

Final (Mrach 2020)

A Flexible Framework to Achieve Strategic Objectives in US-China Policy

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Abstract

The United States must adopt a new overarching strategy to guide US-China relations moving forward. Neither the traditional approach of engagement intended to promote democratic ideals, nor more recent confrontational practices, have worked. There is an urgent need for a new strategic framework that embraces Chinese political and economic realities and uses those realities to US advantage to advance US national and international agendas. What is proposed here is an innovative strategic framework utilizing a soft-power deterrence approach to simultaneously engage, challenge, and integrate China. Successfully implementing this strategy demands a flexible rather than reactive US-China policy encompassing short-term (re-engagement), medium-term (challenging), and long-term (integrating) approaches that will advance US interests across the spectrum of cooperation, competition, and conflict throughout the coming decade.

Keywords

Foreign Policy, Nationalism, Perception, Competition, Conflict

Introduction

United States' policy on China is undergoing a radical metamorphosis. To some, these changes are undermining longstanding agreement about how to constructively engage China. To others who view China policy prior to the current administration as having failed to serve the interests of the United States, the transformation in thinking about China is welcome. Although US-China policy during the current administration has sometimes been successful, it may lead to harmful unintended consequences and reduce US power to counteract China's excesses. Instead, what is proposed here is an innovative strategic framework to simultaneously engage, challenge, and integrate China. Successfully implementing this strategy demands a flexible rather than reactive US-China policy encompassing short-term (re-engagement), medium-term (challenging), and long-term (integrating) approaches that will advance US interests across the spectrum of cooperation, competition, and conflict throughout the coming decade.

The United States needs an effective overarching strategy to guide US-China relations moving forward. Relying on the US-China policy of the past poses serious risks—both in terms of failure to attain US strategic objectives with China, and in terms of the international reputation of the US as a global leader. We've seen the failure of both the longstanding, traditional approach of engagement to encourage and promote democratic ideals, as well as more recent confrontational practices (e.g., initiating trade war, and encouraging Taiwan to arm itself for potential conflict with China). There is an urgent need for a new overarching strategic framework that embraces

Chinese political and economic realities and uses those realities to US advantage to advance US national and international agendas.

Because of China's unique geopolitical situation as an emerging world power, and its close physical proximity to both North Korea and Russia, the US would be wise to adopt a more nuanced, forward-looking, soft-power deterrence strategy on China. This new comprehensive, long-term strategy should utilize China's own stated principles as a means to achieve the primary objective of the US to maintain a rules-based global order.

To attain that objective, the US must embrace China as a prospective responsible stakeholder and ally, or it risks pushing China more firmly towards Russia, with the potential to form a truly destructive, anti-American alliance. To circumvent that danger, the new, flexible US-China policy proposed here will give China what it considers important (outward expressions of respect by the US and acknowledgement that China is a world power) while shrewdly applying China's own doctrines and engagement style as a means to specifically channel China's geopolitical influence to serve US needs, as well as substantially curtail China's anti-America alliance with Russia.

In practical terms, the US-China policy moving forward must be adjusted so that the US: 1) acknowledges China's socialist system under one-party rule; 2) accommodates China's quest to pursue an "independent foreign policy of peace" (Yang, 2018); and 3) acknowledges China's "increasing contribution to global stability and prosperity" (Wang, 2018). These policy adjustments will help the US avoid the diplomatic pitfall of appearing overly critical of China, and will boost China's self-image, but will nonetheless oblige China to behave in a manner that reinforces achievement of the US's long-term strategic objectives.

Know China through Its Propaganda: Government-Controlled Media

Understandably, Chinese ancient proverbs are highly regarded as they often reveal the brightest wisdom and unmeasurable knowledge. It is indeed crucial to comprehend Confucius' Golden Rule, the most prominent philosopher created, a well-known rule that is taught to kids and adults alike since ancient time. For example, Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* is one of the most read books by people who want to be more successful and wiser in business and in life, but, the following words in the book serve the most applicable purpose of this work:

If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.

Knowing well of the other(s) is indeed nothing but a soft power in place. It only helps to better oneself, deter the strong and defeat the foe. But how can we get to know China in a time when the media is considered to be "the enemy of the people"?

Media in China functions totally different from the United States. It serves the need for popular mobilization launched and guided by the national government.

When examining world order, many of the long-standing regimes appear to be uniquely characterized. For instance, with just an initial examination, it is difficult to find similarities in the political systems of the United States, France, and China. However, although these systems may be radically different from one another, they are all governed by a common need: the need for popular mobilization. In order to retain power, the current regime in any country must mobilize a large portion of the public behind a common goal. This is essential how nationalism is created and sustained. Another possible alternative to popular mobilization is to act with force. This creates instability and actually increases the risk of a military coup. Therefore, when a regime wishes to remain in power with the largest amount of support possible, popular mobilization is the key.

China is no different than any other nation-state or governing body in this respect. Indeed, the Communist Party has been allowed to remain in power in China since 1949 because the people themselves are fairly aligned with the ideology of the party. There are several forms that mobilization can take. In China, there is an emphasis on the media. The government in China uses the media to transmit its political positions abroad. The Chinese leaders have used the media in order to engage in political propaganda. In various forms of media, from internet, news outlets, all kinds of brochures and pamphlets, propaganda in China actually extends its scope to individual, government, or corporate actions. Propaganda art has played a major supporting role in many campaigns that have been used to project a nationalistic perception as to mobilize the people. As is evident through both current and historical examples, Chinese propaganda has always played a large role in influencing the people on a variety of subjects and garnering public support for controversial issues. The purpose of propaganda is largely to influence the opinion of the public.

It is interesting to note what James Dator once talked on the issue of propaganda in 1993. He said that “policies and propaganda over the past several decades have also destroyed and delegitimized government in America at all levels”¹. Today, the media is considered popularly in many parts of the world as the “enemy of the people.” However, China sees the media as useful as it can ever be. Political situation in China leads us to just the opposite in terms of the propaganda impact onto the Chinese government, in other words, propaganda, especially in the era of the technology, is utilized as to sustain the governmental power and its ruling legitimacy in China.

The use of political propaganda to promote a nationalistic fervor within China has a long history. Indeed, it has been used by the Communist Party since the advent of the People’s Republic in 1949. Since then, an almost continuous stream of mass movements that have addressed national, international, moral and social topics have occurred. The flow of campaigns organized at both the national and local levels and in the rural and urban areas was intended to strengthen support for the Communist Party, to deepen the understanding of the party lines that guides China on a daily basis.

Chinese Nationalism and Perception Theory

¹ Jim Dator, “American State Courts, Five Tsunamis, & Four Alternative Futures”. Published in *Futures Research Quarterly*, Winter 1993.

