**China Heg Good AFF**

**2ac --- US Heg Good**

**Heg solves global nuclear war**

Zalmay **Khalilzad 16**, former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, counselor at the CSIS, 3/23/16, “4 Lessons about America's Role in the World,” http://nationalinterest.org/feature/4-lessons-about-americas-role-the-world-15574?page=show

Ultimately, however, we concluded that the United States has a strong interest in **precluding the emergence of another bipolar world**—as in the Cold War—or a world of **many great powers**, as existed before the two world wars. Multipolarity led to two world wars and bipolarity resulted in a protracted worldwide struggle with the **risk of nuclear annihilation**. To avoid a return such circumstances, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney ultimately agreed that our objective must be to prevent a hostile power to dominate a “critical region,” which would give it the resources, industrial capabilities and population to **pose a global challenge**. This insight has guided U.S. defense policy throughout the post–Cold War era.

Giving major powers the green light to establish spheres of influence would produce a multipolar world and **risk** the return of **war between the major powers**. Without a stabilizing U.S. presence in the Persian Gulf and U.S. relationships with Jordan and the Gulf States, Iran could shut down oil shipments in its supposed sphere of influence. A similar scenario in fact played out during the 1987 “tanker war” of the Iran-Iraq war, which eventually escalated into a direct military conflict between the United States and Iran. Iran’s nuclear program makes these scenarios even more dangerous.

The United States can manage the rise and resurgence of great powers like **China, Russia and Iran** at an acceptable cost without ceding entire spheres of influence. The key is to focus on normalizing the geopolitics of the Middle East, Europe and the Asia-Pacific, which the United States can do by strengthening its transatlantic and transpacific alliances and adapting them to the new, dangerous circumstances on the horizon. The United States should promote a balance of power in key regions while seeking opportunities to reconcile differences among major actors.

**2ac/1ar --- AT: China Heg Inevitable**

**Studies exaggerate--- even if China takes the lead it means nothing for hegemony.**

Ian **Verrender 03-15**-2022 [ABC Business Editor, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, “Why China is unlikely to overtake the United States to become the biggest economy in the world,” https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-03-15/china-faces-significant-hurdles-to-become-biggest-global-economy/100912398//ZW]

For decades, it has been one of the great truisms of global foreign policy; the "inexorable rise of China". Never a question of if but only when, the betting amongst academics, politicians and diplomats has concentrated on how long it would take for China to overtake the United States as the world's biggest economy. Its sheer size, both in terms of land mass and population, made it seemingly inevitable as the economy developed and living standards soared in one of history's fastest transitions from a Third World agrarian nation to a highly urbanised society**. But the path to becoming the biggest is becoming increasingly hazardous**. China is experiencing serious growing pains. The easy gains have been extracted and many pundits are winding back those ambitious straight-line extrapolations of continuous growth. Even then, there are various ways to measure size. Time to scale back the growth prospects A new study by Lowy Institute researchers Roland Rajah and Alyssa Leng casts doubt upon the speed with which China can achieve the dubious honour of claiming the crown and questions whether it will ever become the most powerful. "China would overtake the United States to become the world's largest economy in nominal US dollar terms by about 2030," the report's authors conclude. "**But it would never establish a meaningful lead** ... and would remain far less prosperous and productive per person than America, even by mid-century." Most research concludes that China will be able to motor along with around 5 per cent annual economic growth until 2050. If it did, it would be the world's biggest economy by a country mile, with the capacity to be its own bloc. It is those kinds of projections that have created fear and angst among many Western nations, including Australia, on how best to deal with a global economic powerhouse of such magnitude that does not adhere to democratic norms. This new study paints a vastly different picture of the future. Rather than 5 per cent growth, it forecasts growth of around 2 to 3 per cent a year, which has significant ramifications for the balance of global power and a major impact on China's internal politics. "With slower growth, China's progress in catching up to rich country average living standards and productivity levels would remain significantly incomplete, even by mid-century," the study says. "On the one hand, the average person in China would be 2 to 3 times richer by 2050 compared to today and 2.5 to 3.5 times more productive. "Nonetheless, China would still be much poorer and less productive than the United States, based on current expectations of future US growth at around 1.6 per cent a year on average." By 2050, the authors calculate the average person in China would be only 40 per cent as rich as the average American and about half as productive. More than just teething problems The early gains were easy. From an economy largely run by the state, allowing individuals to own and operate their own businesses sent growth soaring. Global capital poured in, providing cheap investment and employment. But those easy gains no longer are available. And the ongoing fracturing in relations between the West and an inward looking Beijing, accelerated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, will likely continue to see a slowing and perhaps withdrawal of foreign investment. In recent years, it has faced a series of crises fuelled by mounting debts which have seen a sharp uptick in defaults within private and government owned businesses, most recently concentrated within the property sector and companies such as Evergrande. Putting aside poor productivity, debt and overinvestment in infrastructure, the Lowy Institute report cites another issue as the biggest overall impediment to China's future; its ageing population and the legacy of its draconian past one child policy. "China's working age population has been shrinking since the middle of last decade," it says. "The fertility rate has fallen rapidly over the past decade to just 1.3 births per woman in 2020 — well below the replacement rate of 2.1." By 2050, China's working age population will have shrunk by around 220 million, which is around a fifth of its current level, with those aged over 65 making up about a quarter of the population. The authors conclude that you can never completely rule out the prospect China could rule the world, the chances of such are nowhere near as likely as most studies would indicate. "But it would require an enormous degree of success with productivity enhancing reforms well beyond China's track record to date," they argue. "It should not be the baseline expectation."

**Alternate factors mean China will never be the hegemon--- even if it becomes militarily and economically superior.**

Ashok **Swain** 01-21-**21** [Ashok Swain is a Professor of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University, Sweden, The Print, “China’s economy and military can overtake US, but it still won’t become global superpower,” https://theprint.in/opinion/chinas-can-overtake-us-but-it-still-wont-become-global-superpower/588718///ZW]

There is an ongoing discussion that China is emerging as a new superpower and replacing the US from the global power structure. China emerging strongly from the growing global economic crisis due to the Covid-19 pandemic and Donald Trump’s ally-alienating policies within NATO for the last four years have pushed this narrative forward considerably. There is no doubt that China has already become the global powerhouse economically, and is expected to surpass the US as the world’s biggest economy by 2028. China is still behind but on its way to surpassing the US in military power with increased spending on weapons technology and developing several secretive weapons. There is no doubt over China acquiring economic and military strength superior to the US sooner than later, but the question is, can the Communist Party-led China be ever as formidable and complete a superpower as the US has been for the last eight decades? When the Soviet Union competed with the US to claim superpower status during the Cold War period, it somewhat matched America’s strength in leading alliances and military power. However, at the height of its power, the Soviet Union was never a match for US domination economically or culturally. Like the Soviet Union in the past, China now faces several geopolitical and cultural challenges before it can reach global superpower status similar to the US. China can’t aspire to get the same respect and acceptance worldwide, even if its economic and military power overtakes the US. A democratic US will always have ideological, political, and cultural superiority compared to a Communist China. One-party Communist country Although China has developed a hybrid system to grow spectacularly on the economic front, it is still a one-party Communist country. Politically, it has become further closed and centralised than ever before. The Chinese Communist Party is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. In 2011, when it was celebrating its 90th anniversary, I was fortunate to attend an invite-only meeting of the Chinese Political Science Association in Shanghai. Many top Chinese political scientists openly discussed the possibilities of China opening up to a multi-party electoral system. That sort of discussion is almost impossible to imagine in Xi Jinping-led China now. No doubt, China is a strong state with a powerful party bureaucracy, but its politics is potentially very fragile. Under a closed system, it is almost impossible to predict when that spark will arrive to ignite a political upheaval. This is a country where the Interpol chief or a globally famous billionaire can disappear without any official explanation. Hundreds of Chinese millionaires have been living abroad to protect their wealth from future uncertainties and to avail the opportunities of open societies. China has become rich, it is spending heavily on its university education, but 600,000 Chinese students go abroad for their higher studies every year. China’s economy might be booming for decades, but 10 million Chinese have traveled to other countries to find jobswhile 51 million people from all over the world have moved to the US for better work and improved living. Tough neighbourhood Despite its ongoing political troubles, there is no doubt that the American political system is resilient to any attack from destabilising forces. But that sort of trust in the system continues to elude China. Though China has been enjoying political stability for long, the Chinese people don’t have similar trust and confidence in their political system as the Americans have in theirs. This will not help China command the respect of other countries in its competition to become the global superpower. Geopolitics also does not favour China as it has the US. Unlike the US, China is surrounded by several powerful and competing countries. Among them, at least two, Russia and India, see the dream of becoming superpowers. China has also fought wars against them and continues to have several border disputes. China is neither safe nor secure in its neighbourhood to freely engage in political and military projects in other parts of the world as the US does. Besides China’s location in a tough neighbourhood, it also lacks trusted, powerful allies. On the one hand, the democratic US has established strong political and military cooperation with many regionally powerful countries like the UK, Germany, Japan, and Australia from the Cold War days. It continues to keep those allies, while getting new ones like India. On the other hand, China’s only significant ally in the world is Russia, but that alliance suffers from many contradictions and has not passed the test of time. It will be hard to imagine China gaining the upper hand militarily, economically, and politically in the future, vis-à-vis the US and its allies’ combined forces. The US stands firm The US has been and will continue to be the global cultural superpower, and there is **minimal possibility of China posing any serious challeng**e to that status. Not only does its democracy and freedom provide ideological superiority to the US, its cultural influence through movies, media, music, and literature also extends across the world. The US is a country of immigrants, and it represents and enriches the cultures and ideas of the world. But China has remained a closed country for long. While English remains the world’s language, it is almost impossible to imagine Mandarin taking up that place. China will always be struggling to catch up to the US and take the lead position in the global power race. Like the Soviet Union, its superpower status will be limited and confined to certain aspects of it. The US has everything to hold its own long in this competition if it doesn’t often engage in self-sabotaging acts like it has in the last four years.

**Reject predictions--- they’re always wrong.**

Mark **Beeson and** Corey **Crawford** 02-10-20**22** [Mark Beeson is of the University of Technology Sydney, Ultimo, Australia, Corey Crawford is of the University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia; Chinese Political Science Review (2022), “Putting the BRI in Perspective: History, Hegemony, and Geopolitics,” https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s41111-022-00210-y//ZW]

Western IR theory does not have a good record in predicting major turning points in international affairs; the supposed inevitability of ‘hegemonic transitions’ looks anything but certain at this point in history. There are tentative signs that both Xi and President Joseph R. Biden Jr. recognise the importance of establishing some sort of working relationship—and the possible dangers of not doing so (Kanno-Youngs and Sanger 2021). The rest of the world may not be entirely happy about the prospect of the coordinated actions of a ‘G2’, but it may be preferable to its absence. If the US and China cannot find a way to manage their differences for the common good, then the discussions of comparative hegemony and the continuing rise of China will become theoretically irrelevant and empirically improbable.

**American heg is sustainable.**

**Yoon Seok-cheon** 03-13-20**22** [Finance columnist, Hankyoreh, “Three reasons why China won’t overtake the US anytime soon,” https://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english\_edition/e\_international/1034592.html//ZW]

