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THE POLITICAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19

FERAS SADIQ SALLOUM^a

^aBelarusian State University, 4 Niezaliežnasci Avenue, Minsk 220030, Belarus

Like the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 and the global economic crisis in 2008, COVID-19 is viewed to be a turning point in the international system. Just as the coronavirus altered the habits of many societies, claimed the lives of thousands, disrupted markets, revealed the efficiency or lack thereof of governments, it may drive into permanent transformations in the world's political system. The aim of this article is to reveal whether COVID-19 will reshape the current world order. The article focuses on the impact of COVID-19 on international relations. The opinions of various authors, politicians, and journalists on the effects of coronavirus on the world order are described. A reasonable conclusion is drawn about the state of the USA and China and the emergence of a new world order.

Keywords: COVID-19; world order; America; China; post-coronavirus era.

ПОЛИТИЧЕСКИЕ ТРАНСФОРМАЦИИ В КОНТЕКСТЕ COVID-19

ФЕРАС САДЫК САЛЛУМ¹⁾

¹⁾Белорусский государственный университет, пр. Независимости, 4, 220030, г. Минск, Беларусь

Подобно падению Берлинской стены в 1989 г. и глобальному экономическому кризису в 2008 г., COVID-19 рассматривается как поворотный момент в системе международных отношений. Коронавирус изменил привычки многих обществ, унес жизни тысяч людей, изменил рынки, показал эффективность или отсутствие таковой у правительств. Все перечисленные выше факторы могут привести к постоянным преобразованиям в мировой политической системе. Цель статьи – рассмотреть вопрос о возможности COVID-19 изменить нынешний мировой порядок. Исследование посвящено влиянию COVID-19 на международные отношения. Описаны мнения различных авторов, политиков и журналистов о воздействии коронавируса на мировой порядок. Обоснованно делается вывод о положении США и Китая и возникновении нового мирового порядка.

Ключевые слова: COVID-19; мировой порядок; Америка; Китай; посткоронавирусная эра.

A lot of being said about what is going to transform forever on account of COVID-19. The workplaces will be different, the retail shopping will change, the way college students study may never be the same again, whether we will never go back to the way that things were before, and more importantly, how coronavirus

might reshape geopolitics. In the midst of that, the question begs who is going to be the number one in the arena of great power competition, as some opinions point to the rise of China. Actually, there is an argument that the coronavirus crisis is opening the door for China to move up while the US is to move down. Based

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Автор:

Ферас Садык Саллум – кандидат исторических наук, доцент; доцент кафедры международных отношений факультета международных отношений.

Author:

Feras Sadiq Salloum, PhD (history), docent; associate professor at the department of international relations, faculty of international relations.
ferassalloum2000@yahoo.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1221-405X>





upon that, the aim of this article is to reveal whether COVID-19 will reshape the current world order.

In view of myriad contradictory studies on the ramifications of this pandemic for the global order, as well as for a lucid grasp of the problem in question, the article will be split into two discrete sections. The first one is going to accentuate on analysts who confirm that the post-coronavirus era would serve some countries' interests, particularly China and Europe, as America's dominance in the post-pandemic world will descend if it did not revisit its own policy. In respect to the second section, it should be noted that though it will mostly revolve around the researchers who believe that the results of COVID-19 will not significantly transform the nature of the world order, and therefore the world leadership will stay behind the United States, a number of thinkers within this section maintain that the pandemic will intensify the current rivalry between Europe, China and America. As a result, neither China nor the EU will not be able to upturn the world order. Also, particularly interesting are the Arabs and Chinese writers whose opinions are vehement opponents of the Chinese political system.

Accordingly, in the first section, changing the world order is mirrored in H. Kissinger's article "The coronavirus pandemic will forever alter the world order". The author explains that the reality is that the world will never be the same after the coronavirus. And while the assault on human health will hopefully be temporary, as he puts it, the political and economic upheaval it has unleashed could last for generations. H. Kissinger's gaze into the future also includes a global collaborative vision and program to overcome the virus. In this regard, he underscores that the historic challenge for leaders is to manage the crisis while building the future otherwise failure could set the world on fire. But to avoid such a dire scenario, the previous American advisor urges the USA to draw lessons from the development of the Marshall plan and the Manhattan project. As such, the US is obliged to undertake a major effort in three domains: first, shore up global resilience to infectious disease; second, strive to heal the wounds to the world economy; third, safeguard the principles of the liberal world order. Mentioned article also peers into power and legitimacy. In this relation H. Kissinger writes, the world's democracies need to defend and sustain their Enlightenment values. For that end, he advocates for a critical balance in any international system between two critical ingredients which are power and legitimacy. In his opinion, a global retreat from balancing power with legitimacy will cause the social contract to disintegrate both domestically and internationally¹.