Perception theory has been used increasingly to explain decision-making in foreign policy. Any political perception and actions cannot be explained without taking account the values, goals, aspirations, orientations, emotions, and cognition of the political actors. Their decisions are the result of their self-image and perception of the contingent environment in which they are placed.² Policy making, especially decisions involving foreign relations, can be best understood only by comprehending what the decision-makers, i.e. political elites who participate directly in policy and decision-making, define as national interest and their perception of the international and domestic environment. Therefore, to understand why political actors make certain decisions, one has to know the psycho-cultural factors which affect their perceptions of a situation.³ All actors incorporate their cultural, historical, and social baggage in the process of perceiving, analyzing, and acting on international and domestic issues. Regardless of the validity of their interpretation of each situation, their subjective perceptions have real consequences.⁴

For China's political elites, the traditional political culture and the Chinese historical experience since the Opium War in 1839 are especially important factors affecting the actor's perceptions. The most enduring and significant element of Chinese political tradition is autocracy. This tradition continues to influence contemporary Chinese politics and instills in the Chinese political leaders the conviction that an autocratic system with minimal constraints must be maintained at all costs.⁵ It is on the basis of the fundamental Confucian principle that Chinese political culture has been shaped and formulated. However, the legalist practice, which is more Machiavellian than Machiavelli, has been much more influential in expounding Realpolitik to Chinese politicians. The legalists' theme of "enrich the country and strengthen the army" has been a common policy of all imperial dynasties and modern Chinese states, and their doctrinal thesis of Realpolitik has much certain similarity with official Marxist-Leninist revolutionary ideology.⁶

Understanding the multitude of beliefs that make up modern Chinese nationalism will provide us with a foundation for examining what is to come for this rising nation. When deciding how best to deal with China it is necessary to look at its history and culture and only when we take into account this variety of perspectives can we be in a position to predict how this nation will develop. The most important factor affecting modern Chinese politics is a new nationalism, nurtured by the historical experience of foreign invasions since the middle of the 19th century, and emboldened by the newly achieved status as a power house of the world economy.

² Perception theory has been used increasingly to explain decision-making in foreign policy. This theory has been used to analyze Chinese foreign policy. For example, see Gilbert Rozan, *The Chinese debate about Soviet Socialism 1978-1985*, (Princeton University Press, 1987). For comments on perception theory applied to China, see Samuel S. Kim, "China and the World in Theory and Practice," in *China and the World*, Samuel S. Kim ed., (Westview Press, 1994).

³ For a psycho-cultural analysis of Chinese foreign policy, see Chih-Yu Shih, *The Spirit of Chinese Foreign Policy: A Psychocultural View*, (St. Martin's Press, New York, 1990), pp. 38-43.

⁴ American sociologist William I. Thomas made a dictum: "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences. See William Thomas and Dorothy S. Thomas, *The child in America; behavior problems and programs*, (New York, A. A. Knopf, 1928), p. 572.

⁵ For a summary of Chinese political tradition and its impact on the political system and practice of the PRC, see Fu Zhengyuan, *Autocratic Tradition and Chinese Politics*. (Cambridge University Press, 1993).

⁶ Wayman, Frank W. and Paul F. Diehl, *Reconstructing Realpolitik*. (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1994), pp. 13-16.

From the Opium War in 1839 to the end of World War II in 1945, the Chinese people experienced a period of national shame, humiliation, and trauma. It was during this period that Taiwan, recognized as an integral part of China, was forcefully taken as a Japanese colony for fifty years (1895-1945). The memories of the Japanese invasion into China in 1931, its scorched earth, tactics and the rape of Nanjing, and millions killed in 1937 still haunt many Chinese. Such historical memories fuel and sustain Chinese anti-foreign nationalism.

Nationalism is a relatively recent phenomenon which developed during the nineteenth century in Western Europe, one whose framework and principles tend to take a Western bent. When looking at the emergence of nationalism in China, however, a reassessment must be made in order to define its characteristics in the proper frame. Chinese nationalism has emerged as a tool to serve the government and thus nationalism in China has taken on various forms in relation to its changing regimes. Differing schools of thought regarding Chinese nationalism exist and it is necessary to understand the historical context and multitude of positions related to this issue in order to form a more encompassing view of modern Chinese nationalism.

When analyzing nationalism, it is important to recognize that its emergence in China is not consistent with those of the West in which states developed following de-colonization from outside powers. In any case nationalism fluctuates as boundaries, leaders, and constituencies change and as expectations and doctrines begin to shift or emerge. This ever changing climate reveals why Chinese nationalism is an unpredictable phenomena.

In order to understand the distinct Chinese phenomena of nationalism, it is necessary to recognize the historical conditions from which it emerged. Chinese nationalism emerged from the imperial ideology that centered on Confucian tradition and culture. China was an empire and certainly not a nation state until the 20th century. Its unifying force was its culture and civilization. Hence some historians have called China a civilization state rather than a nation before the 20th century.⁷

Starting in the 19th century, imperialism gave way to modern nationalism. This emerging nationalism focused primarily on culture: shared history and myths of origin, language, religious beliefs and rituals, and the role of political elites. As nations developed into modern industrialized societies many Chinese intellectuals and elites began to question their identity and the identity of their nation. Many viewed the Confucius teachings as a barrier to modernization and as a remnant of the imperial state. Many of these historical traditions were abandoned and a modern national identity began to take shape.

As nationalism began to take shape in China, it assumed various characteristics. In any territory that attempts to create and consolidate itself as a sovereign political and social entity, it will develop its nationalism upon pre-existing ideas as well as selecting specific aspects of tradition and culture to promote a common identity while suppressing others. Nationalist sentiments typically focus on ethnicity, loyalty to the state, or a combination of the two. The earliest development of Chinese nationalism began with Sun Yat-sen, the turn of the century liberal and founder of the Nationalist Party whose concept of the nation involved a united people superior to

⁷ Francois Thierry, "Empire and Minority in China," in Cerard Chaliand (ed.) *Minority Peoples in the Age of Nation-States*. (London: Pluto Press, 1989), p. 38.

the rest of the world. Sun and his “republican revolutionaries” developed a new foundation of the nation-state.⁸ They rejected the aspects of culturalism that centered on Confucius’ principles and adherence to specified ritual orders and sought to develop a unified ‘race.’ For Sun Yat-sen, this superior Chinese race was not based on ethnicity but rather on territory and all those inside of China’s territorial borders were united as one. During the period of the republic, nationalism was defined in terms of a body of citizens which allowed Sun to integrate the multitude of ethnic peoples into a united Chinese “race.”

Chinese nationalism has consistently been shaped by those in power. Each changing regime has reconstructed what constitutes Chinese national identity in order to legitimize and maintain their rule. While Sun Yat-sen’s version of nationalism used race, the emerging Communist regime emphasized a similar approach under the auspice of social class. The communist regime sought to unify the peasants, workers, and educated business owners as a single Chinese people. This allowed its leaders to exclude individuals who were not in line with the party’s platform. The CCP began to emphasize state nationalism after 1949 as a way to create a single Chinese nation. This idea was “[an] appealing doctrine for legitimating this political and cultural transformation.”⁹ Since the state controlled education and the media, the PRC was able to indoctrinate the people with the party’s definition of nationalism. Emphasis was placed on the rural peasant life and educated citizens were assumed to be less than fully Chinese because they rejected such principles. Based on this assumption, it becomes clear that China’s leadership has not always been in the hands of the most educated or forward-thinking individuals, which could be viewed as an obstacle to its modern development.