It’s in the nature of human beings, and countries, to want to be at an advantage over others. In that sense, history may be seen as a record of competitions for dominance. Another heated battle for dominance is unfolding today. We see signs of it in the conflict between the US and Russia over Ukraine. An even more intense competition is taking place between the US and China. In terms of economic might, China has reached a level where it poses a threat to the US. Dominance is decided as much by economic power as by military strength. It’s natural for the US to feel threatened by China’s pursuit. But some Westerners’ **claims that China is poised to surpass the US should be seen as exaggerated**. China has more weaknesses than people realize. Demographic issues China is a massive country. As of 2020, its population was counted at 1.41 billion. In terms of population, China is over four times larger than the US, which has around 330 million people. Gross domestic product (GDP) is calculated by multiplying productivity by the population. A higher population is clearly an advantage for a higher GDP. That fact serves as the basis for most of the predictions that have the Chinese economy poised to surpass the US economy in view of past growth rate trends. But those predictions are mere conjecture, which fails to take into account qualitative aspects related to the population. In China’s case, the qualitative aspects of its population are starting to have a negative impact on growth. In many countries, the pandemic served as a mechanism lowering the birth rate. When entire families are forced to remain at home, that translates for most households into greater fears for the future. As financial difficulties are factored in, stress levels escalate even further. It’s not the sort of climate that would put anyone in the mood. China’s disease containment measures have been particularly extreme in comparison with other countries. People are barred from going outside at all. This inevitably leads to greater stress for households. Under the circumstances, the chances of the low birth rate rebounding are effectively zero. The decline in China’s birth rate dates back to before the pandemic. The country abolished its one-child policy in 2016, but that alone is not enough to boost the birth rate. Simply changing the laws is not going to instantly wipe away memories of decades of education instructing people that they were only allowed to have one child, with punishments for those who violated the rule. The total fertility rate, which represents the average number of children that a woman of childbearing potential (aged 15 to 49) is expected to bear over the course of her life, remains down at 1.3. The situation has only gotten worse during the pandemic. According to the National Bureau of Statistics of China, around 10.6 million children were born in China in 2021. That’s compared to around 12 million in 2020 — showing that the various incentive measures haven’t been effective. For 2021, the number of births and deaths was roughly equivalent. Without people coming in from outside, China is poised to shortly face a population decline. A declining population doesn’t necessarily spell doom for GDP growth. You can still achieve growth through increased productivity. The problem arises when the population decline occurs in tandem with an aging population. In this case, senior citizens leave the labor market faster than young people arrive to take their place. It’s a problem that a lot of countries are facing, and it’s especially noticeable in China. Unless “Xi Jinping’s China” can solve it, a scenario where China surpasses the US may be unlikely. Lack of soft power Even without the US reining it in, China is unlikely to surpass the US. The reason has to do with its lack of soft power. Soft power can be seen as the finishing touch on a country’s dominance or standing. You can’t assume control of the world unless you can dominate through cultural products. At the moment, US cultural products are in a league of their own, circulating all around the world. Even in the 21st century, the US remains massively influential with its films and television series. What about China? Despite its long history and time-honored traditions, it has produced nothing to boast about in terms of cultural products. China may have the economic might to threaten the US, but in terms of soft power, it is still in its infancy. Over the four decades since it implemented reforms and openness, it has achieved global success with exactly two of its cultural products: Liu Cixin’s science fiction novel “The Three-Body Problem” and the short-form video service TikTok. Even those successes can only be viewed as partial. “The Three-Body Problem” won Liu the Hugo Award in 2015 — an honor that could be called the Nobel of science fiction. He was the first Asian to achieve that. Without question, the book is a work of genius. But its success is still only within the narrow confines of the science fiction genre. Not only has it failed to broaden its base, but the follow-ups have been underwhelming. We see a similar situation with TikTok. Owing to a lack of Chinese content, it hasn’t served as a window for distributing culture. Among Asian countries, soft power has been growing by the day in South Korea, Japan and Taiwan. South Korea’s popular music, films, and television series have joined the ranks of the world-class. Japanese animation remains influential as well. Yet China, a country seen as synonymous with Asian civilization, has yet to develop soft power. The reason for that is self-evident: the state itself clamps down on creativity. “The Three-Body Problem” was able to gain worldwide acclaim thanks to celebrities who actively promoted the book in various media. This is unimaginable in China right now. Chinese authorities thoroughly regulate speech unrelated to patriotism or everyday life. When channels of speech are obstructed, creativity dies out. Though Asian culture is now widely consumed in the West, Chinese culture’s share of the market is minimal at best. China clearly has a rich and lively culture. The problem is its government, which isn’t very interested in encouraging or enhancing cultural activity within its borders. The Chinese government believes information hinders stability. Under such circumstances, the promotion of Chinese culture abroad becomes a complicated matter. The Chinese government also partially blocks the influx of foreign cultural products into China. It’s only natural that Chinese culture is enjoying diminishing opportunities to globalize. Aside from censorship, indifference is another factor that’s further isolating Chinese culture from the world. China’s insistence on doing everything the Chinese way itself is causing the country’s soft power to languish. This in turn has inevitably led to the decline of the competitiveness of China and its companies. Debt and inequality Astronomical debt and severe inequality are other main factors impeding growth for China. While the latter is a big problem in and of itself, the bigger problem is that China is attempting to solve the issue of inequality through force. The country’s push for “common prosperity” will ultimately undermine its growth potential, as it will surely hurt the vitality of Chinese corporations. Private enterprises in China are rapidly becoming public under state control. Though the country’s authorities dream of realizing Chinese-style capitalism, such an approach may weaken entrepreneurship and temper the competitiveness of Chinese businesses in the long run. While the approach can effectively foster growth in fledgling industries, it will negatively impact industries that call for creativity and a daring spirit. Though China is attempting to redesign its economic and financial systems without destabilizing its society, it’s unclear whether this can be done without any changes in its governing system, the fundamental source of inequality in China. Chinese President Xi Jinping must simultaneously accomplish two seemingly contradictory goals, the very goals that past Chinese leaders strived to realize for centuries: growth and equality. Unfortunately, the path to these destinations is long and winding, and inequality is only worsening in China. Debt is another serious problem in the country, especially that of local governments. The real estate market, comprising 30% of China’s GDP, was what mainly powered the Chinese economy. But the debt explosion triggered by the bankruptcy of the China Evergrande Group may end up affecting local governments, who up until now made up for budgetary deficits by selling land to real estate developers. Now, this has become impossible. The finances of local governments will slowly deteriorate, and regional disparity will intensify. The conflict between the wealthy coastal region and the poor western region may come to light and lead to social unrest. The Chinese government has designated zero COVID, economic growth of 5%, and debt reduction as its three main policy objectives. Already, the last goal is falling by the wayside due to concerns that austerity measures for the purpose of debt reduction and stabilization will cause economic stagnation. That being the case, will China be able to achieve its other two goals? China’s zero-COVID policy has been put in jeopardy due to the emergence of the highly transmissible Omicron variant. Because of China’s track record of low caseloads, only a small number of Chinese people have developed natural immunity against the COVID-19 virus. The effectiveness of Chinese vaccines is also questionable. Rigid lockdowns for the sake of zero COVID transmission are impediments to growth in and of themselves. If lockdowns fail, China may be subject to the kind of economic chaos that swept the world early in the pandemic. Countries around the world are suffering from the consequences of COVID-19 — China won’t be the exception for long. What’s meant to happen is bound to happen. Will China be able to achieve a 5% economic growth under these circumstances? Pax Americana’s long run It was once projected that Japan, which entered the ranks of wealthy nations before becoming an aging society, would outpace the US in terms of its economy. This turned out to be a mere pipe dream. What then of China? China’s population is already aging when the country has yet to accumulate much wealth. Astronomical expenses will be needed to make sure its aging population doesn’t tip China into social unrest. The cost may be too much for China to handle. To make matters worse, Xi Jinping is pressuring corporations, the backbone of economic growth. More importantly, China can no longer boast low-cost labor as its strength. The country is losing its competitive edge in labor-intensive industries. But this doesn’t mean the country has become competitive enough in high-tech industries with high added value. These factors can all contribute to social instability. Considering all this, it’s baseless, wishful thinking to imagine China coming out victorious in its race against the US. The above-mentioned issues must be resolved for China to gain an upper hand in its competition with the North American powerhouse. Whether China is capable of overcoming these challenges under its current governing system is open to doubt. There are limits to the ruling class’s ability to better itself. The solution has to be structural. But to expect this of an unchecked power is in itself a contradiction. Then, it’s clear what the outcome will be of the hegemonic competition between the US and China. Pax Americana may continue on longer than one might think.

**Reports of booming economy are wrong--- US is outpacing China annual growth.**

Tom **Hancock and** Chris **Anstey 05-20**-2022 [Tom Hancock is a senior reporter, Chris Anstey is a senior editor, Bloomberg, “US Growth Seen Outpacing China’s for First Time Since 1979,” https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-05-20/us-growth-seen-outpacing-china-s-for-first-time-since-1976#xj4y7vzkg//ZW \*graphics omitted\*]

China’s coronavirus lockdowns mean its economic growth may undershoot the US for the first time since 1976, in a role reversal with potential political reverberations in both Beijing and Washington. The world’s second-largest economy will grow just 2% this year, Bloomberg Economics wrote in a report Thursday. By comparison, US gross domestic product will increase 2.8% this year, Bloomberg Economics predicts. While Beijing is applying fiscal, monetary and regulatory stimulus measures, the impact is being blunted by President Xi Jinping’s Covid Zero policy, which requires strict curbs on activity when virus outbreaks occur. The US, while struggling to cope with high inflation, is still being propelled by strong hiring and consumer spending. The Bloomberg Economics call is on the bearish end of the spectrum, with the median forecast for China’s 2022 GDP growth still over 4%. If they have it right, this year would be the first time that China’s full-year growth pace has lagged behind that of its rival since 1976, when China was emerging from the tumultuous decade of the Cultural Revolution, World Bank data show. Since the “reform and opening up” campaign launched in the late 1970s, China has enjoyed faster expansion rates, with plenty of scope still remaining for its per-capita GDP to narrow the gap with the US. Catching Up China's per-capita GDP remains well below US, showcasing growth potential President Joe Biden, who is urging congressional lawmakers to pass a package of legislation aimed at strengthening US competitiveness against China, would be sure to seize on such a relative growth outcome. He has framed his economic agenda in part around demonstrating whether democracies can stand up to Xi’s authoritarian model. The stakes are even higher for Xi, who is widely expected to secure a third term as Communist Party chief later this year in a precedent-breaking move. A 2% growth rate would be far below the government’s official growth target of about 5.5% this year. Xi told officials to ensure China’s growth outpaces the US this year, the Wall Street Journal reported last month. It would mark the first time the nation significantly undershot the annual goal since the practice of setting targets was adopted in the late 1990s. The government didn’t publish a target in 2020, when the pandemic hit. This year’s goal of “around 5.5%,” the lowest ever set, was determined by Chinese leaders before the latest spate of lockdowns in metropolises including Shanghai, which have devastated domestic spending. Some economists now estimate China’s GDP contracted this quarter amid April declines in retail sales and industrial production. A 2% expansion also would be the weakest for China since 1976, undershooting even 2020 when the pandemic pulled GDP growth down to 2.2%. Back in the aftermath of the Tiananmen Square crackdown, a much-smaller Chinese economy expanded 3.9% in 1990. Politics may have played some part in the setting of a target that already looked ambitious before the latest pandemic-related measures, according to Stephen Jen, who runs hedge fund and advisory firm Eurizon SLJ Capital. There are likely divisions over the magnitude of regulatory moves against industries including property and technology, in his analysis. “This is, we suspect, the main reason behind the obviously aggressive growth target: it was intentionally planted by the ‘pro-growth’ camp in Beijing to limit further ‘crackdowns’ and restore a better environment for the private sector to thrive,” Jen and colleague Joana Freire wrote in a note earlier this month. Policy makers indeed have repeatedly rolled out pledges of more growth-friendly measures. Vice Premier Liu He earlier this week hinted that Beijing may be ready to let up on the clampdown on technology firms. But announcements have fallen short of any specific, large-scale fiscal package or decisive across-the-board monetary easing, leaving economists and investors unimpressed. “China still has policy options,” Citigroup Inc. economists Xiangrong Yu and Xiaowen Jin wrote in a note this week. “At this juncture, a timely and decisive rollout of real stimulus measures is really critical to bring growth back on track.” One footnote to the GDP rivalry: Biden has already claimed credit for outpacing China. “For the first time in 20 years, our economy grew faster than China’s,” the president said in a statement on GDP data in January. Measuring the fourth-quarter of last year compared with the same period of 2020, the US expanded 5.5% against China’s 4%. American growth in the final three months of last year was accentuated by a jump in inventories. It remains to be seen whether the US can outstrip China on a calendar-year average basis

**2ac/1ar --- China Regs Don’t Work**

**China’s regulations for AI aren’t feasible.**

Makenzie **Holland** 03-17-20**22** [News writer covering big tech and federal regulation, Tech Target, “China’s AI regulations face technical challenge,” https://www.techtarget.com/searchenterpriseai/news/252514781/Chinas-AI-regulations-face-technical-challenge//ZW]

China is one of the first countries to regulate AI algorithms -- a regulation that may prove technically difficult for businesses to adhere to**.** China's AI algorithm regulations took effect March 1, requiring businesses to provide explainable AI algorithms and be transparent about their purpose, such as for recommending products or services. The new regulations also prohibit businesses reliant on AI algorithms from offering different prices to different people based on personal data collected. Technical feasibility will be one of the most challenging aspects facing the new regulations**, said Russell Wald, director of policy for Stanford University's Institute for Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence (HAI). Explainable AI has proven to be difficult for businesses to offer up.** **In this Q&A, Wald talks about the AI regulations' impact on businesses, as well as how they're unlikely to affect the Chinese government's own use of AI when it comes to surveilling its citizens.** What do you think about China taking this step? Wald: What I find most interesting is China has done this first. We can see and watch in real time what happens to some of these businesses now being regulated for the first time. Questions remain about the technical feasibility of this. The question is, are we seeing regulation in theory or regulation in practice? One key part is a continuing need for human-centered AI. How do you define human-centered AI? Wald: AI that is inspired by the human brain and comes from what you've seen in human development. AI that doesn't replace humans but augments human capability. And the third part of that is AI that doesn't harm but rather benefits humanity … technology fostering instead of eroding democratic aspects. That's the key part. It's a recognition of the rights of everyone to be able to go in and look at these technologies and have fair access to them and the rights to challenge their governments when they're in use. How will requiring AI algorithmic accountability and transparency impact businesses? Wald: There is the technical issue here of whether that's feasible. That's one layer that has a big question mark hanging over it. Then there's the aspect of following regulation where you could and being in compliance with that. To that end, whether or not those companies will be able to do it, I think they'll have to. I don't think they have a choice. The larger question is not whether Chinese businesses are able to comply with this, it is whether other international companies will now be affected by this. If you're selling into the Chinese market, you are going to have to work on that. That's where a unique tension is going to come through. What if China says, 'It is technically feasible'? Then there will be other countries that say 'No, it's actually not, we've had these problems.' Will these regulations apply to the Chinese government's use of AI? Wald: The government will not cede, from my view at least, its surveillance of its citizens. Because of that, I think it'll always have access to that technology. It's too tempting. It even remains tempting for local law enforcement in the U.S. But here, at least in the United States, we're having a debate about an AI bill of rights. We're debating about facial recognition use by police, by the federal government at the border. There is this open debate. That debate is not happening in this case of the [Chinese] government's use of it. Do you think there needs to be more debate before moving forward with AI regulations? Wald: The EU or U.S. system of open debate around this is ultimately driving us in the right space. Not fast enough, but still a better pathway forward. What I do have concerns about in the U.S. is we are woefully behind. You're starting to see an increase in legislation. You're starting to see a Federal Trade Commission that's trying to lean a little more forward on some of this. But I think the best way to have these dialogues and national debate is through legislation where all the interest groups, all the advocacy organizations, everyone comes to the table and hashes it out. Are there aspects of the Chinese legislation you'll be paying attention to, like how they handle consumer complaints about potential harms caused by AI algorithms? Wald: I mentioned that technical feasibility part, that's really important. I'm more curious about what the petition process will be. I'd like to watch that space more than anything. Is it significant, is it public, are a lot of people openly complaining? I would be curious to see the registration of these complaints. That would be important for when Europe or the U.S. starts to get into this model. What's the mechanism for them to be able to do this? If we all had a contact at the FTC or the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, they'd be flooded and overwhelmed and unable to manage that process appropriately. The logistics of managing that has huge application towards ultimate effectiveness. Editor's note: **Responses have been edited for brevity and clarity.**

