## 1

#### Ethics must begin a priori and the meta-ethic is bindingness.

#### [1] Uncertainty – our experiences are inaccessible to others which allows people to say they don’t experience the same, however a priori principles are universally applied to all agents.

#### [2] Bindingness – I can keep asking “why should I follow this” which results in skep since obligations are predicated on ignorantly accepting rules. Only reason solves since asking “why reason?” requires reason which is self-justified.

#### That means we must universally will maxims— any non-universalizable norm justifies someone’s ability to impede on your ends.

#### Thus, the standard is consistency with the categorical imperative.

#### Prefer –

#### All other frameworks collapse—non-Kantian theories source obligations in extrinsically good objects, but that presupposes the goodness of the rational will.

#### Negate:

#### [1] A model of freedom mandates a market-oriented approach to space—that negates

Broker 20 [(Tyler, work has been published in the Gonzaga Law Review, the Albany Law Review and the University of Memphis Law Review.) “Space Law Can Only Be Libertarian Minded,” Above the Law, 1-14-20, <https://abovethelaw.com/2020/01/space-law-can-only-be-libertarian-minded/>] TDI

The impact on human daily life from a transition to the virtually unlimited resource reality of space cannot be overstated. However, when it comes to the law, a minimalist, dare I say libertarian, approach appears as the only applicable system. In the words of NASA, “2020 promises to be a big year for space exploration.” Yet, as Rand Simberg points out in Reason magazine, it is actually private American investment that is currently moving space exploration to “a pace unseen since the 1960s.” According to Simberg, due to this increase in private investment “We are now on the verge of getting affordable private access to orbit for large masses of payload and people.” The impact of that type of affordable travel into space might sound sensational to some, but in reality the benefits that space can offer are far greater than any benefit currently attributed to any major policy proposal being discussed at the national level. The sheer amount of resources available within our current reach/capabilities simply speaks for itself. However, although those new realities will, as Simberg says, “bring to the fore a lot of ideological issues that up to now were just theoretical,” I believe it will also eliminate many economic and legal distinctions we currently utilize today. For example, the sheer number of resources we can already obtain in space means that in the rapidly near future, the distinction between a nonpublic good or a public good will be rendered meaningless. In other words, because the resources available within our solar system exist in such quantities, all goods will become nonrivalrous in their consumption and nonexcludable in their distribution. This would mean government engagement in the public provision of a nonpublic good, even at the trivial level, or what Kevin Williamson defines as socialism, is rendered meaningless or impossible. In fact, in space, I fail to see how any government could even try to legally compel collectivism in the way Simberg fears. Similar to many economic distinctions, however, it appears that many laws, both the good and the bad, will also be rendered meaningless as soon as we begin to utilize the resources within our solar system. For example, if every human being is given access to the resources that allows them to replicate anything anyone else has, or replace anything “taken” from them instantly, what would be the point of theft laws? If you had virtually infinite space in which you can build what we would now call luxurious livable quarters, all without exploiting human labor or fragile Earth ecosystems when you do it, what sense would most property, employment, or commercial law make? Again, this is not a pipe dream, no matter how much our population grows for the next several millennia, the amount of resources within our solar system can sustain such an existence for every human being. Rather than panicking about the future, we should try embracing it, or at least meaningfully preparing for it. Currently, the Outer Space Treaty, or as some call it “the Magna Carta of Space,” is silent on the issue of whether private individuals or corporate entities can own territory in space. Regardless of whether governments allow it, however, private citizens are currently obtaining the ability to travel there, and if human history is any indicator, private homesteading will follow, flag or no flag. We Americans know this is how a Wild West starts, where most regulation becomes the impractical pipe dream. But again, this would be a Wild West where the exploitation of human labor and fragile Earth ecosystem makes no economic sense, where every single human can be granted access to resources that even the wealthiest among us now would envy, and where innovation and imagination become the only things we would recognize as currency. Only a libertarian-type system, that guarantees basic individual rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness could be valued and therefore human fidelity to a set of laws made possible, in such an existence.

#### [2] Banning private space appropriation inhibits the sale and use of spacecraft and fuel- that’s a form of restricting the free economic choices of individuals

**Richman 12**, Sheldon. “The free market doesn’t need government regulation.” Reason, August 5, 2012. // AHS RG

Order grows from market forces. But where do **market forces** come from? They **are the result of human action. Individuals select ends and act to achieve them by adopting suitable means.** Since means are scarce and ends are abundant, **individuals economize in order to accomplish more rather than less.** And they always seek to exchange lower values for higher values (as they see them) and never the other way around. In a world of scarcity, tradeoffs are unavoidable, so one aims to trade up rather than down. (One’s trading partner does the same.) **The result of this**, along with other **features of human action**, and the world at large **is what we call market forces. But really, it is just men and women acting rationally in the world.**

## 2

#### Interpretation: “Private entities” is a generic bare plural. The aff may not defend that a subset of nations ban the appropriation of outer space.

Nebel 19. [Jake Nebel is an assistant professor of philosophy at the University of Southern California and executive director of Victory Briefs. He writes a lot of this stuff lol – duh.] “Genericity on the Standardized Tests Resolution.” Vbriefly. August 12, 2019. <https://www.vbriefly.com/2019/08/12/genericity-on-the-standardized-tests-resolution/?fbclid=IwAR0hUkKdDzHWrNeqEVI7m59pwsnmqLl490n4uRLQTe7bWmWDO_avWCNzi14> TG

Both distinctions are important. Generic resolutions can’t be affirmed by specifying particular instances. But, since generics tolerate exceptions, plan-inclusive counterplans (PICs) do not negate generic resolutions.