Modernization and nationalism have been congruent developments in most modern societies; however this is not the case in China. The resentment against the West emerged under Mao Zedong and the emphasis of rural traditions was antagonistic to the principles of modernization and nationalism. The culture and power clashes between China and the West have consistently been cited as unique to the development of modern nationalism in China. From this foundation it is worth noting that the Chinese are a self-deprecating people, who despite their tremendous cultural, historical, and economic successes tend to be unable to look beyond their faults to see the impressive magnitude of their creations. The common assertion of humiliation by the West during times of Chinese weakness is commonly played upon while achievements tend to be downplayed. There is growing consensus in Beijing that “adversaries are trying to pin China down, preventing China from assuming her rightful place again as one of the few great powers of the world.”¹⁰ As China is emerging as an economic power, it is important to recognize the variety of national sentiments that its constituents prescribe to and follow.

Various constituencies are responding differently to the changes China is undergoing. It should be noted here that there are four primary groups with their individual perceptions of nationalism. The first group is composed of all PRC citizens both Han and non-Han people while the second group is made up of the ethnic Han population. The third group involves the PRC plus (in PRC terms) its ‘compatriots’ of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao while the fourth group consists of

⁸ Chang Hao, *Chinese Intellectuals in Crisis: Search for Order and Meaning, 1890-1911*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), p. 8.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹⁰ Chen Mingming, "Zhengzhi fazhan shijiao zhongdi Minzu yu Minzu zhuyi", *Zhanlue yu Guanli* (Strategy and Management, 1996), Vol. 15. pp.63-71.

overseas Chinese. Each group has developed an individual sense of national identity and therefore the study of Chinese nationalism is incomplete without taking into account these complex and ever-changing views.

By recognizing the cultural and historical shifts that have occurred in China since the 19th century it becomes easier to understand why Chinese nationalism bears little resemblance to that of the West. There is a widespread sense of national identity among the Chinese, both on the mainland, Taiwan, and abroad, yet its definition is as diverse as its culture. The competing definitions of the nation tend to be determined and played upon by the party leadership. From a body of citizens during the republic to Mao's form of Han nationalism to Deng's political modernization and democratic reforms, the concept of nationalism has been used as a tool by political elites to legitimize and sustain their control of China. Nationalism of any kind attempts to build upon a shared sense of national identity. Jiang Jie-shi and the GMD's emphasis on culture and tradition in Taiwan was a response to the threat of the Communist regime and "in this regard, the construction of tradition had an explicitly political agenda from the beginning."¹¹ As Maoist ideological beliefs have faded, the CCP has increasingly relied upon nationalism as a unifying ideology.

The shift of power from the West to the East is increasing its pace and will dramatically change the way we view the world. This transformation will require the integration of very different concepts of political and cultural traditions and beliefs. China is a rising power and its concepts of nationalism will continue to shift alongside its political regimes. How China will emerge in the coming century is unpredictable but studying the Chinese nationalism can provide us with greater knowledge of the past, which is said to be the basis of the future. If history is to repeat itself we can hope to learn from the emerging Chinese nationalism in its own historical context and open our hearts and minds to the possibilities of the future.

Nationalism can also be defined as "patriotic feelings or principles." However, in China, this sentiment takes on a different form. It cannot simply be thought of as loyalty to one's country. In China, nationalism often functions as a sense of national identity. It defines the Chinese as a people and offers them a common foundation.

Throughout the 20th century nationalism has been the most potent normative force motivating the Chinese people, coloring their perceptions on international matters. During the Sino-Japanese War (1931-45), most recruits into the Chinese Communist Party were driven by nationalism rather than Marxist-Leninist doctrine. Many of them still hold important positions in the PRC official hierarchy. In China, nationalism (often identified as patriotism) has been closely intertwined with statism.

Chinese nationalism is a strong and driving force in the day-to-day lives of both Chinese politicians and Chinese citizens. In general, Chinese nationalism can take on several forms: nativism, anti-traditionalism, or pragmatic nationalism. However, pragmatic nationalism is the type of nationalism that most Chinese currently use to view themselves and the outside world. Pragmatism "sees foreign economic exploitation and cultural infiltration as a source of China's weakness, but believes the lack of modernization is the reason why China became an easy target

¹¹ Ibid.

for Western imperialism.”¹² While pragmatic nationalists believe that foreign influences are potentially harmful to China, they do not believe that foreigners are to blame for the problems of China. However, pragmatic nationalism does react to influences from the outside world and becomes stronger with perceived foreign threat. As a rule, pragmatic nationalism is fairly moderate in relation to nativism and anti-traditionalism.

The primary influence on the Chinese leaders' perceptions and strategic decision making has been a combination of autocratic tradition and modern Sinicized nationalism. Legalistic Realpolitik direct Chinese leaders' strategic thinking. Official ideological pronouncement aside, the overriding goal of the leaders is to consolidate their power and rule supreme in their domain. Any perceived encroachment on this goal must be repelled by any means necessary, including force. They are also more likely to make decisions based on politics rather than economics. PRC leaders still start from an entrenched state-centered approach in formulating international issues. Chinese statism is wedded with nationalism. Therefore, priority is placed on state sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national security. It is through this policy that Chinese leaders intend to restore to China the international status that is her due.

The principal Chinese leaders are not ideologues, but pragmatists. When dealing with issues in the realm of high politics, especially key matters like Taiwan and Sino-U.S. relations, formal ideology through propaganda is used to justify policy and mass consumption, but does not necessarily serve as a guide to action. As recounted by Henry Kissinger, Mao expressed "that in foreign policy national interests overrode ideological differences. Ideological slogans were a facade for considerations of balance of power. Each side would be expected to insist on its principles but each had an obligation not to let them interfere with the imperatives of national interest--a classic definition of modern Machiavellianism."¹³ It is unlikely that Chinese elites ever read *The Prince*. Such Chinese Machiavellianism is a legacy from China's ancient legalism practiced since China's first unified empire in 221 BC.

Since the 1930s, the Chinese Communists have consistently used nationalism as a major ideological weapon. Along with official Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong thought, nationalism has been an important theme in mass political indoctrination and public education. When Mao Zedong mobilized the Chinese people for the Korean War against the U.S. in the early 1950s, it was in the name of nationalism and not Marxism-Leninism. In the 1990s, when Marxism-Leninism has lost the remainder of its appeal to the Chinese people, nationalism has become the only effective ideological glue which binds the 1.4 billion people as a nation under the rule of the CCP. Some astute scholars have observed that the current generation of CCP leaders, including the more "enlightened" ones, are even more nationalistic than their predecessors.

Culturally, the Chinese people have always been concerned with what is commonly called "face saving." China is a face-loving nation. This concept is very closely related to pride. The idea is that by "saving face," one is always able to maintain its dignity. It is generally understood

¹² Zhao Suiheng, "Chinese Nationalism and its International Orientations," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 115, No. 1 (Spring 2000), p. 1.

