this respect, the newly revised official strategy of the Russian Federation clearly demonstrates the assertivenes of Russian Pivot towards the Arctic both economic and security sphere.

i.Threat Matrix in the Arctic and NATO's response

The maritime geopolitical overtures in the early 20th century began with the famous work The Problem of Asia by American Naval theorist Alfred Thayer Mahan, which addressed possible confrontation between the Russian Empire and Western powers over trading passages across the Asian continent, from the Near East to China (Antrim, 2010). In his seminal work The Problem of Asia (1900), Mahan briefly mentioned the limitations of Russian naval power in dominating key maritime routes to the Asian continent, which believed gave an upper hand to Western maritime powers such as Great Britain and the United States (Mahan & Sachsman, 2003, p. 33). For instance, the naval presence of Russia in the Baltic Sea through Saint Peterburg faces the sea power of Nordic states across the Danish Strait and the Gulf of Finland. Similarly, in the Black Sea, the Naval fleet of Russia faces British and American Sea power in the Mediterranean across the Dardanelles and Strait of Gibraltar (Luzin et al., 1994). Likewise, in the Far East, the Russian naval presence in Vladivostok is facing competition from the Japanese Navy, which has made the outpost a limited challenge to Western interests in the region (Antrim, 2010). Several years later, British Geographer Halford Mackinder in his seminal work The Geographical Pivot of History pointed out the southwestern parts of imperial Russia as a key juncture between Europe and East Asia. According to Mackinder, Russia could dominate the major corridors between East Asia and Europe through steppes and plains in the Southwest, which was the central theatre during the Great Game of the 19th century (Hall, 1955).

Both Mahan (1900) and Mackinder (1904) did not directly address the Russian naval potential in the Arctic, which was inaccessible for naval deployment during the early 20th century. However, in his groundbreaking geopolitical work, Mahan did mention the Debatable Lands, which divide Russia from Western Europe along the peripheries of Asia (Kikkert & Lackenbauer, 2020). Moreover, the Arctic coastline of Russia falls in the category of Debatable Lands coined by Alfred Thayer Mahan because the Arctic coastline of Russia extends from the Norwegian border on the Kola Peninsula to the eastern region of the Bering Strait (Antrim, 2011).

In 1933, the Soviet Union established its Northern Naval fleet based in the Kola region, which presently forms the largest portion of the Russian Navy (Luzin et al., 1994). Nonetheless, the geopolitical dynamics of the Arctic region altered during the second half of the 20th century when Arctic ice melting progressed at a rapid pace. The climate change-driven transformations in the Arctic allowed the Soviet Union, United States, Canada and Europeans to pursue offshore oil and gas exploration that brought the Arctic region to mainstream geopolitical discourse (Chaturvedi, 2020). In this respect, the contemporary Russian strategy towards the Arctic region can be traced back to the Soviet Union, which played a pivotal role in shaping the contemporary approach of Russia towards the North Pole by establishing the Northern Naval Fleet, military bases, intelligence outposts and research headquarter (Sergunin & Konyshev, 2017). Moreover, to comprehend the current geopolitical situation of the world, it is crucial to take into account the latest wave of competition between Russia and the West, especially NATO, in the Arctic region.

On the other hand, the geopolitical theories pioneered by Mahan and Mackinder during the early 20th century play a crucial role in comprehending the contemporary geopolitical dynamics of the Arctic region. From the geopolitical standpoint of Mahan and Mackinder, the ongoing great power competition between Russia and the West at the North Pole is an apparent geopolitical reality of the 21st century (Chaturvedi, 2020). Moreover, the ongoing great power competition for resources in the Arctic is accompanied by shifting power dynamics, global security risks and regional stability at the North Pole. For instance, the expanding Russian pivot towards the Arctic Ocean especially its massive military presence in the Arctic zone jeopardizes the security dynamics of the region (Done, 2020) illustrated in Figure 2. In the past ten years, the Arctic Ocean has become a region of strategic importance, as it is of significant interest to NATO member countries, particularly the United States and its European allies (Wegge, 2020). Moreover, from the Russian perspective, the development of the Arctic Maritime route is essential for reviving the global prominence of Russia. Since 2010, Russian President Vladimir Putin has strengthened the position of Russia in the Arctic region by establishing military bases along with huge investments in the development of Arctic ports (Sergunin & Konyshev, 2014). In contrast to the substantial Russian presence in the Arctic, the involvement of the other six coastal states, the majority of which are NATO members, is relatively insignificant. The huge untapped natural resources in the Arctic region are geopolitically important for both Russia and its Western neighbours (Antrim, 2010). The attempt by a single power to dominate the Arctic Ocean can result in a significant geopolitical conflict that could destabilize the entire region.

Unlike Russia there is no formal strategy of the NATO towards the Arctic region, however, since 2015 NATO became deeply concerned with the changing security architecture of the High North. The initial attention towards the changing Security landscape of the Arctic came from U.S. when President Obama signed the Executive Order entitled 'Enhancing Coordination of National Efforts in the Arctic' on January 21, 2015. The executive order entailed the new U.S. strategy towards the changing security landscape of the Arctic (White House , 2015). This executive order became the foundational document for the NATO to mitigate the security risks in the High North and develop a parallel strategy to address them. The first major compiled report concerning the security of the Arctic was prepared and presented in the NATO parliamentary Assembly on October 7, 2017. The title of the report was 'NATO and the Security in the Arctic' which briefly highlighted the evolving security landscape of the region especially the growing Russian presence in the Arctic and its close cooperation with China (NATO, 2017, p. 1).

Figure 3 The Security Ecosystem of the Arctic Region in the Wake of Russian Military Buildup
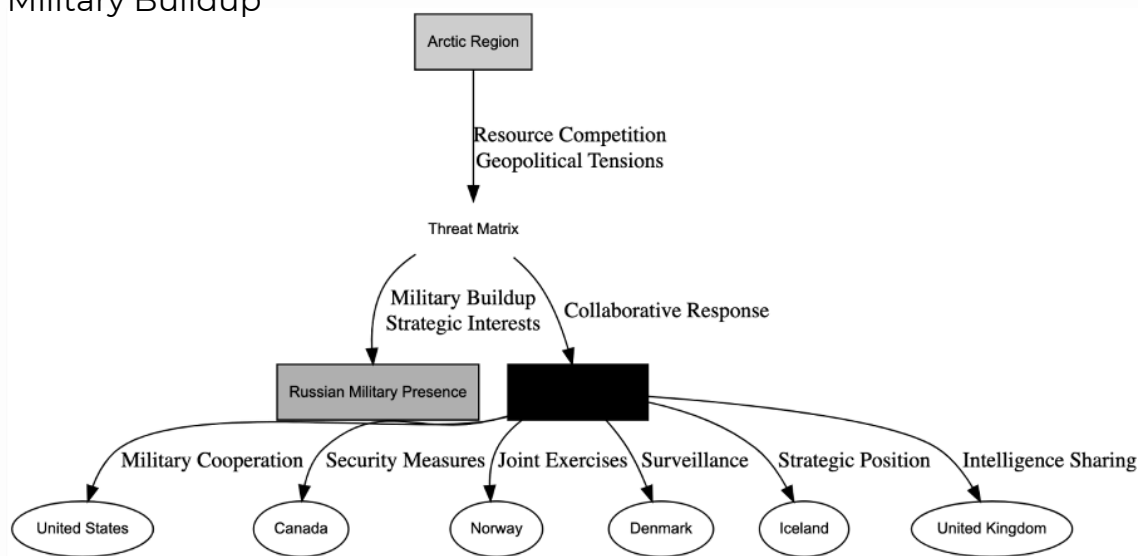
Note: This figure was retrieved from Isa real Cold War possible in the Arctic?Russia Direct, November 28, 2013, https://www.russia-direct.org/content/real-cold-war-possible-arctic "

Figure 3 illustrates that the threat matrix in the Arctic between Russia and NATO is complex stemming from the combination of geopolitical, economic, and security factors. Both parties are competing for control over the vast untapped resources in the region such as oil and natural gas, resulting in intensified rivalry. The NATO countries that share borders with the Arctic Ocean are far behind compared to Russia, when it comes to the development of the region (Wegge, 2020).

Since 2010, Russia has been at the forefront of expansion to the Arctic region by developing key ports, choke points, and maritime routes. Furthermore, Russian domination and excessive exploitation of resources in the region pose a threat to the interests of other coastal states, which have not given much consideration to the area (Piskunova, 2010). Hence, the threat matrix concerning the existing security system can be understood by considering the expanding influence of Russia in the North Pole through massive military buildups that could trigger a geopolitical turf between Russia and NATO countries in the coming years.

I.UNCLOS, Arctic Governance, and Russian Territorial Claims

In the last decade and a half, governance in the Arctic has become a major theme of debate and discussion among the members of the Arctic Council and experts in international Law. The growing Russian expansion towards the Arctic region in the military and economic spheres became a major security concern for the members of the Arctic Council, which includes the United States, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden (Ingimundarson, 2014). The Arctic Council was founded on September 19, 1996, as the leading intergovernmental forum for cooperation, interaction and promotion of regional stability in the Arctic region. Despite its global presence, the Arctic Council remained inactive for several years to address the rising challenges in the Arctic region (Young, 2010). However, in the past five years, the Arctic Council revitalized its activities due to emerging security challenges in the wake of growing Russian engagement in the region. The lack of a legal regime concerning the regulation of the Arctic basin has obligated the Arctic Council members to work on a common treaty (Molenaar, 2017) for two reasons. First, the rapid ice melting at the North Pole due to rising global temperatures has boosted the accessibility of the coastal states to develop offshore oil and gas fields (Young, 2010). Second, Russia has the largest coastline state in the Arctic including two and half million people living in its Arctic territories. Moreover, the growing Russian axis towards the Arctic region through militarization and infrastructure developments threatens the interests of other Arctic littoral states (Roberts, 2015). In this respect, the lack of legal regimes allows Russia to exploit and advance its geopolitical ambition without legal constraints.

International Law experts view the absence of a legal regime in the Arctic region as a major source of the forthcoming confrontation between Russia and other Arctic Council members, most of them are NATO members (Ingimundarson, 2014). Various legal discussions and conferences were organized between 2005 and 2008 by the Arctic Council members to work on the common Arctic Treaty. To form the basis for the common treaty, contrasts were drawn between the Arctic and the sophisticated legal framework that exists in Antarctica.