Bare plurals are typically used to express generic generalizations. But there are two important things to keep in mind. First, generic generalizations are also often expressed via other means (e.g., definite singulars, indefinite singulars, and bare singulars). Second, and more importantly for present purposes, bare plurals can also be used to express existential generalizations. For example, “Birds are singing outside my window” is true just in case there are some birds singing outside my window; it doesn’t require birds in general to be singing outside my window.

So, what about “colleges and universities,” “standardized tests,” and “undergraduate admissions decisions”? Are they generic or existential bare plurals? On other topics I have taken great pains to point out that their bare plurals are generic—because, well, they are. On this topic, though, I think the answer is a bit more nuanced. Let’s see why.

“Colleges and universities” is a generic bare plural. I don’t think this claim should require any argument, when you think about it, but here are a few reasons.

First, ask yourself, honestly, whether the following speech sounds good to you: “Eight colleges and universities—namely, those in the Ivy League—ought not consider standardized tests in undergraduate admissions decisions. Maybe other colleges and universities ought to consider them, but not the Ivies. Therefore, in the United States, colleges and universities ought not consider standardized tests in undergraduate admissions decisions.” That is obviously not a valid argument: the conclusion does not follow. Anyone who sincerely believes that it is valid argument is, to be charitable, deeply confused. But the inference above would be good if “colleges and universities” in the resolution were existential. By way of contrast: “Eight birds are singing outside my window. Maybe lots of birds aren’t singing outside my window, but eight birds are. Therefore, birds are singing outside my window.” Since the bare plural “birds” in the conclusion gets an existential reading, the conclusion follows from the premise that eight birds are singing outside my window: “eight” entails “some.” If the resolution were existential with respect to “colleges and universities,” then the Ivy League argument above would be a valid inference. Since it’s not a valid inference, “colleges and universities” must be a generic bare plural.

Second, “colleges and universities” fails the [upward-entailment test](https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/generics/#IsolGeneInte) for existential uses of bare plurals. Consider the sentence, “Lima beans are on my plate.” This sentence expresses an existential statement that is true just in case there are some lima beans on my plate. One test of this is that it entails the more general sentence, “Beans are on my plate.” Now consider the sentence, “Colleges and universities ought not consider the SAT.” (To isolate “colleges and universities,” I’ve eliminated the other bare plurals in the resolution; it cannot plausibly be generic in the isolated case but existential in the resolution.) This sentence does not entail the more general statement that educational institutions ought not consider the SAT. This shows that “colleges and universities” is generic, because it fails the upward-entailment test for existential bare plurals.

Third, “colleges and universities” fails the adverb of quantification test for existential bare plurals. Consider the sentence, “Dogs are barking outside my window.” This sentence expresses an existential statement that is true just in case there are some dogs barking outside my window. One test of this appeals to the drastic change of meaning caused by inserting any adverb of quantification (e.g., always, sometimes, generally, often, seldom, never, ever). You cannot add any such adverb into the sentence without drastically changing its meaning. To apply this test to the resolution, let’s again isolate the bare plural subject: “Colleges and universities ought not consider the SAT.” Adding generally (“Colleges and universitiesz generally ought not consider the SAT”) or ever (“Colleges and universities ought not ever consider the SAT”) result in comparatively minor changes of meaning. (Note that this test doesn’t require there to be no change of meaning and doesn’t have to work for every adverb of quantification.) This strongly suggests what we already know: that “colleges and universities” is generic rather than existential in the resolution.

#### It applies to “private entities” – adding “generally” to the rez doesn’t substantially change its meaning and the rez doesn’t entail that all entities ought to ban private appropriation

#### Violation: They spec china

#### Net benefits -

#### [1] Limits – 195 recognized countries plus combinations and specific entities within countries makes negating impossible especially with no unifying disads against different policies, implementation and regulation procedures

#### [2] Precision outweighs – it determines which interps your ballot can endorse by providing the only salient focal point for debates—if their interp is not premised on the text of the resolution, its benefits are irrelevant to the question of topicality since it fails to interpret the topic. Plan affs just lead to cheatier pics anyways since the neg has to default to generics

#### DTD on T-- indicts their ability to read the aff and the debate shouldn’t have happened to begin w if the aff was abusive

#### No rvis – illogical and baiting

#### Competing Interps on T since its binary and a question of models—reasonability arbitrary

## Case

### Adv 1

#### Framing issue: any risk we win the impact turn is sufficient to solve the first advantage – China would break their alliance with Russia and pursue coop rather than aggressive space militarization.

#### It’s also just a PSA about China and Russia pushing the United States to agree to faulty treaties – that still happens post plan, probably more, because China would want to close the US out of cheap avenues to space weaponry.

#### 1] Russia-China space coop is unthinkable

Luzin 17 [Specialist in international relations,expert on the Russian Armed Forces. Political scientist (PhD). Senior lecturer, Faculty of History and Political Science, Perm University. 2013 – 2014 – fellow at the Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO, Russian Academy of Sciences). 2012-2013 expert in PIR-Center (Moscow), assistant to editor-in-chief of Security Index Journal. Space Power: What is Russia’s Military Strategy in Outer Space? October 25, 2017. intersectionproject.eu/article/security/space-power-what-russias-military-strategy-outer-space]

Truth be told, the Kremlin may harbor hopes of cooperation with China. However, it remains unthinkable that such a degree of trust between the two countries, making cooperation in terms of military outer space possible, could exist. Cooperation in the area of military satellite development and production is very limited, even between the US and its NATO allies. Against this backdrop, the situation concerning human capital outflow is more easily managed: the Kremlin may try to stem the flow by imposing new restrictive measures on Russian citizens.

