



```
hackIntoPolitics(Politics US,Politics China,Politics Russia) {  
    while(2020.relations(China,US)>0)  
        2020.trade(China,US);  
  
}  
  
trade (Politics a, Politics b){  
    a.economy(1);  
    b.economy(1);  
}  
  
economy (int good){  
    if (good == 1)  
        this.economyPowIncrease(1);  
}  
  
relations (Politics a, Politics b,){  
    if (dispute(a,b))  
        relationsChange(a,b,-1);  
  
    if (signAgreement(a,b))  
        relationsChange(a,b,1);  
  
    if (haveCommonThreat(a,b))  
        relationsChange(a,b,5);  
  
}  
  
winner (Politics a, Politics b, Politics c){  
    compare(a.economyPow, b.economyPow, c.economyPow);  
}
```

The United States and Russia have been struggling for the world leader position ever since they have known each other. The disputes have heated up in the Cold War, in which also emerged a new power, China. In an attempt to have allies in the East Asia, the US have adopted policies to be on good terms with China, which provided many advantages to both sides during and after the Cold War. Moreover, using its relatively better relations with Russia after the Cold War, the US had gained the favored position in the trilateral relationship between the superpowers of Earth: China, Russia and the US. Nowadays though, it is impossible to notice that China has taken that position from the US. Especially in an era when we depend on the Chinese industry and its trade, China's impressive growth has also raised some worries in the US, which can be based on to the fact that China and Russia are on friendly terms as never before; Russia, energy exporter, and China, energy importer. Are Russia and China returning to power? Will this development create a new Cold War?

In an effort to elaborate on and answer some worries of Europe and the US, I will be analyzing great panels on this topic, in which many people of essence on the relations between China – Russia – United States have shared their insights.

## Is the United States losing China to Russia?

Mr. Strobe Talbott opens the discussion with a joke to soothe the air that have become heavy because of the recent political discussions between Russia, China, and the US. Mr. Talbott states that although in the past the relationship between China and Soviet Union have been mostly enmity, nowadays both countries have the common cause to “thwart” the U.S. global security policy and weaken U.S. alliances around the world that they, Russia and China, think that should be within their spheres of influence. He informs the audience that these topics and their accuracy will be discussed. The speakers are people of essence in the politics between the triangle relations between Russia, China and the US: Cheng Li, director of Thomson China Center, which is the China Center of Brookings Institution; Fiona Hill, director of Brookings Center on the US and Europe; Yun Sun alumna of the Brookings Institution and associate of Stimson Center, a non-profit company that pursues peaceful international relationships; and Stapleton Roy, ambassador to the People’s Republic of China.

As the moderator, Mr. Cheng Li reminds us of the U.S – China relations in the 70’s and the 80’s and its advantages as the quarrel between the U.S and Soviet Union grew. Mr. Li presents us a new term adopted by the Chinese analysts, “New Three Kingdoms,” describing the contemporary trilateral relationship between the US, China, and Russia. He mentions that nowadays, while the relation between US – China and US – Russia is deteriorating, China – Russia relation is growing steadily. He questions the best interests of each three powers, and asks whether dealing with the ISIS and North Korea while having hostile relations with Russia and China work out well with the interests of the US.

Ambassador Roy starts with a powerful remark as an answer to the debate question, that the United States never had China to lose. He incurs that the trilateral relation of China - Russia - United States is more about who had the better relationship with the other two. He continues with, "it was the US before, now its China."

Mr. Roy dates the improvement of the relations between China and Russia to the collapse of the Soviet Union, claiming by the fact that the border disputes that took years of debate were resolved in a rapid manner after the collapse. In addition to that, the pragmatic administration in China used this chance to remove the ideological rivalry between the countries. Since the two countries are opposed to a sole superpower that is US, the two countries' relations have grown with the strategic cooperation. However, he also added that, although the trade between China and Russia has grown 20 times over 25 years, the trade between China and the US has also grown 6 times, which the Chinese officials would never ignore. He implements that China does not want a hostile relation with the US, rather a relation which offers comfortable situation in which China can trade with Russia and the US at the same time. He claims that Russians think the recent Ukrainian crisis might have been the doing of the Chinese, as the crisis has made Russia, who had NATO opposing them, depend on China for trade, which we can see with the Chinese trade strategy, One Belt, One Road Initiative. On the other hand, China opposes the military intervention and referendums in Ukraine supported by Russia, as it might stimulate independence seeking in Taiwan, Tibet and Xinjiang (Turkic Uighurs). Mr. Roy summaries the relation as a good, close relationship based on interests of the two countries, but also notes that China's rise of power is a challenge that Russia is definitely concerned about.

After Mr. Roy concludes his remark, Ms. Fiona Hill starts with a supporting argument to his, saying that the debate title should have been "Losing Russia to China" instead. Unlike Mr.

Roy though, Ms. Hill suggests that the international relations have become much more complex than the Nixon era, stating that more and more countries have become part of the “game,” and that the focus of countries have become more toward how they manage their own complex relationships. She gives an example from the Russian – Japanese relationship and how it became a priority issue after Chinese warships took a different route from a joint operation in the Mediterranean and distantly “visited” the Russian and Japanese shores in 2013. Ms. Hill elaborates with the facts that European countries also started to have good relations with China and seek funding from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, which provides funding for construction type projects. She concludes with repeating that the environment is more complex than it has been in the past, and that there are new players in the market.