Hence, the discussions concerning the Arctic Treaty were prepared in the image of the 1959 Antarctic Treaty to develop a distinctive Arctic legal regime (Molenaar, 2017). The debate conclusively was brought to an end when the five Arctic littoral states—Russia, the U.S., Norway, Canada, and Denmark accepted a non-binding Ilulissat Declaration in May 2008. The Declaration urged the littoral states to consider the Law of Seas as a legal framework for the resolution of international legal issues in the Arctic (Rothwell, 2013). Moreover, the legal sections of the Declaration were espoused within the framework of UNCLOS to resolve the international legal challenges in the Arctic. The Declaration opens with an acknowledgement of the Arctic Ocean as the major threshold of contemporary global politics (Dodds, 2013).

Although the Ilulissat Declaration acknowledges that an extensive international legal framework could be applied to the Arctic Ocean, however, it does not directly give reference to any precise instrument of the UNCLOS (Rothwell, 2013). Therefore, the lack of any direct reference to the precise instruments of UNCLOS makes the application of the Ilulissat Declaration limited when it comes to legal regimes in the Arctic. Using this legal gap, the non-observability of UNCLOS in the Ilulissat Declaration allows the powerful littoral states in the Arctic such as Russia to violate the international legal regimes (Molenaar, 2017). Nevertheless, as per UNCLOS, the coastline state has the legal right to claim its maritime borders up to 200 nautical miles from its coastline, along with sovereign rights over the seabed and any resources that may be present beneath the surface (Lucia & Nickels, 2020). In addition, the UNCLOS also allows the coastline state to claim the Continental Shelf exceeding the 200 nautical miles maritime border rights (Dodds, 2013). Unlike the other coastal states, the Russian territorial claims regarding both the EEZ and the Continental Shelf in the Arctic pose a threat to the stability of the region (Piskunova, 2010). The Russian huge territorial claims in the Arctic cause disputes between Russia and other coastal states. Because to claim the Continental Shelf in the continental waters, the coastal states are obliged to submit proposals to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) within the framework of Article 76(8) and Article 3 of Annex II of the UNCLOS (Eklund & Watt, 2017).

On December 20, 2001, Russia, the nation with the most extensive coastline in the Arctic region, submitted a proposal under Article 76.8 of UNCLOS to the United Nations regarding its territorial claims in the Arctic, which was in contradiction with the precise instruments of the UNCLOS (Lucia & Nickels, 2020). The Russian territorial claims in the Arctic were disputed by the Kingdom of Denmark, which urged the UN to call on Russia for revision. Based on the disputed claims of Denmark, the UN urged Russia to revise its proposal concerning the extension of its Outer Limit of the Continental Shelf (OLCS) (Eklund & Watt, 2017).

The United Nations requested for a revised proposal under Paragraph 1 of the Article 75 of the UNCLOS (2001), which says;

Subject to this Part, the outer limit lines of the exclusive economic zone and the lines of delimitation drawn in accordance with article 74 shall be shown on charts of a scale or scales adequate for ascertaining their position. Where appropriate, such limit lines or delimitation lines may be substituted by a list of geographical coordinates of points, specifying the geodetic datum (UNCLOS, 2001, p. 52).

To uphold the UN recommendations, Russia submitted an updated version of its claims to the UN on August 3, 2015, expressing its sovereign rights over roughly 2 million square kilometres in the Arctic Ocean, which goes beyond the limits of the 200 nautical miles (Piskunova, 2010). However, the expansive territorial claims by Russia in the Arctic were again disputed by the four coastal states Denmark, the U.S., Norway and Canada, which duped the Russian claims as a violation of their sovereign rights in the Arctic Sea. The legal rebuttals from the other four Arctic coastal states pushed the UN to urge Russia to revise its proposal again (Roberts, 2015). Finally, on March 31, 2021, Russia submitted a revised proposal to the United Nations asserting its territorial rights in the Arctic. The revised proposal extends its territory all the way to the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of Canada and Greenland, increasing the area by approximately 705,000 square kilometres compared to the previous proposal (Eklund & Watt, 2017) as illustrated in Figure 4. The revised proposal claims Russian sovereign territorial rights in the Central Arctic Ocean with a major addition to the OLCS of Russia in the region.

Figure 4 Russian Expansive Territorial Claims in the Arctic

Note: This map was adapted from"Polar Politics and Commerce", World Ocean Review, 2019 https://worldoceanreview.com/en/wor-6/polar-politics-and-commerce/the-arctic-and-antarctic-as-political-arenas/

As illustrated in Figure 4, the Russian expansive territorial claims in the Arctic Ocean demonstrate the extension of its continental character articulating its sovereign rights over the EEZ under UNCLOS. According to UNCLOS, the maximum distance for maritime border extension to the EEZ is 350 nautical miles from the coastline territory of a country (Rothwell, 2013). Russia asserts that its continental shelf in the Arctic Ocean is almost 70% of the region, overlapping with the EEZs of other Arctic countries, including Denmark and Canada, as per the 2021 revised proposal. The Russian expansive territorial claims under the framework of UNCLOS became a major security concern for the other members of the Arctic Council, which dispute Russian claims (Lucia & Nickels, 2020).

 The proposed Russian territorial claim in the Arctic violates Article 75 and Article 76 of the UNCLOS and Ilulissat Declaration. Among the Arctic Council members, Denmark and Canada are major disputants to Russia's expansive territorial claims (Koshkin, 2022). Denmark was the first Arctic littoral state, which objected 2001 proposal of Russia within the legal premise of Article 75 of the UNCLOS. According to Denmark, the territorial claim of Russia in the Arctic beyond 200 nautical miles violates Article 75 and Article 76 of the UNCLOS (Eklund & Watt, 2017) for two reasons. First, Based on Article 76 of the 1982 UNCLOS and its annexes, the coastal cannot extend the continental shelf without determining the area of the continental shelf. Hence, to determine the area of the Continental Shelf, a scientific inspection of the ocean floor is required, which is mentioned in the proposals of Russia (Çiftci & Ali, 2014, p. 9). Although, Russia revised its proposal twice in 2015 and 2021 respectively, but without carrying out the scientific examination of the ocean floor, which was objected to by Denmark, Norway and Canada under the precise instruments of the UNCLOS (Lucia & Nickels, 2020).

Despite the legal objection from the coastal states, Russia seems increasingly insistent and belligerent concerning its territorial claim in the Arctic. Second, Russia claims approximately 2 million square kilometres of area up to the central Arctic, which overlaps the EEZs of Denmark and Canada. Hence, under the legal framework of the UNCLOS, the expansive territorial claim of Russia in the Arctic violates the maritime borders of the other Arctic littoral states such as Denmark and Canada (Koshkin, 2022). Russia's efforts to modernize its Soviet-era military bases in the Arctic region, which are seen as a security threat by NATO, serve to bolster its extensive territorial claims (Boulègue, 2019). In the face of the deteriorating security situation in the Arctic Ocean, the Arctic Council is concerned with the emerging geopolitical rivalry between Russia and Arctic littoral states.

Arctic Council is the major inter-governmental body in the region with 8 members and fourteen observer states but, the resolutions of the Arctic Council are non-binding, which in turn restricts the efficiency of the organization (Ingimundarson, 2014). In this regard, the expansive territorial claim of Russia in the Arctic Ocean in the absence of UNCLOS arranged legal regime and jurisdictive limitation of the Arctic Council threaten the governance edifice of the North Pole.

I.Russia and the New Great Game in the Arctic

In terms of capabilities and territory, Russia is the greatest power in the Arctic Ocean. Despite major domestic challenges such as demographic decline, economic sanctions and lack of military modernization, Russia perceives its Arctic territorial strength as pivotal to its future great power status (Sergunin, 2016, p. 37). The standing of Russia as a major Arctic power can be assessed through various realms, including its domestic political landscape, foreign policy, economic prowess, and military might. Moreover, the growing Russian economic and military prowess in the Arctic region cannot be detached from the context of great power competition akin to the Great Game of the 19th century due to the probable disagreement with the NATO bloc over territorial claims (Piskunova, 2010). The recent studies concerning the growing Russian pivot to the Arctic Ocean aptly sum up the importance of the region for the Russian economic future. The vast untapped natural resources found in the Arctic seabed and the establishment of a trade route that links Europe and Asia are key to restoring the great power status of Russia (Boulègue, 2019). As American-based Russia-Eurasian expert Marlène Laruelle contends, "For Russia to maintain its status as one of the world's largest producers of hydrocarbons it will have to depend increasingly on Arctic Resources" (Laruelle, 2009). Apart from the oil and gas reserves, the ice melting as a result of rising global temperatures has also opened up potential maritime trade opportunities in the Arctic region.

Figure 5 Russia's Northern Sea Route versus the Existing Route

Note: This map was retrieved from "What Is the Northern Sea Route", The Economist, 24.09.2018 https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2018/09/24/what-is-the-northern-sea-route

However, the NSR became functional for maritime trade and fishing during the early days of the Soviet Union. After the break of the Soviet Union, Russia resurrected the Soviet legacy in the Arctic by formulating a comprehensive strategy that encompassed the restoration of military bases, the establishment of research headquarters, the development of Arctic ports, and the transformation of the NSR (Lagutina, 2019, p. 20). According Arctic Policy 2035 the development of NSR as a major functional alternative-maritime sea route to enhance competitive national transport line of the Russian Federation in the global market (Arctic Russia, 2020). Subsequently, the amplified assertive engagement of Russia with the Arctic Region ranging from expansive territorial claims, maritime trade cooperation with China, and increased militarization of the region could trigger a New Great Game between Russia and NATO (Boulègue, 2019). Furthermore, the U.S. and NATO bloc considers the substantial natural gas and oil reserves located beneath the Arctic Sea, which account for 30% of the undiscovered reserves in the world, to be of paramount importance in helping Europe dissuade itself from Russian oil and gas (Belkin, 2008).