**China led AI strangles innovation---American standards are key.**

Arijit **Sengupta** 09-15-**21** [Founder and CEO of Aible, Fast Company, “China’s new proposed law could strangle the development of AI,” https://www.fastcompany.com/90676516/china-ai-law-problems//ZW]

China’s internet watchdog, the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC), recently issued a draft proposal of regulations to manage how technology companies use algorithms when providing services to consumers. The proposed law mandates that companies must use algorithms to “actively spread positive energy.” Under the proposal, companies must submit their algorithms to the government for approval or risk being fined and having their service terminated. This is an incredibly bad and even dangerous idea. It’s what happens when people who don’t understand AI try to regulate AI. Instead of fostering innovation, governments are looking at AI through their unique lenses of fear and trying to reduce the harm they worry about most. Thus, western regulators focus on fears such as violation of privacy, while Chinese regulators are perfectly okay with collecting private data on their citizens but are concerned about AI’s ability to influence people in ways deemed undesirable by the government. If the Chinese law is adopted, it will create a lengthy bureaucratic process that will likely ensure that no small company or startup will survive or even enter the market. The moment you allow government regulators to be the final arbiters of what emerging technologies can and cannot do, you’ve strangled innovation. The only people who will profit under such a law are large companies that can invest in unproductive bureaucratic activities due to massive cash reserves and bad actors because they’ll ignore regulators and do whatever they want. Cash-starved startups who wish to follow the law will be most disadvantaged by this approach. China is not alone in taking bureaucratic approaches to AI. In April, the European Union released a draft Artificial Intelligence Act that would ban certain AI practices outright and mandate that AI applications deemed “high risk” meet strict data governance and risk management requirements. This includes requirements on testing, training, and validating algorithms, ensuring human oversight, and meeting standards of accuracy, robustness, and cybersecurity. Businesses would need to prove that their AI systems conform with these requirements before placing them on the European market. Imposing algorithm requirements or requiring companies to justify approaches can sound less onerous than the outright banning of technologies. The reality is that in either case, startups do not have the resources to participate in such bureaucratic slow processes. Smaller companies will be forced out of the arena even though they are most likely to create true innovations in this space. Imagine a world where startups had to get patents on their technology before building their software. Only about half of U.S. patents are approved, which is not terrible, but it takes about two years for approval to come through. Algorithms are more difficult to examine than patents—especially deep learning algorithms which very few experts understand. Based on the lengthy timelines in the patent office, we can surmise that algorithm approval processes are likely to take longer than two years. This is simply not fast enough: Technology in a rapidly evolving space like AI would already be outdated by the time it was approved. Any approach that involves regulators preapproving algorithms would strangle innovation in this space. There’s another reason why such legislation would be more onerous for small companies. For startups reliant on venture capital investments, typical funding cycles are 18 months long, which means that investors expect to see tangible results from the investment in less than 18 months. Thus, current investment approaches would not support waiting years to get algorithms approved before launching a product. While some VCs may adopt a different investment approach, similar to medical investments for example, many entrepreneurs would simply turn away from AI and pursue other opportunities. The U.S. is in a unique position to get AI guidelines right. While China and the European Union outline ever-stricter guidelines banning certain types of AI, the U.S. has an opportunity to establish ethical guidelines without inhibiting innovation. The only appropriate approach to regulating AI is one where we make our societal goals clear from the start and hold companies liable if they violate those goals. For example, we don’t force every company to undergo Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) inspections before being able to operate. However, labor safety expectations are enshrined in law and violators are prosecuted. If companies find alternative approaches to keeping their employees safe, they are not penalized as long as the societal goals are achieved. Giving government regulators the power to limit broad technology categories is not the approach that built the internet or the smartphone. That’s why the U.S. should tackle AI regulation by making our societal goals clear and giving organizations flexibility in achieving such goals.

**New regulations create steep barriers for tech companies.**

Ellen **Lu and** Ryan **Fedasiuk** 12-13-20**21** [Ellen Lu is a research assistant at the Center for Security and Emerging Technology at Georgetown University, Ryan Fedasiuk is a research analyst at the Center for Security and Emerging Technology at Georgetown University, The Diplomat, “Will China’s Regulatory “Great Wall” Hamper AI Ambitions,” https://thediplomat.com/2021/12/will-chinas-regulatory-great-wall-hamper-ai-ambitions///ZW]

In September the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) announced a three-year plan to regulate predictive algorithms, and Chinese companies scrambled to comply with new regulations. News of the plan came on the heels of two other stringent policies – the Data Security Law (DSL) and Personal Information Protection Law (PIPL) – which were passed earlier this year and came into full effect in November. China’s push for data security and algorithmic governance should be viewed as a new chapter in the country’s storied attempts to regulate the technology sector. In all likelihood, these moves will minimally affect state security bureaus’ data collection capabilities, but will create steep compliance costs for internet companies that could hamper the state’s long-term development goals. The DSL is designed to curtail invasive data collection by Chinese tech companies. Specifically, it restricts the collection of data by Chinese companies within and outside of China that may “harm the national security or public interests of the PRC.” Given the ambiguous nature of the law, many Chinese companies have erred on the side of over-compliance, rather than risk facing exorbitant penalties – which range from $1,000 to over $150,000, and may result in the suspension or revocation of a business’ license. The PIPL imposes even more day-to-day compliance costs on Chinese tech companies that work with personal data. Under the law, Chinese companies are now obligated to create cybersecurity teams, conduct training sessions, and classify data according to the potential for national security threat. The sweeping regulatory framework consists of 74 articles, and it applies to any company that handles individual Chinese citizens’ personal information. Taken collectively, the DSL and PIPL should be viewed as a new chapter in Beijing’s push to regulate the Chinese technology sector. At first glance, the steep limits they place on data collection stand at odds with Beijing’s long-standing ambition to become the world leader in AI by 2030. But the laws’ long-term effects will hinge on two hotly debated questions about how China’s national tech champions interact with the state. The first question is whether the new regulations will actually apply to China’s “national AI champions,” or whether the special relationship between big tech and the state might exempt them from the most onerous requirements. On the one hand, the Communist Party under Xi Jinping seems adamant about curtailing the massive power China’s tech companies have accumulated over the past decade, and is using these data governance regulations to reassert control. For their part, investors do expect China’s internet titans to take a hit. Immediately after the DSL was passed, the Hang Seng Tech index measured a 2.5 percent decrease in China’s largest internet and e-commerce stocks, to include those of Tencent and Alibaba, amounting to a loss equivalent to tens of billions of U.S. dollars. In the same month, when China’s most popular ride sharing app Didi Chuxing filed for an IPO on the New York Stock Exchange, Chinese regulators yanked it from app stores, citing violations of DSL’s data security regulations. The company has since lost 30 percent of users and seen its share value decline by more than 40 percent. On the other hand, however, the Chinese government has historically relied on Chinese internet giants Baidu, Alibaba, and Tencent to aid in intelligence and police work, by collecting and processing troves of information these companies collect about Chinese netizens. Through Article 7 of China’s National Intelligence Law, Article 77 of the National Security Law, and Article 28 of the Cybersecurity Law, the government is able to deputize internet companies to assist with intelligence gathering. The codependent relationship between Baidu, Alibaba, Tencent, and Chinese security services could imply that China’s AI champions are too big to regulate. But if they are subject to the full force of the DSL and PIPL, the second question is whether the limitations set out in these laws will materially limit Chinese tech giants’ ability to collect and process data at scale. Neither the DSL nor PIPL constrains data collection by China’s state security apparatus – only internet and data companies. But it’s not clear to what extent state security offices rely on data collected data in-house or outsourced to these firms. If public security bureaus have immediate and unfiltered access to the collection platforms operated by private companies, as has been claimed about Huawei 5G platforms and Lenovo computers, then the government would have little incentive to spare Chinese AI companies from stringent restrictions on data collection. But, because of their special relationship with the state, it’s possible that China’s internet companies will benefit from data collected and provided by Chinese security services to continue their AI development. Under the auspices of China’s national security and cybersecurity laws, Chinese businesses are compelled to work with the state’s security apparatus. Companies that handle data related to “national security” are further required to allow the Ministry of State Security access to their companies’ servers. Even if Baidu, Alibaba, and Tencent face data collection limitations, they could theoretically continue to rely on data provided by Chinese security services to fine-tune their AI products. Although it’s not clear how exactly China’s large internet companies may be affected by new regulations on data and algorithms, the composition of China’s private tech industry will be fundamentally altered. The DSL and PIPL will make it substantially harder for existing businesses to continue operating with the same degree of autonomy they had enjoyed in the past, and may create steep barriers for new players hoping to enter China’s tech market.

**2ac/1ar --- AT: AI Impact**

**They’ve got it backwards--- AI singularity solves threats.**

Rick **Hayes-Roth** 10-02-20**06** [Rick Hayes-Roth is a professor in the Information Sciences Dept. at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, “Puppetry vs. Creationism: Why AI Must Cross the Chasm,” https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/abstract/document/1705420/authors#authors//ZW]

Most of the visions for self-modifying and self-improving AI have been a bit scary or a bit shallow. Much discussion has occurred around the concept of the singularity, first explained by Vernor Vinge2 and now a theme popularized by Ray Kurzweil,3 among others (for example, see www.aleph. so/Trans/Global/Singularity). Roughly, the singularity is a point in history when technology accelerates beyond human capacity to master it. With regard to AI, this could mean that computers learn and communicate with one another faster than they can with humans. At that point, they might not be willing to slow down or engage further. In such a case, the machines would reach a kind of escape velocity, enabling them to leave human culture behind. I'm suggesting that we should actively seek to create the capabilities underlying such a possibility, because **the potential gains are exponentially greater than what traditional puppetry can produce**. But this surely entails risks, as readily suggested in most of the scary movies about rogue AI and robots gone haywire. We obviously have limited insight into both the positive and negative capabilities of self-improving AI systems. Although the road will be somewhat long, we ought to consider ways to identify and mitigate the risks before they afflict us. Fortunately, many people interested in the singularity and future visions of robots have given these issues serious consideration. We'll want to incorporate their ideas and related technologies into the new creationism agenda. This will help prevent predictable problems and provide additional insurance against the unforeseen. Although I consider these risks serious, I think we can de-emphasize or defer them a bit. To get out of the puppetry business will require a major shift in investment, orientation, and technology. By focusing mostly on the required new capacities for model-based learning and improvements in operational contexts, we put first things first. Like the master puppet makers of the classic folktales, AI engineers have built some marvelous machines. These machines are surely valuable, but our puppetry won't cross the chasm separating us from a world of artificially intelligent creatures. To get there, we need a singularity of artificial creationism, where we launch artificial beings that can adapt, learn, and evolve. We need to emphasize the development of continuously self-improving systems that interact with and perform tasks in the physical world. Creation of those systems will mark a singularity in the punctuated evolution of artificial intelligence.