In the point of international cooperation in the post-epidemic era, N. Tocci, an Italian political scientist and international relations expert, concentrates mostly on the position of Europe in her search "How coronavirus will upturn the global order". She holds an opinion that the EU's role is in the post-COVID-19 world is very crucial because it is Europe's responsibility to make multilateralism great again. From N. Tocci's point of view, with Beijing presenting the most prominent challenge to Washington and trying to present itself as a model to follow, the international order is going from unipolar to multipolar. However, the EU's burgeoning success in rising to the challenge may undermine Beijing's efforts to present itself as a model. As per the article, the virus has exploded across the planet just as the hegemony that the United States enjoyed as the world's only superpower has come to an undeniable end. In that event, today, it is not a question of agreeing or disagreeing with the US, but rather of not seeing it on the global map².

That holds true in the work of the American diplomat R. Haass "The pandemic will accelerate history rather than reshape it". R. Haass concedes that one of the contours of the current crisis is the conspicuous absence of US leadership. Even before COVID-19 reared up, there was already a sharp decline in the attractiveness of the American model due to the constant political stalemate, gun violence, mismanagement that led to the 2008 global financial crisis and the coronavirus epidemic. In addition to it, the fatigue correlated with two long wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and growing domestic issues, Washington is not bent on playing a leading international role. Alongside the slow and inconsistent response of the federal government to the pandemic has reinforced the already widespread belief that the United States has gone astray. Still, R. Haass is convinced that nor China neither anyone else, has the desire or ability to fill the void that the United States has created. To the diplomat's mind, what will change out of the pandemic is not the fact of the disorder, but its degree. On that note, R. Haass elates, a more appropriate precedent for consideration may not be the post-World War II period, but the post-World War I period as an era of declining American influence and growing international turmoil³.

It is worth mentioning that among the Western writers, K. M. Campbell (CEO in the Asia Group and former diplomat) and R. Doshi (the director of the Brookings China Strategy Initiative and a fellow in Brookings foreign policy) appear to be sure about reordering the global system by virtue of PRC's performance and US incompetence during this epidemic. Describing the

¹Kissinger H. A. The coronavirus pandemic will forever alter the world order [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-coronavirus-pandemic-will-forever-alter-the-world-order-11585953005> (date of access: 12.10.2020).

²Tocci N. How coronavirus will upturn the global order [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.politico.eu/article/coronavirus-upturns-global-order-china-united-states/> (date of access: 15.10.2020).

³Haass R. The pandemic will accelerate history rather than reshape it [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-04-07/pandemic-will-accelerate-history-rather-reshape-it> (date of access: 17.10.2020).



American behavior during the COVID-19 crisis, they make clear that the status of the US as a global leader over the past 70 years has been built not only on wealth and influence but also on the internal governance system, i. e. the provision of socially significant goods, the ability and desire to spearhead and coordinate the global efforts to mitigate the crises. The epidemic disaster tested all three elements of American supremacy, however, its response fell short of these elements. By way of contrast, they give a vivid account of how China conducted an active diplomatic campaign to bring together dozens of countries and hundreds of decision-makers via videoconference to share information about the pandemic and China's personal experience in fighting the disease. Furthermore, while no European state responded to Italy's request for urgent medical equipment and protective equipment, Beijing publicly pledged to send ventilators, masks, respirators, protective suits and medical tests to Italy, Iraq, and Serbia. It is important to indicate that China's help to some European countries was a staunch blow to the EU. In this context, the Serbian president called the talk of European solidarity "fairy tales" and stated that only the Chinese government could help the Serbs. In the article titled "China strives for world leadership against the backdrops of errors of the USA", K. M. Campbell and K. Doshi compare the current crisis with the Suez crisis in 1956, which marked the end of the United Kingdom's dominance in the global scene. They stress that if the United States does not rise to fight a new challenge, the coronavirus plague could be a repeat of the Suez crisis. From their perspectives, China's main asset in its pursuit of global leadership during the coronavirus pandemic is the American outright inconsistency and its focus on domestic politics. However, China's ultimate success will be equally dependent on what is transpiring in Washington and Beijing. That said, the USA could still turn the tide in the current crisis if it acted as a leader, who is supposed to deal with the problem at home, to provide the world with socially significant goods, and to coordinate global efforts. In doing so, it will be a step towards restoring faith in America's continued leadership⁴.