Plausibly, the New Great Game in the Arctic, similar to the Old Great Game in the Eurasian heartland, is centred on the Eurasian plane of the North Pole and involves Russia, China and NATO as key players (Cerbu & Cioranu, 2020). At the beginning of the 20th century, American Naval theorist Alfred Thayer Mahan viewed Russia as a land power with inherent constraints, which hindered its capacity to effectively exert its power through the precarious "debatable lands" (Mahan & Sachsman, 2003, p. 83). However, Mahan did not mention geographical potential of Russia along the Arctic, which became the new geopolitical reality at the beginning of the 21st century. Additionally, compared to the NATO Arctic states, Russia is effectively engaged in the growth of its Arctic territories through streams of various development such as the construction of offshore oil and gas fields and the transformation of NSR into a functional maritime trade channel (Heininen, 2018). In recent years, China has uplifted its status in the Arctic theatre by calling itself a near Arctic state through mega joint ventures with Russia. For instance, in the past decade, China has invested roughly $90 billion in Arctic energy and mineral projects, primarily in Russia (Rashmi, 2019, p. 13). In addition, the Russian NSR development initiative is currently a major part of China-led Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). China formally became the investment partner of Russia's mega Yamal LNG Project on September 5, 2013, by buying up to 20% stakes (Downs, et al., 2018: 24). The Chinese media celebrated growing partnership between China and Russia in the development of the Arctic region by calling it Win Win scenario for Russia and China.

In this respect, the formation of alliances within the Arctic region due to the close collaboration between a Eurasian power Russia and a major East Asian power China, on the one hand, and the cooperation between the United States and its NATO Arctic members, on the other, could potentially ignite a new competition akin to the Old Great Game (MacDonald, 2021). In the past decade, there has been mixed commentary in the West concerning the possibility of the New Great Game in the Arctic between Russia, China and the United States. Today, a renowned Arctic expert Emily Rauhala believes, the Arctic region appears to have already become a major geopolitical rivalry between the United States, Russia, and China. It is because, the rapid melting of Arctic ice and the possibility of greater access to resources in the region could ignite a scramble for Arctic resources among Russia, China, the United States, and other countries (Rauhala, 2023). On the other hand, there are contrary views, such as popular Arctic expert Martin Breum, who personally travelled to the North Pole, denying the possibility of the scenario of the New Great Game in the Arctic in the near future; they still do not rule out the possible great power competition there between Russia, China and NATO (Breum, 2019). Indeed, the Russian sprawling engagement in the Arctic region through a joint partnership with China has already been a great concern for the U.S. and its NATO allies in Europe, who perceive this as a great security and economic threat. Thus, it looks inevitable that existing power dynamics in the Arctic demonstrate that the region may become a geopolitical battleground between Russia, China, and NATO soon.

Conclusion

The contemporary manifestation of the New Great Game in the Arctic Region can be characterized as the interplay of security, geopolitical and economic factors. Due to the rising global temperatures, the Arctic Ocean has become increasingly accessible for major Arctic powers such as Russia, the U.S., Canada and the Arctic states in Europe, which are competing for dominance in this strategically important region. The research has primarily sought to explore Russian assertiveness in the development of the Arctic region ranging from militarization of the region, development of ports, and upgradation of NSR to a close partnership with China. The research argues that the Russian growing engagement in the Arctic region has geostrategic implications for regional stability and international relations. The historical context of the North Pole in the first section shows that how the Arctic Ocean from the No-Man land for several centuries transformed into a major geopolitical theatre during the second half of the 20th century. The study explored the dual purpose of the growing Russian pivot towards the region emphasizing the implications of its presence for the global political order.

The major purpose of Russia's growing presence in the Arctic is linked with the prioritization of its security and national which is rooted in realism and geopolitics. Second, Russia also emphasizes cooperation and collaboration with other Arctic states to mutually exploit the vast untapped natural resources on the Arctic seabed. Moreover, the study contends that Russian diverse strategies, which extend across military, economic, diplomatic, and security domains are closely connected to the overall security ecosystem of the region. For that reason, the possibility of the New Great Game in the Arctic, triggered by the assertive engagement of Russia in the region, highlights its desire for dominance. These actions may result in heightened tensions in the Arctic area. The available research studies and reports demonstrate that the Arctic policies of Russia are cohesively aligned with its overarching national interests, indicating a deliberate approach to exploit the economic prospects andstrengthen its geopolitical position in the region. The evolving Arctic landscape demands ongoing international attention and collaboration, as stakeholders grapple with reconciling resource exploitation, shifting power dynamics and regional security.

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THE IMPACT OF PARTISAN MEDIA ON MINORITY GROUPS: INCIVILITY AND POLARIZATION IN AMERICAN POLITICAL DISCOURSE

ABSTRACT

This research article explores the intricate relationship between partisan media and its effects on minority groups—specifically African Americans, Latinos, and Asians—in American political discourse. By analyzing news headlines from major cable news networks such as CNN, Fox, and MSNBC, the study investigates how selective framing and biased coverage influence the portrayal of these minority groups. Utilizing sentiment analysis on a dataset from LexisNexis, the study identifies a predominance of negative tones in news headlines related to these groups. The findings reveal how partisan media contributes to political polarization by reinforcing existing biases and fostering echo chambers. This polarization exacerbates societal divisions by shaping public perceptions in ways that deepen prejudices and conflict. The study underscores the need for more inclusive media practices to mitigate the adverse effects of partisan coverage and promote a more equitable and informed society.

Keywords: Partisan Media; Minority Groups; Political Discourse; Selective Framing; Media Bias

Introduction

Partisan media significantly influences public perceptions of vulnerable minority groups through selective framing and bias. In today's media landscape, outlets with distinct political leanings often tailor news coverage to reinforce the biases and preconceptions of their audiences, a phenomenon known as selective exposure. This process creates echo chambers where individuals are exposed primarily to information that aligns with their preexisting views, thereby widening political polarization (Garrett, 2009, p. 270; Iyengar & Hahn, 2009, p. 34).

Partisan media frequently portrays minority groups—such as Latinos, Asians, and African Americans—negatively, particularly concerning issues like crime, immigration, and cultural differences (Bleich et al., 2018). Such biased framing not only perpetuates stereotypes but also contributes to fractious societal divisions by altering the way in which audiences perceive and relate to these communities. Indeed, research conducted by Valentino et al., (2004), confirms the cause-and-effect nature of partisan media and political polarization through the reinforcement of strong partisan dividing lines as a result of prejudiced media coverage, leading to increased discord within society (p. 351). This introduction sets in context how partisan media really makes an impact on public discourse and affects attitudes toward minority groups in the United States, hence forming a stage through which understanding could proceed with respect to how such polarization, driven by the media, results in bigger rips within society.

I. Literature Review

A. Partisan Media and Bias

Partisan news media have become prevalent, broadcasting news that caters to specific political ideologies. Prior (2013) agrees that cable television provides selectivity in that people can choose news media that favor present choices. This, according to Prior, is what is referred to as selective exposure, of which it renders the media space fractured; therefore, people are ever listening to individuals' opinions that reflect their own (p.110). Garrett (2009) argues that selective exposure is much more likely to strengthen attitudes rather than just maintaining them, which can further exaggerate the effects of political polarization through a type of news consumption that confirms ideological orientation and reinforces people's views on polarized public matters (p. 267). Iyengar and Hahn (2009) find that those most politically involved are most likely to seek out and be persuaded by news from sources they perceive as aligning with their partisanship, thus continuing the pattern of selective exposure (p. 25).

Arceneaux and Johnson (2013) add to this point by showing that the development of partisan media also means increased skepticism toward news sources outside a person's ideology. Such selective skepticism is a further conduit in polarizing public opinion in that people become more entrenched in their ideological positions (p. 227). Moreover, Stroud (2010) states that this behavior no longer stays within the confines of news consumption but has spillover effects onto platforms of social media, in which people would now tend to follow and engage with others who post contents that best suit their beliefs, hence further entrenching selective exposure within the digital age (p. 557).

More recent studies conducted during the presidency of Trump shed more light on this. For instance, Benkler et al. (2018) argue that "increasingly, the media ecosystem has become polarized." That is to say, conservative media created a large part of an alternative reality for their audiences. This alternative reality has huge bearings on political discourse and public perception alike (p. 312). Likewise, according to Pew Research Center (2020), the habits of news consumption among Americans have polarized along partisan lines: Republicans and Democrats trust different news sources and perceive reality.

Levendusky (2013) further argues that partisan media can lead to further increases in affective polarization, wherein the concerned individuals disagree not only on political issues but also bear negative feelings toward members of the opposite party. These kinds of affective polarizations give way to increased social division and decreased willingness to engage in bipartisan cooperation (p. 611). Furthermore, according to a recent article by Guess et al. (2018), at least some kinds of partisan media exposure modulate political legitimacy perceptions and even democratic institution distrust among strong partisans.

While these studies provide valuable insights into selective exposure and media fragmentation, it is crucial to link these findings to the hypothesis of the current study, which investigates the impact of media partisanship on minority issues. By understanding the mechanisms of selective exposure and its impact on political polarization, we can explore how media partisanship influences public perception and discourse surrounding minority issues. This connection is essential to demonstrate why the selected literature is relevant and how it addresses existing gaps in research. The literature, however, reviewed highlights the importance of understanding selective exposure and media fragmentation in the context of political polarization. However, there is a gap in examining how these phenomena specifically impact minority issues.

The articles chosen are crucial because they provide a foundation for exploring the broader implications of media partisanship. By addressing this gap, the current study aims to contribute to the understanding of how partisan media influences public opinion and policy regarding minority communities.

Studies have shown that partisan news media have gained increased prevalence where it delivers news that is directed to specific political ideologies. Prior (2013) was in agreement that cable television and the internet had allowed selectivity where people could choose news outlets that reinforced their prior beliefs in what they hear and read on a routine basis; this is referred to as selective exposure (p. 101). This has in turn created the fragmentation of the media environment where one predominantly gets their views upheld.

The selective exposure proposed by Garrett (2009) is more likely to act as a mechanism for attitude strengthening rather than merely maintaining attitudes and beliefs. Consequently, it has the potential to exacerbate political polarization. It is even possible that news consumption that reinforces a person's ideological orientation can turn someone into an entrencher with polarized public views (p. 268). However, Iyengar and Hahn (2009) have shown that this trend is even more accentuated in high-politically-involved people, who are more likely to look for and trust in news sources that show their partisan leanings (p. 33).

