



## نظرية انتقال السلطة على أسس عرقية: تفسير الطبيعة الدائمة للاستياء غير الأوروبي

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### ملخص

**هدف الدراسة:** من خلال نظرية انتقال السلطة، تقوم هذه الدراسة بتدويل النظرية العرقية النقدية للمساعدة في تحديد مدى رضا الدول عن أو استيائها من التسلسل الهرمي القائم على السلطة فيما يتعلق بالنظام السياسي الدولي. **المنهجية:** بعد تسليط الضوء على العتمة النظرية من حيث الأخذ في الاعتبار العرق كمتغير توضيحي في دراسة السياسة الدولية، فإننا نحلل سلوك التصويت في الأمم المتحدة من عام 1946 إلى عام 2021 كميًا باستخدام برنامج Stata لتحديد مدى رضا الدول عن التسلسل الهرمي للقوى على الساحة الدولية، ومع النظر بكيفية تطبيع الانحياز ضد الفئات العرقية التي لا تنتمي إلى الفئة المهيمنة. كما شملت هذه الدراسة دراسات حالة حول كيفية تأثير العرق في الانتقال بين معسكري الجهات الراضية عن التسلسل الهرمي القائم على السلطة الدولية والجهات المستاءة منه. **النتائج:** تشير النتائج إلى أن الخلفية العرقية عامل ارتباط مهم يساعد في تفسير مدى الرضا عن التسلسل الهرمي القائم على السلطة الدولية.

**المصطلحات الرئيسية:** النظرية العرقية النقدية، نظرية انتقال السلطة، الاستيطان الاستعماري، النظام السياسي الدولي.

## Power Transition Theory along Ethnic Lines: Explaining the Perennial Nature of Non-European Dissatisfaction

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### Abstract

**Objective:** Through the lens of power transition theory, this research internationalizes critical race theory to help determine the extent states are either satisfied or dissatisfied on Organski's power-based hierarchy regarding the international political order. **Methods:** After highlighting the theoretical scotoma in terms of factoring in ethnicity as an explanatory variable in the study of international politics, we examined with empirical analysis dyadic trends in UN voting behavior from 1946 to 2021 using the Stata statistical program. The voting behavior is used as a proxy for state satisfaction along ethnic lines vis-à-vis the dominant state. In addition to the quantitative methodology, we also included two case studies of Japan and South Africa. The studies showed how ethnicity influenced transition between the satisfied and dissatisfied camps on the international power-based hierarchy in the recent past. **Results:** Results indicated that ethnic background was an important correlate of satisfaction and dissatisfaction on the international power-based hierarchy.

**Keywords:** Critical Race Theory, Power Transition Theory, Settler Colonialism, International Political Order.

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## **Introduction**

Racial discrimination can persist despite legal guarantees against it. This is the reason why Critical Race Theory (CRT) was developed to explain the continued differences in treatment between the white majority and some minorities in the United States after the end of the segregation era. While CRT had historically been used to analyze race relations within the United States, its applicability in the study of international relations (IR) has been very limited. This paper shows how the problem of discriminatory racial dynamics at the international level, or what some might think of as an anachronism from previous eras, can be explained via an internationalized version of CRT.

Our primary goal in this paper is to develop a framework that combines CRT with power transition theory (PTT). Such a combination is important because it helps students from outside the western world in decolonizing the field of international relations. By connecting PTT with CRT, students and scholars from Latin America, Asia, the Middle East, and Africa can start explaining racial interactions at the international level in a parsimonious and a logically consistent manner. The framework is used to empirically explain, through quantitative methodology, political dynamics on a satisfaction spectrum measured through coherence in UN voting behavior.

Our secondary goal is to analyze how racial dynamics played out in some exceptional cases dealing with a state with an ethnic outgroup (such as Japan after WWII), and ethnic ingroup (like apartheid South Africa) during the Cold War – we show that both cases went opposite the trend expected as per empirical findings given the interest convergence they had with the dominant state. Our main research question is the following: To what extent can the CRT and PTT framework explain political dynamics along ethnic lines at the international level?

## **The Research Problem**

The backdrop in literature explaining international politics suffers from a scotoma in terms of factoring in ethnicity as an explanatory variable. Political correctness has propelled mainstream international relations theory to imagine that ethnic background no longer shapes international political relations in any shape or form, with economic and political considerations being thought of as sufficient explanatory variables. Such an

assumption gained traction alongside mainstreaming human rights among former colonists and postcolonial territories since the end of the Second World War. However, the problem of ethnic discrimination still lingers at the global level with no clear theory to explain its effect on International Relations.

The problem emerging from missing theory becomes most obvious when students are unable to explain why there is a motivated response by Western powers when White Europeans (Ukrainians) are attacked or need assistance, while the same powers tend to dismiss the plight of non-Europeans as exaggeration (e.g. the Palestinians, Yemenis, and Sudanese). Unfortunately, there is no clear theoretical framework that can help students and scholars make sense of political attitudes based on ethnic background in International Relations theory. This research thus aims to fill in the gap by developing an appropriate theoretical framework to help make sense of double standards in policy along ethnic lines when studying International Relations.

### **Research Questions**

1. To what extent can territories with different ethnic majorities explain voting similarity at the UN General Assembly?
2. Given the answer to the above question, should ethnic background be dismissed as an important explanatory variable when analyzing International Relations?

### **Importance of the Study**

The significance of this research study emerges from the fact that it is the first that attempted merging a general empirical international relations theory (i.e., Organski's (1968) Power Transition Theory) with Critical Race Theory (CRT). The purpose of this merger is to offer a framework to help understand how racial background remains an important determinant in International Relations. Such a framework is particularly significant for both students and scholars from outside of the Western world, to enable them to challenge the Eurocentric gloss surrounding the study of International Relations. The framework developed here also offers a more objective analysis of political relations without omitting important variables due to willful blindness born out of political correctness.

## Literature Review

### 1. What is Critical Race Theory?

Delgado and Stefancic (2017) identified the “basic tenets” of CRT, the most important of which can be summarized as follows: (1) racism is normalized by the public and the authorities, and (2) racism aspects disappear only when the ingroup’s interests<sup>(1)</sup>. The first tenet of CRT holds that racial discrimination that is divorced from legal texts is difficult to eradicate, because society and the people they choose to empower can simply refuse to acknowledge that extant dynamics between different groups are bigoted. The willful blindness towards racial bias would enable the perpetrators and victims at different levels of society to perceive a discriminatory attitude as normal. As a result, scholars have been able to study the persistence of racial discrimination in the United States despite the legal reform there<sup>(2)</sup>.