#### 2] No China space war – the only scenario for conflict is Earthbound – Chinese military plans prove

Cheng 17 [Dean Cheng, Senior Research Fellow, Asian Studies Center, Davis Institute for National Security and Foreign Policy Heritage. The U.S.-Japan Alliance and Deterring Gray Zone Coercion in the Maritime, Cyber, and Space Domains. Chapter 6. Space Deterrence, the U.S.-Japan Alliance, and Asian Security: A U.S. Perspective. Rand Corporation. 2017]

But while there may be clashes in space, the actual source of any Sino-American conflict will remain earthbound, most likely stemming from tensions associated with the situation in the East China Sea, the Taiwan Strait, or the South China Sea. This suggests that U.S. and allied decisionmakers (both in Asia and Europe) should be focusing on deterring aggression in general, rather than concentrating primarily on trying to forestall actions in space. Indeed, there is little evidence that Chinese military planners are contemplating a conflict limited to space. While there may be actions against space systems, Chinese writings suggest that they would either be limited in nature, as part of a signaling and coercive effort, or else would be integrated with broader terrestrial military operations.

#### 3] No space war – prefer data over political rhetoric

Klimas interviewing Weeden 18 [Brian Weeden, smart space guy. Is the space war threat being hyped? August 3, 2018. https://www.politico.com/story/2018/08/03/space-war-threat-hype-force-760781]

There’s been increasing rhetoric...about the militarization of space and the potential for conflicts on Earth to extend into space. That’s driven in part by reports about anti-satellite testing in Russia and China...The report really grew out of our frustration at the level of publicly available information on this topic.

A lot of what you get are public statements from military leadership or politicians, or sometimes news articles talking about something and it’s really hard to get down to details and...sort through what might be real, what might be hype. Our goal was to dig into the open source material and see what we could determine from a factual standpoint was really going on -- what types of capabilities were being developed and how might they be used in a future conflict.

Ultimately we hoped that would lead to a more informed debate about what U.S. strategy should be to address those threats.

What sort of feedback have you gotten so far?

A lot of the feedback has been either informal or private because a lot of the issues we talk about, people in the government research using classified materials. So it’s difficult for them to give detailed feedback.

In general, the feedback we’ve gotten has been pretty positive. People have said they like the fact that this sort of stuff is being put in the public domain and encouraged us to continue.

Were your findings better or worse than the picture public discourse paints?

In general, it’s a little bit better. A lot of political rhetoric and news stories focus on the most extreme examples, so using kinetic weapons to blow up satellites. While there is research and development going on to develop those capabilities, what we found is there’s yet to be any publicly-known example of them being used.

What is being used and what seems to be of the most utility are the non-kinetic things, like jamming and cyber attacks. The good news is we have yet to see the most destructive kinetic attacks that can cause really harmful long-term damage to the space environment, but unfortunately we are seeing non-kinetic attacks being used, and that’s likely to continue.

#### 4] Space weapon deployment doesn’t cause an arms race or increase chance of war

Lopez 12 [LAURA DELGADO LO´ PEZ, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Arlington, Virginia. Astropolitics. "Predicting an Arms Race in Space: Problematic Assumptions for Space Arms Control." https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14777622.2012.647391]

The previous discussion demonstrates that although a globalized space arms race could follow U.S. deployment of space weapons, it is also plausible and more likely that it may not happen at all. As Mueller states: ‘‘In the end, most of the inevitability arguments are weak.’’62 The assumptions discussed here break the argument into a series of debatable maxims that other scholars have also considered. Hays, for instance, counters the inevitability argument by pointing out that previous ASAT tests did not have this purported destabilizing effect, to which we can add that even after the Chinese ASAT test, neither Russia nor the United States, who would be both capable and more politically likely to launch space weapons, moved forward in that direction.63 Although some may draw attention to the recent wake-up calls in order to underline a sense of urgency, one should also recall that when it seemed truly inevitable before, it did not happen either. In his detailed account of military space developments from 1945 to 1984, Paul Stares described how superpowers’ assessment of the value of space weapons shifted, with a ‘‘hiatus in testing’’ reflecting the attractiveness of satellites as military targets.64 In this changed landscape, Stares also assumed the inevitability argument, claiming that ‘‘the chances of space remaining a ‘sanctuary’ [absence of weapons] into the 21st century appear today to be remote.’’65 Perhaps the conditions are more conducive now, but the important point to be reiterated is that the outcome is not inevitable, and that any such prediction must be undertaken with caution. One of the most prominent theorists to propose an alternate picture and pair it with an aggressive pro-space weapons stance is Everett Dolman. In his Astropolitik theory, Dolman summarizes the steps that the United States must take to assume control of space, particularly through withdrawal from the current space regime.66 This move, he argues, would benefit not only the United States, but also the rest of the world, since having a democracy controlling space is a catalyst for peace.67 Elsewhere, he writes: ‘‘Only a liberal world hegemon would be able to practice the restraint necessary to maintain its preponderant balance of hegemonic power without resorting to an attempt at empire.’’68 Accordingly, he believes that this strategy would be ‘‘perceived correctly as an attempt at continuing U.S. hegemony,’’69 but that other countries, correctly assessing U.S. leadership in space, would not seek to deploy their own systems. Having the ability to prevent the stationing of foreign weapons systems in space, he writes, ‘‘makes the possibility of large-scale space war and a military space race less likely, not more.’’70 In fact, he says, ‘‘to suggest that the inevitable result is a space arms competition is the worst kind of mirror-imaging.’’71 Dolman argues that the weaponization of space by the United States would ‘‘decrease the likelihood of an arms race by shifting spending away from conventional weapons systems,’’ which would reduce U.S. capabilities in territorial occupation and would thus be perceived as less threatening to other countries.72