B. Incivility in Political Discourse

Increased incivility in political discourse has gone hand in hand with such partisan media. Incivility, understood as impertinence and rudeness in behavior, has transformed itself to become emblematic of most political communication in America. Research has identified the use of uncivil terms along with an uncivil tone as common strategies used by partisan media to appeal to and inflame their audience (Sobieraj & Berry, 2011, p. 23). This use of incivility is not stylistic in nature but strategic in an attempt to draw upon the emotions that would serve to increase audience loyalty (Borah, 2013, p. 460).

The term partisan, however, has negative connotations. Engaging in media-driven incivility may particularly be viewed as trivial. However, one needs to acknowledge that being partisan per se is not negative. Instead, it reflects great support for a particular party or ideology, which many people feel is very positive—a way of expressing their political identity and creed. However, the manner in which partisan media channels implement incivility to engage their audience helps foster a more hostile and polarized political environment.

In this sense, partisan media often turn to incivility as a tool for strengthening and mobilizing their base, contributing to polarization. The feeling or expression of incivility may convey an association with partisanship. The objective will be an understanding of how public political discourse has been altered through the articulation of the use of uncivil rhetoric by partisan media that contributes to a more contentious and polarized political landscape.

According to Mutz (2016), viewers are more attentive during uncivil discourse with heightened emotional responses to it, while Gervais (2017) showed how exposure to incivility might heighten political participation by eliciting strong emotional reactions. Some researchers, such as Mutz (2016) and Gervais (2017), have argued that media incivility might prove effective at capturing audience attention but evoke strong psychological impacts (p.18).

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Brooks and Geer (2007) have also pointed out that information in political ads generally carries incivility in partisan media, which may instantly generate negative effects on political participation. On one side, it effectively mobilizes the core supporters, while on the other side, it tends to mislead the moderate and undecided voters. This process gradually diminishes the turnout of voters and thus declines democratic participation (p. 11). On the one hand, media incivility can effectively mobilize core constituencies; for example, Sobieraj and Berry (2011) demonstrate that uncivil discourse can actually enhance political participation among partisan viewers. On the other hand, it tends to alienate moderate and independent voters, thereby feeding political cynicism and leading to growing distrust in the media, as has been noted by Mutz (2015). This can be the process that gradually dampens voter turnout and general democratic participation, as supported by studies such as Mutz and Reeves (2005), which show that exposure to uncivil political talk can drive down the urge to participate in politics among less partisan people.

C. Polarization and Public Opinion
The link between partisan media and public opinion has been more widely discussed, with some empirical evidence claiming that partisan media contribute to political polarization (Prior 2013; Levendusky & Malhotra; Garrett et al., 2019).

Regular exposure to partisan news sources leads one to be more politically polarized; a person becomes extreme in his personal views. Thus, this effect is further reinforced for an individual who regularly accesses sources of partisan news, which only deepens the ideological gaps among the electorate (Davis & Dunaway, 2016). The relationship between partisan media and public opinion has been widely discussed, and concrete evidence tends to indicate that partisan media further spur political polarization. For example, Stroud (2010) found that routine exposure to partisan news sources tends to polarize those in the sample politically, moving them toward extreme personal views (p. 557). Furthermore, Arceneaux and Johnson (2013) have suggested that this effect is deepened for those who habitually access partisan news, further widening the ideological schisms among the electorate (p. 214).

Levendusky (2013) went a step further to say how partisan media reinforces already-held beliefs but also builds new ones. This is possible because partisan outlets always have in them the debunking abilities of swinging perceptions and reactions that people have towards political events by the mode of information presentation in ideological consonance with that ideology (p. 611). By framing news and events in ways that best serve particular ideological perspectives, partisan media manage to powerfully influence and sometimes even shift public opinion. Thus, the shaping of public opinion can have very important consequences with respect to political behavior in wider terms, such as those related to voting patterns and civic engagement.. Also, Baum and Groeling (2008) indicate the influence that partisan media holds in agenda setting; through story selection and framing, partisan outlets determine what the public will come to view as important and in what way these matters should be viewed (p. 348). In this way, they come off as having an edge to alter discourse within the public sphere and drive on the mechanism of polarization.

D. The Role of Social Media

This relationship between partisan media and political polarization has even become more complex with the rise of social media. Most of this major news issue content is ever-increasing and more often distributed through social media, which has positioned them in the league of becoming important news sources. According to Bakshy et al., (2015), users of social media subsequently have a high probability of paying attention to the news that resonates with their political predispositions, hence deepening selective exposure and adding to echo chambers where discordant views are seldom heard (p. 1130).

However, Tucker et al., (2018), argue that algorithms used to personalize content on social media increase the polarization of politics. By surfacing information that resonates with user preferences, the algorithms create feedback loops through which users become exposed to more and more extreme views, creating echo chambers that result in the sowing of divisiveness into the political landscape. This worsens not just differentials but also fosters incivility because contentious and outrageous content is promoted. Political polarization is strengthened by social media interactions that magnify the social identity processes involved. Social validation from engaging with politically like-minded others on social media strengthens partisan identity and, in turn, hostility toward political out-group members (p. 53).

The role that social media has played in politics has been noticed more during the COVID-19 period and with the rise of AI. For instance, Cinelli et al. (2021) found that during the pandemic, misinformation cascaded over social media very fast, hence increasing political polarization and affecting public opinion related to health measures (p. 5). Further, Pappalardo et., (2020) found that AI-based algorithms of social media platforms amplified echo chambers, leading to increased political extremism with reduced exposure to a wide range of viewpoints (p. 14). These studies thus put forward the twin effect of social media working positively and negatively and hence require measures concerning the effects of negative tones on minorities when viewed through the lenses of political polarization.

E. Partisan Media Frames and Minority Groups

Much of the research on partisan media has focused on their effect on mainstream consumption (Stroud, 2010). Increasingly, however, a small but growing level of literature examines the impact of partisan media on minority populations such as Latinos, Asians, and African Americans (Mastro & Stamps, 2018; Abrajano et.al., 2020). Biased framing and coverage can shape selective perceptions of these racial or ethnic media groups. For instance, evidence has it that partisan media seek to represent minority groups of immigrants and people of color in negative terms by focusing on crime and immigration issues and cultural separateness from the mainstream culture (Heather & Emily, 2019, p. 13; Tukachinsky et.al, 2017, p. 546). This selective framing may only end up further stereotyping these groups and enhancing racial and ethnic tension in societies.

For example, negative media depictions of their groups are known to create influences on prejudice and other poor attitudes (Appel & Weber, 2021, p. 10).

This is even worse when the same is reiterated and reinforced by partisan media outlets, which, once again, would have their vested interests in presenting some kinds of narratives to audiences. More abstractly, partisan media frames are believed to impact minority political behavior and engagement. Such empirical research has shown that slanted coverage can shape how minority voters view candidates, parties, and issues and, hence, may well sway their vote (Mingxiao et.al, 2018, p. 1094), and in those elections where the turnout of such minorities can change the final result, slanted coverage does affect whether they will show up to vote.

II. Methodology

The methodology of the research in this section centers on a mixed-method approach with both qualitative and quantitative elements, underpinned by a coding system developed by Benson (2014). This coding system allows for analysis that makes use of the headlines of articles as the primary sampling unit. Examining headlines without paying attention to the text itself makes the analytical process easier and more focused. Headlines are attention getters and heuristic shortcuts (Nisar & Bleich, 2020); hence, they help in understanding the general tone and framing of any news articles.

Cable network headlines not only indicate the subject and summarize the major information of the news article, but they also attempt to assist the reader in understanding the meaning of the text (Bonyadi & Samuel, 2013). The content perceived by readers through headlines has proved to affect the way people perceive news much better than the article's full text (Ifantidou, 2009). Although focusing on headlines does not render full texts superfluous, headlines provide a valuable measure of public perceptions of groups and topics of general interest, as well as reaffirm and shape consumers' attitudes toward these groups and topics. The cable networks that were chosen to examine their headlines are: Cable News Network (CNN), Fox Cable Network (Fox), and MSNBC. We chose these three because they are sometimes referred to as the "big three"(Pew Research Center, 2020), and also because they have both liberal and conservative bias.

The sampling strategy employed is stratified purposeful sampling. This approach ensures that the sample accurately reflects the distribution of headlines from each cable network over time and includes a comprehensive representation of the networks' coverage. The author conducted sentiment analysis on all the headlines of those cable networks using the LexisNexis dataset. Sentiment analysis empirically determines the tone of a headline by examining occurrences of positive and negative words in a corpus of documents(Bhonde et al., 2015).

For this reason, we use the LexisNexis database to extract news articles from all sections of Cable News Network, Fox Cable Network, and MSNBC between November 8, 2016 and November 8, 2021 that contain root words associated with each of our groups. Here are the root words:

African Americans OR African American OR Black American OR Black Americans
Asian Americans OR Asian American
Latinos OR Latino OR Latino OR Latinos

We next removed articles that were not connected to our groups of interest by removing those that merely included extraneous phrases like "Latina". Initially, we did not search for root words such as Chinese, Japanese, or Mexican American. This decision was made to maintain the focus on minority groups who are citizens or permanent residents within the US, rather than immigrants who are often identified by their country of origin. Including such root words would significantly broaden the scope of our study, necessitating a fundamental redesign of our data collection, sampling, and analysis processes. Our current approach ensures that the study remains manageable and maintains its analytical rigor by concentrating on well-defined and specific groupings.

These selections guarantee that all of the articles in our dataset are directly connected to our selected groups of interest. For our five-year analysis, we kept all of the articles published within the given timeframe. Our sampling method employed an analytical strategy to inspect those selected headlines, removing duplicates and those with neither positive nor negative tone.

This method ensured that the sample accurately reflected the headline distribution from each cable network over time. Table 1 presents the quantity of headlines published by the three cable networks over five years, along with the final sample.

The qualitative method was employed to conduct a discourse analysis to gain an understanding of the framing and tone of the headlines. This qualitative component was the analysis of language in the headlines to establish if any patterns of selective framing and political discourses were evident. We therefore relied on some key political science and international relations scholars, including Entman (1993) in framing theory, Marcus (2000) on the influence of political communication, and Baum (2003) on media effects and public opinion. Finally, we integrated the ideas of Goffman (1959), self-presentation, and framing, as well as Kingdon, with thoughts on policy agendas and political processes.