Racial discrimination, of course, can go beyond state-society relationships to extend to civil interactions. Whether it is through interactions with the authorities, or the rest of society, the relegation of minorities in the United States appears to be predicated on the conceptual “construction” where “Whiteness exists not only as the opposite of non-Whiteness, but as the superior opposite” (López, 2006). In this regard, psychologists explain how ethnic outgroups are perceived by the dominant

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- (1) In addition to these two points, Delgado and Stefancic point to four other tenets. See AlMusallam (2023) for summary of remaining tenets.
  - (2) In examining criminal sentencing after the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) Supreme Court decision, for example, Sidanius (1988) concluded that “[b]lack do appear to receive more severe sentences than Whites based solely on race.” Starr and Rehavi (2014) also found that “black [...] arrestees ultimately face longer prison terms than whites arrested for the same offenses with the same prior records.” In a more recent study, Baumgartner et al. (2018) also found that although African Americans have a contraband possession rate less than Caucasians do, police are more than twice as likely to search African Americans than to search White Americans.

ingroup<sup>(3)</sup>. The average outcomes for the implicit association tests taken in Europe produced the same results found in the United States, where there was not a single European state whose average score for the implicit association test indicated a neutral or more favorable view towards non-White people (Stafford, 2017)<sup>(4)</sup>.

The results of the implicit association test in the United States and former European metropolises can, therefore, explain why the suffering of some groups appears to matter more for the Western world than the suffering of other groups. As Heyden (2015) explained, in 1937 Winston Churchill who had served in several British ministerial positions, and would ultimately serve as prime minister of the United Kingdom, stated that

I do not admit for instance, that a great wrong has been done to the Red Indians of America or the black people of Australia. I do not admit that a wrong has been done to these people by the fact that a stronger race, a higher-grade race, a more worldly-wise race to put it that way, has come in and taken their place.

The modern-day results of the implicit association test indicate that the Western demographic at its core still retains Churchill's sentiment regarding racial superiority but is more reticent about it given political correctness<sup>(5)</sup>.

The Hamas attack against Israelis in 2023 thus received widespread

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(3) Morin (2015) explained that the implicit association test, which is used to determine how humans link certain concepts together, showed how most of the White American public subconsciously associate their own ethnic group with positive indicators while associating African Americans with negative ones. Although there existed a spectrum across the different states of the extent Black people were associated with negative adjectives, there is not a single state in which the average individual viewed African Americans more favorably or in the same way they would White people (Mooney, 2014).

(4) Such bias extends to how adults interact with preschoolers as well – see Gilliam et al. (2016).

(5) In the case of Ukraine, for example, the Western world was ready to help Ukrainians resist Russian occupation, all while emphasizing the law and morality of a people's right to defend themselves against an occupier. The same logic, however, would not necessarily apply with the same force when the occupied people belong to an ethnic outgroup while the occupier is better associated with the ingroup.

condemnation and outrage across Europe and the United States<sup>(6)</sup>. Israel can also continue with settlements expansions, a policy of apartheid, and disproportional responses (see figure 1), without any meaningful Western intervention or condemnation. Indeed, despite the greater number of deaths and injuries on the Palestinian side, any Palestinian resistance, whether through militant or mere verbal action (such as promoting the BDS movement), will readily be portrayed by Israel and the rest of the Western world as either terrorism, antisemitism, or both.

**Figure 1**

Image source: Niall McCarthy. <https://www.statista.com/chart/16516/israeli-palestinian-casualties-by-in-gaza-and-the-west-bank/>



(6) Israel, which was the product of British and now American backed settler colonialism, can therefore count on sympathy when their demographic is targeted by militants, and support when they commit to a disproportional response against the people they colonized. In contrast the Palestinians as the outgroup will only hear a deafening silence from the same Western bloc when Israeli officials, like the Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, calls the people of Gaza that they have besieged and blockaded for around 17 years “human animals.” For Gallant’s quote, see Aljazeera. “Israeli defense minister orders ‘complete siege’ on Gaza.” 2023. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/program/newsfeed/2023/10/9/israeli-defence-minister-orders-complete-siege-on-gaza>

As for the second tenet of CRT, it holds that efforts aimed at securing equal treatment of marginalized groups would only be possible if such efforts converge with the dominant group's interests. The notion of a moral awakening undoing a discriminatory status quo would therefore be dismissed on the grounds that the positive changes in law were instead the result of shifts in interests that enabled better overlap between the rights-oriented disenfranchised groups and the dominant side in society<sup>(7)</sup>. For example, Bell Jr. (1980) highlighted the “disillusionment” of the domestic audience with the American political system during and soon after WWII, which expected African Americans to fight against European fascists and resist Soviet influence only to return home and become subject to racial segregation<sup>(8)</sup>.

Thus, with the American political system being contrasted to rival systems on the international scene, which included Nazis and Soviets, the leadership in the United States began taking measures to undermine the ability of both internal and external challengers to portray the United States negatively. Soon after the end of WWII, the American leadership's interests started to converge with the interests of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to end racial segregation. However, despite the end of legal segregation, ethnic outgroups in the United States remain at a disadvantage when it comes to the majority ingroup's discretionary powers.

## 2. Power Transition Theory: The Better IR Theory

In rejecting the widespread balancing propositions in IR, Organski (1968) developed the PTT as an alternate approach to explain international cooperation and conflict<sup>(9)</sup>. The reason why IR scholars might rely on PTT

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(7) Bell Jr. (1980), for example, explained that the *Brown v. Board* decision was enabled at a time when the United States was competing against the Soviet Union “to win the hearts and minds of emerging third world peoples.”

(8) In this regard, Robeson (1950) maintained that “[t]he Soviet Union is the friend of the African and West Indian peoples” and that “its example before the world of abolishing all discrimination based on color or nationality [...] has given us Negroes the chance of achieving our complete liberation [...]”

(9) Given its progressive nature as described by Diccio & Levy (1999), PTT has enabled scholars to study international and internationalized domestic developments. Toft (2017) for example explained that “power transition theory is a promising framework for understanding civil war.” By factoring in the state's internal happenings, PTT abandons the black box theory of politics that holds states as mere power or interest =

instead of the balancing approach and its various reformulations, is that the balancing paradigm has exhibited evidence of theoretical degeneration by the Lakatosian (1970) standard. Whether in the form of classical, neo-classical, offensive, defensive, or threat-based realist theories, the balancing proposition was described by Vasquez (1997. P.899)<sup>(10)</sup>.

as degenerating because of: (1) the protean character of its theoretical development; (2) an unwillingness to specify what constitutes the true theory, which if falsified would lead to a rejection of the paradigm; (3) a continual adoption of auxiliary propositions to explain away flaws; and (4) a dearth of strong research findings.

In contrast to the balancing approach, Dicicco and Levy (1999) described PTT as progressive and add that it “has developed into a rich, expanding research program spanning several generations of scholars.”