¹³ Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, (Boston: Little, Brown, 1982), p. 67. Kissinger commented on the CCP leaders such as the first Chinese premier Zhou En-lai; "[t]he Chinese were cold-blooded practitioners of power politics, a far cry from the romantic humanitarians imagined in Western intellectual circles." See Henry Kissinger, *The White House Years*, (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), p. 747.

that China can not lose face to foreigners. Losing face on the part of the Chinese leaders is considered, or presumed as being humiliated. If someone, especially a political leader, loses face, the only way to get out the “humiliation” is to try one’s best to get it back. Pragmatic nationalism allows the Chinese to do exactly this. It allows them to interact with the international community yet still retain their cultural identity. In addition, by seeing themselves in relation to others in the world, the Chinese are able to make sure that they adopt some practices of modernization while still retaining their own practices of tradition.

Finally, in view of the fact that China does not recognize nor practice democracy, nor does its government think in a universal manner, whether the explanation for U. S. involvement be universal or Realpolitik or the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, China is not likely to allow such Western political concepts impact its decision making.

Part I: Moving Forward: An Innovative, Long-Term Strategic Framework For US-China Relations

The following practical US-China policy proposals suggested for the short-, medium-, and long-term, should be implemented with the flexibility necessary to ensure adaptability in the face of change, while always maintaining a coherent and rational approach.

1. Short-Term (1-3 Years) Strategy: re-engaging China
 - A. US re-engages China with multilevel diplomacy to identify and cement the institutional rules that both countries will follow
 - B. US acknowledges China’s significant and justifiable place on the global stage
 - C. US accepts China’s authoritarian, one-party state under a socialist system
 - D. US acknowledges China as a developing country with a developed economy, and that it is in the US’s interest to ensure broader cooperation
 - E. US upholds its national commitment to democracy, global security, and world peace

Acknowledge a Non-Western, but Almighty God: China Remains Authoritarian State under CCP

Mainland China is not the country it has been in past decades. The Chinese seem to have had enough of political and cultural revolutions; it’s time for an industrial revolution.¹⁴ China liberalized its markets in 1978 after passing some reforms, which supported more of a free-market economy. After decades of fast economic development, China has become more self-confident, and believes that that time is on its side. China's comprehensive national strength is continuing to rise, and it has further enhanced its position and role in international affairs. Further, its general international environment has improved. In particular, because US’s war on terror, Chinese economy enjoyed several years of high growth, whereas the other major economies have been facing noticeable difficulties.

¹⁴ James P. Pinkerton, “China Boom Requires Perspective,” *Omaha World Herald*, March 13, 2005.

The CCP's reversal in its attitude towards the Chinese economy is due to its insecurity about its legitimacy in China.¹⁵ A case in point, the CCP cannot afford to lose Taiwan if it is to maintain its legitimacy as the ruling party in Mainland China. The CCP needs to convey an image of control and competence to its public in order to maintain its legitimacy. Amy Hanser reports that in order to show that it can competently provide for the needs of its citizens, the CCP has liberalized the markets in order to keep its promise of individual prosperity, which it espoused before the reforms took place.¹⁶ Chinese Communist political culture has a traditional anti-democratic outlook. The CCP insists that it is the best organization for society and often draws on fears of the chaos and uncertainty that democracy would bring. CCP's response to big problems of governance is to put "stability and unity" in top priority, basically to repress any activity or thought of dissent from the communist party platform. CCP does not allow the existence of organizations that it does not approve of or that may threaten its power. Members of the CCP believe that China must still be ruled by an authoritarian political system in order to keep the mainland unified. In order to avoid the fate of the Soviet Eastern-Bloc countries, the CCP sought to provide its citizens with a better standard of living to ensure its legitimacy.¹⁷ However, a step towards a free-market economy seems at odds with the traditional communist ideology of an egalitarian society. The free-market system would also seem to promote individual liberties and rights, which could be seen as antithetical to the power of the CCP. However, Hanser does admit that a growing economic freedom may help the Chinese people to develop a more individualized concept of themselves. She contends that due to the free-market environment, class stratification will inevitably develop placing large gaps between the poor and the wealthy. Such a development would have been unthinkable during the days of China's Cultural Revolution before economic reform. Although the CCP are still in control, it is obvious that China is going through an economic metamorphosis. The booming Chinese economy has put the country on the path of modernization not just in its domestic sector but in its military sector as well.

A plethora of domestic issues undermine China's legitimacy and authenticity as a nation-state; at the same time however, China's international reputation as a developing power has expanded along with its impressive economic accomplishments, practical military buildup, and global infrastructure projects resulting from its Belt and Road Initiative. If we look into the domestic affronts of which China is accused, the list includes its dictatorial nature as a single-party country, its poor human rights record, and its newly established re-education centers to round up Uyghurs in Xinjiang. Despite internal discontent, however, there is virtually no chance that unrest will lead to a revolution turning "rule by man" to "rule by law." It is a prevailing fact that "rule by man" in China today is a continuation of a centuries-long absence of popular desire for a democratic society. All internal unrest in modern Chinese history has ended in a bloodbath. The Chinese culture of realism fosters a realpolitik based on practical and material outcomes rather

¹⁵ Monte R. Bullard, *The Soldier and the Citizen* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1997), p.18. At the beginning of the PRC rule in mainland China, the CCP government clearly put its priority on political stability over economic development for the first three decades, it was from the late 1970s that the economy became PRC's top priority. Examining the role of the military in the economic development, Monte Bullard contended that "priorities for economic, social, and political activities were determined by considerations of security." Stability is certainly interconnected with security; one would not be possible without the other.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Amy Hanser, "Made in the PRC: Consumers in China," *American Sociological Association* 3, no. 1 (2003): p. 19.

than on moral or ethical objectives, and undermines the potential for fundamental political change.

While China has achieved unprecedented economic advances during the last four decades, it is virtually unchanged in terms of its political and bureaucratic systems. Since the 1990s, Chinese leaders have firmly rejected any fundamental reform of their authoritarian one-party political system, even as a decades-long boom has reshaped China's economy and society. Today, China remains both an authoritarian one-party state led by a single man, and a union between the technocracy and the elites. The bulk of Chinese society continues to live in the shadow of a many-thousands-year-long dynastic order; it is a pyramid shaped society with a single individual at the top. Democratic institutions are strongly desired by China's liberal-minded academic and financial sectors, as well as by law-enforcement agencies. Nonetheless, China's one-party state has not only survived the heyday of democratization, but is also credited with effective leadership that has persevered in order to achieve its economic goals, including lifting millions of its own citizens out of poverty. However, most obvious to the core desire of the political elites and the nationalist populous, the American-style democratic change in Taiwan has since fueled China's ultra-nationalist response which drives China with ambition and hostility. It is gradually revealed that the most recent years see Chinese economic reforms instituted by the Beijing government have brought no fundamental change to the nature of the regime. Although it is problematic to apply China's case to debunk the populous theory that the economic liberation will lead to political liberation, however, it is true to interpret that the democratic theory that freed Taiwan from the authoritarian platform to a new Taiwan identity set an antagonistic agenda in Chinese political mind. Desiring a China for a similar detour towards democracy, as Taiwan has, Americans have yet to realize that US open-door policy with a one-sided intention for democratic change through economic development "highjacked" China on a modernization path, but left it unchecked and facilitated China from an economic disaster to a military bully after decades-long benefiting from its "cheap riding or free riding"¹⁸ from multinational economic and technological know-how and yet made little demand for its proportionate contribution.