#### 5] No heg impact

* empirics and political psychology prove US posture is unrelated to great power peace
* other factors aren’t accounted for in their analysis

Fettweis 17 [Christopher Fettweis, associate professor of political science at Tulane University. Unipolarity, Hegemony, and the New Peace. May 8, 2017. http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/09636412.2017.1306394?needAccess=true]

After three years in the White House, Ronald Reagan had learned something surprising: “Many people at the top of the Soviet hierarchy were genuinely afraid of America and Americans,” he wrote in his autobiography. He continued: “Perhaps this shouldn’t have surprised me, but it did … I’d always felt that from our deeds it must be clear to anyone that Americans were a moral people who starting at the birth of our nation had always used our power only as a force for good in the world…. During my first years in Washington, I think many of us took it for granted that the Russians, like ourselves, considered it unthinkable that the United States would launch a first strike against them.” 100 Reagan is certainly not alone in believing in the essential benevolent image of his nation. While it is common for actors to attribute negative motivations to the behavior of others, it is exceedingly difficult for them to accept that anyone could interpret their actions in negative ways. Leaders are well aware of their own motives and tend to assume that their peaceful intentions are obvious and transparent.

Both strains of the hegemonic-stability explanation assume not only that US power is benevolent, but that others perceive it that way. Hegemonic stability depends on the perceptions of other states to be successful; it has no hope to succeed if it encounters resistance from the less powerful members of the system, or even if they simply refuse to follow the rules. Relatively small police forces require the general cooperation of large communities to have any chance of establishing order. They must perceive the sheriff as just, rational, and essentially nonthreatening. The lack of balancing behavior in the system, which has been puzzling to many realists, seems to support the notion of widespread perceptions of benevolent hegemony.101 Were they threatened by the order constructed by the United States, the argument goes, smaller states would react in ways that reflected their fears. Since internal and external balancing accompanied previous attempts to achieve hegemony, the absence of such behavior today suggests that something is different about the US version.

Hegemonic-stability theorists purport to understand the perceptions of others, at times better than those others understand themselves. Complain as they may at times, other countries know that the United States is acting in the common interest. Objections to unipolarity, though widespread, are not “very seriously intended,” wrote Kagan, since “the truth about America’s dominant role in the world is known to most observers. And the truth is that the benevolent hegemony exercised by the United States is good for a vast portion of the world’s population.” 102 In the 1990s, Russian protests regarding NATO expansion—though nearly universal—were not taken seriously, since US planners believed the alliance’s benevolent intentions were apparent to all. Sagacious Russians understood that expansion would actually be beneficial, since it would bring stability to their western border.103 President Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher were caught off guard by the hostility of their counterparts regarding the issue at a summit in Budapest in December 1994.104 Despite warnings from the vast majority of academic and policy experts about the likely Russian reaction and overall wisdom of expansion itself, the administration failed to anticipate Moscow’s position.105 The Russians did not seem to believe American assurances that expansion would actually be good for them. The United States overestimated the degree to which others saw it as benevolent.

Once again, the culture of the United States might make its leaders more vulnerable to this misperception. The need for positive self-regard appears to be particularly strong in North American societies compared to elsewhere.106 Western egos tend to be gratified through self-promotion rather than humility, and independence rather than interdependence. Americans are more likely to feel good if they are unique rather than a good cog in society’s wheel, and uniquely good. The need to be perceived as benevolent, though universal, may well exert stronger encouragement for US observers to project their perceptions onto others.

The United States almost certainly frightens others more than its leaders perceive. A quarter of the 68,000 respondents to a 2013 Gallup poll in sixty-five countries identified the United States as the “greatest threat to world peace,” which was more than three times the total for the second-place country (Pakistan).107 The international community always has to worry about the potential for police brutality, even if it occurs rarely. Such ungratefulness tends to come as a surprise to US leaders. In 2003, Condoleezza Rice was dismayed to discover resistance to US initiatives in Iraq: “There were times,” she said later, “that it appeared that American power was seen to be more dangerous than, perhaps, Saddam Hussein.” 108 Both liberals and neoconservatives probably exaggerate the extent to which US hegemony is everywhere secretly welcomed; it is not just petulant resentment, but understandable disagreement with US policies, that motivates counterhegemonic beliefs and behavior.

To review, assuming for a moment that US leaders are subject to the same forces that affect every human being, they overestimate the amount of control they have over other actors, and are not as important to decisions made elsewhere as they believe themselves to be. And they probably perceive their own benevolence to be much greater than do others. These common phenomena all influence US beliefs in the same direction, and may well increase the apparent explanatory power of hegemony beyond what the facts would otherwise support. The United States is probably not as central to the New Peace as either liberals or neoconservatives believe.

In the end, what can be said about the relationship between US power and international stability? Probably not much that will satisfy partisans, and the pacifying virtue of US hegemony will remain largely an article of faith in some circles in the policy world. Like most beliefs, it will remain immune to alteration by logic and evidence. Beliefs rarely change, so debates rarely end.