The most important assumption of PTT that distinguishes it from the balancing paradigm is that the international order is hierarchically organized as opposed to being an anarchic one<sup>(11)</sup>. The hierarchical nature of the international order, as shown in figure 2, places a single most powerful state at the top of the global power pyramid, and beneath it are other states ordered by the extent of their power. Given the dominant state’s extraordinary ability to influence international norms and legal standards,

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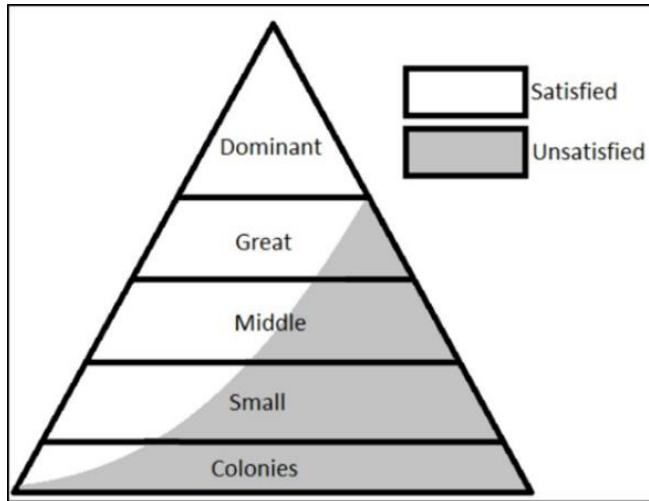
= maximizers and instead acknowledges that the determinants of national goals and status depend on the inner happenings of the given state.

- (10) Moreover, the shortcomings of the balancing proposition are most easily highlighted when studying ethnic relations. Given the history of western colonialism in Africa and Asia, and the long-term consequences of such exploitation, an obvious imbalance between postcolonial peoples and the western world in terms of all standard conceptualizations of power will emerge. The proponents of a balancing approach will therefore be unable to explain the unbalanced relationship the Western world has with the postcolonial one where, historically, such proponents viewed most non-White peoples as lesser subjects or even mere objects of the law that can be distributed to create an essentially White balance as opposed to an international one. See generally Fanon (2001) and Henderson (2013).
- (11) Dicicco and Levy (1999) also included as PTT’s core assumptions that the rules governing the international system are fundamentally like the ones governing the domestic system, and that internal growth and development shapes international change.

when compared to others, it is assumed to be satisfied with the international order that it helped shape and with the dynamic it has with weaker states.

**Figure 2**

*Organski's (1968) international power-based hierarchy*



Other states scattered across the rest of the pyramid can also be content with the status quo, depending partly on their values (Tammen et al. 2017) and how such values align with the values of the dominant power. As for states that are dissatisfied with the leadership of the dominant power, their numbers would increase the weaker they are, and this is primarily due to a status quo that the dominant and other satisfied powers are preserving at the same state's expense (Organski, 1968)<sup>(12)</sup>.

When examining the dynamic between the United States as the dominant power, and the Soviet Union as the dissatisfied challenger near the end of the Cold War, it can be noticed that economic indicators widened between the two rivals; the Soviet Union, and later Russia, was unable to catch up with the United States as the dominant power. Today, however, it appears that China is the new challenger from the dissatisfied camp. What is important to note with this new challenger is that the economic data suggests that it could potentially not only catch up with the United States, but also perhaps surpass it in the future.

(12) PTT also helps explain when to expect conflict between states. See generally Lemke (1993).

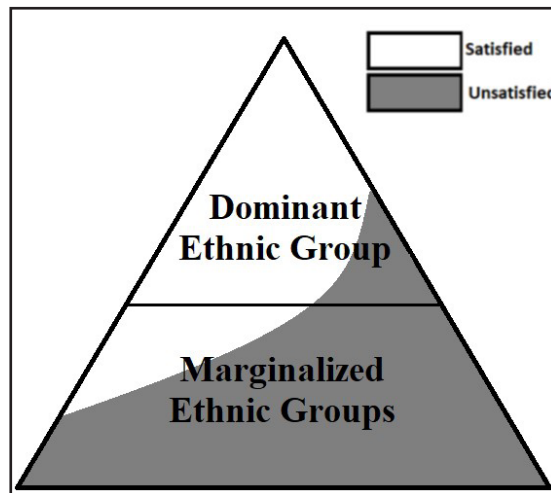
## Theoretical Framework

### - Connecting CRT with PTT

While CRT has helped explain race relations within the United States, its application at an international level has been limited. In examining the conceptual use of race in IR theory, Krishna (2001) mentioned that “the discipline of international relations was and is predicated on [...] a willful amnesia, on the question of race.” Sen (2022) added that “[d]iscussions of race and racism are often missing in the curriculum of international relations courses [...]” Henderson (2013) went further by highlighting how the notion of anarchy in IR was built on the idea that the White race had progressed past the state of a “bestial war of all against all” to reach a “civilized” status, which enabled them to control the “primitive” non-White people through colonial rule. He concluded by pointing to how such “racist precepts have an enduring impact on IR theory today.”

**Figure 3**

*Ethnic based global power pyramid*



Whether IR theory is passively embracing racist precepts or is silent about race relations in general, scholarship in the field has come to suffer from a theoretical blind spot that leaves present-day students and academics unsure about how to approach the study of ethnic discrimination at the inter-state level. The paradigmatic lacuna in modern IR theory is especially problematic for students and scholars in the developing world, who come

to realize there exists no mainstream framework within the field that can explain how their own ethnic background still plays a role in shaping IR after the advent of decolonization and modern human rights. Scholars like Mutua (2000), for example, called for the internationalization of CRT more than 20 years ago by using it as a means in which international law could be analyzed, yet other scholars some 21 years after Mutua's invitation still found CRT and international legal analysis to "exist in separate epistemic universes" (Achiume and Carbado, 2021).

In this research paper, it is posited that the reason why CRT is not easily internationalized is due to the absence of a parsimonious framework enabling its application at such a level. By reconfiguring the structure of PTT along ethnic lines, a framework that enables the application of the basic tenets of CRT internationally has been presented. This framework is not meant to supplant the original state-centric power pyramid as envisaged by Organski but is instead meant to offer a necessary backdrop to help explain why some states are more likely to fall in either the satisfied or dissatisfied side of the global power hierarchy.

As Tammen et al. (2017) explained, "[t]he search for a valid and robust measure of satisfaction-dissatisfaction is an unfinished item in the Power Transition research agenda."<sup>(13)</sup> The racial dimension of PTT that this research is exploring therefore serves to help scholars navigate the extent of satisfaction and dissatisfaction on Organski's power pyramid, where states with a majority demographic that is like the dominant state's demographic will more likely be satisfied than not. Borrowing from Organski's conceptualization of the international structure, figure 3 was produced to distinguish between the: (1) dominant and satisfied, (2) dominant and dissatisfied, (3) marginalized and satisfied, and (4) marginalized and dissatisfied ethnic groups.