**Chinese tech control causes extinction.**

Ash **Jain and** Matthew **Kroenig** 20**19** [Ash Jain is a senior fellow with the Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security, where he oversees the Atlantic Council’s Democratic Order Initiative and D10 Strategy Forum, Dr. Matthew Kroenig is the deputy director for strategy in the Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security. In this role, he supports the director in overseeing all aspects of the Center’s work and manages its strategy practice area, Atlantic Council Strategy Papers, “Present at the Re-Creation: A Global Strategy for Revitalizing, Adopting, and Defending a Rules-Based International System, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Present-at-the-Recreation.pdf//ZW]

Yet, AI is also transforming economies and societies, and generating new security challenges. Automation will lead to widespread unemployment. The final realization of driverless cars, for example, will put out of work millions of taxi, Uber, and long-haul truck drivers. Populist movements in the West have been driven by those disaffected by globalization and technology, and mass unemployment caused by automation will further grow those ranks and provide new fuel to grievance politics. Moreover, some fear that autonomous weapons systems will become “killer robots” that select and engage targets without human input, and could eventually turn on their creators, resulting in human extinction. The other technologies on this list similarly balance great potential upside with great downside risk. 3D printing, for example, can be used to “make anything anywhere,” reducing costs for a wide range of manufactured goods and encouraging a return of local manufacturing industries.61 At the same time, advanced 3D printers can also be used by revisionist and rogue states to print component parts for advanced weapons systems or even WMD programs, spurring arms races and weapons proliferation.62 Genetic engineering can wipe out entire classes of disease through improved medicine, or wipe out entire classes of people through genetically engineered superbugs. Directed-energy missile defenses may defend against incoming missile attacks, while also undermining global strategic stability. Perhaps the greatest risk to global strategic stability from new technology, however, comes from the risk that revisionist autocracies may win the new tech arms race. Throughout history, states that have dominated the commanding heights of technological progress have also dominated international relations. The United States has been the world’s innovation leader from Edison’s light bulb to nuclear weapons and the Internet. Accordingly, stability has been maintained in Europe and Asia for decades because the United States and its democratic allies possessed a favorable economic and military balance of power in those key regions. Many believe, however, that China may now have the lead in the new technologies of the twenty-first century, including AI, quantum, 5G, hypersonic missiles, and others. If China succeeds in mastering the technologies of the future before the democratic core, then this could lead to a drastic and rapid shift in the balance of power, upsetting global strategic stability, and the call for a democratic-led, rules-based system outlined in these pages.63 The United States and its democratic allies need to work with other major powers to develop a framework for harnessing emerging technology in a way that maximizes its upside potential, while mitigating against its downside risks, and also contributing to the maintenance of global stability. The existing international order contains a wide range of agreements for harnessing the technologies of the twentieth century, but they need to be updated for the twenty-first century. The world needs an entire new set of arms-control, nonproliferation, export-control, and other agreements to exploit new technology while mitigating downside risk. These agreements should seek to maintain global strategic stability among the major powers, and prevent the proliferation of dangerous weapons systems to hostile and revisionist states.

**China can’t develop AI--- lack of innovative talent and restrictive legislation.**

Michael **Wade and** Amanda **Bris** 10-**2018** [Wade is director of the Global Center for Digital Business Transformation at IMD, Amanda Bris is a computer science student at Boston College and Chief Information Officer at Canor, and was an intern at the IMD Global Center for Digital Business Transformation, IMD, “The Chinese AI Innovation Chasm, https://www.imd.org/research-knowledge/articles/the-chinese-AI-innovation-chasm///ZW]

The Chinese AI advantage Leading economies in the world understand the importance of artificial intelligence (AI) in generating economic growth. China is no exception. In July 2017, the Chinese State Council declared that AI was a top priority and created the Next Generation Artificial Intelligence Development Plan to catch up with the West by 2020 and overtake it by 2025. Investment is not only coming from the government. In April 2018, SenseTime Group Ltd, backed by Alibaba, became the world’s most valuable AI start/up, having raised $600 million. By 2030, it is predicted that AI will increase China’s GDP by 26.1%. In addition to massive investment, China has other distinct characteristics that put it at an advantage in the development of AI. With more than 700 million internet users, China has a clear advantage in data volume that can be used to train AI-learning algorithms. Its unique brand of socialist market economy gives the government substantial control over market forces, creating a closer cooperation between businesses and the government, and giving Beijing economic leverage to expand its AI initiatives across many industries. Additionally, China has relatively few privacy protection laws, providing the government with extensive access to consumer data, a key to AI development. China’s innovation talent gap Despite heavy investment and easy access to data, however, we believe **China will struggle to realize its AI ambitions**. The main obstacle for AI development in China is not lack of funding, but lack of innovative talent. China is not short on raw technical talent – quite the opposite. The number of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) graduates has been particularly explosive as part of the government’s push to develop a technical workforce. In 2013, 40 percent of Chinese graduates finished a degree in STEM, more than twice the U.S. average. Nevertheless, we believe that AI advancements will plateau as China struggles with its lack of innovative talent. This limiting factor cannot be easily overcome by government legislation, as it must be fostered through a culture of entrepreneurship, something that the country is sorely missing. In recent years, China has been importing its AI talent from overseas. According to LinkedIn’s Global AI Talent report published in July 2017, 44% of the overseas AI talent working in China comes from the US, followed by the UK and France as the second and third source countries. Roughly 90% of AI positions advertised in Mainland China go unfilled unless companies offer them to overseas workers. The number of Chinese AI job postings on LinkedIn surged from about 50,000 in 2014 to 440,000 in 2016, according to Wang Di, vice-president of LinkedIn China. China ranked 40th and 31st out of 63 countries in the IMD World Talent Report and Digital Competitiveness Report, respectively. Educational barriers The Chinese AI innovation chasm Inhibiting creativity starts in school and carries through higher education. Jack Ma, founder of the Alibaba Group, suggests that the Chinese education system does not give students enough time to have fun, explore and experiment. It is often in these moments that great ideas are born. Chinese students, especially at university level, are so consumed by academics that they rarely get an opportunity to experiment with outside-the-classroom learning and growth. A study conducted by researchers from Kyungpook National University in South Korea to analyze creativity in Chinese and Korean universities concluded that Chinese students at top-ranked institutions were less creative than those at less prestigious institutions. Once they enter the workforce, these graduates struggle to step out of their disciplined and rigidly structured environment. As a consequence, they tend to produce superficial, mechanical innovations that require little imagination. Students who enter top Chinese universities, through China’s brutal Gaokao entrance exams, have their creativity muted by a system that rewards rote memorization over original thinking. While China produces twice as many college graduates as the United States, it fails to cultivate entrepreneurial and creative spirit in these highly educated workers. Overcoming cultural barriers Culture also plays an important role. Whereas risk-taking and entrepreneurship are woven into the fabric of many Western cultures, the Chinese mentality is imbued with unity, obedience and reputation. Both China’s current communist system and its ancient culture have long stressed the importance of social cohesion. Rather than prioritizing their own interests, people are encouraged to think collectively, placing the majority over the individual. The stress placed on saving face means that people are scared to take risks out of fear of damaging their social standing. These powerful cultural norms are a threat to the development of courageousness in innovation, which is a necessary condition for creating new ideas. Moreover, Confucianism highlights the importance of showing obedience to superiors. Thus, workers will often blindly follow their leaders without question. These cultural factors thus become a limitation to what Chinese companies can produce qualitatively. It cannot help that, because of government censorship, AI researchers in China do not have access to key research tools, like Google. Chinese digital giants, like Alibaba, Tencent, and Baidu, have compensated for these cultural barriers with speed and agility. Frequent tiny, incremental changes can add up to large innovations over time. Tencent’s WeChat started out as a direct copy of WhatsApp, but through thousands of rounds of iterative improvement, it has become something much more impressive. However, AI is unchartered territory, and innovations tend to be less linear than for apps, games, and marketplaces. It is unlikely that Chinese giants can use fast, incremental approaches to compensate for a lack of AI innovation. Crossing the AI Innovation Chasm China has the potential to become the preeminent global superpower in AI innovation. Money and other resources are available and its people have boundless intellectual capacity. At the moment, however, the cultural climate with respect to innovation is very restrictive. By fostering creativity from an early age, and reducing structural barriers, China’s model for AI development would become more sustainable. Heavy R&D investment will boost the economy for a while, but a continued lack of innovative talent may leave it at standstill.

**The benefits of AI outweigh the risks.**

Daniel **Joseph** 05-14-20**16** [Writing for PH, PH, “Artificial Intelligence Danger: Are Fears Over AI Exaggerated? IBM Scientist Explains Benefits of AI,” https://www.parentherald.com/articles/43575/20160514/artificial-intelligence-panic-fears-ai-exaggerated-ibm-scientist-explains.htm//ZW]

The progression of artificial intelligence has made many notable people concerned. Alphabet CEO Larry Page noted how artificial intelligence will change how we think about jobs; Telsa Motors and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk commented on the existential threat posed by artificial intelligence; and Bill Gates also expressed his concern about super-intelligent machines. However, Murray Campbell, IBM research scientist and senior manager, says that fears over the progression of artificial intelligence have become "overblown." He also noted that there are plenty of benefits that humans could gain from having super advanced artificial intelligence. "Because the benefits are so huge, that if we don't use AI technologies we're going to be losing out on all of these beneficial effects in health care, in self-driving cars, in education," Campbell told Time. The scientist also added that workers and employees who have artificial intelligence as their work assistant can become more effective and efficient with their jobs. Clarifying the uses of artificial intelligence in the enterprise https://t.co/4cRDban3Af — TechCrunch (@TechCrunch) May 12, 2016 But will people lose potential jobs due to advanced artificial intelligence? Campbell explained that new technology always takes away human jobs but creates new opportunities as well. He added that the biggest danger is not following up on advancing artificial intelligence because humans could really lose out on all of the benefits of this new technology. However, there are many aspects of artificial intelligence that scientists and researchers need to figure out better. "I think it's worthwhile to think about these research questions around AI and ethics, and AI and safety," Campbell explained. Because of the increase in interest regarding artificial intelligence, the White House has announced four public workshops about the technology. These workshops will focus on the potential pros and cons of using advanced artificial intelligence, Fortune reports.

**2ac/1ar --- AT: China Tech Inevitable**

**China tech is not inevitable--- regulations killed the industry.**

James **Cooper and** Kashyap **Kompella** [J**ames Cooper is professor of law and director of International Legal Studies at California Western School of Law in San Diego and a research fellow at Singapore University of Social Sciences Kashyap Kompella, a technology industry analyst, is CEO of RPA2AI, a global artificial intelligence advisory firm, The Hill, “No, China is not winning the AI race,” https://thehill.com/opinion/technology/592270-no-china-is-not-winning-the-ai-race///ZW]**

The global competition between the United States and China continues apace. Technology is rightly seen as providing unique leverage to win this geopolitical race. The U.S. long has been the global technology powerhouse, but not surprisingly, we have heard much about the Chinese government’s ambition to dominate high-tech industries such as 5G telecommunications, autonomous vehicles, blockchain, and semiconductor chips. In this light, as a horizontal technology that can be applied across all sectors, artificial intelligence (AI) has become a strategic priority and the Chinese focus on superiority in this field is touted as something about which the U.S. should be concerned. Some have gone so far as to conclude that the West has already lost the AI race. Don’t believe the hype. To be sure, the availability of large amounts of data is at the heart of AI success. It is tempting to think that less-democratic regimes that amass huge amounts of data about their citizens and have scant regard for privacy can develop better AI systems using that data. However, all other things being equal, better and higher quality AI systems emerge from countries with strong data privacy and data protection regulations because AI systems must undergo greater scrutiny during their development and deployment. An example of this can be seen in the United States regarding fair lending practices and consumer protection from credit bureaus. Further, the market for AI is global, and such high-quality AI systems find buyers in other countries as well. Around the globe, Big Tech’s rising power has resulted in calls for more oversight. In a drastic move that stunned the industry and analysts alike, the Chinese government recently rewrote the rulebook for the country’s technology industry. In effect, China is vacating entire swaths of digital and creative industries, arenas that serve as training grounds and talent factories for other industries. This more restrictive approach may not bode well for China’s AI industry in the long term. China may find itself constrained on the extent of automation and AI in its manufacturing sector — labor-intensive manufacturing remains China’s main strength, and a high degree of automation can result in job losses, labor unrest, and instability. Meanwhile, there is bipartisan support for AI in the United States. Former President Trump proposed increasing funding for AI development through the National Science Foundation. The National AI Initiative Act of 2020 signaled a sense of urgency and suggested that several federal agencies create a national strategy on artificial intelligence. The Biden administration has formed the Artificial Intelligence Research Resource Task Force to develop a roadmap to foment AI research and spark innovation nationwide. There is draft legislation, at both the state and federal level, to promote responsible use of AI and prevent its misuse. Strong objections to the use of facial recognition and other AI systems by law enforcement in the U.S., raised by civil liberties advocates, have led some local authorities, such as the City of San Francisco, to ban such systems. To use a Silicon Valley phrase, these debates are “not a bug, but a feature.” They shine a light on the limitations of AI systems and help to set the “rules of the road” for proper use of AI. This **will establish the U.S. as a global leader in AI regulation**, once lawmakers and regulators do their work. China, meanwhile, has faced strong global criticism for using facial recognition software to monitor and surveil Uyghurs in its Xinjiang region. China has outlined a set of AI ethics principles, but the jury is still out on enforcement and how they function in practice. The increasing number of AI research papers and patents by Chinese researchers is often cited as proof that China has caught up with the United States in this field. The increased focus is good for the Chinese AI ecosystem, and it will help them solve China-specific problems. But dominance in this emerging strategic industry is not guaranteed. The U.S. has several strategic advantages, including: the strengths of its higher education and research institutes, which attract the best STEM talent from across the world; the largest venture capital ecosystem; and the largest number of technology unicorns (start-ups with private valuations greater than $1 billion). China is not overtaking the U.S. in artificial intelligence. The current evidence and trajectory paint a clear picture: The conditions for AI to flourish, such as incentives to experiment, freedom to pursue opportunities without restrictions, and the coming guardrails to prevent misuse, favor U.S. leadership. This is still the United States’s game to lose — though maybe both countries could win through collaboration. To solve planet-scale problems such as climate change, we are going to need AI solutions from both competitors.

**2ac --- China Great Power War**

**The risk of great power war is high – it could cause nuclear escalation**

**Brands, 18** – Henry Kissinger Distinguished Professor at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies and a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (Hal, “Great-Power Rivalry Is Back. The U.S. Is Playing Poorly.” Bloomberg View, 2/28, <https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2018-02-28/trump-s-losing-the-great-game-against-putin-and-xi>

Having reconstituted its military power, Russia has been reasserting its dominance along its Central Asian and Eastern European peripheries, challenging NATO and undermining the European Union, and projecting its military power deep into the Middle East -- all in addition to seeking to weaken and divide the U.S. through information warfare and other means.