Our approach allows us to situate our discourse analysis within the framework of leading theories and assert that the cable networks purposefully implement strategies of selective exposure and framing.

Table1. Distribution of CNN, FOX and MSNBC Headlines, 2016–2021

	Final Database			Final Sample		
	CNN	FOX	MSNBC	CNN	FOX	MSNBC
African Americans	10000	3357	2954	1000	335	295
Latinos	7262	2549	1866	726	254	186
Asians	8139	5107	1840	813	510	184

There are two methods to code the database: computer-assisted coding and human coding, which will undoubtedly help in the coding of a large volume of text—for example, coding the models using machine learning and lexical sentiment analysis reliably. The approaches work well with many words per text in a database. Because of the probability that headlines may include some metaphors or idiomatic expressions that might pose challenges to computer-assisted coding and affect the validity of the interpreted headlines, the author used human coding to increase the validity of the results.

For computer-assisted coding, LexisNexis automatically classified and coded headlines tone as negative when found. For human coding, the author and an assistant created a codebook to classify and code each headline either negative or positive after reviewing the classification of headlines tone coded by LexisNexis. According to our classification and coding, positive headlines refer to groups who are victims to verbal or physical attacks and those who successfully contribute to the political, economic, and development of the country. Negative headlines refer to perpetrators and those who reflect negative values within society. Table 2 shows examples of negative and positive tones.

Table 2. Sample Headlines with Positive or Negative Tone

	CNN	FOX	MSNBC
Positive	Student makes history as first African-American lead in Mobile Ballet in Alabama	Black Friday Deals Already Here? Payouts to Separated Migrant Families?	President Trump Pledges to Unite Divided Country after African-American History Museum Visit; Republican Lawmakers Grilled at Town Halls
Negative	Detroit Police chief calls Tlaib's comments 'racist' after she suggests facial recognition tech analysts should be African American	Biden Ignores Key Details in Asian Hate Crime Surge; Dems Care About the Perpetrators, Not the Victims; Media's Hate Crime Double Standard	They're rapists…all have AIDS': Some of Trump's comments on immigrants, minorities

The variable measured was the overall sentiment of headlines for each group. This sentiment was determined by subtracting the count of negatively-toned headlines from the count of positively-toned ones, and then dividing by the overall count of headlines assessed. The formula to compute this sentiment is:

$$Net\ tone\ (g) = \frac{Headlines\ with\ Positive\ Tone\ (g) - Headlines\ with\ a\ Negative\ Tone\ (g)}{Total\ Number\ of\ Coded\ Headlines\ (g)}$$

The sentiment score for a group can vary from -1 (all headlines are negative) to +1 (all headlines are positive). For example, CNN had 776 assessed headlines about Latinos, with 430 being positive and 296 being negative. The sentiment score for Latinos on CNN is [(430 - 296) / 776] = +0.17. To compare the coverage of different groups by each of the three cable networks, we calculate an index of headline sentiment using this formula.

III. Findings

In general, when comparing the tone distribution of each cable network, we notice that the negative tone in the three cable networks is higher in the three groups in comparison to the positive tone. African Americans coverage in Fox news and MSNBC score the highest percentage, with 72% and 71.6% respectively, while CNN news has a lower-negative tone than Fox and MSNBC, with 52.7%. We also notice that the negative tone in Fox news is higher than in CNN and MSNBC. African Americans, Latinos and Asians are more negatively portrayed in Fox than in other cable networks. See figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Overall tone distribution of CNN, FOX, and MSNBC headlines, 2016–2021
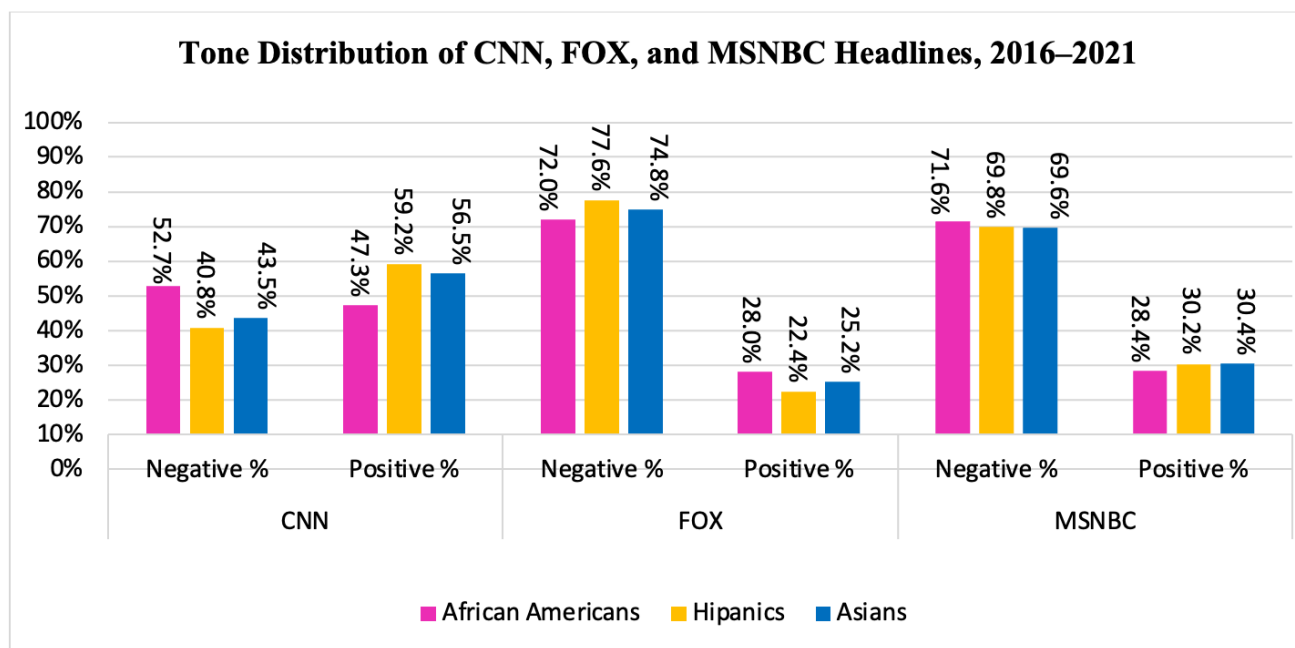
When examining the net tone of headlines of the three cable networks for each group, we find notable differences in coverage:

For CNN:

$$African\ Americans: Net\ tone\ = \frac{473 - 527}{1000} = -0.05$$

$$Latinos: Net\ tone\ = \frac{430 - 296}{776} = +0.18$$

$$Asian\ Americans: Net\ tone\ = \frac{459 - 354}{813} = +0.12$$

For Fox News:

$$African\ Americans: Net\ tone\ = \frac{94 - 241}{335} = -0.43$$

$$Latinos: Net\ tone\ = \frac{57 - 197}{254} = -0.55$$

$$Asian\ Americans: Net\ tone\ = \frac{128 - 381}{510} = -0.49$$

For MSNBC

$$African\ Americans: Net\ tone\ = \frac{84 - 211}{295} = -0.43$$

$$Latinos\ and\ Asian\ Americans: Net\ tone\ for\ both\ groups\ = \frac{56 - 130}{186} = -0.39$$

Table 3. Net Tone by Cable Network and Ethnic Group

	CNN						FOX						MSNBC					
	African Ame		Latinos		Asians		African Ame		Latinos		Asians		African Ame		Latinos		Asians	
Tone	Frame ct.	%	Frame ct.	%	Frame ct.	%	Frame ct.	%	Frame ct.	%	Frame ct.	%	Frame ct.	%	Frame ct.	%	Frame ct.	%
Positive	473	47.3	430	59.2	459	56.5	94	28	57	22.4	128	25.2	84	28.4	56	30.2	55	30.4
Negative	527	52.7	296	40.8	354	43.5	241	72	197	77.6	381	74.8	211	71.6	130	69.8	128	69.6
Net Tone	-0.05		+0.18		+0.12		-0.43		-0.55		-0.49		-0.43		-0.39		-0.39	
Total	1000		726		813		335		254		510		295		186		184	

In examining the viewer numbers in the table above, it is essential to clarify how these figures relate to the overall analysis of partisan media coverage. The fluctuations in viewer numbers can indicate shifts in audience engagement with different news outlets, which may reflect their editorial choices and the perceived credibility of their reporting.

This context is crucial for understanding the subsequent analysis of news coverage, particularly regarding Latino issues.

As highlighted in the training articles, Fox News has a notably more negative sentiment score for Latino news coverage compared to MSNBC, with scores of -0.55 and -0.39, respectively. This indicates that Fox's portrayal of Latino-related news is significantly more negative than that of MSNBC.

Furthermore, while MSNBC ranks second in terms of negative sentiment, it is important to note that the difference in coverage volume is also relevant. According to Figure 2, Fox News has a total of 667 headlines related to Latino issues, while MSNBC has 639. This difference of 28 headlines suggests that Fox not only presents a more negative tone but also covers Latino issues more extensively than MSNBC, which may influence viewer perceptions and engagement.

Our findings, however, indicate that the overall sentiment for each group aligns closely with previous research. Figure 1 and Table 3 validate H1. African Americans are depicted more negatively than Latinos and Asians by differences of +0.23 and +0.07 on CNN, less negatively by differences of -0.12 and -0.06 on Fox, and more negatively by a difference of -0.04 on MSNBC. The notable differences in headline sentiment among the three groups support the widely accepted notion that Latinos, African Americans, and Asian Americans are often portrayed negatively in the United States.

The divergent tones across the headlines of the three cable networks require a detailed explanation to clearly establish what these differences entail. It is important to delve into the kinds of topics that were covered and specifically what the nature of negative portrayals was regarding each group over the four-year period, in an attempt to provide an answer as to whether these negative portrayals tend to further confirm this preliminary claim that political polarization is fueled by the media. Such tone differences should be located within the broader context of polarization to ensure that the findings are consistent with the article's initial assertions about the media's role in shaping political attitudes.

The findings show that Latinos news were frequently covered when immigration issue has been debated in public, particularly during the 2016 and 2020 general elections. 368 headlines negatively covered Latinos in CNN, while Fox and MSNBC outnumbered it with 667 headlines for Fox and 639 headlines for MSNBC.