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(13) We should note that trade relations are, counter intuitively, not clearly indicative of the extent of satisfaction. The United States, for example, sold weapons to Iran through Israel during the Iran-Iraq war. China is America's third largest trading partner despite their differences in principles. Therefore, the extent of converging economic interests should not be confounded with the extent of overlap in principle.

Members of the dominant ethnic group tend to be satisfied given the material redistribution of wealth brought about by colonial conquest.<sup>(14)</sup> The same group would ensure the application of policy, at both international and domestic levels, that further their interest relative to relegated groups. As a result, it can be seen how in the case of the United States for example, the first Act of Congress dealing with immigration held that any “free white person... may be admitted to become a citizen” of the United States if they decide to apply for such citizenship.<sup>(15)</sup> Congress replaced the Act multiple times (in 1795, 1798, and 1802), to adjust the conditions for immigration, but continued with restricting the naturalization process to “free white” persons.<sup>(16)</sup>

A smaller proportion of the dominant group, of course, might miss out on taking enough advantage of the ingroup policy or redistribution of wealth, rendering them dissatisfied. Such a group, however, will maintain a relative advantage when compared to ethnic outgroups in terms of the potential for advancing up the socio-economic ladder given their ingroup status. Italian Americans, for example, were thought to “embarrass white liberals by insisting that their working-class, square, uneducated, unpolished values deserve a place in the American mainstream.”<sup>(17)</sup> Yet, scholars like Alba (2018), found that “Italians are the paragon of generation-by-generation progression into the [American] mainstream.” It is important to note that

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(14) Including its ramifications even after decolonization in the case of the modern period. An example of such interaction can be found with the labor market, where Darity Jr., et al. (2018) explained that in the United States, “[w]hite households with a bachelor’s degree or post-graduate education (such as with a Ph.D., MD, and JD) are more than three times as wealthy as black households with the same degree in attainment.” Ensign and Shifflett (2015) also explain that the “median income for Black college-educated households in their 30s increased 7% from the early 1990s to late 2010s to about \$76,000. Income for their white counterparts rose 13% to about \$114,000.”

(15) See The Naturalization Act of 1790.

(16) Consequently, it became easier for Europeans to emigrate to the United States and flourish socially and economically through legal means when compared to non-Europeans including the Native Americans. The mensrea, or mental state, of United States authorities was thus explicitly biased against non-White groups. Such explicitness, of course, can easily be remedied with colorblind law in the modern period, but without addressing the implicit dimension.

(17) See Gambino (1974). See also Staples (2019).

the Italian status as the “paragon” of integration in the United States has no parallel with any non-White group.

While most outgroups would remain dissatisfied given a material redistribution that overlooks their wants and even their needs; such a group is unable to tap into the rules and policies to secure their basic rights in a way that the unsatisfied members of the dominant ethnic group would. Instead, members of this category can be neglected to the extent that basic human and humanitarian rights would be thought of as not necessarily applicable to them. In the case of CRT’s first tenet, the dominant ethnic group would consider the hurtful status quo that the marginalized ethnic group is suffering from as something normal as with the case of the Palestinians above.

As for the last category, of marginalized and satisfied ethnic groups, while such a group can also suffer from the legal hurdles imposed by the in-group’s conquests, this minority group managed to navigate its way to secure enough material wealth, through the dominant group’s consent and even endorsement to deem it relatively satisfied. In this case, the dominant group would have reason to believe that the affluence of the outgroup can benefit, or at the very least, will not obstruct their ambitions for economic dominance. An example of this category is the case of Japan after WWII, which is discussed further below.

Regarding the second tenet of CRT dealing with interest convergence, which holds that marginalized ethnic groups would only be able to gain better treatment from the dominant side if the latter would think it would be in their interest to allow it, such convergence could be seen at play during the decolonization period in the previous century. The Soviet call for a global struggle by the proletariat against western capitalists reverberated across the Asian and African protectorates and colonies of European countries, thereby pushing the dominant power and the rest of its satisfied camp to hedge against such messaging by acknowledging the independence of most of the formerly subjugated colonies, protectorates, and mandates.

However, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, and with the absence of a political rival pushing the dominant ethnic group’s interests to converge with the marginalized groups as had happened during the decolonization period, we can expect a pause in the progress towards undoing ingroup biases or even a gradual return to the old discriminatory normal.

Huntington (2003), for example, imagined the post-Cold War era to have conflict be based on religious boundaries with the most intense conflicts being between Islamic peoples and the Christian West. Huntington's idea of civilization conflict can easily be meshed into the power transition hierarchy to help explain the extent of cooperation and its type since the end of the Cold War. In this case, unless Muslim majority states are major resource producers that are willing to ignore the settler-colonial project in Palestine, the leaderships in those states can expect significant sanctions to be imposed on them from the dominant power.

The notion of American exceptionalism has also gained traction after the collapse of the Soviet Union (Cheney & Cheney, 2015). It perhaps became most explicit with republican presidents since the end of the Cold War, with some like Trump using "America First" as one of their slogans. While those describing the concept of American exceptionalism (Lipset, 1963) would imply that American characteristics like liberty and democracy in the United States are colorblind, any simple critical analysis of American history will reveal that those concepts were predicated on racial characteristics.

### **Discriminatory Normal in the Dominant State**

The focus on the United States is justified based on its position as dominant on Organski's power pyramid, which has enabled it to mainstream and apply international standards in a way other states have not been able to. The UN Charter, for example, was agreed upon at the San Francisco conference in 1945 primarily through American leadership; and while the Charter enshrines notions of equality and security for all without discrimination based on race, the dominant state will enjoy greater enforcement capability when compared to other states given its political, economic, and military advantage.

Before examining voting behavior as a proxy for state satisfaction, it is important to review trends in past decisions by authorities in the United States dealing with ethnic outgroups so to evaluate the extent of continuation of norms from previous eras. The provision(18) restricting naturalization to White people was only modified to include Black people with the Naturalization Act of 1870, when section seven of the Act held

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(18) The Naturalization Act of 1790.

“[t]hat the naturalization laws are hereby extended to aliens of African nativity and to persons of African descent.”<sup>(19)</sup> The expansion of citizenship rights to Black people was enabled after the inclusion of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States constitution, which guaranteed citizenship, due process rights, and the equal protection of the laws to “all persons born or naturalized in the United States.”