Riding an economic and military rise unprecedented in modern history, China has been seeking to re-establish its former mastery in the Asia-Pacific and perhaps eventually compete with the U.S. on a global scale as well. All this is normal enough; it is the warp and woof of great-power rivalry. Yet it has uniquely dangerous implications for the U.S. and the international system it leads.

As relations between the major powers become more rivalrous, it becomes harder to achieve cooperation on matters that require multilateral action. Since 2011, for instance, U.S.-Russian rivalry has continually frustrated international efforts to bring the Syrian civil war to an end. As Russia and China assert their influence, they are also increasingly contesting the global rules of road -- freedom of navigation in the South China Sea, the illegitimacy of altering borders by force -- that have underpinned international peace and prosperity for generations.

Likewise, the return of great-power rivalry raises the possibility that a hostile power might come to exert dominant influence in one of the key regions of the world -- a nightmare of U.S. strategists reaching back roughly a century. Finally, this competition is a potential pathway to the most cataclysmic phenomenon that can afflict the international environment: war between the major powers.

These dangers are not as far-fetched as they may seem. In East Asia, China has used maritime coercion to sprint toward a position of dominance in the South China and East China Seas, while also shifting the regional military balance through a two-decade buildup meant to keep the U.S. from projecting power into the Western Pacific.

Russia has demonstrated that it will use force to keep states like Georgia and Ukraine from tilting too far toward the West, and Moscow’s military buildup has given it a pronounced local advantage on NATO’s exposed eastern flank.

Indeed, the prospect of great-power war is becoming steadily less remote. Chinese strategists are reportedly preparing for a “short, sharp war” with the U.S. and its East Asian allies, and Russian doctrine now reportedly emphasizes the limited use of nuclear weapons to achieve “escalation dominance” in a conflict. And as the intensity of great-power competition rises, the Trump administration is largely fumbling the American response.

**2ac/1ar --- China Leadership Fails**

**Chinese leadership fails – the US is successful**

**Zhao, 18** – Suisheng Zhao is professor and director of the Center for China-US Cooperation at Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver (“A Revisionist Stakeholder: China and the Post-World War II World Order” Journal of Contemporary China, DOI: 10.1080/10670564.2018.1458029

But China is not ready. First, as one Chinese scholar admitted, ‘China does not have the comprehensive national strength to change the current global order led by the US and other Western countries for more than 70 years’.41 A fragile rising power much weaker than most outsiders think, China is a middle-income country, facing immense internal hurdles, such as the environmental destruction, rampant corruption, inequality, and huge local government debt, all of which have the potential to derail its rise. Preoccupied by mounting challenges, Chinese leaders have to fight an uphill battle to mobilize resources and internal support for the global leadership role. China is far from achieving the donor status of many OECD countries. For one prominent Chinese scholar, the most dangerous challenge is the extreme-leftist policy-line and ‘the false-large-empty’ (假大空) slogans, making international promises and setting strategic objectives beyond the reach of China’s national strength.42 China’s international initiatives do not play a critical role in China’s rise but are the consequences of its rise.

Although some scholars have claimed that the US power was declining so that the post-World War II order was suffering from an acute case of Anno Domini, they may have to recant their predictions. With the world’s largest concentration of capital and technology, the US remains the most powerful nation. China has faster GDP growth than the US, but its net national wealth, i.e. the resources available to pursue national interests, is still not in America’s league. From 2000–2012, Chinese net wealth jumped from $4.66 trillion to $21.7 trillion. American net wealth over the same period rose from $42.3 trillion to $67.5 trillion. From 2012 to 2017, while Chinese net wealth climbed to $29 trillion, American net wealth reached to over $93 trillion. Claiming that China is about to eclipse the US is untenable in the face of $64 trillion less in net wealth. The resource advantage rests overwhelmingly with the US.43

China has pushed RMB internationalization. But the share of RMB in global payment is below 2% while US dollar share remains above 40%. RMB accounts for a scant 1% of global reserves while the US dollar accounts for over 60%. The drive to internationalize RMB has not gained momentum since its inclusion in the SDR basket in 2015.44 Shortly before inclusion, China’s Central Bank announced a ‘market-oriented’ mechanism for setting the daily benchmark of the exchange rate, accompanied by 2% devaluation, the first since 1994, leading the onshore RMB to tumble by 4% in the subsequent two days. The Central bank intervened massively to halt the slide in the weeks after. Less than two months after RMB’s inclusion in the IMF basket, the central bank imposed new controls over capital outflow.45 These difficulties have made the cost outweigh the benefits of RMB internationalization.

Remaining the ‘indispensable nation’ of the world, the US cannot avoid the responsibility to provide public goods and security protection for its allies. Although President Trump has distanced Washington from its traditional allies and stepped back from global leadership, the American economy and geopolitics encourage a global outlook, imposing compelling imperatives on the superpower. Woven thickly into global value chains, protectionism calls for other countries’ retaliation against American producers and shifts burdens to American consumers. With checks and balances in the US constitution and the dynamism of the open society, economic liberals and internationalists in the US Government and across the states have been powerful countervailing forces against protectionism and disengagement. In spite of President Trump’s isolationist position, ‘American national interests endure. They include preventing any hostile power from dominating Asia, Europe, or the energy resources of the Middle East; sustaining an open international economic and political order, not subverted by spheres of influence that exclude the United States; protecting free access to the global commons, especially the maritime sea lanes that carry 90 % of global trade; nurturing alliances that magnify American power and influence; and promoting democracy and human rights, because the ultimate source of global security is a world in which power is bounded by law and pluralistic institutions’.46

Second, China cannot provide shared values and other elements of soft power to commons willingness on the part of other countries to align, and in some cases subordinate, their own narrow interests to those of the larger international community. China has made significant investments in developing its soft power with the opening of more than 500 Confucius Institutes across the world and carrying out extensive international branding campaigns. But China is not successful in projecting its values and ideals that others identify with and aspire to share. The US leadership comes with willing followers and trust through a network of alliances and other ties. For all of their differences with Washington and periodic resentment of its policies, many countries invested more confidence in the US than in any other nation. China does not possess the attributes that underpin US leadership. It lacks allies and inspires little trust in its own neighborhood. Its efforts to project soft power often fail to resonate abroad partly because China displays little empathy with the sensitivities of those living beyond its borders.47

While US global influence has dropped due to President Trump’s policy, it still holds much more soft power than China. Against the background of seemingly retreating democracy, China’s authoritarianism appears to be more appealing to autocracies. But this has not been accompanied by serious and significant interest worldwide in China’s development model. Promoting globalization, the Chinese Government is doing the opposite by imposing controls on the inflow of information and outflow of capital, leading people to question the sincerity of its posited global leadership.

A Chinese scholar admits that China might one day overtake the US in the size of economy but may never overtake the US influence and leadership in the world.48 Another Chinese scholar finds that China is short of international discursive power (国际话语权缺失). China had never played a world leadership role in history. The traditional Chinese system (华夏体系) was only an East Asian system, not universal, and cannot automatically transform into modern discursive power.49 Until China develops values that appeal universally, it misses one of the core features of global leadership.

**China’s overreliance on economic power prevents it from effectively exercising leadership**

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Beijing’s overreliance on its economic prowess as the key diplomatic instrument reveals the shortage of normative power. Despite its growing economic and military might, China’s efforts to use economic ties to influence other state’s behavior have only achieved limited success because money cannot buy loyalty. Influence does not simply derive from a country’s coffers. While closer economic ties are important, they are hardly sufficient to build strong trust between countries—especially those with conflicting security interests. This is clearly reflected in China’s relationship with Japan, characterized as hot economics and cold politics. it is reflected in China’s relations with North Korea, a country that is widely perceived as economically dependent on China for its own survival but has often taken actions against China’s strategic interests. To play a global leadership role, China has to build the ability to inspire other countries to share its vision. The leadership will not work itself out only through economic ties. Building common identity and value is equally, if not more, important.

Unable to construct shared values, China may change nothing of substance in the global order. While China’s insistence on the Westphalian principles looks attractive to some countries where intense interventionism by the US often ends in chaos and chronic instability, many of China’s neighbors view China’s great power aspiration with a wary eye, worrying that, as Chinese power rises, China’s imperial past can produce an undue pressure on its leaders to restore the old Chinese hierarchical order. One reporter took note that at the 60th anniversary of the Bandung Conference that gave birth to the Five-Principles, only two notable leaders turned up. One was President Xi, who used the occasion to portray China as the leader of the non-western world. The other was Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who suggested that the threat to the sovereignty of smaller countries no longer came from the West.50

China’s power aspirations in a diverse and crowded neighborhood are checked by the presence and influence of the US and other regional powers. The Twenty-first century has seen a multipolarity rather than a Chinese hegemony. While China is rising, many surrounding states are also on the rise. China’s shift from espousing a peaceful rise to assertive behavior has made its neighbors nervous, motivating them to realign with the US and with each other to balance China.51 A May 2017 ASEAN survey found that more than 73 % of correspondents had little or no confidence that Beijing would do the right thing in contributing to global peace, security, and governance.52 A regional Pax Sinica is not desirable for these countries. Historically, to bandwagon with a rising power is common practice due to potentially great relative gains. The most successful rising powers most often attracted the greatest number of bandwagoners.53 It does not serve China’s interests to have tension with many neighbors simultaneously. China cannot rise successfully without winning the support of its neighbors or at least preempt their balancing motives.

**Chinese leadership fails and can’t replace the US**

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Paradoxically enough, however, in the aftermath of the election of Donald Trump, China has emerged as an unexpected champion of ‘globalization’. In part, this reflects a recognition on the part of China’s leaders that the country has been one of the principal beneficiaries of an open international economic order. At the same time, however, Xi (2017) in particular clearly sees an opportunity for China to reposition itself as precisely the sort of ‘responsible stakeholder’ that some have long called for (Zoellick 2005). At a time when the Trump administration seems to be abandoning the traditional American role in favor of a more instrumental, nationalistic approach to trade and even security policy (Browne 2017; Hodge 2017), Chinese officials have been quick to seize the moment and the initiative.

There are, however, continuing constraints confronting China that raise real questions about its ability to offer a leadership at the regional, much less the global level. First, the extant international order will not be easily replaced, nor will America’s role within it. The fact remains that the US is still the world’s preeminent economic and military power, albeit one with diminished status and damaged authority. Second, China has shown little desire or capacity to articulate an alternative vision for the international system, thus far, and seems willing to work within existing institutional architecture and **avoid the costs associated with leadership** (Wang and French 2014). Third, leaders need followers, and at this stage—despite an apparently growing diplomatic influence in Southeast Asia—it has few allies and friends. Indeed, the fourth point to make is that China’s continuing pursuit of its own nationalistic goals, especially its claims in the South China Sea dispute, look certain to **make its future relations and role divisive and contentious**.

**No other power can replace the US – retrenchment guarantees global conflict**

**Haass, 17** – president of the Council on Foreign Relations (Richard, “America and the Great Abdication” The Atlantic, 12/28, http://www.washingtonspeakers.com/images/pdfs/America%20and%20the%20Great%20Abdication%20-%20The%20Atlantic.pdf

An optimist would also hope that other countries would pick up where the United States left off in promoting international order. The fact is, though, that there is no alternative great power willing and able to step in and assume what has been the U.S. role. China is often suggested, but its leadership is focused mostly on consolidating domestic order and maintaining artificially high rates of economic growth, lest there be popular unrest. China’s interest in regional and global institutions (including both its regional trade mechanism and its “One Belt, One Road” infrastructure initiative) seems more designed to bolster its economy and influence than to help set rules and arrangements that would be broadly beneficial. China’s assertiveness in the South China Sea (including its rejection of an international legal ruling challenging its claims) and its unwillingness to do all it could to rein in North Korea casts further doubts as to its readiness to fill the shoes of the United States.

There is no other candidate. Russia under Vladimir Putin is a country with a narrowly based economy that is focused on retaining power at home, reestablishing Russian influence in the Middle East and Europe, and interfering in the internal politics of Western democracies. It is mostly a spoiler prepared to use those instruments of power it possesses (military, energy, and cyber) to advance its aims. India is preoccupied with the challenge of economic development and is tied down by its problematic relationship with Pakistan. Japan is held back by its declining population, domestic constraints, and the suspicions of its neighbors. Europe is limited in what it can do by a lack of defense capability, and is distracted by questions revolving around the relationship between member states and the EU. The cold truth is that the alternative to a U.S.–led international order is less international order.

All this comes at a time challenges to order are many, including a China that is trying to extend its writ over the South China Sea and a North Korea that appears intent on developing the ability to place nuclear warheads on ballistic missiles capable of reaching not just its neighbors but across the world and an Iran with an imperial vision of its position in the Middle East. The Middle East is a region of multiple conflicts of every sort—civil, regional, proxy, and global—involving state and nonstate actors, as well as a mixture of strong, weak, and failed states. There is as well the continuing Russian occupation of Crimea and its destabilization of eastern Ukraine, the undermining of democracy and economic deterioration of Venezuela, and any number of governance failures in Africa, most starkly in South Sudan. There has been a marked deterioration in U.S. relations with Russia, the result not just of its military actions in Ukraine and Syria but also of its interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. And at the global level there is the continuing gap between challenges and collective responses, none more pronounced than in the domain of cyberspace.