While the Western authors deal with the problem cautiously, the majority of Eastern analysts insist that the coronacrisis will reshape the world order in the interests of the Eastern countries, especially the People's Republic of China. A striking example is the Arab journalist A. al-Bari Atwan who in the article "Forget the

"Coronavirus": two events confirm China's early leadership", notes that the World War II paved the way for the rise of the American power, and the "global corona war" has laid the foundations for the new superpower i. e. China. A. al-Bari Atwan draws his conclusion based on China's amazing excellence in managing the coronavirus crisis and exporting medical equipment to more than 98 countries free of charge, regardless of color, gender, race, and religion. From his perspective, China will come up with an advanced weapons system that will put an end to the presence of American aircraft carriers. On top of that, the renminbi, the official currency of China, will be the first currency in all financial and international dealings in the short term⁵.

In the context of the upcoming influence of the East, the journalist K. al-Jabri sees that this cataclysm will also accelerate the shift of power from West to East, as South Korea and Singapore responded better than Washington or other European capitals. Regarding China, he voices that after its early mistakes, it reacted well, while in Europe and America the response was slow and haphazard. Consequently, the perception of what called Western brand aura, which was able to overcome any crisis, ended. K. al-Jabri assumes that this plague will reshape the structure of international power over time⁶. On the status of the East in the post-corona world, the Iranian professor M. Sanai underlines that multilateralism will undoubtedly gain momentum in world politics and countries will move away from US-oriented globalization as well. What is more, due to the American and the European incoherent policy on combating COVID-19 infection, the East will occupy a special place in the international arena. As a result, countries such as China, Russia, India, and Iran will have more leeway in international affairs⁷.

That perception on multilateralism is underpinned by some Chinese professors. An example of that, Gu Xuewu, the Chinese professor, in his interview with the German journalist R. Ebbighausen, says that we already live in a multipolar world. Many political scientists agree that the short phase of American hegemony following the collapse of the Soviet Union no longer exists. Professor adds that some key elements of the "Chinese order" can still be identified. China wants a world order that is politically multipolar, functionally multilateral, and ideologically pluralistic⁸.

It is also should be noted that the Chinese policy makers have been outlining about the perspective of the international order even before COVID-19. A para-

⁴Campbell K. M., Doshi R. China strives for world leadership against the backdrops of errors of USA [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://globalaffairs.ru/articles/koronavirus-pereformatiruet-globalnyj-poryadok/> (date of access: 25.10.2020).

⁵al-Bari Atwan A. Forget the "Coronavirus": two events confirm China's early leadership [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://shaamtimes.net/231995/> (date of access: 27.10.2020).

⁶al-Jabri K. Our world as we know will change forever. What awaits the global system after the corona pandemic? [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://arabicpost.me/تاليلحت/2020/04/15/يذللانملاءع/> (date of access: 01.11.2020).

⁷Sanai M. World order after coronavirus: nothing will change [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://ru.valdaiclub.com/a/highlights/mirovoy-poryadok-posle-koronavirusa/> (date of access: 05.11.2020).

⁸Ebbighausen R. What is China's world order for the 21st century? [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.dw.com/en/what-is-chinas-world-order-for-the-21st-century/a-54368354> (date of access: 10.11.2020).



digm example of that is a speech of Xi Jinping, the general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) at the World economic forum in Davos in 2017. He was quoted as saying: "Rejected isolationism positioned China as a supporter of multilateralism. The international community should adhere to multilateralism to uphold the authority and efficacy of multilateral institutions. We should honor promises and abide by rules. One should not select or bend rules as he sees fit"⁹.