Despite extending equal protection of the laws to Africans with the Fourteenth Amendment, the US Supreme Court ruled that apartheid did not violate the rights of “colored” Americans near the end of the nineteenth century. The court, in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) maintained that the petitioner’s argument, of separation stamping the colored race with the mark of inferiority to be a “fallacy,” and continued to explain that if this inferiority is evident, it would be “solely because the colored race chooses to put that construction upon it.” Implementing apartheid enabled the relegation of the African American community in the minds of the majority ingroup, to the extent that prosperity of the outgroup would have been considered provocative by the ethnic majority. The perpetrators of Tulsa race massacre in 1921 that destroyed successful African American lives and livelihoods, for example, were never brought to justice. The victims, also, never received reparations by authorities.<sup>(20)</sup>

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(19) One notable exception to the exclusion of non-Caucasians for naturalization purposes prior to 1870 was with the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek in 1830, which enabled the native Americans citizenship if they refused to relocate to west of the Mississippi river. However, although an estimated 6000 people sought such citizenship, the settler agency dealing with their native requests for citizenship refused to process their applications. As a result, of the 6000-pursuing gaining citizenship, “only sixty-nine heads of household were officially registered. The vast majority of the Choctaw remaining in Mississippi became squatters living in isolated areas on poor farmland.” See Fixico (2008).

(20) It is also important to note that rights under the Fourteenth Amendment did not initially extend to other ethnic outgroups such as Native Americans. When Native Americans sought to take advantage of the Fourteenth Amendment to gain citizenship, the settler (White) authorities rejected their applications and that escalated all the way up to the United States Supreme Court in *Elk v. Wilkins* (1884). The Court found that American citizenship by birth onto the territory of the United States is not possible if the person is a Native American. As for the Asian demographic, the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. restricted their path to citizenship. See also Geary Act of 1892, *Fong Yue Ting v. United States* (1893), and the Immigration Act of 1917.

It was not until after America's rivalry with the Soviet Union that the United States gradually began reforming its immigration laws alongside its domestic ones to omit explicit discrimination against non-White groups. The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 removed immigration bans placed on various locations in favor of a quota system. According to the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, passed during the heyday of the Cold War, the quota system was removed in addition to the remaining racial barriers to immigration in favor of a visa application process.

However, with the decline of the Soviet Union in the 1980s, the federal government introduced its Visa Waiver Program which permitted a mostly Western (White) people entry to the United States for 90 days without having to obtain a visa. Another indicator of how the normalcy of ethnic discrimination in the United States still weighs on immigration can be seen with Executive Order 13769 (i.e., the Muslim ban), and the public reaction to it in 2017. Shepard (2017), for example, explained that “[a] clear majority of voters support President Donald Trump’s travel ban on visitors from six predominantly Muslim countries, according to a new POLITICO/Morning Consult poll.”

### **Hypotheses**

With the absence of some rival great power using the ethnic injustices committed by the dominant power on Organski's pyramid to gain support, as was the case during the Cold War, there remains little motivating the interests of ethnic outgroups to overlap with the interests of the majority ingroup. Our hypotheses are as follows:

- H<sub>1</sub>**: At the default level, US voting behavior will be better aligned with European voting behavior when compared to the non-European category;
- H<sub>2</sub>**: Exceptions to H<sub>1</sub> can be made on a case-by-case basis and is explained by the Cold War dynamic in recent history.

## Empirical Analysis

### - Voting Similarity with the Dominant State

**Table 1**

*Descriptive statistics*

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
IPD for all state dyads	1,751,766	-1.02604	0.841351	-5.73192	0
GDP Per Capita	1,538,225	9235.461	18410.02	0	234317.1
GDP Growth (annual %)	1,491,559	3.608179	6.161671	-64.0471	149.973
GDP (current US\$)	1,540,654	2.35e+11	1.17e+12	1.40e+07	2.55e+13
Population	1,656,514	3.28e+07	1.22e+08	9609	1.42e+09
Polyarchy	1,584,892	0.448681	0.284359	0.008	0.924
Latin America & Caribbean	1,739,833	0.188507	0.391117	0	1
Western Europe	1,739,833	0.15789	0.364638	0	1
Eastern Europe	1,739,833	0.097231	0.296272	0	1
Asia Pacific	1,739,833	0.270208	0.444067	0	1
Africa	1,739,833	0.286164	0.451967	0	1

Our methods to test  $H_1$  were empirical. To proxy for the extent of a group's satisfaction or dissatisfaction on Organski's power hierarchy, we used data on voting similarity between different regions as identified by the United Nations Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, in relation to the dominant world power (the USA). The regions were Africa, Asia-Pacific, Eastern Europe, Latin America & Caribbean, and Western Europe. It is important to note that the Western European group, according to the United Nations, includes European settler colonies like Canada, Australia, Israel, New Zealand, and the United States. The countries in each region are dominated by a certain ethnic group, with White people from the European groups, Black people from the African group, Asian and South Asians from the Asia-Pacific group, and a Mestizo demographic from the Latin American and Caribbean group.

The Ideal Point Difference (IPD) score, developed by Bailey et al. (2017), used an item response theory statistical model, generated from "799 pairs of identical [UNGA] resolutions" from 1946 to 2021 to determine the

extent of voting similarity between different states. The dyadic IPD score between the United States and other states is calculated by measuring the distance between the similarity scores of each country with the United States in relation to the 799 resolutions. The IPD score ranges from near zero indicating states hold similar preferences, to -5.75 indicating the most dissimilarity in preferences.<sup>(21)</sup> We include, as controls, economic indicators from the World Bank website, the population for each state from the same source, in addition to the democracy measure from the V-Dem database. Table 1 shows descriptive statistics.

Table 2 uses robust regression.<sup>(22)</sup> All regional coefficients are statistically significant. Models 1 and 2 alternate in dropping one of the regional groups to satisfy the k-1 requirement that would allow the regression analysis to treat the missing group as the baseline for comparison. Both models show that being a European state weighs positively on minimizing the Ideal Point Difference (to near zero) between the United States and some given territory. In contrast, being non-European increases the Ideal Point Difference in the negative away from the zero mark. Even when including the economic, democracy, and demographic controls, the sign and significance of the regional indicators remains the same in models 3 and 4. The log GDP and GDP per capita are associated with a negligible but significantly increased IPD distance. Such results are not surprising, as every dominant power would seek to undermine competition to its status as dominant even if the competition is from the satisfied side.

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(21) The authors explain how the IPD estimates provide more meaningful results than other similarity measures, such as Signorino and Ritter's (1999) S-Score. The authors show how the S-scores can easily fluctuate to defy common sense and use the example of the US-USSR dyad that averaged a near zero S-score (indicating similarity) in the early to mid-1970s, while in the late 2000s the US-Russian dyad was closer to a -0.6 on the S-score (indicating divergence). In contrast, the ideal point estimate showed a more reasonable association for those years.