For those not yet fully converted, however, perhaps it will be significant that corroborating evidence for the relationship is extremely hard to identify. If indeed hegemonic stability exists, it does so without leaving much of a trace. Neither Washington’s spending, nor its interventions, nor its overall grand strategy seem to matter much to the levels of armed conflict around the world (apart from those wars that Uncle Sam starts). The empirical record does not contain strong reasons to believe that unipolarity and the New Peace are related, and insights from political psychology suggest that hegemonic stability is a belief particularly susceptible to misperception. US leaders probably exaggerate the degree to which their power matters, and could retrench without much risk to themselves or the world around them. Researchers will need to look elsewhere to explain why the world has entered into the most peaceful period in its history.

The good news from this is that the New Peace will probably persist for quite some time, no matter how dominant the United States is, or what policies President Trump follows, or how much resentment its actions cause in the periphery. The people of the twenty-first century are likely to be much safer and more secure than any of their predecessors, even if many of them do not always believe it.

### Taiwan

#### I’ll concede that the US comes to defend Taiwan

#### War stays conventional.

Caitlin 1AC Talmadge 18, Associate Professor of Security Studies at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, November/December 2018, “Beijing’s Nuclear Option,” Foreign Affairs, Vol. 65, No. 5

As China’s power has grown in recent years, so, too, has the risk of war with the United States. Under President Xi Jinping, China has increased its political and economic pressure on Taiwan and built military installations on coral reefs in the South China Sea, fueling Washington’s fears that Chinese expansionism will threaten U.S. allies and influence in the region. U.S. destroyers have transited the Taiwan Strait, to loud protests from Beijing. American policymakers have wondered aloud whether they should send an aircraft carrier through the strait as well. Chinese fighter jets have intercepted U.S. aircraft in the skies above the South China Sea. Meanwhile, U.S. President Donald Trump has brought long-simmering economic disputes to a rolling boil. A war between the two countries remains unlikely, but the prospect of a military confrontation—resulting, for example, from a Chinese campaign against Taiwan—no longer seems as implausible as it once did. And the odds of such a confrontation going nuclear are higher than most policymakers and analysts think. Members of China’s strategic community tend to dismiss such concerns. Likewise, U.S. studies of a potential war with China often exclude nuclear weapons from the analysis entirely, treating them as basically irrelevant to the course of a conflict. Asked about the issue in 2015, Dennis Blair, the former commander of U.S. forces in the Indo-Pacific, estimated the likelihood of a U.S.-Chinese nuclear crisis as “somewhere between nil and zero.” This assurance is misguided. If deployed against China, the Pentagon’s preferred style of conventional warfare would be a potential recipe for nuclear escalation. Since the end of the Cold War, the United States’ signature approach to war has been simple: punch deep into enemy territory in order to rapidly knock out the opponent’s key military assets at minimal cost. But the Pentagon developed this formula in wars against Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Serbia, none of which was a nuclear power. China, by contrast, not only has nuclear weapons; it has also intermingled them with its conventional military forces, making it difficult to attack one without attacking the other. This means that a major U.S. military campaign targeting China’s conventional forces would likely also threaten its nuclear arsenal. Faced with such a threat, Chinese leaders could decide to use their nuclear weapons while they were still able to. As U.S. and Chinese leaders navigate a relationship fraught with mutual suspicion, they must come to grips with the fact that a conventional war could skid into a nuclear confrontation. Although this risk is not high in absolute terms, its consequences for the region and the world would be devastating. As long as the United States and China continue to pursue their current grand strategies, the risk is likely to endure. This means that leaders on both sides should dispense with the illusion that they can easily fight a limited war. They should focus instead on managing or resolving the political, economic, and military tensions that might lead to a conflict in the first place. A NEW KIND OF THREAT There are some reasons for optimism. For one, China has long stood out for its nonaggressive nuclear doctrine. After its first nuclear test, in 1964, China largely avoided the Cold War arms race, building a much smaller and simpler nuclear arsenal than its resources would have allowed. Chinese leaders have consistently characterized nuclear weapons as useful only for deterring nuclear aggression and coercion. Historically, this narrow purpose required only a handful of nuclear weapons that could ensure Chinese retaliation in the event of an attack. To this day, China maintains a “no first use” pledge, promising that it will never be the first to use nuclear weapons. The prospect of a nuclear conflict can also seem like a relic of the Cold War. Back then, the United States and its allies lived in fear of a Warsaw Pact offensive rapidly overrunning Europe. NATO stood ready to use nuclear weapons first to stalemate such an attack. Both Washington and Moscow also consistently worried that their nuclear forces could be taken out in a bolt-from-the-blue nuclear strike by the other side. This mutual fear increased the risk that one superpower might rush to launch in the erroneous belief that it was already under attack. Initially, the danger of unauthorized strikes also loomed large. In the 1950s, lax safety procedures for U.S. nuclear weapons stationed on NATO soil, as well as minimal civilian oversight of U.S. military commanders, raised a serious risk that nuclear escalation could have occurred without explicit orders from the U.S. president. The good news is that these Cold War worries have little bearing on U.S.-Chinese relations today. Neither country could rapidly overrun the other’s territory in a conventional war. Neither seems worried about a nuclear bolt from the blue. And civilian political control of nuclear weapons is relatively strong in both countries. What remains, in theory, is the comforting logic of mutual deterrence: in a war between two nuclear powers, neither side will launch a nuclear strike for fear that its enemy will respond in kind. The bad news is that one other trigger remains: a conventional war that threatens China’s nuclear arsenal. Conventional forces can threaten nuclear forces in ways that generate pressures to escalate—especially when ever more capable U.S. conventional forces face adversaries with relatively small and fragile nuclear arsenals, such as China. If U.S. operations endangered or damaged China’s nuclear forces, Chinese leaders might come to think that Washington had aims beyond winning the conventional war—that it might be seeking to disable or destroy China’s nuclear arsenal outright, perhaps as a prelude to regime change. In the fog of war, Beijing might reluctantly conclude that limited nuclear escalation—an initial strike small enough that it could avoid full-scale U.S. retaliation—was a viable option to defend itself.