**2ac/1ar --- Deterrence Works**

**The perception of resolve is a greater predictor of how war starts than any other factor – China prioritizes it over capabilities**

**Mastro 15**-an assistant professor of security studies at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, “Why Chinese Assertiveness is Here to Stay”, The Washington Quarterly, 21 Jan 2015, <https://www.ciaonet.org/attachments/27434/uploads)//SL> **italics in original**

These efforts are commendable—the United States rightly works to preserve its military superiority and retain its ability to project power in the region. During the Cold War, when the greatest pacing threats were land conflicts, forward deploying U.S. forces in Europe and Asia were sufficient to demonstrate the credibility of the U.S. commitment to peace in those regions. But China is currently testing the waters not because its leaders are uncertain about the balance of power, but because they are probing the balance of ***resolve***. This means that staying ahead in terms of military might is insufficient in contemporary East Asia.

China’s strategists are betting that the side with the strongest military does not necessarily win the war—the foundation of the deterrent pillar of its A2/AD strategy. Indeed, China’s experience in fighting the Korean War proves that a country willing to sacrifice blood and treasure can overcome a technologically superior opponent. The belief that balance of resolve drives outcomes more so than the balance of power is the foundation of China’s new, more assertive strategy; but U.S. responses to date have failed to account for it. Canned demonstrations of U.S. power fail to address the fundamental uncertainty concerning U.S. willingness, not ability, to fight.

The U.S. focus on de-escalation in all situations only **exacerbates this** issue. The Cold War experience solidified the Western narrative stemming from World War I that inadvertent escalation causes major war, and therefore crisis management is the key to maintaining peace.74 This has created a situation in which the main U.S. goal has been de-escalation in each crisis or incident with Beijing. But Chinese leaders do not share this mindset—they believe leaders deliberately control the escalation process and therefore wars happen because leaders decide at a given juncture that the best option is to fight.75 China is masterful at chipping away at U.S. credibility through advancing militarization and coercive diplomacy. It often uses limited military action to credibly signal its willingness to escalate if its demands are not met. Strategist Thomas Schelling theoretically captured this approach when he wrote it is “the sheer inability to predict the consequences of our actions and to keep things under control … that can intimidate the enemy.”76

Because China introduces risk for exactly this reason, the U.S. focus on deescalation through crisis management is unlikely to produce any change in Chinese behavior—if anything it will only **encourage greater provocations**. Beijing has identified the U.S. fear of inadvertent escalation, and is exploiting it to compel the United States to give in to its demands and preferences. In this way, the U.S. focus on de-escalation **may actually be the source of instability** by rewarding and encouraging further Chinese provocations. To signal to China that the United States will not opt out of a conflict, Washington must **signal willingness to escalate** to higher levels of conflict when China is directly and purposely testing U.S. resolve. This may include **reducing channels of communication during a conflict**, or involving additional regional actors, to credibly demonstrate that China will not be able to use asymmetry of resolve to its advantage.

The current mindset—that crisis management is the answer in all scenarios— will be difficult to dislodge, given the tendency among U.S. military ranks to focus on worst-case “great battle” scenarios. While realistic in Cold War operational planning, decision makers should consider instead the less violent and prolonged engagements that characterize Chinese coercive diplomacy when evaluating risk and reward, such as the 1962 Sino–Indian War or the 1974 Battle of the Paracel Islands. The idea that any conflict with China would escalate to a major war, destroy the global economy, and perhaps even escalate to a nuclear exchange has no foundation in Chinese thinking, and causes the United States to concede in even the smallest encounters. While the Chinese leadership has proven to be more risk-acceptant than the United States (or perhaps more accurately, to assess the risks to be less than those perceived by U.S. strategists), **Xi still wants to avoid an armed conflict at this stage**. In his November 2014 keynote address at the Central Foreign Affairs Work Conference, he noted that China remains in a period of strategic opportunity in which efforts should be made to maintain the benign strategic environment so as to focus on internal development.77

Ultimately, the U.S. regional objective must be peace and stability at an acceptable cost. Given this, it is critical to understand the four components of China’s A2/AD strategy, the strategic foundation for China’s recent assertiveness, and how best to maintain the U.S. position as a Pacific power. In addition to regularly attending meetings in the region and developing new technology, new platforms, and new operational concepts designed to defeat China’s A2/AD strategy, the United States needs to break free of its Cold War-based paradigm paralysis and rethink conceptions of limited war, escalation, and risk.

Scolding China and imposing symbolic costs for each maritime incident is unlikely to inspire the corrective change U.S. thinkers are hoping for. The United States needs to fundamentally change its approach by **accepting higher risk** and **allowing for the possibility of escalation**—both vertically in force as well as horizontally to include other countries. This admittedly is a difficult balance, especially given the need to avoid emboldening U.S. allies to take actions that run contrary to U.S. interests. But only by mastering these two balancing acts—focusing on balancing resolve, rather than forces, and prioritizing stability over crisis management—will the United States be able to maintain peace and stability in East Asia without sacrificing U.S. or allied interests.

**2ac/1ar --- No Mindset Shift**

**Ceding to China destroys US influence AND no mindset shift – policymakers are locked in**

**Layne 18** - professor at Texas A&M University's. George H. W. Bush School of Government and Public Service (Christopher, “The US–Chinese power shift and the end of the Pax Americana,” 2018, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/images/ia/INTA94_1_6_249_Layne.pdf>, Accessed 6-30-22, LASA-AH)

The lock-in strategy also assumes that if the Pax Americana’s institutions are reformed, Beijing (and other non-western emerging powers) will find it more attractive to remain in the post-1945 international order than to overturn it. That assumption, however, is logically flawed: achieving lock-in by reforming the existing international order presumes that the United States can have its cake (preserving the Pax Americana) and eat it too (reforming the current international system’s legacy institutions). But, as we all know, **when the cake is eaten, it’s gone.** Reform—at least, any kind of reform that would appeal to China—would mean the United States **yielding significant power** in international institutions to accommodate Beijing. However, doing so would reduce US ability to shape outcomes, diminish Washington’s voice in international institutions, and impose constraints on US autonomy in foreign and domestic policy.79 As University of Birmingham lecturer Sevasti-Eleni Vezirgiannidou observes with respect to insti- tutional reform: ‘It is questionable whether this will really preserve US influence or rather, on the contrary, **diminish it,** as the United States will have to share power in a reformed order and thus will be restricted in its ability to act unilaterally.’80 The US foreign policy establishment may talk the talk of reforming the interna- tional order (and the institutions that underpin it), but it is doubtful it will walk the walk with respect to reform, because that **would mean accepting a downsized American role in international politics**. On the contrary, Washington’s opposition to the AIIB indicates that the United States is not prepared to see its influence in the international order diminished. And, with respect to reforming the post-1945 international order to accommodate the reality of a risen China, this is the nub of the problem: instead of preserving the Pax Americana, reform would lead to changes in the international order that would undermine it. Of course, regardless of whether there is institutional reform, the coming decades are likely to witness major changes in the international order irrespective of America’s preferences.

**2ac/1ar --- China is Aggressive**

**Island Building**

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6.1 Model Case 1: Island building in the South China Sea as a form of Coercive hegemony China continued to pursue through 2018 an aggressive strategy to expand and maintain a foothold in the South China Sea. It claimed rocks, islets, and archipelagos in this body of water to enlarge its maritime territory and reach deep into Southeast Asia, close to the Malacca Strait. China achieved this objective at the expense of several Southeast Asian states who also claim jurisprudence in this area. These are Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, and Taiwan. These states' claims clash with China's in the area that the Chinese refer to as the “Nine-Dash-Line.” China bases its territorial claim on historical maps, albeit they are not entirely conclusive. A 2016 verdict by an International Tribunal based in The Hague ruled negatively against China: In a case where the Philippines filed a complaint against Chinese conduct disregarding its maritime borders, the verdict ruled against China and in favour of the Philippines. China, of course, ignored and disavowed the ruling, as well as making clear that the tribunal did not have jurisdiction over the matter (Phillips, Holmes, & Bowcott, 2016). China has gone beyond publicly announcing its territorial claim. Instead, it has actively started to produce real and tangible facts by engaging in the process of “island building.” The construction process begins by China taking an islet, which sometimes is not larger than a rock, and transferring building materials via ship to create helipads, harbours, and airstrips. Some have compared these artificial islands with sort of China's stationary aircraft carriers. China wants to send a loud and clear signal to regional neighbours and the rest of the world, particularly to other great powers. It wants to **underscore its maritime territorial claims**, with absolute and full vigour and unwavering resolve. Hence, rather than leaving unperturbed uninhabited and partially submerged islands, rocks, and islets, without any physical signs of territorial claim and sovereignty, China builds this new-aged military bases. These are all projections of China's geostrategic reach. China's fortification drive and island-building program in the South China Sea is consistent with revisionist and coercive policies. It deliberately revises borders. This trend is reminiscent of the violent rising by other great powers in history. France, Germany, and Imperial Japan in the 18th and 20th centuries, respectively, pursued such territorial expansion and aggressive practice. This aggressive territorial expansion constitutes the type of evidence that many analysts will cease on to conclude that **China is on a collision course with other great powers and neighbours**. The policy will lead to diplomatic and possibly military conflict over these territories. In this sense, it will be a harbinger of China's violent rise.

**Russia-China alliance – now is key to prevent it**

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6.2 Model Case 2: The emerging Sino-Russian Entente as a form of coercive hegemony At the end of the Chinese Revolution in 1949, the PRC and the Soviet Union became close allies. Chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Josef Stalin formally instituted this political, ideological, and military alliance by negotiating and signing the Treaty of Moscow in 1950. At this juncture, the Soviet Union was the senior partner whereas the newly established PRC was the junior member of the alliance. China was still recovering from the Japanese occupation and protracted civil war. A decade after the signing of the Moscow Treaty, it became evident that political interests and ideology were not sufficiently strong to keep these two actors together in an alliance. Thus, from 1960 onward, the Sino-Soviet split became increasingly evident and pronounced, even including a 7-month undeclared military border conflict in 1969 that exacerbated further the Sino-Soviet split. The tense rivalry and differences between these two communist actors ultimately led to a de facto end to the alliance in 1979. At this point, China's tendency to side with the West and the United States became more evident, too. It led to the official opening of relations with the United States in the same year. Already several years prior, in 1972, unofficial diplomatic ties under President Nixon and Secretary of State Kissinger opened the door to China. Renewed relations led to China's gradual embrace of the market economy. This decision was fundamental in China's development and economic success from the early 1980s to approximately 2014. Interestingly, though, **China has grown closer to Russia more recently**. 11 We identify two interconnected examples to highlight and underscore better the recent Chinese and Russian connection: First, it is China's tacit support for Russia's annexation of Crimean, and, second, the treaty on energy cooperation negotiated and signed by China and Russia concomitantly to the annexation of Crimea and the escalation of the Eastern Ukraine war in 2014. First, China's reaction to the Russian annexation of Crimea was mute (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 2014). We must emphasise that before 2005, the PRC would have severely condemned and sternly opposed Russia. Russian annexation of Crimea was anathema to China's fundamental principles and priorities (Sun, 2015). On the one hand, it was a violation of sovereignty and the noninterference in the internal affairs of another country. On the other hand, the annexation challenged China directly on two additional fronts: First, its zealous commitment to defend its territory against aggression and, second, its commitment to protect minorities within Chinese borders. Notwithstanding, **China remained uncharacteristically distant and quiet.** Second, the media outlets reported the energy treaty with Russia as the deepening of the Sino-Russian relationship amid the Eastern Ukrainian crisis and Western sanctions against Russia. It was also a Russian carrot extended to China for its allegiance, tacit political support of the Crimea annexation, and the significant Chinese financial package. This agreement was crucial for Russian prowess at a juncture when it was simultaneously fighting an undeclared war in Eastern Ukraine and escalating its military involvement in the Syrian civil war to protect the government of its political ally, President Bashar al-Assad. In exchange for its advanced hefty financial package, Russia agreed to sell oil and natural gas at rates considerably lower than current market prices. 12 It is plausible to argue here that the PRC agreed to the terms of the 2014 energy agreement on two grounds. First, the economic benefits accruing to China were too vast and attractive to ignore. Second, the agreement granted the PRC the first opportunity and greatest satisfaction to become the senior partner in the Sino-Russian alliance since the signing of the Treaty of Moscow in 1950, when the Soviet Union was the senior partner. The trend in China's international relations examined thus far would suggest a **Chinese move toward revisionism, aggressiveness, and coerciveness** insofar as the PRC condoned Russia's annexation of the Crimean Peninsula. Besides, China and Russia appear to **share their opposition against united actions** by the West's politico-military alliance. The Sino-Russian universal resistance against the West seems to be supported by evidence from the West's sanctions against Russia in the aftermath of the Eastern Ukrainian crisis. China's reaction suggests that it is preparing the grounds in case of future challenges to its rise by the West. It appears as if China is signalling to the West and the entire world that it is prepared to defend its place among great powers, **even if it entails the use of force and mass violence**. Such actions are consistent with the violent ascent of rising great powers in the history of the world such as Wilhelmine Germany and Imperial Japan. From this vantage point, the previous analysis suggests that China is on track to follow the footsteps of those other yesteryear revisionists and coercive rising hegemons.