(22) According to the UCLA Statistical Methods and Data Analytics site, "Stata's `reg` command implements a version of robust regression. It first runs the OLS regression, gets the Cook's D for each observation, and then drops any observation with Cook's distance greater than 1. Then iteration process begins in which weights are calculated based on absolute residuals. The iterating stops when the maximum change between the weights from one iteration to the next is below tolerance." See <https://stats.oarc.ucla.edu/stata/dae/robust-regression/>

**Table 2**  
*Robust regression*

VARIABLES	Ideal Point Difference with USA			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Latin America & Caribbean	-0.142*** (0.0330)		-0.953*** (0.0304)	
Western Europe	1.178*** (0.0343)	1.320*** (0.0282)	0.589*** (0.0336)	1.543*** (0.0299)
Asia Pacific	-0.539*** (0.0316)	-0.397*** (0.0248)	-1.318*** (0.0306)	-0.365*** (0.0236)
Africa	-0.661*** (0.0314)	-0.518*** (0.0246)	-1.417*** (0.0301)	-0.463*** (0.0222)
Eastern Europe		0.142*** (0.0330)		0.953*** (0.0304)
Log GDP			-0.0709*** (0.00434)	-0.0709*** (0.00434)
GDP Per Capita			-3.10e-06*** (6.86e-07)	-3.10e-06*** (6.86e-07)
GDP Growth (annual %)			0.00238** (0.00117)	0.00238** (0.00117)
Population			2.72e-10*** (6.27e-11)	2.72e-10*** (6.27e-11)
Polyarchy			0.208*** (0.0349)	0.208*** (0.0349)
Constant	-2.455*** (0.0271)	-2.597*** (0.0188)	-0.268** (0.104)	-1.221*** (0.0998)
Observations	10,875	10,875	7,914	7,914
R-squared	0.342	0.342	0.541	0.541

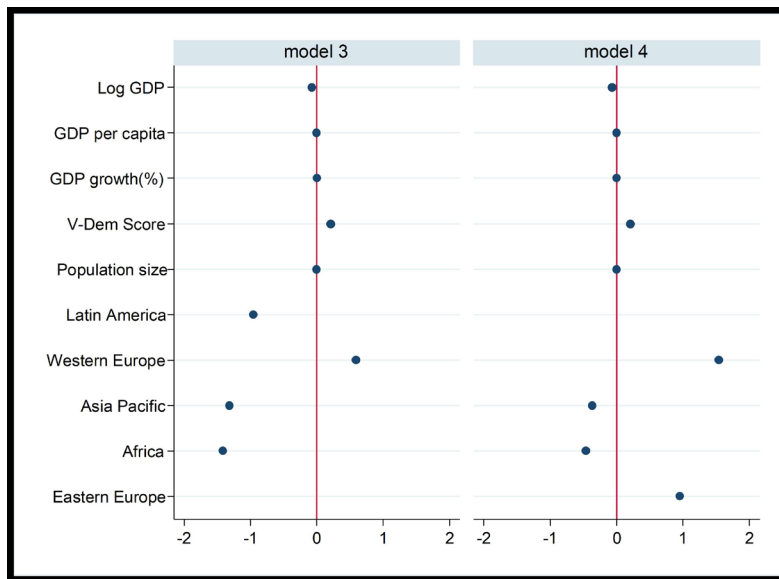
Standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

It is also important to note that by visualizing the confidence intervals, we can demonstrate how some variables function as substantively meaningful indicators of the IPD while other significant variables can only be said to have a negligible effect. For example, while the GDP indicators are statistically significant their substantive weight on the IPD is negligible at near zero. In contrast, the regional indicators are substantively meaningful when it comes to the IPD score. In this case, depending on the model specification, Western European states can expect a mitigated gap between them and the United States by 0.5 to 1.5 points on the IPD measure. In contrast, non-European regions can expect a widened IPD gap that would range from -0.3 to -1.4 (see figure 4).

**Figure 4**

*Plotting coefficients*

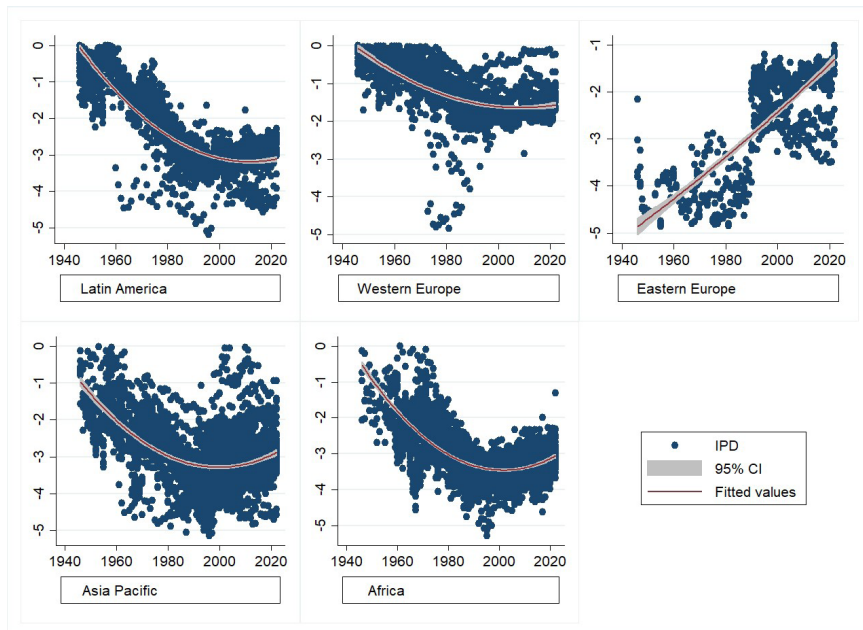


The trend lines in figure 5 show how American voting preferences better align with the preferences of the European world. Especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union, there appears a clear shift in the East European states in terms of voting preferences. In contrast, non-European states appear to trail behind the European trajectory in terms of their dyadic IPD relation with the United States. While the fitted values for the non-European states are at around -3 on the IPD measure, the European

averages after the collapse of the Soviet Union are at greater than -2. Thus, to answer our main research questions, territories with different ethnic majorities can largely explain voting similarity, which means that ethnic background should not be dismissed as an important explanatory variable when explaining International Relations.