It is important to note that the Russian researchers somewhat share the same Arabs' views when it comes to diminishing US superiority. The journalist P. Akopov, in his article "In order to survive, America must become China", believes that America cannot contain China and the East will also prevail over the West. According to him, it is still unclear who will take the lead, be Asia, Eurasia, or the Pacific region, but what seems to be certain is that the Atlantic time is running out. On the other hand, with a view to maintaining its global leadership, P. Akopov proposes that the United States ought to become like China, that is, Washington should not fight with everyone and everything, put its own laws above the international ones, bomb or impose sanctions and not dictate rules of behavior either¹⁰.

Moving on to the second section, we will notice quite the opposite respecting the American role in international relations. On the relations between America and China after COVID-19, N. Chomsky, the American linguist and historian, makes clear that the US is, by far, the most powerful country in the world. It is the only one able to impose sanctions that others must obey. For its part, he records, China has had enormous growth, though it is still a very poor country and has huge internal problems – demographic and ecological issues that are entirely unknown to the West. N. Chomsky, on the other hand, who is renowned for his criticism of American politics and neoliberalism, confirms that neoliberalism's goal, in the aftermath of the pandemic, is to ensure that there will be harsher autocratic measures that favor the wealthy and the corporate sector. From his point of view, because democracy is deemed a danger, the neoliberal state needs to crush resistance by all means possible, including violence¹¹. The very idea, of how mighty Washington is, is endorsed by J. S. Nye Jr., the American political scientist, who is dismissive of the claims that the pandemic changes everything. According to the author, the balance of hard and soft power favoring the United States will not be changed by the pandemic and it is still much too early to predict a geopolitical turning point that would fundamentally

alter the power relationship between the United States and China. At the same time, the American politician admits that there will be changes, but one should be wary of assuming that big causes have big effects. He refers to the fact that the 1918–1919 flu pandemic killed more people than World War I, yet the lasting global changes that unfolded over the next two decades were a consequence of the war, not the disease¹².

The geopolitical implications of COVID-19 for the international order are also addressed in the article of J. Grunstein, the editor-in-chief of World Politics Review. J. Grunstein observes that absent a sea change in government responses at the multilateral level, the pandemic is unlikely to transform the international order so much as reinforce the current trends of strategic competition among the United States, Europe, and China. He views the abdication of global leadership and America's unwillingness to lead a globally coordinated response to this crisis should come as no surprise under D. Trump's administration. Speaking of Europe, he looks dubious about the EU's ability to project its leadership in Europe or globally. Additionally, the long-term consequences of the European Union's failure to lead a unified response to the cataclysm, manifested in the rise of Eurosceptic extremist parties or the fraying of European solidarity, will proceed to influence the EU's role. As for China, though it used a series of high-profile humanitarian aid packages to European and African countries to lay claim to a role usually occupied by the US, however, nothing about Beijing's handling of the pandemic suggests that those countries will be eager to line up behind Chinese leadership of a new global order in its aftermath. Based on that, the initial predictions that China would emerge from the pandemic atop a realigned global order are looking premature, he accentuates¹³.

Whether COVID-19 will mark a geopolitical reordering that would leave China as the victor, the British professors, M. Green and E. Medeiros have second thoughts about the fact that Beijing's gambit will succeed in turning a pandemic into a major step in China's rise. Undoubtedly, its initial propaganda offensive was stunningly, but, it now appears clumsy and unlikely to work, in part, due to its efforts to suppress information and silence many of the doctors who first warned of the emergence of a dangerous new virus, lack of transparency and substandard of Chinese-made testing kits and protective equipment. Besides, Beijing, in their view, faces internal and external challenges that stem from its choices about economic and politi-

⁹Full text of Xi Jinping keynote at the World economic forum [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://america.cgtn.com/2017/01/17/full-text-of-xi-jinping-keynote-at-the-world-economic-forum> (date of access: 27.11.2020).

¹⁰Akopov P. In order to survive, America must become China [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://ria.ru/20200425/1570540394.html> (date of access: 10.11.2020).

¹¹The future of the world after coronavirus. An interview with Noam Chomsky [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://fondazione-nenni.blog/2020/05/23/the-future-of-the-world-after-coronavirus-an-interview-with-noam-chomsky/> (date of access: 15.11.2020).