**1ar --- AT: China is Benevolent**

**China’s not a benevolent hegemon – refusal to open national market, rejects free trade and island building**

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This article attempted to decipher and explain China's rise and its future direction as a significant leader in the international system. First, consistent with the benevolent-hegemon type, we observed how China's active involvement in the management of the global environment and the UN PKMs indicate this possibility. Nonetheless, these are mainly political activities rather than economic. The benevolent-hegemon type would suggest proactive and liberal sociopolitical and economic practices. Thus far, China does not appear willing and able to implement these in the immediate future. First, it refuses to open its national market fully to the foreign competitor. Second, it maintains a very tight grip on its currency value and fluctuation for narrow, selfish, national interests. Third, it rejects promoting freer and fairer trade among all actors, irrespective of their level of reciprocity. To be sure, China is a hugely wealthy actor, but one that practices a type of neomercantilist approach in the international market as evidenced by its business practices in the global economy. Second, we also observed China's island-building policy and its drive for the establishment of a Sino-Russian Entente to neutralise a potential regional and systemic enemy. These are actions that we categorise as consistent with the **coercive-hegemon type,** similar to the cases of Wilhelmine Germany and Imperial Japan and in the 19th and 20th centuries, respectively.

**2ac/1ar --- AT: China War**

**China can’t fight – imperial overstretch**

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<http://www.the-american-interest.com/2017/03/01/a-strategy-for-chinas-imperial-overstretch/>

Notwithstanding the facile talk of China’s “gains” from Donald Trump’s imagined withdrawal from the world, Beijing is no position to lead the world. Instead it is **very close to imperial overstretch**. A new U.S. strategic approach should hasten a Chinese reckoning with its geopolitical troubles.

Contrary to the recent, post-Davos “wisdom” about a new era of Chinese global leadership, things do not look good for Beijing. The Chinese economy continues to struggle and Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Secretary-General Xi Jinping believes that China faces a deteriorating security environment. Even so, China continues to expand its grandiose foreign policy ambitions, slowly extending its control over the South China Sea while also planning to create a “New Silk Road” linking Asia with Europe. But China is biting off more than it can chew.

The CCP was founded on an anti-imperialist doctrine and is offended by the suggestion that it rules an empire. Nevertheless, it does. Indeed, China is the world’s last standing multi-ethnic empire. Its physical borders today mirror those of China’s last imperial dynasty, the Qing Dynasty, whose emperors conducted the greatest imperial expansion in China’s history. From the 17th to 19th centuries, they succeeded in conquering Xinjiang, Tibet, Mongolia, and Taiwan. By virtue of these achievements, the Qing expanded the empire to a truly continental scale.

With the exception of Mongolia and Taiwan, all of the Qing’s imperial conquests, including Xinjiang and Tibet, are again under Chinese control today. And Beijing has regained de facto suzerainty over Hong Kong as it exerts close to total control over the city-state’s politics.

Finally, the international community long ago accepted the CCP’s position that Taiwan is part of China, never mind that this “claim” is mostly based on the Qing imperial conquest of the island more than a century ago. Beijing’s continued hold over its empire is unique in global affairs. For some context, imagine if Turkey still controlled the Ottoman lands of the Levant and the Middle East. Or for another comparative image, what if the Austo-Hungarian empire still controlled much of Europe?

Today the CCP’s desire for more territory does not stop with the old Qing maps. Though the Qing Empire was not a maritime power, the CCP has “discovered” new imperial territories in its surrounding seas. Chinese commentators frequently refer to China’s “three million square kilometers of blue territory,” which would incorporate “nearly 90% of the area within the major bodies of water within the First Island Chain, including the Bo Hai, the Yellow Sea, the East China Sea, and the South China Sea.”

China has claimed everything within the “nine-dash line” as its “indisputable territory”—this arbitrary series of dashes on Chinese maps encompasses the South China Sea. To advance this claim, Beijing has built over 3,000 acres of new “island” bases and deployed military forces to help control the surrounding waters. It has set up a provincial administration to govern these maritime “territories,” which directs its fleets of maritime militias and law enforcement agencies to harass foreign vessels.

All told, China’s territorial claims now extend from the westernmost reaches of Xinjiang, bordering Afghanistan, to the easternmost point in the East China Sea. The sheer expanse of Beijing’s claims might explain why Xi is so pessimistic about China’s security. The PLA must defend an overwhelming amount of land and maritime territory from “enemies” foreign and domestic.

Nonetheless, Xi Jinping is pressing ahead with a key component of his national development strategy, called “One Belt One Road” (OBOR)—a network of economic infrastructure projects linking China with more than sixty Central Asian, Middle Eastern, and European countries. This plan is intended to proceed along two distinct routes. First, the Silk Road Economic Belt, consisting of rail routes and oil and natural gas pipelines, will stretch overland from China, through Central Asia to Eastern Europe.

Second, the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, made up of a series of port projects, will extend through the Indian Ocean and into the Suez Canal to reach the Mediterranean Sea. The underlying promise of OBOR is that Chinese infrastructure investment can link together China’s maritime and continental interests. Xi wants this program to be his stamp on China’s future, just as Deng Xiaoping was known for the policy of “reform and opening.” In practice, China will have even more territory and assets to protect.

Where Are the Resources?

Xi faces substantial economic headwinds as China enters a period of long-term economic stagnation. After the 2008 financial crisis, the Chinese government conducted one of the largest stimulus plans in history, leading to overcapacity and debt. The PRC’s national debt is in excess of $28 trillion. In a further sign of financial deterioration, Beijing’s foreign exchange reserves have fallen from $4 trillion in mid-2014 to $3 trillion at the end of 2016. China’s GDP growth rate has slowed to as little as half of what it once was during the mid-2000s. Some believe that the statistics of recent years are falsified, and that the annual growth rate has been between 3 and 5 percent for at least three years. That still might seem high for a Western country, but for a China still under pressure to create employment and social stability, it spells trouble ahead.

In addition, China has a rapidly aging society as the result of decades of the One-Child Policy. The Chinese workforce continues to shrink annually and the expense of caring for hundreds of millions of elderly Chinese is overwhelming. Beijing will spend vast sums of money cleaning up its environment—remediating soil pollution alone could cost over $1 trillion. Even doing the minimum to address these social ills will strain China’s fiscal resources.

If Xi were to face a real cost-imposing strategic challenge from the United States, it is hard to see how he could continue to devote the necessary resources to all of his social and foreign policy aspirations.

The Costs of the Empire

In pursuit of his ambitious foreign policy strategy, Xi Jinping has urged the Party to think of China as both a maritime and continental power. The Chinese government has continued to devote resources both to China’s naval build-up and to its vast internal security enterprise. At its current buildup rate, the People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) could have 430 major surface combatants and almost one hundred submarines by 2030. It is on the path to possessing the world’s largest merchant marine and coast guard fleet as well. While the defense budget growth is slowing a bit, this past year the PLA still saw a budget increase of nearly 8 percent.

To advance (or, from Beijing’s perspective, protect) its maritime plans, China has increased the tempo of its maritime exercises. For example, it sent its first aircraft carrier, the Liaoning, through the Miyako Strait within Japan’s southern island chain, in December 2016, going beyond the first island chain to conduct drills in the Western Pacific. Its maritime militias and coast guard fleets maintain a steady presence around the Senkaku Islands. Chinese vessels continue to maintain a presence around the Scarborough Shoal, which Beijing seized from Manila in 2012. Meanwhile, PLA rocket forces continue to improve their lethal precision strike capabilities, with over 1,000 SRBMs alone aimed across the Taiwan Strait. The PLA’s military build-up and increased “presence missions” require substantial new budgetary outlays.

On China’s mainland, 800,000 People’s Armed Police (PAP) troops patrol the streets of Chinese cities to crackdown on protests and prevent violent uprisings, particularly in the western regions of Xinjiang and Tibet. Within what is known as the “Han heartland,” the CCP faces unrest as well. In turn, Beijing has engaged in the harshest crackdown on social and political activity since the massacre at Tiananmen Square. Repression is expensive, as is running an empire.

Beijing’s Continental Consolidation

The tenacious efforts by both the Republic of China and the PRC to reacquire and consolidate the territory of the Qing Empire remains among the least studied phenomena in China’s strategic history. Instead, most observers of China accept the official narrative of China’s “century of humiliation.” While China was doubtless a victim of Western imperialism, when it comes to imperialism, it has been no slouch itself.

All efforts by China, including the OBOR plan, on the Asian continent are driven in part by the need to pacify its territorial periphery. A 2015 Chinese National Development and Reform Commission report states:

We should make good use of Xinjiang’s geographic advantages and its role as a window of westward opening-up to deepen communication and cooperation with Central, South and West Asian countries, make it a key transportation, trade, logistics, culture, science and education center, and a core area on the Silk Road Economic Belt.

There are doubtless many strategic and economic reasons for OBOR. Xi wants to put his stamp on China’s economic development strategy, rid his economy of overcapacity, create new export markets, and attempt to re-establish the centrality of the Middle Kingdom in world affairs. But the most pressing continental priority for Xi is to further integrate Xinjiang into China proper and keep potential “separatists” at bay.

This plan is all very expensive. If, according to Chinese estimates, all OBOR infrastructure investment were realized, the bill would be $6 trillion (not all paid by China, of course). The China Development Bank already has stated that close to $900 billion of projects are either planned or underway. China will finance OBOR projects through institutions such as the China Development Bank, the China Eximbank, the Silk Road Fund, and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

This all sounded plausible while Beijing enjoyed double-digit economic growth for three decades. But now China must make hard choices about where to allocate its national security resources. Thus far, the United States has not hastened that reckoning. But China’s current imperial overstretch provides Washington with an opportunity to do so.

**No China rise impact – numerous checks on aggression.**

**Eikenberry, 15** (Karl W, retired United States Army lieutenant general who served as the U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan from April 2009 to July 2011, "China’s Place in U.S. Foreign Policy," [www.the-american-interest.com/2015/06/09/chinas-place-in-u-s-foreign-policy/](http://www.the-american-interest.com/2015/06/09/chinas-place-in-u-s-foreign-policy/), CMR)

For all its ambition, China’s strategic options are not unlimited. Indeed, its foreign policy choices are **severely constrained** both by formidable domestic problems and by unfavorable international factors that the United States would be wise to consider when formulating its response to China’s increasing influence.

Internally, Beijing’s leaders face an interwoven array of daunting social, environmental, economic, and political problems that, left unresolved, will **limit the state’s ability** to generate national power and could even threaten the Communist Party’s monopolistic grip on political and societal control. A brief look at five of these issues makes clear the severity of the situation.

Economic Restructuring: Some 100,000 state-owned enterprises (SOEs) account for about half of China’s economic assets. Despite 15 years of reform efforts, only half of the SOEs have been corporatized, and their return on assets is not significantly different from those of the traditional SOEs. Overall, SOE financial performance has deteriorated significantly since 2008, becoming a major drag on economic growth. This drag serves as a source of **serious political opposition** to enterprise reform, thereby limiting the national leadership’s effort to focus on strategic sectors such as aviation, energy, and telecommunications.13

Nevertheless, the impetus for reform has not slackened over the past year, as both state and local SOEs have been selling off non-strategic assets in accordance with Party policy direction. Serious political obstacles to economic reform remain, however, including the fact that, for all of their inherent inefficiencies, SOEs predictably provide jobs to workers, who, if unemployed, might question both Party wisdom and its unchallenged supremacy. At the same time, labor costs are rapidly rising. In 2013, for example, China’s 269 million migrant workers earned an average of $410 per month, an increase of nearly 14 percent from 2012 and almost twice the rate of the nation’s GDP.14 As a result, Chinese firms are being forced to change their enterprise models and export strategies as foreign companies choose lower-wage alternatives to China.15

The three-decade transition from an agrarian to industrial-service economy, which saw the transition of some 300 million people from rural to urban areas, will continue over the next two decades, with another 350 million people—a number in excess of the entire U.S. population—still to follow. The economic impact of this colossal resettlement has been staggering. Chinese investment in real estate, which was $120 billion in 2003, grew to $980 billion in 2011.Chinese investment in real estate, which was $120 billion in 2003, grew to $980 billion in 2011. The infrastructure required to support this exploding urban population is massive.16

Adding to these difficulties, PRC debt loads have exploded over the past decade. Government debt (a large percentage of which is higher-risk local government debt) to GDP ratio stood at 53.5 percent in 2012, up from 32.5 percent in 2005.17 Of greater concern is the recent rapid rise of total debt (encompassing that from the corporate, household, and financial sectors), which increased from 150 percent of GDP in 2009 to 250 percent in 2014.18 Included in these figures are loans to SOEs that have poor repayment records, but that are often protected by political patronage. Moreover, the recent and dramatic rise of China’s shadow banking industry has complicated the central government’s efforts to bring lending under control.19

Aging Population & Social Welfare Costs: The scope and pace of aging in China’s population pose other significant economic problems for the Party. Over the next twenty years, the ratio of workers to retirees (at the current retirement age of sixty) will decrease from five-to-one to two-to-one. This dramatic demographic shift is both exacerbated and made more urgent by the success of the “one child policy” in place since 1979. It will not only **erode** the huge **economic stimulus** and advantage of a young working population, but it will also come at a point in China’s modernization when it is more vulnerable to the “middle income trap.”20Huge expenditures will be required to put into place more comprehensive national health care and pension systems to help avoid that potential pitfall.