#### Wouldn’t go all out – it would stay conventional.

Natasha Kassam 20, Research Fellow in the Diplomacy and Public Opinion Program at the Lowy Institute, Bachelor of Laws (Hons I) and a Bachelor of International Studies from the University of Sydney, and Richard McGregor, Senior Fellow at the Lowy Institute, Former Fellow at the Wilson Center and Visiting Scholar at the Sigur Center at George Washington University, “Taiwan’s 2020 Elections”, Lowy Institute Report, 1/7/2020, https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/taiwan-s-2020-elections

Regionally, the conventional balance of military power is tipping towards China. The People’s Liberation Army has long equipped itself and planned for a cross-straits conflict. However, a full-frontal Chinese invasion of Taiwan remains unlikely in the near term. There are numerous factors that would deter such an invasion, including Taiwan’s unwelcoming geography and climate, the difficulties of staging an amphibious landing, the unknown appetite in the United States for intervention and Japan’s interests in the Taiwan Strait. Other military options which would be less risky, and potentially less disruptive to trade, include a targeted naval blockade.[36]

#### No US-China nuclear war – answers Chow and Kelley which has one line at the end about miscalc.

Shifrinson 2/8/19 [Joshua Shifrinson is an assistant professor of international relations at Boston University. The ‘new Cold War’ with China is way overblown. Here’s why. February 8, 2019. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2019/02/08/there-isnt-a-new-cold-war-with-china-for-these-4-reasons/?noredirect=on&utm\_term=.f8ca8195c4e4]

Is a new Cold War looming — or already present — between the United States and China? Many analysts argue that a combination of geopolitics, ideology and competing visions of “global order” are driving the two countries toward emulating the Soviet-U.S. rivalry that dominated world politics from 1947 through 1990.

But such concerns are overblown. Here are four big reasons why.

1. The historical backdrops of the two relationships are very different

When the Cold War began, the U.S.-Soviet relationship was fragile and tenuous. Bilateral diplomatic relations were barely a decade old, U.S. intervention in the Russian Revolution was a recent memory, and the Soviet Union had called for the overthrow of capitalist governments into the 1940s. Despite their Grand Alliance against Nazi Germany, the two countries shared few meaningful diplomatic, economic or institutional links.

In 2019, the situation between the United States and China is very different. Since the 1970s, diplomatic interactions, institutional ties and economic flows have all exploded. Although each side has criticized the other for domestic interference (such as U.S. demands for journalist access to Tibet and China’s espionage against U.S. corporations), these issues did not prevent cooperation on a host of other issues. Yes, there were tensions over the past decade, but these occurred against a generally cooperative backdrop.

2. Geography and powers’ nuclear postures suggest East Asia is more stable than Cold War-era Europe

The Cold War was shaped by an intense arms race, nuclear posturing and crises, especially in continental Europe. Given Europe’s political geography, the United States feared a “bolt from the blue” attack would allow the Soviet Union to conquer the continent. Accordingly, the United States prepared to defend Europe with conventional forces, and to deter Soviet aggrandizement using nuclear weapons.

Unsurprisingly, the Soviet Union also feared that the United States might attack and wanted to deter U.S. adventurism. Concerns that the other superpower might use force and that crises could quickly escalate colored Cold War politics.

Today, the United States and China spend proportionally far less on their militaries than the United States and the Soviet Union did. Though an arms race may be emerging, U.S. and Chinese nuclear postures are not nearly as large or threatening: Arsenals remain far below the size and scope witnessed in the Cold War, and are kept at a lower state of alert.

As for geography, East Asia is not primed for tensions akin to those in Cold War Europe. China can threaten to coerce its neighbors, but the water barriers separating China from most of Asia’s strategically important states make outright conquest significantly harder. Of course, as scholars such as Caitlin Talmadge and Avery Goldstein note, crises may still erupt, and each side may face pressures to escalate. Unlike the Cold War, however, U.S.-Chinese confrontations occur at sea with relatively limited forces and without clear territorial boundaries. This suggests there are countervailing factors that may give the two sides room to negotiate — and limit the speed with which a crisis unfolds.

3. The Cold War had just two major powers

The Cold War took place in a bipolar system, with the United States and Soviet Union uniquely powerful, compared with other nations. This dynamic often pushed the United States and the U.S.S.R. toward confrontation and contributed to more or less fixed alliances; moreover, it encouraged efforts to suppress prospective great powers, such as Germany.

In 2019, it’s not at all clear we are back to bipolarity. Analysts remain divided over whether the U.S. unipolar era is waning (or is already over) — and, if so, whether we are heading for a new period of bipolarity, modern-day multipolarity or something else. Regardless, most analysts accept that other countries will play a central role in East Asian security affairs.

Russia, for example, still benefits from legacy military investments, India is developing economically and militarily, and Japan is beginning to build highly capable military forces to complement its still-significant economic might. Even if these nations aren’t as powerful as the United States or China, their presence makes for more fluid diplomatic arrangements and more diffuse security concerns than during the U.S.-Soviet competition. The resulting security dynamics are therefore likely to look very different.

4. Ideology plays less of a role in U.S.-Chinese relations

Many people see the Cold War as an ideological contest between U.S.-backed liberalism and Soviet-backed communism. But that’s not the whole story.