The topics in which African Americans' news were negatively covered and appeared in crime-related issues, including the events of police brutality against African Americans and deaths caused by police such as the deaths of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, in addition to Black Lives Matter movement. Yet, the number of headlines about African Americans is smaller than number of headlines about Latinos, with 31 headlines in CNN, 69 headlines in Fox, and 28 headlines in MSNBC. While headlines about Asian Americans, the number is approximately close to that of African Americans and significantly smaller than that of Latinos, with 69 headlines for CNN, 11 headlines for Fox news and 38 headlines for MSNBC (see figure 2).

Figure 2. Tone distribution of headlines by theme
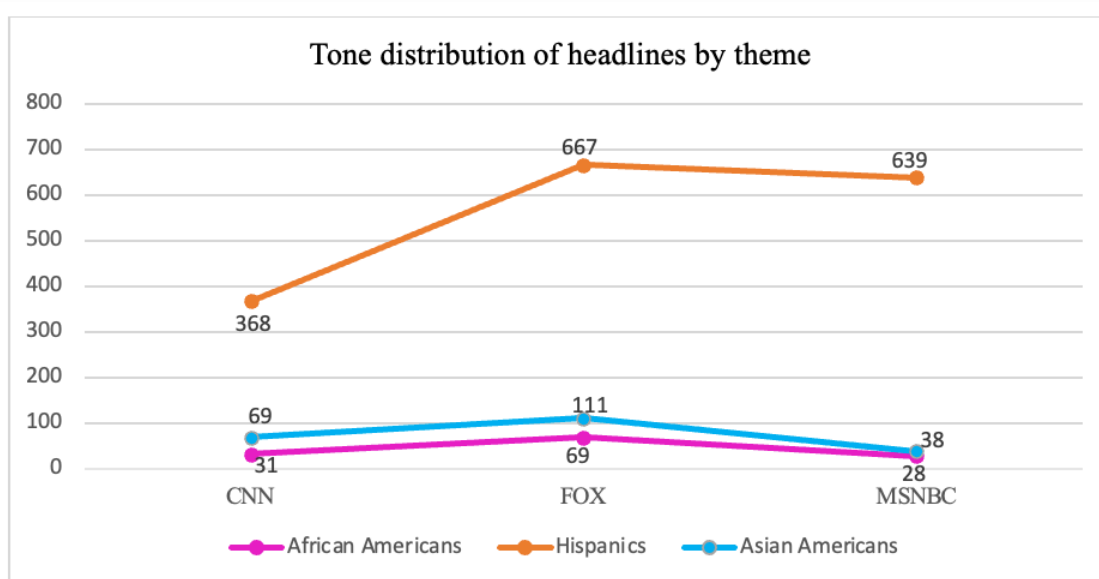
III. Discussion

In this section, we analyze the tone of coverage of three major news networks: Cable News Network (CNN), Fox News Network, and MSNBC. We compare them with the overall tone concerning their respective affiliations with three major minority groups in the United States: Latinos, Asians, and African Americans. From this news headline dataset, we try to unearth the tone utilized by these networks in their coverages of the news related to these groups. These networks collectively reached an audience of approximately 3.8 million people in the United States in 2021. During the prime news time slot (8 to 11 p.m.), CNN's audience decreased by 25% from 1.1 million in 2021 to 828,000 in 2022. MSNBC's audience also declined by 6%, from about 881,000 to 827,000. In contrast, Fox News witnessed an increase in its audience from 1.9 million in 2021 to 2.1 million in 2022, representing a 10% increase (Pew Research Center, 2023). These viewership patterns underscore the importance of understanding how each network's coverage potentially shapes public perception.

A. Tone of Coverage and Political Polarization

The results show that differences in tone toward Latinos, African Americans, and Asian Americans are apparent in coverage on all three stations—CNN, Fox, and MSNBC. Such differences might be explained by their different political leanings. A case in point, Fox News, a traditionally conservative station, had largely negative coverage of Asian Americans in the COVID-19 period. This complements findings from extant literature on COVID-19 stigma that associated Fox News with it; hence, showing those who relied more on Fox News were more likely to have stigmatizing attitudes against Asian Americans (Dhanani & Franz, 2020; Cho et al., 2020). In addition, Fox News frequently bashed Latinos in its coverage of Latino news, especially during debates of immigration issues, which help further anti-immigrant discourse, fostering stereotypes and prejudices against Latinos and immigrants (Reny & Manzano, 2016; Fujioka, 2011; Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2012).

Fox News typically holds a negative tone in its coverage, typical of its general editorial line on such sensitive subjects, including conservative political viewpoints, which tend to hold a caution toward immigration policies and minority rights movements on the back foot. The coverage is but one reflection of network politics, and, in essence, it contributes to the very problem: the polarization of public opinion on these issues. In a way, Fox News is priming its audience with these negative frames so that it goes out and conceptualizes these minority groups more negatively, which helps division across those frames.

In contrast, CNN and MSNBC, known generally as liberal networks, used a positive or even indifferent tone when addressing minority groups. However, MSNBC has also been shown to have negative reporting since historical analysis showed its poor portrayal of Asian Americans during the 1998 Winter Olympics (Tuan, 1999). It helps to illustrate the fact that while political leanings affect reporting, it is not the only issue. Their views on the coverage of minority groups are rather similar, as both CNN and MSNBC reverse their general stance—part of their broader editorial stance—toward strong social justice and inclusivity. This is in coherence with the literature stating that liberal media outlets would more often frame minority issues in a supporting and compassionate way (Holtzman et al., 2011; Feldman et al., 2012).

B. Influence of Partisan Media on Public Perception

The role of partisan media in shaping public perception is evident from our analysis. According to Shim (2016), negative portrayals of minority groups portrayed by Fox News reflect its general ideological perspectives, closely aligned with conservative and Republican views.

These findings indicate that through selective framing, the quality is very instrumental in reinforcing already held biases and increasing political polarization. Fox News silences the voices of most issues on immigration and minority rights, hence fitting into a broader rhetoric of marginalization, leading to increased social stratification and intergroup hostility. Research shows that exposure to partisan media, particularly those with a conservative bent, significantly impacts their viewers' attitudes toward minority groups and is likely to lead to the formation of more negative perceptions pertinent to them (Feldman et al., 2012; Reny & Manzano, 2016).

Any analysis of political polarization cannot be complete without the role of media in shaping public perception. A story on the news, more so on minority groups, can go to a great degree in influencing public opinion and reinforcing existing biases. Partisan media outlets present news items in ways that are commensurate with their ideologies, thus creating echo chambers in which viewers are bombarded constantly to entrench any preset belief (Arceneaux & Johnson, 2013). Such exposure to partisan media content may result in increased polarization as people grow further entrenched in their ideological positions.

C. Broader Implications and Future Research

These findings highlight the broader implications of media coverage with respect to political polarization and social cohesion. Particularly, these cable networks are relevant platforms in respect of how public discourse on minority groups is framed or otherwise set within the greater agenda. Accordingly, the negative tone that characterized Fox News' coverage comports with a growing literature regarding the impact of partisan media on societal attitudes, such as (Feldman et al., 2012; Lajevardi, 2019). Comparing the audiences of CNN and MSNBC with the viewers of Fox News, there is a drop in both, while that for Fox News increased. This change in viewership points to increased ideologically homogeneous media exposure, deepening an already biased exposure and echo chambers.

Future research should further refine the scope of this study, perhaps increasing the number of media outlets under investigation and studies that are adequately longitudinal to trace changes over time. Researchers could also consider studying moderating variables associated with the amount of coverage the cable networks provide, in which case they would recognize how cable networks of different ideologies cover minority news. Briefly, the difference in tone regarding coverage for minority groups between CNN, Fox News, and MSNBC serves to underscore how huge a role the media play in setting public perception and political dynamics.

The overwhelmingly negative coverage of Fox News contrasts to those of a more neutral or positive tone for CNN and MSNBC; the greatest contrast, in fact, contributes to the wider ideological divides that cast long shadows on American media. These results tell us that partisan media can change people's public attitudes toward minority groups in ways that create greater societal divisiveness and heightened polarization in politics.

Conclusion

The proliferation of partisan media has significantly impacted political discourse in the United States, contributing to increased incivility and polarization. Research indicates that partisan outlets reinforce existing biases, shape public opinion, and influence political behavior through selective exposure, agenda-setting, and framing. The rise of social media has further amplified these effects, creating echo chambers and feedback loops that deepen ideological divides. Understanding the role of partisan media in shaping political discourse is crucial for addressing the challenges posed by political polarization and fostering a more informed and engaged citizenry.

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Book Review - Kitap İncelemesi

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY (1923–2023) HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS

EDITORS
BİNNUR ÖZKEÇECİ TANER AND SİNEM AKGÜL AÇIKMEŞE
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This book is part of a series that aims to deepen studies in foreign policy analysis. This series includes three main points:

1.   Examining Overlooked Countries: Most studies focus on the US and European countries. In contrast, this series looks at countries from different regions around the world and their types of governments. It offers a broader analysis of foreign policy.

2.   Focusing on Special Topics: The series explores how foreign policy is related to gender, race, climate change, and new technologies. It studies how gender and race affect foreign policy decisions and the impact of new technologies on foreign policy.

3.   Using Different Approaches: The series uses different approaches beyond traditional theories, such as emotions, post-colonial theories, feminist theories, and international political economy. It analyzes foreign policy with these new and innovative ideas.

The 100th anniversary of the Republic of Turkey is a great chance to study Turkey's international impact and how it has developed. In 1923, Turkey concentrated on establishing a robust state and steering clear of foreign intervention.

Today, Turkey is very different. It tries to increase its influence not only in neighboring regions but also in Asia, Africa, the Far East, and Latin America. These changes help us understand Turkey's international identity and security issues. Those also show us how other countries see Turkey's international relations. This book deeply analyzes changes in Turkish foreign policy. Each chapter is written by expert Turkish women academics, which is a considerable achievement for both the academic community and Turkey.

The authors examine the following questions about Turkey's relations with specific regions and global actors: 1) What goals does Turkey have in its relations with the region or global actor? (2) What factors and major developments have shaped the relationship between Turkey and the regional or global actor? (3) What is the current situation between Turkey and the region or global actor? (4) What are some of the opportunities and challenges in Turkey's relations with the region or global actors? (5) How will this relationship evolve in the future?