¹²Nye J. S. Jr. No, the coronavirus will not change the global order [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/04/16/coronavirus-pandemic-china-united-states-power-competition/> (date of access: 15.11.2020).

¹³Grunstein J. Why the coronavirus pandemic won't lead to a new world order [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.world-politicsreview.com/insights/28646/why-the-coronavirus-pandemic-won-t-lead-to-a-new-world-order> (date of access: 18.11.2020).



cal governance at home and global governance abroad. Given all that, the 21st century is hardly certain to be “the Chinese century”. About the USA, M. Green and E. Medeiros shed light on a catastrophic failure of the US political and diplomatic leadership in the current crisis that could cost the United States dearly in lives and international influence. However, they stick to the idea that as deeply flawed as Washington’s response to the pandemic has been so far, the US power rests on an enduring combination of material capabilities and political legitimacy. In conclusion, they believe that the United States can use the pandemic as an opportunity to remind the world of what American leadership looks like. It implies that the USA must learn from the experiences of Germany, South Korea, Taiwan, and others in pandemic management; embrace practical and meaningful cooperation with China and engage with global organizations, such as the World Health Organization, to help them reform¹⁴. By the same token on the Chinese and American approach to COVID-19, the Chinese-American political scientist, Minxin Pei, in his article “COVID-19 is finishing off the Sino-American relationship”, affirms that after news of its botched initial response in Wuhan got out, the Chinese Communist Party went into damage-control mode. As soon as new infections began to decline, the government launched an aggressive diplomatic effort and propaganda blitz to repair its image. It has sent medical supplies and personnel to hard-hit countries like Iran, Italy, and the Philippines. Pinning the blame on the USA, Minxin Pei contends that the West gave China plenty of ammunition. US president D. Trump, in particular, has overseen a truly inept crisis response, characterized by finger-pointing, constant contradictions and outright lies. In Minxin Pei’s opinion, the COVID-19 crisis is bound to reshape geopolitics and its outbreak may have sounded the death knell for the Sino-American relationship. Consequently, the pandemic may well lock the US and China into a vicious cycle of escalation, leading directly to full-blown conflict¹⁵.

As the author mentioned above that most of the Eastern intellectuals are inclined to buy the assumption that COVID-19 will help Beijing to emerge as the new global leader, it seems a few of them do not have the same say. For example, the Arab journalist S. Kulaib sees that most Arabs exaggerate everything, needless to say when it comes to the post-corona world. Since

the trade, technology exchange, as well as common economic interests are more important than introversion, isolationism, and nationalities, neither the West is on the verge of collapse, nor does that break-up serve the interests of China and Russia. The West may weaken and retreat, but to collapse, it is overstated, he affirms¹⁶.

Another pertinent view is echoed by the Egyptian political analyst and poet A.-R. Youssef. Admittedly, China succeeded in defeating the pandemic by using various means, including its security services that monitor everything. A.-R. Youssef, however, counts China’s success as a threat to freedom-seekers in the world who are deeply afraid of the future. For this reason, he urges them to join hands to protect the planet from disease far more dangerous than COVID-19, called the “tyranny virus”. Worse, in his words, there is an unbridled desire among the ruling elites and politicians in most countries (even democratic ones) to capitalize on the pandemic as an excuse to surveil their citizens and control their activities under the pretext of protecting public health¹⁷.

In like manner, K. Fouad, the political researcher, regards China as the worst authoritarian model in comparison with all the authoritarian regimes. It suffices only to indicate that it has a system that monitors its citizens in a way that goes beyond what is featured in the novels and literature depicting the dictatorial rulers. The other thing is that China’s model considerably deviates from human morals and values. That is not because of the current practices related to the corona pandemic, but the bloody history of China. Therefore, without looking at its history, ideas, and perception of others, it seems difficult to forecast Beijing’s intentions despite its peaceful behavior during the current crisis, he stresses¹⁸. It is noteworthy that criticism of China’s political system was also reflected in some studies of Chinese politicians. Minxin Pei, in his article “Coronavirus is a disease of Chinese autocracy”, holds CCP’s leadership responsible for the coronavirus outbreak. He claims that when China’s leaders finally declare victory against the current outbreak, they will undoubtedly credit the CCP’s leadership. But, from his perspective, the truth is just the opposite: the party is again responsible for this calamity¹⁹.