**Figure 5**

*United States IPD trendline based on different regions from 1940 to 2020*



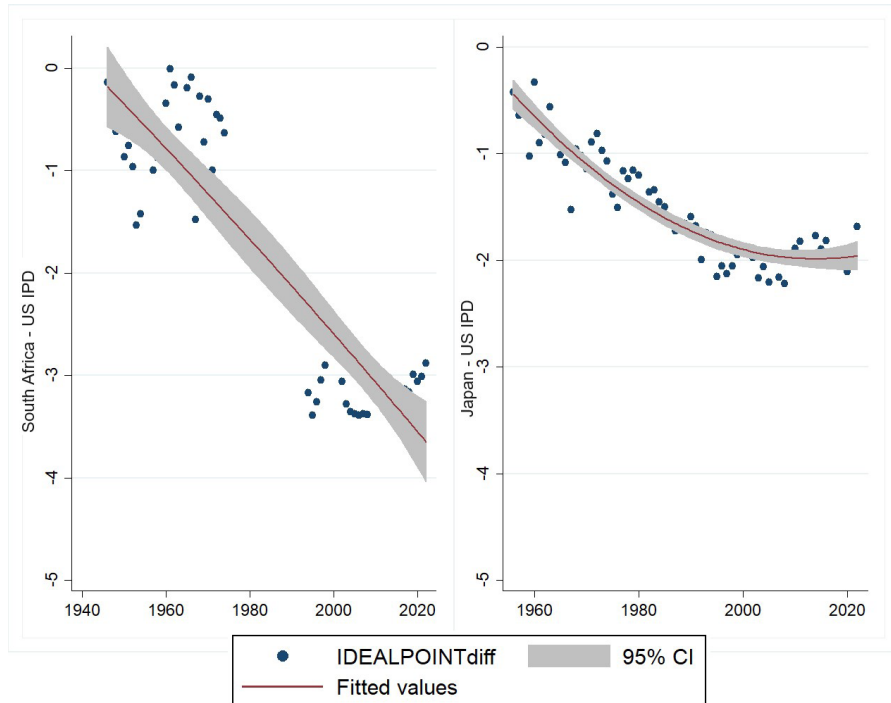
There may, of course, appear some important exceptions to the trends. Japan, for example, went to war against the United States during WWII and was thus clearly dissatisfied with the idea of American leadership on the international political hierarchy. Yet, the Asia-Pacific trendline in figure 5 shows some major outliers. The United States - Japanese IPD dyad form part of those outliers, where the Japanese preferences appear to better align with the European trend than it does with the Asia-Pacific one.(23) Thus, Japan can be thought of as having transitioned from the dissatisfied camp

(23) The Japanese ideal point averages since 2000 have been at around -2 since the year 2000, while the European average has been at around a -1.5 for the same period. In contrast, Asian ideal point since 2000 appears to average at around -3 since 2000.

to a relatively satisfied position on the global power hierarchy despite being dominated by an ethnic outgroup after WWII.

**Figure 6**

*Trendline of the United States IPDs with the Japanese and South African cases*



In contrast, South Africa offers an example of transition from the satisfied camp to the dissatisfied one. When the country was dominated by an apartheid government, the United States acknowledged and normalized relations with such a government up until the height of the Cold War. It was only after such normalization became costly on the international scene that American preferences started to diverge from the preferences of the apartheid government thereby resulting in South African transition from the satisfied camp to the dissatisfied one. Figure 6 shows the dyadic IPDs for the Japanese and South African cases. We examined the Japanese and South African exceptions to  $H_1$  in the following sections that address  $H_2$ . Transition from the Dissatisfied to the Satisfied - Japan

Comparing the fitted values in figure 5 with the values for the Asia

pacific trajectory in figure 4 indicates that Japan's ideal point estimates began to diverge from the East Asian trajectory since the mid-1970s. The proximity of the US and Japanese voting behavior suggests that Japan would be relatively satisfied on Organski's power hierarchy. Such satisfaction can primarily be explained by the American Reverse Course on Japan following WWII, where the US emphasized economic reconstruction in addition to the initial objective of political reform in Japan. That change in US policy towards Japan began with the Cold War and was aimed at hedging against Soviet propaganda regarding American imperialism. This is to say that the ethnic outgroup's (i.e. the Japanese) preferences for economic recovery converged with the American preferences of having a strong Japanese economy that can resist Soviet messaging regarding the evils of capitalism.

What is most telling of how the Japanese were marginalized in the minds of American leadership and people was the response to those with Japanese vs. European ancestry on the American mainland during WWII. President Roosevelt issued executive order 9066 in 1942, which "authorized the forced removal of all persons deemed a threat to national security from the West Coast to 'relocation centers' further inland," that is moved into internment camps. The executive order, however, primarily targeted people with Japanese ancestry at a much higher rate than those with Italian or German ancestry. Estimates for the interned people with Japanese ancestry reached 120,000, while those of German and Italian ancestry were far fewer in number.<sup>(24)</sup>

While the Reverse Course indicates the American attempt to accommodate Japan on the satisfied side after the conclusion of the war, the American leadership's attitude towards the initial draft directives for the US policy in Japan and Germany reveals the extent the Japanese were relegated in comparison to the Germans in the minds of American leadership. Dobbins et al. (2008), for example, explained how Henry Morgenthau, the US Secretary of the Treasury in 1945, in addition to his team, "showed

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(24) According to Basset (2010), "[a]pproximately 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry, including 70,000 who were US citizens, were confined to US internment camps. [...] individuals of German and Italian ancestry were also interned and relocated during [WWII], but in far fewer numbers – nearly 11,000 of German descent and 2,000 of Italian descent."

little interest in planning for Japan's occupation; many of the plans that were developed for Germany were copied, in some cases word for word, in the plans for Japan."<sup>(25)</sup> Although the political leadership in the United States attempted to approach the administration of the different occupied territories through a cookie cutter approach, the leadership was satisfied with less oversight over the American military in Japan.

According to Dobbins et al. (2008), the Americans had a strict nonfraternization policy in Germany, yet "the US lack of interest in the details of the occupation in Japan left MacArthur to run his own show."<sup>(26)</sup> Nevertheless, with America's accommodation and endorsement of a strong Japanese political economy through the Reverse Course, Japan became relatively satisfied on Organski's power hierarchy despite being composed primarily of an ethnic outgroup in relation to the United States.

### **Transition from the Satisfied to the Dissatisfied – South Africa**

The Union of South Africa was established as a dominion by the British in 1910, with minority White rule.<sup>(27)</sup> Apartheid was institutionalized in 1948 when the National Party won the general election. The apartheid system in South Africa was enabled through different legislation, such as Act no. 55 of 1949, which prohibited mixed race marriages, Act no. 21 of 1950 (the Immorality Amendment Act) that proscribed sexual interaction

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(25) Morgenthau's planning efforts produced the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) directive 1067 for the military government in Germany and JCS 1380 for the military government in Japan.

(26) Dobbins et al. (2008) noted that MacArthur exclaimed to an aide that he "wouldn't issue a non-fraternization order [in Japan] for all the tea in China."