After Ms. Hill, Ms. Yun Sun, who studies China’s foreign policy, provides China’s perspective to the discussion. Ms. Sun states that from the Chinese perspective, China – Russia relations have more overlapping interests than diverging ones. She states that since 2013 Xi Jinping and Putin has met many times, also adds that these leaders see their strategic position in the international system as similar; at disadvantage against the United States. Both countries see US intervention as an undermining of their power in the region. She, too, mentions the Ukrainian crisis, and claims that US returning its focus back to Europe has provided China more freedom, and created an isolated and vulnerable Russia. These developments have increased China’s hand in negotiations, which allowed cooperation in sectors that Russia did not want to cooperate, especially in energy negotiations. For instance, China – Russia have confirmed the progress of Sino-Russian gas pipeline, Russia’s largest crude oil producer signed stakes to Chinese enterprises, and both countries planned a joint petrochemical plant in Russia. However, with all these progressions in the relationship between Russia and China, Ms. Yun reminds us the still-

existing border and territory issues between the two country, and the countries' concern of military power of each other. She claims that these issues can be managed, as China's interests rely on a good relationship with Russia, Russia being the energy exporter, China being the energy importer. Adding one more point to the discussion, Ms. Yun tells that Russia and China has similar authoritarianist ideology which reject the Western revolutions and interventions. She concludes her remark there.

Since each speaker had spoken their ideas on the matter, Mr. Li asks several general questions; Do you see the emergence of a new Cold War? Or can the triangular relationship be managed in a cooperative manner? Also, do you agree with the quote "A tripartite relationship should not be considered a game in which two players go against a third?"

Ambassador Roy answers with his diplomat experience during the Cold War, that current situation is very different from that time, and that Russia and US can and should get along, and whether with Russia or China, the US should get itself into the position of the favorable one in the trilateral relationship.

Ms. Hill continues with saying that, running a country and engaging in foreign policy should be different; the latter should be without ideologies at play. She adds that we have always had a difficult relationship with Russia, compared to our relationship with China. She mentions a new opportunity to improve our relationship with Russia as the new upcoming presidential election. Ms. Hill reminds us that there are other players in the international struggle for power and suggests that we should avoid such a conflict.

Ms. Yun as the last one to answer these questions, states that we should drop thinking of Cold War, as these quarrels are not ideology-driven, and the disputes are not as intense as the Cold War. She adds that Russia and China are able to maintain their disagreements and prioritize

cooperation, but she disagrees that their common threat, the US, may have the same flexibility on these issues.

Continuing after the general questions, Mr. Li and audience asks a few questions to the speakers; I picked the one that was relevant and essential to the our topic and mentioned in our class.

Mr. Li: How important is the personal relationship between Putin and Xi Jinping, and what are the differences between Putin and Xi Jinping?

Ambassador Roy: Even if you don't like the person, you still have to deal with them for the interest of your country, just like the relationship between President Nixon and Chairman Mao. Both of the leaders are reflecting the national interests of their countries, and both of them respect each other. But the reason for the improvements in relations are is not the chemistry between the two leaders, rather the US behavior. As for differences, Xi Jinping did not approve of Putin's behavior of using a referendum to separate a territory, as China still has problems in unification.

In conclusion for this panel, China's economic policy and overlapping interests with Russia have allowed it to have the favored position in the trilateral relationship between Russia – China – United States, while more and more countries have started to become present in international relations.

## The Emerging China-Russia Axis: The Return Of Geopolitics?

Dr. Richard C. Bush opens the program, with informing the audience the topic is “the Emerging China – Russia Axis, the return of Geopolitics?” He explains geopolitics as the idea that in international relations, physical geography matters in the alignments of actors in international system. The speakers are: Akihiro Iwashita, professor in Slavic-Eurasian Research Center at Hokkaido University, and at the Center for Asia – Pacific Future Studies at Kyushu University; Professor Chisako Masuo, who is Associate Professor at the Graduate School of Social and Cultural Studies at Kyushu University; Dr. Tom Wright, Fellow and Director of the Project on International Order and Strategy; David Gordon, Senior Advisor at Eurasia Group, and former chairman, he has a decade long experience in CIA and National Intelligence Council.

Dr. Bush states that the topic for the debate is whether the economic and foreign policy convergence of China and Russia, the two countries that dominate the East Asia, and the particular problems for policymakers all around the world. After him, speakers start their talks.