Particularly interesting is the professor A. Obaidat’s article “Why will America not be defeated soon by China or others?”. As he puts it, no country can become

¹⁴Green M., Medeiros E. S. The pandemic won’t make China the world’s leader [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-04-15/pandemic-wont-make-china-worlds-leader> (date of access: 25.11.2020).

¹⁵Minxin Pei. COVID-19 is finishing off the Sino-American relationship [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/covid-19-is-finishing-off-the-sino-american-relationship/> (date of access: 26.11.2020).

¹⁶Kulaib S. Gentlemen, take a moment to explain the post-corona world. Neither the West will collapse, nor do China and Russia want it to collapse [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://ida2at.org/news/2020/04/11/6872/ي-ف-قداس-اي-ال-ي-لق-اول-دمت-بيلك-ي-م-اس-ب-ت-ك> (date of access: 01.12.2020).

¹⁷Youssef A.-R. Coronavirus: the world fights against freedom and tyranny [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.aljazeera.net/news/politics/2020/4/13/ي-ف-قداس-اي-ال-ي-لق-اول-دمت-بيلك-ي-م-اس-ب-ت-ك> (date of access: 05.12.2020).

¹⁸Fouad K. Industry and trade are not enough. How will China become a pole in the global system? [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://arabicpost.net/تفاوت/2020/04/14/ا-ح-ب-ص-ت-س-ف-ي-ك-ن-اي-ف-ك-ت-ال-ت-را-ج-ت-ل-ا-و-ع-ان-ص-ل> (date of access: 15.12.2020).

¹⁹Minxin Pei. Coronavirus is a disease of Chinese autocracy [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/coronavirus-is-a-disease-of-chinese-autocracy/> (date of access: 26.11.2020).



a polar superpower simply by wielding two or three merits. Brazil and Australia, in the words of A. Obaidat, are rich in raw animal and plant resources as well as minerals, yet they are not superpowers. China is the world's major manufacturing center, but still, it is not a polar state. Denmark, Sweden, and Norway are among the most democratic and just countries, however, they are not great powers. Although Japan and Germany are some of the brightest countries in the field of science and education, they are not polar countries. India is one of the most populated countries, still, it is not considered a powerful nation. Russia, with its formidable army, is not a polar state. A. Obaidat's study peers into the fact that even the countries that have the aforementioned characteristics, such as France and Britain, are not polar countries either. On this score, he points out, only the USA is the world's polar superpower because it has control over eight worldwide networks. These are raw materials, advanced industries, media, science, population, arts, armaments, and finance. On China's rise, A. Obaidat highlights that it is natural and in sync with America's decline. Notwithstanding that, he deems that China will replace America as soon as it gains access to those eight worldwide networks monitored by its rival. In this way, confrontation with the US means to stand up to the entire world system. China, Russia, and Turkey are conscious of this²⁰.

Analyzing the two sections, we can draw the following: in the first one, H. Kissinger, K. M. Campbell and R. Doshi believe that though, America's missteps respecting the fast reaction to COVID-19, the USA can still retain its global leadership. R. Haass and N. Tocci consider that America's decline is out of the question. Referring to China, N. Tocci sees that country is trying to present itself as a model to follow, but its efforts can be undercut by the EU's role, which is very crucial to make multilateralism great again. R. Haass thinks that China cannot replace the global American role. Meanwhile, K. M. Campbell and R. Doshi seem to be certain about China's surge. In this section, the Eastern writers alongside the Chinese concur with the fact that COVID-19 will reshape the global order in favor of the East, in particular China.

About the authors mentioned in the second group, N. Chomsky and J. S. Nye Jr. state that the USA is by far the world's global leader. J. Grunstein assumes that the pandemic will not alter the international order, rather it will reinforce the competition among the United States, Europe, and China. M. Green and E. Medeiros make clear that the United States can take advantage of the pandemic to return its global leadership. Regarding China, N. Chomsky, J. Grunstein as well as M. Green, and E. Medeiros do not count that COVID-19 constitutes a major step in China's rise. Particularly interesting is the prediction of Minxin Pei, the Chinese

professor, who assumes COVID-19 as the death knell for Chinese-American relations. It is important to note that unlike the Arab scholars in the first section, a few of them, including some Chinese political scientists, are vociferous critics of China and its political system in the second one.