(27) According to Clark and Worger (2011), "[a] commitment to segregation and to institutionalizing white supremacy on a national basis underpinned the establishment on 31 May 1910, of the Union of South Africa." The same authors added (2011) "[...] the policy of segregation generally separated races to the benefit of those of European descent and to the detriment of those of African descent. Segregation policies affected the rights of Africans to own land, to live or travel where they chose, and to enjoy job security. While segregation was not as sweeping or inclusive as apartheid, neither was it an informal system of discrimination. Segregation policies that increasingly limited African rights were implemented through a series of laws passed during the first half of the twentieth century, and which were often enforced with great brutality."

between White people and non-White people, and perhaps most importantly was Act no. 41 of 1950 (the Group Areas Act), which legalized segregation of residential and business areas based on race.<sup>(28)</sup>

The United States maintained friendly relations with South Africa for a significant portion of the time that the apartheid system was in effect, essentially rendering the apartheid regime a satisfied one on Organski's power hierarchy.<sup>(29)</sup> The ideal point divide between South Africa and the United States only began to widen ten years after the United States Supreme Court ruled that racial segregation in public schools is unconstitutional, and such ideal point divergence coincided with the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act during the mid-1960s. Given the Soviet messaging regarding racial injustices committed by Western capitalists, the United States began to abandon the apologetic narrative for racial segregation both at home and on the international scene by endorsing civil and political rights at home and the self-determination of most of the British and French colonies abroad.

The increasing divide in ideal point is thus attributed to shifting American preferences as opposed to a shift in South African preferences. Such a divide ultimately culminated into costly sanctions imposed by the United States against the apartheid regime near the end of the cold war, essentially pushing South Africa into the dissatisfied camp on Organski's power hierarchy.<sup>(30)</sup> By the early 1990s, President Frederik De Klerk of

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(28) Other relevant legislation included the Bantu Education Act of 1953, which emphasized the segregation of the educational system, the Sabotage Act of 1962, which enabled the judiciary to ignore the burden of proof, and Act no. 30 of 1950 (Population Registration), which required people living in South Africa to register with authorities as fitting a certain racial background,

(29) As Thomson (2008) suggested, US interests in maintaining friendly relations with South Africa outweighed the immaterial benefit of committing to costly sanctions aimed at condemning the apartheid regime. Thomson (2008. P.12) added "[a]ny form of punitive measures, designed to challenge Pretoria over its apartheid policy, risked damaging U.S. economic interests in this country, as well as exacting a political cost amongst corporate representatives at home."

(30) See the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986. During the Truman and Eisenhower administration (1948-1961) United States and South Africa maintained good bilateral relations. See Thomson (2008). It was only during the Kennedy years (1961-1963), that US policy began shifting against the accommodation of apartheid as a normal by instituting an arms embargo. See =

South Africa entered negotiations with the anti-apartheid leader Nelson Mandela, and the agreements to end apartheid through these negotiations resulted in the gradual lifting of sanctions on South Africa. Despite the end of apartheid, its legacy lives on in terms of socio-economic status for the darker South Africans to this day.

The American default, prior to Soviet pressure, was maintaining a policy that accommodated South African Apartheid. Yet, with the capitulation of the United States to sanction the proponents of Apartheid in South Africa, and the victory of the anti-apartheid activists over the previous racist regime, the new authority remained unable to move into the satisfied camp given the material redistribution of resources. According to Campbell (2014) from the council on foreign relations, “[t]wenty years after the end of apartheid in South Africa, the 9 percent of the population that is white is richer per capita than the 80 percent that is black.” As a result, the ideal point gap between the United States and South Africa never returned to its former status thus rendering the country dissatisfied when compared with the European states.

### **Recommendations**

Given the lingering importance of race in explaining International Relations, students and scholars from the non-Western world can direct their efforts towards two tracks: (1) Identifying and pursuing policy that would promote greater interest convergence between their states and the dominant power, and (2) Anticipating the next power transition to promote

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- = generally Van Wyke and Grobler (2001). President Johnson picked up where Kennedy left off through diplomatic pressure (Thomson. 2008). Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford are associated with a “tilt” back to the normalization of a pigmentocracy in South Africa. Carter was the most vocal about resisting the apartheid system, Thomson (2008) explained “Throughout the whole Carter period there was no shortage of challenging rhetoric and symbolism deployed against South Africa. Although far from being satisfied with the administration’s overall strategy toward South Africa, in the later 1970s, the anti-apartheid movement acknowledged that the United States was now at least saying, if not doing, the right things. There was a wide belief that the executive was sincerely engaged in trying to bring about change: a recognition that had, due to realities and perceptions of ‘neglect’ or ‘self-interest,’ eluded previous administrations.” Reagan adopted a “Constructive Engagement” policy- engineered by Chester Crocker the assistant secretary of state for African Affairs. Such a policy “aimed to give the government in Pretoria space and time to reform its own society.”

greater interest convergence with the main challenger. By securing interest convergence with the dominant power, states representing ethnic outgroups will more likely be able to transition to the satisfied side should they be dissatisfied at the start. Should transition from the dissatisfied to satisfied camps be blocked by the dominant power, scholars can pursue identifying and pursuing policy aimed at accelerating power transition to the next main dissatisfied challenger to the dominant power.

### **Concluding Remarks**

By connecting PTT with CRT, we provide a simple framework for internationalizing CRT. With a focus on voting behavior at the UN as a proxy for the extent of satisfaction with a US led political order, we demonstrate how the ethnic ingroup vis-à-vis the dominant state tends to be satisfied on the international political hierarchy unlike the outgroups. Such a trend, however, is not absolute since interest convergence can enable ethnic outgroups to transition from the dissatisfied to the satisfied camps as had happened with Japan, and the reverse is also possible where members of the ingroup can begin to transition to the dissatisfied camp as had happened with South Africa during the height of the cold war.

The findings in this research have important implications for explaining the moving of the goalposts by the dominant power. Humanitarian crimes by an ethnic ingroup committed against an outgroup (the 2023/2024 Israeli genocide for example) should thus unfold with impunity according to the dominant state. If such a threat, however, is committed against the ingroup (the Russo-Ukrainian war), humanitarian standards should be upheld at the highest standard according to the same state. The recommended policy would thus highlight how states representing ethnic outgroups should identify and pursue greater interest convergence with the dominant state. Should such convergence be prevented by the dominant power, states representing ethnic outgroups can move their effort to promote power transition towards the next dissatisfied challenger in hope better interest convergence would be possible.

Future research can explore what actual power transition, that is China replacing the United States at the top of the global power hierarchy, can mean for the ethnic based power hierarchy. Such research can explore the extent ethnic cleavages will rattle the new satisfied camp, or if the new order will be less vulnerable to having ethnic identities shape international politics.

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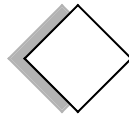
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