The early 20th century saw liberalism, communism and fascism vie for ideological preeminence. With fascism defeated alongside Nazi Germany, the postwar stage was set for a struggle between communism and liberalism to reinforce the U.S.-Soviet contest. That each ideology claimed universal scope ensured that the ideologies served as rallying cries for Third World conflicts, which were subsequently associated with the U.S.-Soviet struggle.

The respective “ideologies” of the United States and China do not favor this type of contest today. Indeed, analysts calling for a hard-line stance against China have faced difficulties even identifying a coherent Chinese ideological alternative. And while some researchers claim that a nascent ideological contest pitting an “autocratic” China against the “liberal” United States is emerging, this narrative ignores the political contests that shape Chinese politics (and have parallels in U.S. politics). Autocracies and democracies often cooperate. And on one important ideological issue — how they organize their economic lives — China and the United States have both embraced economic growth via trade, the private sector and semi-free markets.

#### But, invasion triggers political backlash – induces a democratic transition.

Wang Mouzhou 17 – Pen name of a former NSA intelligence officer, 3-24-2017, (“What Happens After China Invades Taiwan?” The Diplomat, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/03/what-happens-after-china-invades-taiwan/>) Recut Justin

Let’s assume, hypothetically, that the People’s Republic of China (PRC) successfully conquers Taiwan. Most analyses of an attempted invasion consider only if the PRC could successfully subdue Taiwan. The consequences of an attempted invasion –even a tactically successful one – have received little thought, however. This analysis considers some likely consequences for the PRC if it attempts and/or completes an invasion of Taiwan. Likely consequences include: the direct human and economic expenditures of the invasion itself; the costs of garrisoning Taiwan; the PRC’s post-war diplomatic and economic isolation; and, finally, the significant and potentially destabilizing process of incorporating 23 million individuals into the PRC. It is still too soon to say if Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in Crimea and the Donbass produced a strategic defeat or victory for Russia. However, the elements that advantaged Russia vis-à-vis Ukraine will not avail themselves to the PRC in a cross-straits crisis. Invading Taiwan would prove highly dangerous and costly for Beijing. Incorporation of Taiwan into the PRC would prove to be, at best, a Pyrrhic victory if attempted in the near or medium term. The Invasion of Taiwan While the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) is a highly capable and formidable force, a conventional military invasion of Taiwan would prove highly costly in treasure and blood and could fail to achieve the Communist Party of China’s (CPC’s) objectives. Ship-to-shore and shore-to-shore landings are extremely hazardous for the invasion force. In the first Gulf War, American military planners were rumored to estimate that an amphibious invasion of Saddam Hussein-occupied Kuwait would cost up to 10,000 American lives, despite the considerable relative military superiority of U.S. forces. The Republic of China (ROC) possesses a much more sophisticated military than Hussein did in 1991 and, due to advances in anti-access area denial doctrine and capabilities, can impose asymmetric costs on an invader. Additionally, American forces (and, potentially, other actors) would impose punishing costs on any invasion force. A 2015 RAND study estimated that United States submarines alone could sink 41 percent of Chinese amphibious ships in a theoretical 2017 conflict. A direct invasion attempt by the PRC would likely lead to significant – and potentially massive – casualties for all involved actors, as well as a regional or even global economic depression. In the “best-case” scenario for the PRC, a successful invasion would still suffer substantial casualties and cost tens of billions of dollars. Moreover, the consequences of an invasion would persist, as health expenses and pensions would burden the Chinese state for decades (at a time when Chinese veterans are already protesting about unpaid pensions). An invasion and the one-child policy could exacerbate an already hellish social crisis for the mainland, as wounded and deceased veterans – often only children – would be unable to support their elderly parents and grandparents. Instead of a direct invasion, the PRC could employ a blockade or another form of so-called “asymmetrical warfare.” Russia used the tactics of asymmetric warfare to achieve short-term political objectives in Crimea, the Donbass, and, according to some reports, the 2016 United States presidential election. It may also potentially achieve the dissolution of the European Union and stimulate a worldwide financial crisis through its intervention in European elections. Leaving aside, for now, the wisdom of these actions, it is worth noting that the PRC’s invasion of Taiwan would confront an environment hostile to asymmetric means. Several factors aided Russia’s asymmetric/hybrid invasion of Ukraine: popular support in Crimea and the Donbass for close political ties with Russia; a significant number of former Russian (and Soviet) citizens and even veterans in the invaded territories, especially in Crimea; a largely ineffective opposing military force; and the element of surprise. A PRC invasion of Taiwan would confront much more challenging conditions. Few in Taiwan desire reunification with the CPC-dominated mainland: a 2014 public opinion poll by the ROC’s Mainland Affairs Council found that 84 percent of respondents on the island wanted to “maintain the status quo defined in a broader sense.” The PRC could surely count on some fifth-column support in the event of an invasion or asymmetric campaign but the reality is that most individuals in Taiwan fear PRC rule and would actively resist a reduction in their political freedoms and economic prosperity. Finally, the ROC’s military – and other militaries – are unlikely to be surprised by asymmetric warfare and would respond vigorously. Therefore, in the highly likely event of an asymmetric invasion’s failure, the CPC’s political leadership would have to face a hard choice: accept a massive symbolic defeat, which could jeopardize the Party’s legitimacy, or escalate an asymmetric operation into a full military invasion with all attendant risks. Garrison Island The costs of invading Taiwan could, perhaps surprisingly, pale in comparison to the costs of maintaining control over it. In the