Searching the Roots of China's Antagonistic US Policy

Why a new Taiwan democratic identity invites an unprecedented turning point in China's change from embracing the United States in the early 1980s as its new strategic partner to, albeit gradually, an anti America rival? Much more worse and hardly expected, this gradual change entails a most dangerous reality that the United States has to live for a long period of time, that is, China is returning to the shadow of an authoritarian state in nature while maximizing its socialistic style economy disguised with a capitalistic outfit.

The United States is the most influential foreign factor in the relations across the Taiwan Straits. Taiwan's democratization has largely been seen as a defense mechanism designed to

¹⁸ Andrew B. Kennedy, "China and the Free-Rider Problem: Exploring the Case on Energy Security," accessible September 21, 2019 at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/274264569_China_and_the_Free-Rider_Problem_Exploring_the_Case_of_Energy_Security

entice the support from the United States in order to deny the sovereign right of China (PRC) over the island nation.

Since the late 1980s, Taiwan has undertaken a radical transition from authoritarian rule to democracy. The democratization process has produced major changes in the Taiwanese political system. These changes hold significant implications for the content and direction of its policies. Democracy has brought about multi-party politics,¹⁹ and it becomes the driving force behind Taiwan's policy toward the mainland China. Taiwan's democracy has, since its birth, begun with the quest for political independence. The democratization of Taiwan has thus created a dilemma. On one hand, Taiwan's democratization helps foster a strong sense of political identity, enhance the legitimacy of Taiwan's independence, and discredit the PRC's claim over the island of Taiwan. On the other hand, it has also served to increase the possibility of intervention by the rival regime across the Straits. Taiwan's shift toward a more democratic government, and the growing popular independence movement that it had inspired, has provoked China to intensify its reunification campaign. Furthermore, the growing aspiration for a separate Taiwanese identity is likely to fuel an ultra-nationalistic response from the mainland China. In the eyes of mainland China, Taiwan's democracy entails a political non-alignment to the idea of reunification. It fosters a desire for a separate Taiwanese nationalism and a non-Chinese identity, and thus refutes mainland China's legitimacy of any claim on Taiwan.

While the Taiwan issue involves complex combinations of military and political factors on both part of Taiwan and mainland China, the United States, in the eyes of Beijing, is the root of the problem. Washington is seen as the driving force behind Taiwan's democratic change that challenges Beijing's sovereign right over Taiwan.

The US should reconsider its ambiguous policy on Taiwan. The policy, in the eyes of Beijing and Taipei, has been outdated. It does not serve the American interests in the region, nor does it protect Taiwan from China's increasingly assertive behavior, and it does not liberate China from its historical corpus, tangled with unsolvable issues, such as legitimacy and sovereignty. US should enlighten PRC to shoulder global responsibility, freeing itself from the traps of dead-end future, considering the reality that Taiwan will never be subject to Beijing's will, not even Hong Kong does. Therefore, the United States should, conditionally, make it clear that it treats ROC in Taiwan unofficially like a civic Nation, and it treats the PRC officially as a political State, but it respects the reality that ROC in Taiwan and PRC in the mainland, in essence, are two halves of

¹⁹ During the first three decades since ROC relocated in Taiwan, the ROC political system was dominated by a single Leninist-style political party—the GMD—and the views and activities of a single paramount leader—first, Jiang Jie-shi from 1949 to 1975, and then his son Jiang Jin-guo from 1975 to 1988. GMD and its predominantly mainland Chinese leadership controlled the major activities of all key governmental agencies and supervised a network of cadres charged with carrying out its policies. The party remained under the ultimate control of mainlanders and hence the regime reflected the interests of this minority segment of the population throughout most of this period. During this time, the GMD-led ROC regime was a highly personalistic political system. The undemocratic GMD also relied on brute force to ensure obedience, suppress resistance and prevent the emergence of genuine opposition political movements. For more of GMD rule in Taiwan, see Keith Maguire, *The Rise of Modern Taiwan*, (Ashgate Publishing, Hampshire, England, 1998), pp. 32-33. Also see Tien Hung-mao, *The Great Transition: Political and Social Change in the Republic of China*, (Hoover Institution, Stanford, 1989); and Thomas B. Gold, "Domestic Roots of Taiwan's Influence in World Affairs," in Robert G. Summer and William R. Johnson, eds., *Taiwan in World Affairs*, (Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado), 1994, p. 197.

the One ethnic Nation-State as China in a broader way, which should be acceptable to both Taipei and Beijing in realistic terms.

Touching the Void for the Beginning to Re-Engage

As Taiwan became more democratic, pro-independence sentiment also grew. This is the last thing that Beijing wants to fear. But it fears more today than ever. Beijing fears most that it will be deprived from its right of sovereignty over Taiwan.

Since it was established in 1949, China's national purpose is one of redressing a century of national victimization under Western imperialism.²⁰ China restored its sovereignty on Hong Kong, the British colony, in 1997, and Macau, the Portuguese colony, in 1999. As for Taiwan, Chinese leaders see it as the last vestige of the humiliation by Japan and the West during the colonial period when imperial powers carved China into spheres of influence. Unifying Taiwan would complete that trilogy and fulfill its "manifest destiny". Until the current order of residual imperialist exploitation is redressed, no Chinese government can accept the *status quo* and expect to stay in power.

By its political logic, China believes that it is entitled to major power status and deserves the acknowledgment of that status by all. It seeks to expand its rightful influence in international institutions and forums that make decisions economically and strategically for the region and the world. China's destiny is being fueled by a revival of popular nationalism and renewed confidence in its cultural heritage. Any government that does not respond to these national aims cannot govern China for long. Any foreign government that does not acknowledge this Chinese destiny cannot hope for good relations with China. There is no doubt that "the rise of China" will be a historic event comparable to or even greater than that of post-war Japan. Beijing's target is to increase its *per capita* gross domestic product fourfold by 2020 to attain what China calls a state of "relative comfort society" (*xiaokang shehui*). It is all part of a single-minded focus on economic development, oriented to making China an economic superpower in every respect (except, perhaps *per capita* income) in the next two decades.

In foreign affairs, China's foreign policy is in great flux. Beijing's increasing sophistication and subtlety have been matched by the U.S. neglect of Asia. China has been discreet but firm in its promotion of issues that resonate within the developing world. China realizes that peace in its region — east Asia, south Asia and central Asia — is essential for sustaining such a unidirectional effort. It is all part of the new PRC syndrome — not the old People's Republic of China, but a new peaceful rise of China.²¹ The Chinese establishment's mantra is *heping jueqi*—peaceful rising or peaceful ascendancy. The new PRC will not be facilitated if it is seen to be

²⁰ Western and Japanese imperialism in China left it a divided country split up into three: the PRC, Taiwan and Hong Kong. The future of all of these regions is still very much an issue in today's news and has serious consequences for stability in the Asia-Pacific region. Many hurdles have still yet to be overcome in determining the ultimate fate of Taiwan, but it is certain that its colonial history will play a large role in determining its future.