It is noteworthy that, despite the fact the article is primarily dedicated to analyzing two opinions on the impacts of COVID-19 on the global order, however, we can see that some Western scholars, in two sections, agree on the same issues. For example, H. Kissinger, K. M. Campbell, and R. Doshi as well as M. Green and E. Medeiros, say though America's missteps regarding the quick response to COVID-19, the USA still has an opportunity to preserve its global management if American policy makers take actions to handle the problems at home and abroad. While China's initial success, both inside and beyond, does not signify that it will occupy the US-led role due to countless challenges that have plagued China, according to R. Haass, N. Tocci, N. Chomsky as well as M. Green and E. Medeiros. Also, we can observe two contradicting views on Europe, such as N. Tocci's study pays heed to the EU's role in the post coronavirus world, meanwhile, J. Grunstein presumes quite the opposite.

In conclusion, it is needed hard to speculate what kind of world order will arise from COVID-19. What appears, however, to be certain is that COVID-19 has taken a toll on the world's political system that would reshape the global order in time. Nevertheless, to say that these changes will allow China to replace the American global role, in the near long, is overstated. In parallel, the rise of the RPC, for the last decades, is definitely out of question, and it will endeavor to push its dream to be a superpower counting on its grandiose economic heft and weaving close lathers with Russia, Iran, and Europe as well as with many other countries in Asia-Pacific and Africa. But, before laying claim on such a role, Beijing must handle a great deal of domestic issues, which abound, namely: democracy, human rights, transparency, disparity between regions, Taiwan, protests in Hong Kong, Tibet, and Xinjiang. Moreover, China should also bridge differences with its neighbors over many concerns such as the South China Sea, disputes over borders with the adjacent countries, China's debt-trap diplomacy and water resources. Speaking internationally, the RPC has to deal with sensitive issues to scatter fears over the claimed accusations when it comes to the Chinese espionage and the source of COVID-19, not to mention climate issues and contamination. The same goes for the USA, which has been taking pains to preserve its global hegemony. In spite of the fact that the US is in far more favorable position, compared to the PRC or any country, it has been afflicted with domestic and foreign policy issues.

²⁰Obaidat A. Why will America not be defeated soon neither by China nor other country? [Electronic resource]. URL: www.aljazeera.net/blogs/blogs/2020/4/12/الولايات-المتحدة-لا-تغلب-سرعين-على-الصين-ولا-على-أي-دولة-أخرى (date of access: 20.12.2020).



Revealing examples of these defects are the coronavirus pandemic, the deepening socio-economic crisis, the political polarization and the tensions with Iran, China, and even with its allies. Yet, Washington can still tide over the unfavorable situation in its favor, as it has the characteristics that permit it to keep its preeminence. It will, however, mainly hinge on the newly elected president J. Biden and its ability to repair damages, domestically and abroad, done by the previous American administrations. Having said that, the author would argue that China or America will be able to overcome the domestic and foreign policy crises to the extent that their model will gain awed acclaim, and therefore neither of them could reign supreme. Nevertheless, the author acknowledges that COVID-19 has more or less tipped the balance towards China, meanwhile, put America's unparalleled power and unmatched appeal at stake. Such a state of the world, that is, a change in the balance of power, will push the rivalry, between

the rising power and the descending great power represented by China and the USA respectively, to take on an extreme dimension, impelling the two countries to pursue military build-up and forge alignments against each other. Given that, from the author's standpoint, the new world order that will come out of COVID-19 is chaotic. With any miscalculation, the scene could spiral out of control, that is to say from ongoing proxy wars into all-out confrontation. As for Russia and the European Union in the new world order, the author would add that neither Russia nor the EU could pass off as a world leader. With reference to Russia, despite the fact that it is a superpower militarily, but economically Moscow is considered a developing country. However, Russia's rapprochement with China could give it more weight in the international arena. Speaking of the EU, even though, it is great enough militarily and economically, but Brussels' political dependence on Washington makes it inferior to the latter.

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