The book starts with an introduction to Turkey's foreign policy through history and theory. Özkeçeci-Taner and Akgül Açıkmeşe look at how Turkey's foreign policy was shaped during three important periods: 1923-1980, the 1990s, from 2022 onward (AKP Era).

The Editors explore internal, regional, and global factors that influenced Turkey's foreign policy during these times. They, then discuss how three main theories of International Relations; namely, realism, liberalism and constructivism to explain changes and continuities in Turkey's foreign policy over the last 100 years.

Editors argue that Turkey is a unique country (sui generis) that has not followed a predictable path in its foreign policy. Because of this, it is difficult to understand Turkey's foreign policy changes with just one theoretical perspective.

In Chapter 2, Evren Çelik-Wiltse examines Turkey's relations with the US and NATO from a liberal institutional perspective. Çelik-Wiltse divides these relations into two main topics: alignment (When Turkey has aligned with the US and NATO) and divergence (When and why Turkey has moved away from the rules and norms of the US and NATO).

Çelik-Wiltse investigates the institutional and structural reasons behind Turkey's "going it alone" attitude and analyzes it from a liberal institutional perspective. In this section, which examines the relations between Turkey and the USA,

it is investigated when the interests and relations of the two countries become harmonious and when they diverge. A worsening, more tense relationship has been observed. When foreign policy teams, diplomats, military officials, and democratic processes are involved in decision-making, when supported by the UN Security Council, and when aligned with NATO, the resulting policies become more acceptable to both parties.

In Chapter 3, Meltem Müftüler-Baç focuses on Turkey's relations with the European Union (EU). Using Liberalism as the main theoretical framework and examining state-level factors, Müftüler-Baç argues that the EU's role as a norm-setting anchor has changed. This change has led to two main issues: the failure to prevent democratic backsliding, where the EU has not been successful in stopping democratic declines in some of its member states or in countries that are in the accession process, and the emergence of alternatives to full membership, where new options like differentiated integration have made full EU membership less attractive for candidate countries.

Müftüler-Baç concludes that these factors have caused Turkey to reformulate its foreign policy towards the EU. EU membership is not the only way to be part of the European order, but it still affects Turkey's foreign policy choices. The decline of democracy in Europe and the future of European integration indicates how Turkey's relationship with the EU is changing. This creates a new challenge in Turkey-EU relations that was not seen before.

In Chapter 4, Evren Balta and Habibe Özdal discuss Turkey-Russia relations. They argue that these relations have historically been shaped by two main factors: the strength of the Western alliance and anti-Western sentiments. They show that early strategic balancing has shifted to flexible alignment due to weaker NATO unity and increased anti-Americanism in Turkey.

In Chapter 5, Meliha Benli Altunışık examines Turkey's foreign policy in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region through the internal political ideas and goals of the AKP. She highlights two main factors: ideological factors, such as Islamism, which explain Turkey's high level of involvement in the MENA region, and material factors, such as staying in power, which help us understand the conflict between ideology and pragmatism in the AKP's foreign policy.

Altunışık uses the concept of "methodical pragmatism" to show how the AKP combines different ideological frameworks, such as solving problems of the Islamic world and nationalism, in their foreign policy.

In chapter 6, Oya Dursun-Özkanca examines Turkey's foreign policy towards the Western Balkans. She explains how international, regional, and domestic economic-political factors influence Turkey's approach. By visiting the Neoclassical Realism theory, she analyzes the relationships between Turkey and the Western Balkans. Dursun-Özkanca highlights that while some of Turkey's actions in the region test boundaries, its overall foreign policy has not significantly changed yet.

In Chapter 7, Bezen Balamir Coşkun analyzes Turkey's foreign policy in the Eastern Mediterranean, focusing on the Cyprus issue. She considers Turkey as a middle power and examines its relations in four different periods: the founding years of the Republic (1923–1946), the multi-party period (1946–1960), the era of military coups (1960–1985), and the post-Cold War period (after the 1990s). This analysis helps us understand how Turkey's foreign policy has evolved over different periods. Coşkun also discusses how the wars in Syria and Libya, as well as the ongoing competition for valuable gas reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean, have influenced Turkey's strategies in the region.

In chapter 8, Ayça Ergun analyzes Turkey's foreign policy in the South Caucasus using Constructivism theory. She argues that Turkey's foreign policy choices and initiatives are largely determined by historical context, perceptions, and identities (ethnic, religious, linguistic) in a geopolitical context. Ergun points out that the region is not homogeneous and focuses on Turkey's bilateral relations with three regional states: Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia. The Karabakh wars and increased economic relations in the energy and transportation sectors present both opportunities and challenges for Turkey's relations in the region. Ergun concludes her chapter by discussing three main issues that will determine whether Turkey can continue to play an active role in shaping regional policy and participating in regional cooperation efforts: the peace talks between Azerbaijan and Armenia, the normalization process of bilateral relations between Armenia and Turkey, and the cautious cooperation between Russia and Turkey.

In chapter 9, Ayça Alemdaroğlu and Sultan Tepe analyze Turkey-China relations using critical theory and feminist theory. They explore how power hierarchies, sovereignty, and oppression play a role in the relationship between the two countries. The authors argue that Turkey and China benefit from and legitimize existing hierarchical conditions at both national and global levels. Their analysis goes beyond just describing economic, energy, and security agreements

Alemdaroğlu and Tepe show that despite the different ideologies and state interests, women and minority groups are the biggest victims of the Turkey-China partnership. They also suggest that this partnership supports business interests while promoting authoritarian tendencies, anti-democratic practices, and human rights abuses in both countries.

In Chapter 10, Aslı Ilgıt studies Turkey's relations with Africa and adds new information to this topic. Ilgıt looks at foreign policy's identity and cultural sides, focusing on ontological security and feelings. She examines these two related but less researched topics through Turkish identity and foreign policy since the 1990s. She looks at Turkey's humanitarian aid and African projects. This chapter focuses on the emotional sides of Turkey's new humanitarian policy and African policies within the scope of ontological security.

The book "One Hundred Years of Turkish Foreign Policy (1923-2023)" is a unique work with ten chapters, each written by female academics. One of the book's main features is that each author uses different methodologies to explore topics and themes that were previously less covered or considered less important. This variety enriches the book's content, giving readers a multi-dimensional view of Turkish foreign policy. The different perspectives and unique methods of female academics not only open new horizons for readers but also highlight the important role of women in the academic world. This book has secured an important place among studies on Turkish foreign policy and has inspired new research in this field.

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ÇALIŞMALARI DERNEĞİ 2011

Article Review - Makale İncelemesi

İSTANBUL'DA GÖÇMENLERİN MEKÂNA YERLEŞME VE TUTUNMA DİNAMİKLERİ: BEYOĞLU ÖRNEĞİ
ESRA KAYA ERDOĞAN, HATİCE KURTULUŞ, DENİZ YÜKSEKER

İSTANBUL TİCARET ÜNİVERSİTESİ SOSYAL BİLİMLER DERGİSİ TÜRKİYE'NİN GÖÇ SİYASETİ ÖZEL SAYISI, 21(ÖZEL SAYI) 135-158. DOI: 10.46928/İTİCUSBE.1179133

Araştırmanın Kapsamı, Kavramsal Çerçevesi ve Yöntemi

Yazarların Beyoğlu'nda 2021 yılında yaptıkları "Hak Temelli Yerel Politika Bağlamında: Beyoğlu'ndaki Göçmenler" başlıklı saha çalışmasının bulgularına dayanarak kaleme aldıkları makale, İstanbul'un Beyoğlu semtindeki farklı göçmen profillerini görünür kılarken, buradaki göçmen gruplarının yerleşme/tutunma dinamiklerini ele almakta ve göçmenlerin kentteki ihtiyaç, beklenti ve sorun alanlarını ortaya çıkartmaktadır. Bahse konu saha çalışmasında beş göçmen grup ile odak grup toplantısı yapılmış ve 19 kamu kurumunun temsilcileri ile de derinlemesine görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Çalışmanın temel bulgularında Beyoğlu'nun soylulaştırılma sürecinde metruklaşan konut stoğunun ve Beyoğlu'nda yoğunlaşan yeme-içme ve konaklama sektörlerinde kayıt dışı çalışma imkanlarının bulunması sebebiyle düzensiz ve kayıtsız göçmenleri çektiğine ve kayıtsız göçmenlere "bekleme odası" konumunda ev sahipliği yaptığına dikkat çekilmektedir. Beyoğlu örneğinde görüldüğü üzere kayıtsız ve düzensiz göçmenler eğitim, sağlık gibi temel haklara erişimde zorluklar yaşamaktadır. Özellikle sağlık hizmetleri ve eğitim haklarına erişememenin yarattığı sorunlara dikkat çeken yazarlar, yerel düzeyde göçmenlere yönelik üretilebilecek sosyal politika ve uygulamalara katkı sağlamayı hedeflemiştir.

Yazarlar giriş bölümünde kavramsal ve kuramsal çerçeveleri ile çalışmanın temel bulguları ve kapsamından bahsetmemiş olsalar da saha çalışmalarına ve neden bu araştırmada Beyoğlu'nu seçtiklerine dair bilgileri aktarmışlardır. Makalenin kavramsal ve kuramsal çerçevesinde Avrupa'da ve Türkiye'de göç politikalarının merkeziyetçi, yerelci, çok katmanlı veya birbirinden kopuk olabildiğini belirten yazarlar bu göç yönetişim katmanlarını tartışmaktadır. Merkeziyetçi göç yönetişimi tepeden inme bir modele dayanmaktadır. Yerel göç yönetişiminde yerindenlik ilkesi ile hareket edilmekte ve göç politikaları yerele bırakılmaktadır. Çok katmanlı göç yönetişiminde ise farklı düzeylerin birbiri ile karşılıklı etkileşimi ya da kopukluğu söz konusudur. Bu düzeyler arasında merkeziyetçi göç yönetişiminin göçmen karşıtı tepkileri besleyebileceğini ve yerel göç yönetişiminin daha olumlu sonuç verebileceğini AB özelinde yapılan çalışmalarla örneklendirmişlerdir. Bu çalışmalara dayanarak AB düzeyinde ve ulusal düzeyde göçmen entegrasyon politikalarının sadece genel çerçeve sunduğu, yerel düzeyde ise o bölgenin barındırdığı kültürel ve toplumsal çeşitlilik kapsamında göçmen entegrasyonu politikalarının üretildiğini belirten yazarlar, bu yaklaşımın hem kendi kültürel özgünlükleri olan hem de kültürel çeşitlilik barındıran bölgelerin kendi ihtiyaçları çerçevesinde ve katılımcı bir şekilde entegrasyon politikaları oluşturma imkanı sağladığına dikkat çekmişlerdir.