²¹ The Chinese government defines the "China's peaceful rise" as it refers to the road of development pursued by China dating back to the 3rd plenary of the 11th National Congress of the Communist Party of China at the end of 1978, and lasting until the middle of this century. During such a historical process, with peace and development remaining the themes of the times, China by and large realizes modernization through sustained, rapid, coordinated and sound development on the basis of reform and opening up. It has been a quarter century since China embarked on the road to peaceful rise.

extending support to forces ostracized by the international community. For China, the most substantive concern is for economics, the language is peace and stability, the style is constructive diplomacy. Speaking of the current Chinese foreign policy, Medeiros and Fravel wrote their article "China's New Diplomacy" in *Foreign Affairs*, saying that since the mid-1990s, "China has begun to take a less confrontational, more sophisticated, more confident, and, at times, more constructive approach toward regional and global affairs", continued by the authors that "China has expanded the number and depth of its bilateral relationships, joined various trade and security accords, deepened its participation in key multilateral organizations, and helped address global security issues. Foreign policy decision-making has become less personalized and more institutionalized, and Chinese diplomats have become more sophisticated in their articulation of the country's goals. More broadly, the Chinese foreign policy establishment has come to see the country as an emerging great power with varied interests and responsibilities -- and not as the victimized developing nation of the Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping eras."²² Economic clout and military muscle notwithstanding, or perhaps precisely because of that, the Chinese want to be seen as good neighbors and sober citizens of the world. Exhibiting a new self-confidence, China has embraced a more proactive and multilateral foreign policy than ever before. Bitter condemnation of China's perceived enemies has been replaced by smooth talk. The curious mixture of insecurity and arrogance with which China's government used to view the world has been replaced by a sense of rationality and pragmatism. Beijing has adopted a new diplomatic approach as a way of gaining regional acceptance for its expanding sphere of influence and to counter Washington's warning of the "China threat." The "peaceful rising" concept serves as a newly defined veneer laid atop a more subtle and sophisticated strategy to expand China's influence by engaging in a series of diplomatic and economic initiatives directed radically outward from Beijing toward Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Japan and the Koreas. For example, in Northeast Asia, while the U.S. has recognized its lack of influence over North Korea, thus U.S. has offered the PRC an opportunity to perform a constructive role in limiting North Korea's nuclear ambitions.

In Southeast Asia, another America's stronghold historically, China's intention to increase economic relationships has been well received. As a result, Beijing has garnered greater support in regional capitals than what is perceived as Washington's single-minded focus on terrorism.

In Northwest Asia, China has reinvigorated the Shanghai Cooperative Organization to provide Beijing with greater influence over a region that has been of growing concern because of the introduction of U.S. military forces in Afghanistan as part of Washington's global war on terrorism. In South Asia, China has engaged in active diplomatic efforts to strengthen its economic, military, and political ties with both longtime ally Pakistan and previous rival India.²³

China's energetic foreign policy utilizes economic engagement with surrounding Asian nations, and uses this as an incentive for Asian nations to challenge the United States, and thus achieve a predominant role in Asian affairs. China's continued phenomenal economic growth has caused a

²² Evan S. Medeiros and M. Taylor Fravel, "China's New Diplomacy," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2003, pp. 22-36.

²³ India and China fought a brief border war in 1962 that left their relations in shreds. But in recent years they have played down their territorial dispute to focus on improving commercial and other ties. On January 1, 2005, these two countries started to open a first round of "strategic dialogue" as their regional and international influence surges despite a nagging border dispute.

tectonic shift so those smaller nations feel themselves increasingly drawn into the Chinese sphere of influence.

Even larger Asian nations see benefits to securing themselves to what is increasingly viewed as the engine of economic growth in Asia, as China has supplanted Japan as the region's most influential nation. The passing of the economic torch is both the result of and precursor to a commensurate increase in Chinese political influence.

Having witnessed the changes in China's foreign policy, David M. Lampton and Kenneth Lieberthal said that China "now sees itself as a major player with the confidence and perspective that comes from that."²⁴ In his commentary on China's directionless transition, Arthur Waldron stated:

That China is in transition no one can doubt: In ten years she will be very different than she is today, not to mention in twenty or thirty years. This is simply a fact, guaranteed by the unleashing in China, in the twenty-eight years since Mao Zedong died, of powerful and transformative forces of every sort. These range from the loosening of economic regulation to the restoration of high academic standards in elite schools to the welcoming of foreign investment and the granting to many Chinese of the right to travel--to mention but a few.²⁵

However, China's future outlook on the world and on its foreign policy remains unclear to many people. Some argue that in international politics, how a country rises often has more drastic consequences for the world than the rise itself. It is generally assumed that a great power armed with nationalism could be very threatening to the world. Since the early 1990s, the word "China threat" has gradually become a new term in articles on international affairs, replacing the cold war era's "Soviet Threat." China's economic speed, velocity, ideology and, most significantly, the impact it has on the international balance of power, cause other countries to harbor suspicions, caution, jealousy and fear. It triggers antipathy, among other reactions. Some people even compare the rise of China with Germany and Japan when Germany and Japan at the beginning of the 20th century made remarkable advances sparked considerable reactions from established powers. One Japanese columnist, Yoichi Funabashi, concluded in one article:

Many things in China are regarded as 'potential forces that could change the *status quo*' and provoke anxiety: the size of its population; low wages; the 'great leap forward' in growth; environmental destruction; its policy of attaching greatest importance to the market under a one-party system; exclusionary nationalism; and eventual 'confrontation with the United States'.²⁶

It is so true that China is changing its worldview along its economic development. However, under the above mentioned changes in China's economic, military and foreign affairs, how the

²⁴ David M. Lampton and Kenneth Lieberthal, "Heading off the Next War," *Washington Post*, April 11, 2004, p. 10.

²⁵ Arthur Waldron, "China's Directionless Transition: A Commentary", *Asia Pacific Media Network*. (online). Available:

<http://www.asiamedia.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=8157>. (February 25, 2004)

²⁶ Yoichi Funabashi, "China's 'Peaceful Ascendancy'", *Yale Global*, December 19, 2003, p. 8.

issue of Taiwan problem is pursued by the Chinese people and its government? At this point, the Chinese perception of the Taiwan problem in general, and the unification issue in particular should be explained.

For the Chinese in general, and its political elites in particular, Taiwan is *sui generis*,²⁷ that is, a one-of-a-kind issue linked to China's core values, the territorial sovereignty and domestic stability. The question why Taiwan has to be united with its motherland is part of the ABC's of elementary school children. More rhetorically, the unification of the motherland with Taiwan serves as a matter of "supreme national interest,"²⁸ for which China claims it is prepared to "use all its blood" to prevent the island's independence. One of the most sacred and self-righteous reasons along with three serious political, social and military considerations are behind this claim.