Unequal Income Distribution: China’s gap between its rich and poor, measured by its Gini coefficient, has widened greatly since its opening to the world in 1979. In 2012, the head of China’s National Bureau of Statistics, Ma Jiantang, pegged it at 0.47-0.49, which is slightly below that of the United States, but high for a developing country.21 The reasons for this growing gap in wealth distribution are well understood: rapid urbanization on the backs of migrant workers not offered basic social services (a variant of America’s own illegal immigrant phenomenon, except that those affected are PRC citizens); the disparity in wealth between the coastal regions and China’s interior provinces; the cumulative impact of quality education and health care disproportionally available to the Party, government, and urban elite; and widespread corruption (discussed below). In 2013, the Third Plenum of the 18th Chinese Communist Party Congress noted the pressing need to attend to this problem, but failed to offer any concrete proposals for doing so.22

Environmental Degradation and Food Safety: China’s economic miracle has occurred in tandem with environmental catastrophe. Air and water quality, especially in China’s major urban areas, is among the worst in the world. In 2012, China’s Vice Minister of Environmental Protection, Wu Xiaoqing, stated that 40 percent of the country’s rivers and 55 percent of its groundwater were unfit for drinking. Moreover, he noted that in rural China some 320 million people lack access to safe drinking water.23 The cost of such economic externalities came to roughly $230 billion in 2010, or about 3.5 percent of GDP.24 The scale of investment needed to adequately address known environmental threats is extraordinary. For example, between 2011 and 2020, the government plans to spend $850 billion in water-related projects alone.25 Food safety is also a major issue and an increasingly politicized one. It was only in the face of mounting public pressure that the Ministry of Environmental Protection admitted (in 2014) that the acreage of soil contamination (from heavy metals, pesticides, and other toxins) of China’s farmlands had reached a record high of 20 percent.

Political Decay: Most worrisome to China’s leaders is the danger of losing their monopoly on political power. President Xi (like his predecessors) routinely calls official corruption a cancer that, if unattended, will destroy the Party. But by insisting on exclusive occupation of China’s commanding political heights, the Party itself becomes more vulnerable to dysfunction, corruption, and political decay as the number of political, economic, and social contradictions multiply. China witnessed approximately 180,000 protests in 2010. Reflecting Party anxieties, the state spends large sums of money to ensure “stability maintenance.” As recently as 2013, China’s expenditures for internal security exceeded those for its armed forces.As recently as 2013, China’s expenditures for internal security exceeded those for its armed forces.26

Perhaps the Party leaders’ greatest dilemma is that, while they understand the need to decentralize economic and resource allocation decision-making, they seem driven to pursue further political consolidation in hopes that political and economic power can somehow be disentangled. As a result, the development of an independent economic entrepreneurial spirit, the establishment of a more robust rule of law system, and the growth of civil society are all significantly retarded in China, even as pressure for change continues to mount.

International Constraints on China’s Rise

PRC leaders also **face daunting obstacles in the international arena**. These include factors related to history and geopolitics, military potential, and ideological appeal.

History and Geography: China shares land borders with 14 countries, three of which it has fought limited wars with during the past fifty years: Russia (as the Soviet Union), Vietnam, and India. A major land dispute with India remains unresolved, while China’s historical influence in the Russian Far East dating back to the Qing Dynasty continues to cause unease in Moscow. China’s expansive maritime claims in the East and South China Seas have not only stimulated increasingly fractious disputes with Japan, the Philippines, and Vietnam, but have also led to disagreements with North Korea, South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei. Pursuit of these claims has also excited responses in Washington because they involve two American treaty allies and potentially undermine the principle of freedom of navigation—a vital U.S. security interest.27

Indeed, even as Party leaders seek to restore the prestige and influence of dynastic empires in centuries past, China’s neighbors show no desire to return to a tributary political order. Moreover, China is not an ethnically monolithic state. Its populace includes restive non-Han Muslim citizens in its northwest Xinjiang Province who have ethnic kin in Central Asia, as well as a large and culturally distinct Tibetan population in its southwest. Additionally, the PRC lays claim to ade facto independent, democratic Taiwan that evinces little desire to unify with the mainland. Even the full assimilation of Hong Kong has proven both politically and socially challenging, as demonstrated by the continuing pro-democracy movement. The tightening and expansion of Chinese power is **consistently contested** both within its borders and in its immediate neighborhoods.

Military Limitations: Despite extensive modernization over the past 25 years, the People’s Liberation Army still lacks extended force projection or sustained blue water naval capabilities. China’s military can bring impressive power to bear at particular points along its border and near coastal areas. It can also impose increasing costs on U.S. forces operating near its territory. However, **the PLA lags far behind U.S. armed forces** in terms of aggregate Asia-Pacific regional, and especially global, capabilities.

Moreover, given the costly political, economic, and social challenges that China’s leaders must address over the next two decades, it seems unlikely that the Chinese armed forces will continue to enjoy the double-digit annual budget increases that it has been provided since the mid-1990s. In addition, problems with corruption, a lack of leadership initiative thanks to an over-centralized command structure, and the still unproven ability of the PRC research and development establishment to produce equipment and systems that rival those of the United States and its key allies all cast doubt on the PLA’s ability to become a world-class military power in the near- to mid-term.

Absence of Allies and Partners: A state’s power is measured by its own usable capabilities and those of its relevant allies and partners in various contingencies.Competent allies magnify a state’s power, and here China is at a **tremendous disadvantage** when compared with the United States. Competent allies magnify a state’s power, and here China is at a tremendous disadvantage when compared with the United States. China has only one treaty ally—North Korea—and is sharply at odds even with that regime, whose interests are not always in line which those of the PRC. The one cooperative security organization it nominally leads, the Shanghai Cooperative Organization (SCO), includes Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, but no one takes it seriously as a functional military alliance. More important, the current warming relations between Moscow and Beijing **will likely cool** once Beijing intensifies its efforts to establish a new China-dominated Silk Road through Central Asia, a move the Kremlin views as Chinese encroachment on a traditionally Russian sphere of influence. Meanwhile, after losing its sway over its former quasi-ally Myanmar, China’s most reliable source of influence within ASEAN is a struggling Cambodia. And to date, the PLA has yet to establish any foreign military bases of consequence.

The contrast with U.S. capabilities and assets could not be more striking. In the Asia-Pacific region alone, America has active military alliances with Japan, Korea, Australia, the Philippines, and Thailand, and special relationships with Singapore, New Zealand, and Taiwan. It has some 80,000 servicemen and servicewomen stationed throughout the region. It also leads the 28-member NATO Alliance, the most powerful military coalition in the world. While China can unilaterally apply concentrated pressure at specific locations on its periphery, the United States can call upon a worldwide network of friends and allies to flexibly deal with a wide variety of regional and global security challenges.

Weak Ideational Appeal: China’s global economic power is significant but its growth trajectory is slowing. Even if Beijing can buy influence with its cash reserves, its political model is not one that many states (never mind Hong Kong and Taiwan) aspire to adopt, sharply limiting China’s “soft power” appeal. The United States ranks ahead of China around the world (except in the Middle East) in favorability ratings, and significantly so among those 18–29 years of age.28 The once and very temporarily vaunted Beijing Consensus, a system that marries market mechanisms to authoritarian political control, remains a mirage. The Communist Party might yet develop a form of governance that is universally attractive, but for now, China finds itself at a distinct disadvantage in the battle of political ideas.

**No escalation or draw-in**

**Taylor, 14** -- Head of the Strategic and Defense Studies Center – Australian National University (Spring, Brendan, “The South China Sea is Not a Flashpoint”, <https://twq.elliott.gwu.edu/sites/twq.elliott.gwu.edu/files/downloads/Taylor_PDF.pdf>)

**History** initially **suggests** that **the S**outh **C**hina **S**ea **is not a flashpoint**. The loss of life resulting from the use of force there pales in comparison to those in East Asia’s traditional flashpoints. For instance, in the unresolved Korean War (1950–53), which remains at the heart of continuing tensions on the Korean Peninsula, an estimated two million military personnel were either killed or unaccounted for.7 A comparable number of casualties occurred in the Chinese Civil War (1946–1949), which left today’s Taiwan flashpoint as a direct product.8 Further, at a time when some analysts are talking up the prospects of war between China and Japan over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, it is worth recalling that an estimated 15–35 million perished during the course of the second Sino–Japanese War (1937–45).9

While history is not destiny, more recent estimates suggest that the combustion of any one of these flashpoints today could prove equally devastating. Richard Bush and Michael O’Hanlon of the Brookings Institution, for example, predict that a conflict over Taiwan could spark a nuclear war involving 1.5 billion people and produce a fundamental change in the international order.10 Similar estimates produced at the time of the 1993–94 North Korean nuclear crisis suggested that war on the Korean Peninsula could cost half a million lives and up to US$1 trillion in its first ninety days.11 Conflict between Asia’s two most powerful navies in the East China Sea could prove equally devastating, particularly given that China and Japan are also the world’s second- and third-largest economies, respectively. Total trade between these two historical great powers of East Asia currently stands at U.S. $345 billion.12

It is **hard to envisage a credible scenario** where a skirmish in the **S**outh **C**hina **S**ea could erupt into a conflict of similar proportions. The nationalist foundations of these disputes are **fundamentally different** from those underpinning East Asia’s traditional flashpoints. By way of example, recent polling suggests that 87 percent of the Chinese public view Japan negatively, whilst 50 percent anticipate a military dispute with Japan.13 Reflecting this sentiment, when Tokyo announced its decision to purchase contested Islands in the East China Sea from their private owner in September 2012, this sparked widespread anti-Japanese protests across China that spread to more than 100 cities.14 Such public displays of nationalist sentiment stand in marked contrast to June 2013 anti-China protests in Hanoi following Vietnamese allegations that a Chinese vessel had rammed and damaged a Vietnamese fishing boat. Subsequently, a **mere 150 protesters** gathered in the city center.15 Crowds of comparable size have attended anti-Chinese protests in the Philippines. For instance, a March 2012 protest outside the Chinese Embassy in Manila that organizers expected to draw 1,000 protesters attracted barely half that number.16

The strategic geography of the South China Sea also **militates against it being a genuine flashpoint**. Throughout history, large bodies of water have tended to inhibit the **willingness** and **ability** of adversaries to wage war. In The Tragedy of Great Power Politics, for instance, John Mearsheimer refers to “the stopping power of water,” writing of the limits that large bodies of water place on the capacity of states to project military power—relative, at least, to when they share common land borders.17 Even when clashes at sea do occur, history suggests that these generally afford statesmen **greater time and space to find diplomatic solutions**. As Robert Ross observes, in such cases “neither side has to fear that the other’s provocative diplomacy or movement of troops is a prelude to attack and immediately escalate to heightened military readiness. Tension can be **slower to develop**, allowing the protagonists time to **manage** and **avoid** unnecessary escalation.”18

Ross’ observation, in turn, dovetails elegantly with the issue of proximity, which Hoyt regards as a defining feature of a flashpoint. The antagonists in the **S**outh **C**hina **S**ea disputes are **less proximate** than in the case of the Korean Peninsula—where the two Koreas share a land border that remains the most militarized on earth. The same can be said of the Taiwan flashpoint. Indeed, the proximity of Taiwan to the mainland affords Beijing credible strategic options— and arguably even incentives—involving the use of force that are **not available** to it in the **S**outh **C**hina **S**ea.19

Finally, and related to the third of Hoyt’s criteria, the **S**outh **C**hina **S**ea **cannot be said to engage the vital interests of Asia’s great powers**. To be sure, much has been made of India’s growing interests in this part of the world— particularly following reports of a July 2011 face-off between a Chinese ship and an Indian naval vessel that was leaving Vietnamese waters.20 However, New Delhi’s interests in the South China Sea remain overwhelmingly economic, not strategic, driven as they are by the search for oil. Moreover, even if New Delhi had anything more than secondary strategic interests at stake in the geographically distant South China Sea, it is widely accepted that India’s armed forces will for some time lack the capacity to credibly defend these.21 Similarly, while much has been made of Tokyo’s willingness to assist Manila with improving its maritime surveillance capabilities,22 for reasons of history and geography, Tokyo’s interests in the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute, the Korean Peninsula, and even the Taiwan flashpoint **dwarf those** which **it has at stake in the** more **distant S**outh **C**hina **S**ea. The extent to which this body of water genuinely engages the vital interests of China and the **U**nited **S**tates **continues to be overstated**.

**1ar --- at: Japan and China Relations**

**No Japan-China relations**

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As Japan and China recognize the altered dynamics around the Pacific Rim, some observers believe that they may inch toward a possible reconciliation. Such a Sino-Japanese **rapprochement is unlikely**, however, given their **long-standing historical enmity.** Negative attitudes **toward Japan** are **widespread among main- land Chinese**. According to a recent Pew survey, less than **10% of Chinese** think that Japan **can be trusted**—and the feeling is **mutual**. Young Chinese, who did not personally experience the war, express **surprisingly vehement anti-Japanese feelings**—sentiments that are due in no small part to state propaganda and patri- otic education in schools that **make criticism of Japan politically correct**.92 Moreover, the Chinese see themselves as the **natural hegemon**, and in their— worldview, **the Japanese should be subordinate to them**—in other words, Chinese elites **refuse to accept Japan’s legitimacy as a major Asian state.** Neither Shinzo Abe nor his successors will **tolerate such a future for Japan,** which is why Japan is offering maritime and development assistance to countries like Vietnam and the Philippines. Ultimately, however, China’s rise and America’s retreat to a more offshore posture will force into existence a military alliance between Japan and India (and, perhaps, Russia as well) to restore a regional balance of power to counter growing Chinese power.