Türkiye'de yerel yönetimlerin göç yönetişimindeki yerine ve etkisine dair yapılan çalışmaları inceleyen yazarlar yerel yönetimlerin göç yönetişimindeki rolünün öneminin altını çizmektedir. Bu araştırmalardan biri olan Kale ve Erdoğan'ın (2019) İstanbul'un 39 ilçe belediyesinde gerçekleştirdikleri çalışmada, merkezi yönetimin yerel yönetimlere ayırdığı maddi kaynakların yetersizliği sebebiyle belediyelerin sivil toplum kuruluşları ve uluslararası örgütlerle iş birliği kurduğu tespiti önemli bir bulgudur. Başka bir örnek çalışma olan Sultanbeyli, Şişli ve Zeytinburnu'nda Lowndes ve Karakaya Polat'ın (2021) yürüttüğü araştırmada, belediyelerin göçmen ve mültecilere yönelik projelerinde AB fonlarından destek aldıkları ve sadece Suriyelilere yönelik değil, bölgelerinde yaşayan bütün göçmenleri kapsayan faaliyetleri bulunduğu görülmektedir. Yerel yönetimlerin göç yönetişiminde potansiyel olumlu rollere sahip olduğunu vurgulayan söz konusu çalışmada, göçmenlere verilen hizmetlere yönelik mevzuatta ve ulusal düzeyde politika kapsamında, yerel yönetimlerin oluşan boşlukları doldurduklarına ve eksikleri giderdiklerine de dikkat çekilmektedir.

Yazarlar bulgularını aktardıkları çalışmalardan hareketle göç yönetişiminde yerelin rolünü vurgulamakta ve yerel yönetimlerin bölgelerindeki yerli ve göçmen nüfusunun kendine özgü niteliklerini göz önünde bulundurarak politika geliştirmeleri gerektiğini savunmaktadır.

Bu bağlamda Beyoğlu'nda gerçekleştirdikleri saha çalışmasında Beyoğlu'nun nüfus yapısına, göçmenlerin ve mültecilerin durumuna yönelik veriler sunmaktadırlar. Bununla birlikte alan çalışmasında görüşülen kişilere yönelik demografik bilgiler, Beyoğlu'nda yaşadıkları süre, göç durakları gibi bilgileri okuyucuya sunmamışlardır. Göç araştırmalarında yöntem ile ilgili Türkiye'nin göç paternlerindeki özgünlüklerini ortaya çıkartması bağlamında saha çalışmalarında alan tasviri, görüşülen kişilere nasıl ulaşıldığı, katılımcıların özellikleri, araştırmacıların deneyimleri ve gözlemleri önemlidir. Özellikle teorik tartışmaların gelişmesi, yeni teorilerin üretilmesi ve araştırma yöntemlerinin geliştirilmesi açısından bu detayların makalede kısa da olsa paylaşılması göç alanındaki araştırmacılara yol gösterici olacaktır.

Araştırmanın Temel Bulguları

Araştırmacılar Beyoğlu'nun "göçmenler için bir kuvöz" olduğu tespitini yapmışlardır. Beyoğlu'nun göç alan bir semt olmasını dört olumsal unsur ile açıklamaktadırlar. İlk unsur, ilçenin tarihi olarak aldığı ve verdiği göçlerin, sonraki göçlere mekânsal yerleşme olanaklarını sunmasıdır. İkinci unsur, nüfus hareketliliğinin süreklilik içinde olmasıdır. Mahalledeki metruklaşma arttıkça ve göçmenler kente tutunabilecek mekanizmalar geliştirebildikçe daha iyi binalara ya da semtlere göç etmekte ve onlardan boşalan alana yeni göçmenler yerleşebilmektedir. Üçüncü olumsal unsur "tekinsiz" hale gelen mahallelerde kontrollerin yapılmaması nedeniyle göçmenlerin kayıtsız bir şekilde buralarda yaşayabiliyor ve enformel işlerde çalışabiliyor olmasıdır. Dördüncü unsur ise, soylulaştırma projeleri ile emlak ve inşaat hareketliliği olan semtte yaşayan göçmenler kayıtsız olarak inşaatlarda, konaklama ve eğlence sektörlerinde iş bulabilmektedir. Tüm bu unsurların birleşiminde Beyoğlu, özellikle yazarların ifadesi ile "kırılgan göçmen gruplarına kente yerleşirken en temel ihtiyaçlar olan barınma ve geçim imkânı sunmaktadır" ve bir "kuvöz" işlevi görmektedir (2022: 144). Beyoğlu'nun göçmenlerin neden ilk durağı olduğuna dair tespitlerinde göçmenlik ağlarına da vurgu yapan yazarlar, göçmen ağlarının mekânda tutunmayı, iş bulmayı, eğitim ve sağlık hizmetlerine erişimi kolaylaştırdığını da eklemektedir. Ayrıca Beyoğlu, Avrupa'ya göç edebilmek için gelen transit göçmenler için de "bekleme odası" niteliği taşımaktadır.

Araştırmanın diğer önemli bulgusu, göçmenlerin kentsel haklara ve hizmetlere erişimlerinin statülerine, sınıfsal konumlarına ve göçmenlik ağlarına göre değişkenlik gösterdiği hipotezi ile ilgilidir. Bölgede geçmişten günümüze sahipsiz kalan binalara işgalciler tarafından el konulmuş ve bu binalar çoklu kullanıma açılarak göçmenlere yüksek kira bedelleri ile kiralanmaktadır.

Bu durum kayıtsız olan göçmenler için yazarların bahsettiği olumsal unsurlardan biri olsa da yüksek kira artışlarında göçmenlerin hak iddia edememesine ve barınma sorunu yaşamasına neden olmaktadır. Bununla birlikte bu metruk evlerin insan onuruna yakışır bir barınma sağlamadığı da dikkat çekmektedir. Beyoğlu'ndaki göçmenlerin temel haklara ve hizmetlere erişiminde ciddi sorunlar bulunmaktadır. Sağlık hizmetlerine erişimi en sorunlu alan olarak tanımlayan yazarlar, temel belirleyenin göçmenin statüsü olduğunu vurgulamaktadır. Dil bariyeri ve bilgi eksikliği de sağlık hizmetlerine erişimde engel oluşturmaktadır. İş kazası, doğum ve acil durumlarda da geri gönderilmekten korkan kayıtsız göçmenler, merdiven altı yerlerde çözüm aramakta ve bu durum halk sağlığı açısından tehlike teşkil etmektedir. Önemli haklara erişimde sorun yaşayan bir diğer grup, göçmen ve mülteci çocuklardır. Özellikle eğitim hakkına erişimde yine statü kaynaklı ve ekonomik zorluklardan dolayı göçmen ve mülteci çocuklar örgün eğitim alamamaktadır. Buna çözüm olarak örneğin Şişli'de yoğun olarak yaşayan Sahra-altı Afrika göçmenleri kiliselerde çocuklara dil eğitimi dersleri vermektedir. Beyoğlu'ndaki bir diğer sorun kamusal mekânların kullanımının göçmenler için sınırlı olmasıdır. Özellikle kadın, çocuk ve yaşlılar için nefes alabilecekleri mekânlar olan parkların yokluğu önemli bir eksikliktir.

Sonuç ve Tartışma

Araştırmanın temel bulgularını destekleyen tartışmada göçmenlerin yaşadıkları sorunların göçmen gruplarına göre değişkenlik gösterdiği savı üzerinde durulmaktadır. Geçici koruma statüsündeki Suriyeliler'in temel haklara erişimde yaşadığı sorunlar dil sorunu etrafında şekillenirken, düzensiz göçmenler ve ikamet izni başka ilde olan Suriyeliler temel kamusal hizmetlere erişim hakkından yoksundurlar. Yazarlar bu konuda Türkiye'nin kabul etmiş olduğu uluslararası insan hakları hukuku gereğince uygulamaları ve mevzuatları tüm göçmenlere uygulaması gerektiğinin altını çizmektedir. Bununla birlikte yerel düzeyde belediyeler, sivil toplum kuruluşları, kamu kurumları ve gönüllü oluşumların iş birliğinin de göçmenlerin statü fark etmeksizin sağlık, eğitim, barınma gibi temel haklara erişiminin sağlanmasında önemli bir rolü olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır.

Makalenin Beyoğlu örneğiyle yapmış olduğu tespitler, ülke genelinde de statü fark etmeksizin göçmenlerin ve göçmen kökenli vatandaşların da temel insan haklarına ve hizmetlere erişiminde karşılaştığı yasal ve sosyal sınırların varlığını göstermektedir. Bununla birlikte makale, İstanbul gibi yoğun nüfusa sahip toplumsal ve kültürel çeşitliliği barındıran büyük kentin göçmen profilini çıkartan ve takip eden araştırmalara ihtiyaç olduğunu düşündürtmektedir.

Özellikle işgücü piyasası içindeki dağılım, etnik gruplar arasındaki sosyal, ekonomik ve kültürel hiyerarşinin durumu, toplumsal kabulün yerel dinamikleri, göçmenlerin ve yerel nüfusun gündelik hayatta birbiriyle etkileşimleri ve yaşadıkları zorluklarla baş etme mekanizmaları konularında çalışmaların varlığı artık göç alan bir ülke olarak Türkiye'nin huzurlu ve barış içinde bir geleceğinin olabilmesi için önem arz etmektedir. Makale, göç ve kentsel dönüşüm ilişkisinin kapsamlı bir şekilde, bölgesel ve periyodik kriterlerle çalışılması konusunda göç alanında ilgili olan okuyucu kitlesini teşvik etmektedir. Yöntem kısmının zenginleştirildiği ve araştırma sorularının boyutlandırıldığı bir versiyon araştırmacılara yeni ufuklar açabilecektir.