The very sacred reason manifested as a firm belief prevailing in China is that Taiwan has been Chinese territory "from time immemorial" and that, despite a Japanese colonial interlude from 1895 to 1945, Taiwan would have been reunited with the motherland if the Korean War did not break out and its unintended consequences. China's White Paper on Taiwan, despite several versions, has always shared one unvarying, yet sentimental understanding, that while China might have experienced invasions, disunity and dynastic change during the last 5000 years, it has always reverted to a unified state. To listen to the Chinese ordinary people and its leaders, the Taiwan issue transcends logic and reason. One will repeatedly hear more extreme elements within the CCP and PLA saying that China will pay any price, even sacrifice its economic development to prevent a permanent separation and to achieve the final goal of the national reunification. Judged from official and unofficial statements from China, Chinese policy towards Taiwan is not a policy, but a firm attitude, a Chinese holy summon and an emotional, nationalistic determination that leaves no room for compromise. On August 7, 2003, in his letter to the UN Secretary-General enjoying him for refuse Taiwan's entry into the United nations, Chinese Ambassador to the UN, Wang Guangya made this emotional statement: "Our Taiwan compatriots are members of the big family of the Chinese nation." "The people of Taiwan are our compatriots of the same blood. No one in the world cares more about their health and safety than us."²⁹ This fixation on the cycle of Chinese history has made the recovery of Taiwan seem like a sacred mission. This is especially so after the return of Hong Kong in 1997 and Macao in 1999. For the Chinese nationalists and political elites, Taiwan remains the last vestige of a century of Chinese humiliation at the hands of Western and Japanese colonial powers.

China embraces itself with its most righteous mission as to maintain its territorial integrity and national security. The Chinese people and their political elites firmly believe that the implication of Taiwan's independence is unimaginably dangerous. To the elite society in China, Taiwan's

²⁷ Michael D. Swaine, "Don't Demonize China: Rhetoric About Its Military Might Doesn't Reflect Reality," *The Washington Post*, May 18, 1997, p.12.

²⁸ The Chinese primer during Jiang Zeming's administration, Zhu Rongji, made the statement before Taiwan second direct Presidential election in 1999.

²⁹ Letter to the UN Secretary-General from the Chinese Ambassador to the UN Wang Guangya. *China Daily*. (online). Available:

<http://www.chinaembassy-canada.org/chn/ziliao/default.html>. (August 8, 2003)

permanent separation means nothing but a lead domino in the dissolution of mother China. In other words, if Taiwan is allowed to remain separate indefinitely, this will entail an example for potentially rebellious parts of China such as Tibet, Xinjiang, perhaps Inner Mongolia and even Hong Kong. That is to say, Taiwan's future as a part of China is perceived to be inseparable from the integrity of a unified Chinese state. There should be no doubt that the Chinese military is to “Saddamise” any effort in that direction.

During World War II, Taiwan was a launch pad for Japanese imperialism. In the 1950s and 1960s, it was a key link in the US strategy of containing China. Taiwan retains strong commercial ties with Japan and has established close economic and security links with the US. China fears that if it surrenders on Taiwan, it will cede strategic advantage to the US and Japan, its chief competitors in a triangular great power game in Northeast Asia. Furthermore, despite the fact that by the late 1970's after China and the U.S. established their diplomatic relations, China no longer worried about Taiwan as a military threat previously backed by the U.S. The Chinese elites, however, has often taken seriously American General MacArthur's famous description of Taiwan as “ an unsinkable aircraft carrier” off the coast of China.

On August 28, 1950, Commander-in-Chief of the UN forces in the Korean war, General Douglas MacArthur made it clear that the US and its allies would use the arc-shape island chain, formed from the Aleutian Island to the Mariana Island, as to control the area from the Pacific Ocean to the coast of Asia. His intention was to prevent Taiwan falling into the hands of China, which was hostile to the United States. The Chinese interpreted MacArthur's words as to assume that the US gave Taiwan such a high strategic position and excessively exaggerated Taiwan's role as evidenced of a hegemonic mindset of taking a hand in Taiwan and interfering in China's internal affairs. Thus, even today, to some extent, China still presumes that as long as Taiwan is included in the proposed US-Japan theater missile defense (TMD) system, it would be a case of using “part of China against the rest of China”.³⁰ By undercutting China's missile leverage, it would not only boost pro-independence sentiment in Taiwan, but combined with an national missile defense (NMD) system, it would also serve to neutralize the deterrent value of China's strategic rocket force, however much it may be viewed as a purely self-defense move, China presently has only about two dozen missiles with the range to reach the U.S., whereas the latter has thousands of missiles capable of hitting China. Beijing fears it will be exposed to US intimidation if China's small strategic rocket force is rendered useless by a US national missile defense that shields the US and allows the US to retain its strategic arsenal intact. A theatre missile defense that similarly protects Taiwan would neutralize what Beijing regards as its only credible military leverage over Taiwan and the latter's drift towards independence. In his speech at the Australian Defense College on November 7, 2000, Chinese PLA Deputy Chief of Staff Xiong Guangkai said that a US TMD for Taiwan would amount to a new version of the 1954 US-Taiwan Mutual Security Treaty. The treaty was abrogated in 1979 as a pre-condition to the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the US.³¹ For strategic and geographical thinking, China has come to see Taiwan as a critical link in a chain of containment that begins with US

³⁰ Hu Qihua, “Missile system threatens relations,” *China Daily*, August 16, 2000, p. 8.

³¹ General Xiong Guangkai, address to the Australian Defense College, Canberra, November 7, 2000. For more information, see Bonnie S. Glaser's Conference Summary on "China and the United States: Long-Term Visions of Regional Security" in *Comparative Connection, Pacific Forum CSIS* . (online). Available: <http://www.csis.org/pacfor/annual/appendix2000.html>. (December 25, 2000)

forces in Korea and Japan and runs south through Taiwan to the Philippines, Thailand, and Australia, nations with which the United States has security treaties. Taiwan sits astride the two northern channels into the South China Sea, most of which China claims as internal waters. The United States is committed through the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) to provide Taiwan with sufficient arms to defend itself. Beijing seeks to break that chain and to project power into the Pacific.³² China is longing to bring Taiwan into the PRC as a crucial step in establishing Chinese influence over East Asia and in driving the United States from the Western Pacific.

Part II: Holding Beijing accountable and Oblige China to Adhere to International Norms

China's successes come at a steep price in terms of the suppression of human rights, limited or controlled religious practices, and the deprivation of individual political freedom. More ever, it is questionable that internal demand in China will ever force social change and political reform. The US should have learned its lesson from its years of encouraging greater openness in China and promoting political liberalization; these approaches failed. It is time to recognize that failure and take a new path forward.