Dr. Tom Wright starts his talk with a memoir from Hank Paulson, 74 Secretary of the Treasury, that during the 2008 financial crisis, the Russians had proposed China to collaborate together and finish the United States’ economy off, which the Chinese refused immediately. Dr. Wright tells that this story is denied by Russians, but it gives us a baseline for the China – US relationship in 2008. He proclaims that, interpreting from the story, the return to geopolitics is quite recent. He suggests that we should consider whether the issues between major powers pass the threshold of normal disagreements and reach to a situation where countries want each other weakened. He continues by comparing the 90’s and 2000s, when the US, China and Russia shared common interests in global economy and international cooperation, with nowadays. He



states that when the United States invaded Iraq in 2003, Russia did not respond by sending troops to Iraq but rather by registering objections at the UN Security Council, whereas nowadays the current situation in Syria shows how much has changed. He explains the change in the relations between US – China and US – Russia with two reasons: First is the fact that the US considered that these countries would become democratic over time. He includes that this thought was also expressed through diplomatic means, the strengthening of the European Union and the partnership with Ukraine for example. “The world was not safe for authoritarians” he says. The second reason was that as China and Russia became more powerful, they wanted to have the say in their region, which they weren’t able to accomplish because of the power balance being out of order in the 90s and the 2000s. Dr. Wright states that as the environment changed with the financial crisis and as the countries became more authoritarian, opportunities for Russia and China arose.

He also adds that the countries focus on disputes they have with a neighbor rather than wanting to replace a global institution, in an effort to support his idea that international order rests on healthy regional orders. Therefore, he says an emerging sphere of influence has long-term implications for many things. He further suggests that we distinguish China from Russia as the foremost has interests in the absence of war whereas the latter is seeking to use hard power to control the Europe; However, both of the countries’ visions are regionally based and they are trying to increase their influence. They worry about the US-led global system that can arbitrarily put them out of the international financial system and try to create a safety net where it is safer for them to operate. He infers that the relation between Russia and China is based on this situation. He concludes his talk with mentioning the essence of the respect for law while dealing with international order.

After him, Dr. Akihiro Iwashita, different from the previous panel, introduces a quadrangle relationship, adding Japan to the previous triangle. He speaks about four aspects, the geopolitical shift in the quadrangle, China – Russia relations, whether an alliance between them is emerging, and how US – Japan reacts to these developments.

He starts with mentioning that Japan has never become an ally of neither China nor Russia before, as Japan has been the US' Pacific ally for a long time. He says that Japan is starting to focus more on maritime power as Japan is in the conflict sea zone between China and Russia. He concludes his first point by saying that Japan is now having a crisis of geopolitical shift. He presents his second point, which is about how China – Russia relations have changed over the past years, mainly focusing on the border between the two countries. He tells us that the history of China – Russia dates back to the Qing Dynasty and the Russian Empire, affirms us that it is a centuries long conflict. Dr. Iwashita informs us of mutual discussions of the disputed borders, and how they have been equally shared between two countries, with the “Good Neighbor Friendship Cooperation Treaty.”

Dr. Iwashita proceeds to his next point, which is also what we are trying to incur from these debates, whether there is an emerging China – Russia alliance. He states that China and Russia are now calling themselves comprehensive strategic partners, which he infers as a relationship free from past border issues, and a relationship with improving public opinion of each other. He includes that the two countries share common values and interests worldwide, and although China and Russia are constrained by geopolitical limitations, recent developments suggest that we should consider an associate alliance.

He concludes by stating that, thanks to Abe Shinzo's administration, US – Japan alliance have come to existence that can help Japan and other countries in the region in dealing with a possible threat from the China – Russia alliance.

After Dr. Iwashita, Dr. David Gordon remarks a very interesting and powerful point for the relationship development between Russia and China. He states that Russia – China relations' main driving force have been the sanctions forced on Russia after Crimea annexation and the Saudi – OPEC decision in 2014 of not boosting the price of exported energy, which was followed with a dramatic fall in energy prices. Russia responded to these issues rather smart, using fiscal policies to depreciate the ruble so that Russia can still compete with Saudis on the exports of energy; and used unconventional special forces that prevented the government in Kiev from having control in the southeast which caused great damages to the people who facilitated financial flows into Kiev, who had assumed that Ukraine would be closer to the west.

Going back to the relationship between China – Russia, Dr. Gordon quotes Putin in 2014 “Our position on the main global and regional issues are similar or even identical,” which is also supported by the fact that China and Russia in 2014 signed roughly 100 high-level agreements. He also informs us about the military technology exchanges between the countries, S-400 and Sukhoi 35, which will allow a beneficial relationship for both sides, as both of the countries sees themselves in a competitive relationship with the US.

In conclusion for this panel, the geopolitical relationship between Russia and China, as both sides benefits from having an ally close to them, is improving rapidly, which had been unintentionally caused by the sanctions from the US and the price drop in the energy trade.

Conclusion: With the intention to elaborate on the worries of Europe and the US on Russia and China's rise and return to power, I have analyzed two important panels. We can infer from the panels that Russia and China; two countries that share similar ideologies of, seek the unification of their lands, and want to have a sphere of influence in the region, have come together to form a benefitting relationship to both sides. However, we should note that although China and Russia have overlapping interests, on energy trade for instance, they also have divergent interests, especially in the aspect of wars. While Russia seems to be adopting a more military-type policies, China is adopting trade-type policies which easily demolished by a military conflict. Therefore, although these countries are forming allies and coming to power, it is unlikely that China would support Russia in a military conflict, which also means that Russia would not go to war.