2. Medium-Term (3-7 Years) Strategy: challenging China while sharing responsibility
 - A. US accommodates China's pursuit of an "independent foreign policy of peace"
 - B. US allows China to shoulder regional and global responsibility as a legitimate economic power
 - C. US publicly recognizes China's contribution to global progress and the public good
 - D. US avoids overestimating China's political influence and military might

Beijing has stated its intention to continue to pursue "an independent foreign policy of peace" (Yang, 2018), and has maintained that it "never seeks hegemony" (Li, 2017). An underlying principal of China's foreign policy is to remain unaligned with any other major power. China's foreign policy of peace stresses that strong nations should not impose their values on weaker nations, and that one state has no right to interfere in the internal affairs of another. Further, Beijing assures its neighboring states that China's "economic development and growing military might, will not turn the country into a regional bully" (Nathan, 2009). There is every reason for the US to accommodate China's proclaimed foreign policy of peace. Holding Beijing accountable to its own, self-proclaimed principles would be a skillful tactic by which to oblige China to adhere to international norms, in a manner that achieves the US's long-term strategic objectives.

Following the recent rise of US populism, and paired with the US's withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord, UNESCO, UN Arms Trade Treaty, UNGRC, INF, and simultaneous passage of a bill to leave the United Nations, China has seized an opportunity to become a policy-defining

³² For a full discussion of the PRC's position on Taiwan, see Appendix IV: PRC "The One China Principle and the Taiwan Issue". This White Paper, like previous ones, argued that the Taiwan issue, left over from the Chinese civil war, should be peacefully settled under the one-China principle, in which Taiwan was a part of China. The United States should not interfere in China's internal affairs by selling weapons to Taiwan, strengthening the Taiwan Relations Act, or including Taiwan in any future theater missile defense system because these acts would violate China's sovereignty and territory and force China to use force to resolve the divided China problem. Beijing also urged the Taiwan authorities to negotiate, as soon as possible, to resolve the Chinese civil war and not "obstruct the reunification" of China.

voice of wisdom on the world stage. This is a positive development on China's part to engage itself in regional and global affairs. The absence of the United States from these global forums will not necessarily lead to a power transition, however. Rather, China is stepping in to shoulder its responsibility as a world leader. China's transformative diplomacy won it applause when it "championed the Paris Agreement on climate change, defended the international community's nuclear deal with Iran and expanded trade liberalization within Asia" (An, 2017).

Within the region, China's role is in high demand, especially regarding North Korean nuclear issues. Because no multi-national comprehensive package was put together for the Trump-Kim summits, there was no real way to gauge North Korea's willingness to cut a deal. After more than a year of clumsy head-of-state diplomacy, North Korea is back to publicizing its missile tests. The fallout from the unprecedented US-DPRK Summits affords an unexpected but compelling strategic alternative that the US can turn to its advantage: The US should now propose that China shoulder the responsibility of handling the North Korean issue.

China is in a unique geopolitical situation because of its geographical proximity to both North Korea and Russia. Any US strategic assessments regarding military options in the Korean Peninsula have always caused anxiety in Washington for fear of running the risk of escalating to all-out war in the region. By exercising its leverage, China could ensure that the DPRK will submit its nuclear weapons to international supervision. China's curbing of North Korea's nuclear ambitions would ensure a much safer international community and safeguard US interests in East Asia. At the same time, the US could congratulate China on a job well done, a symbol of respect that China would seek as a global power.

Part III: US and China to Pursuit a Positive-Sum Game

3. Long Term (7-10 Years) Strategy: integrating China to secure a rules-based global order
 - A. US works with China to facilitate new rules to strengthen the global order
 - B. US curbs China's growing geopolitical influence
 - C. US refrains from military actions with China
 - D. US curtails China's anti-America alliance with Russia

Early 21st century China saw both record economic growth and more political/military appetite for continental disputes with neighboring countries. For political leaders in Beijing, it is no longer enough to emphasize domestic economic growth. Many ordinary Chinese would argue that the days of having to accept foreign designs for their homeland are over. China's Belt and Road Initiative serves as its roadmap for the future and reveals China's ambition and unprecedented confidence.

China's ambition today is to enhance its hard-earned international status, and to come out from the shadows of what it views as a century-long, Western-imposed humiliation. Similar to Kaiser Wilhelm II's *Weltpolitik* that inspired Germany's desire for a "place in the sun" as a global hegemon, Xi's *Chinese Dream* aims to transform China into a global power that preserves its "Mandate of Heaven" tradition within the East Asian cultural sphere, and conceives a new capacity (the "divine right of kings") through its geopolitical agenda, expressed in Xi's call for a "New Long March."

The liberal international world order has remained largely functional for the past 74 years, despite the interruption of the two World Wars. China has benefited greatly from the liberal international order since the US helped integrate the country into the global economy. The irony is that Beijing, while exploring the liberal international order, is inclined to reject the established rules, insert political influence through its economic power, and attempt to dominate arenas traditionally in the US sphere of influence.

There are some striking similarities between British-German relations in the latter 19th Century, and United States-China relations today. If so, just like the British-German relations of the past, current US-China relations are likely nothing but a zero-sum game. This is the largest challenge that the US faces in the years ahead. It is vital that the US remains confident as a global leader and that it protects the liberal international order in the face of an increasingly assertive China. Simultaneously, the US must also avoid overestimating China's power.

At the same time the US acknowledges China's rightful place on the global stage as a result of its economic success, it must also be acutely conscious of the fact that China is a pro at exaggerating its own power. It is too early to tell how Xi's *China Dream* will turn out, if China will realize its "Project of the Century" through its Belt and Road Initiative, and where the latest "New Long March" will take China on the global map. It is in the US's and everyone else's interest for the "largest developing country," as China calls itself, to become a developed economy, and to engage in pursuit of the public good. The current liberal international order will ensure that China continues to reap its own economic harvest. The United States should work with China to facilitate the development of new rules that will strengthen that global order.

From a realpolitik perspective, economic challenge from China is not a threat to the US. A democratic United States will only become more motivated, innovative, and prosperous as a result of such challenges. It would be a strategic misstep for the US to engage in any military action against China without exhausting multilevel diplomatic strategies. It is a good thing for China and the US to stand toe-to-toe in competition in pursuit of a positive-sum game, and to avoid entirely the zero-sum game scenario. Strong US leadership on the global stage will curtail Chinese growing influence. And, China's success must be based on its continued commitment to peaceful development and win-win cooperation. "The truth is, the more China develops, the more contribution it can make to the world" (Wang, 2018). By encouraging China to share responsibility and leadership on regional and global issues, the US will effectively mold China into the responsible stakeholder that the United States has long urged it to be, advance the global economy, and avert the certain dangers of a stronger China-Russia alliance.

Part IV: Conclusion: US Nurtures a Developing China with Grand Strategy

The United States must have a comprehensive, overarching strategy to guide long-term US-China relations in order to avert two equally dangerous possible scenarios: (1) China's rising, with the US as its rival and Russia as its ally; (2) China's economic collapse, with renewed resentment against the US, and accompanying global economic crisis. Nothing would be worse for the world than for the US to find itself escalating towards war with China out of a misplaced fear of China's growing power on the international stage—the so-called "Thucydides' Trap" (Allison, 2015). Instead, the US must intentionally and purposefully nurture a developing China with its socialist system under authoritarian rule, as a global partner serving US strategic

objectives. Successfully implementing such an overarching strategy for US-China relations demands a flexible rather than reactive approach that will advance US interests across the spectrum of cooperation, competition, and conflict throughout the coming decade.

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