best-case scenario for the PRC, the island would fall with minimal damage to its physical (not to mention human) infrastructure. It is perhaps more realistic to expect that a PRC invasion would lead to catastrophic destruction of private property (much of it owned by mainland elites); severe damages to Taiwan’s transportation infrastructure, such as railroads, bridges, ports, airports, and metro systems; ecological devastation from landmines and unexploded ordinance; and, perhaps, an anti-Communist insurgency. As many Chinese officials and scholars like to point out (especially when they are upset at American actions), the United States has spent significant blood and treasure in Iraq and Afghanistan and has achieved relatively few results. An invasion of Taiwan could provide the PRC with an object lesson in the difficulties of counterinsurgency (for an excellent exposition on guerrilla war in the cross-strait context, see the CSBA’s 2014 “Hard ROC 2.0” report). It is extremely difficult to pacify an invaded region. Unlike, say, Crimea, individuals in Taiwan are quite likely to actively resist their occupiers. If the PRC successfully invades Taiwan, it will likely re-learn many of the hard lessons that Washington experienced in the first two decades of the 21st century. PRC planners should perhaps consider some unpleasant questions. Would ROC security forces be disbanded immediately upon conquest of the island? If so, does the PRC have sufficient financial resources to bribe former ROC soldiers and security officials from conducting an insurgency? If the PRC bribed former ROC soldiers and security officials, how would PLA veterans respond to enemy combatants receiving higher pensions? More broadly, given that Taiwan’s per capita PPP GDP is, at $49,400, over three times larger than the mainland’s per capita GDP, who would finance Taiwan’s reconstruction? Would these expenditures provoke or sharpen resentments on either or both sides of the strait? And how would the PRC handle Taiwan’s old political leadership? Would the PRC murder the old leadership, ensuring a massive backlash from the international community and the people on the island? Would the PLA merely imprison them, perhaps creating a sustained, symbolic threat to the Party? Or would the PLA exile the old political leadership, constructing a sophisticated opposition with governing experience, international stature, and, for the CPC, an uncomfortable historical parallel to Sun Yat-sen, founder of the ROC and one of the few individuals revered on both sides of the strait? Subduing Taiwan would require massive investments of time, personnel, and resources. Counterinsurgency experts suggest that counterinsurgents often need to employ several times as many combatants as the insurgents. Therefore, garrisoning Taiwan would require a minimum occupying force numbering in the tens of thousands. Higher manpower requirements are probable. A PLA counterinsurgency force in Taiwan could require hundreds of thousands soldiers and paramilitary forces, tying down PRC military and financial resources for decades. The PRC’s Legitimacy Post-Invasion An invasion of Taiwan would signal the emergence of aggressive, might-makes-right Chinese nationalism. Indo-Pacific countries would likely respond by coalescing into a military and economic alliance aimed at countering PRC aggression. The PRC’s international isolation would constrain its economic potential and, ultimately, likely lead CPC leadership to seek an alternative legitimation model. Under Mao Zedong, the CPC derived political legitimacy from its assertion of Chinese autonomy, Marxist ideology, and, to a lesser degree, rising living standards (the survivors of Mao experienced improvements in life expectancy, literacy, and infant mortality). Under Deng Xiaoping, the CPC increasingly tied its legitimacy to rising living standards, while notionally adhering to Marxist ideology. An invasion of Taiwan would represent the end of the Deng Xiaoping epoch. Under a new political paradigm, the CPC would mainly legitimate itself through nationalism, not economics: the state would seek to maximize China’s international prestige, perhaps even at the expense of domestic welfare. In other words, the CPC would increasingly resemble Russia under President Vladimir Putin. Under the new legitimation model, several features would emerge. First, living standards would likely stall – while remaining relatively high. Second, China would increasingly seek to derive legitimacy from the domination of other sovereign countries. Third, China’s appetite would likely grow larger with eating: Chinese claims to former territories currently occupied by India, Mongolia, North Korea, Pakistan, and Russia could grow increasingly strident. This new legitimation model would present several challenges for the CPC. First, Chinese and Russians have different historical experiences and psychological expectations. Russians endured a profoundly scarring economic and financial crisis in the 1990s, increasing their tolerance for economic misery while largely sapping demand for free-market economics (not to mention rules-based government). Chinese, on the other hand, have enjoyed near-continuous economic and social improvements for nearly 40 years. A nationalism-induced recession – or even stagnation – could lead to a political backlash from Chinese accustomed to rising living standards. As Samuel P. Huntington wrote, “Urbanization, increases in literacy, education, and media exposure all give rise to enhanced aspirations and expectations which, if unsatisfied, galvanize individuals and groups into politics.” An invasion of Taiwan could trigger an economic crisis and political struggle on the mainland. Second, after invading Taiwan, what would the CPC do to score more nationalist “victories” – particularly if the invasion and/or occupation of Taiwan doesn’t go well? Most countries on China’s land and maritime borders possess nuclear weapons, enjoy an alliance or quasi-alliance with the United States and Japan, or both. Third, Taiwan’s incorporation into the PRC may increase the likelihood of democratic transition. Most individuals in Taiwan possess strong normative commitments to free markets, constitutional law, and open societies. Many mainland Chinese – particularly those from the 1989 generation – support these ideas. Adding 20 million liberals to China’s political discourse could have important implications for its domestic politics.

#### Democratic landing would be peaceful – but public buy-in is key.

Pei 13 – Minxin, Tom and Margot Pritzker ’72 Professor of Government and director of the Keck Center for International and Strategic Studies at Claremont McKenna College, (“5 Ways China Could Become a Democracy”, <http://thediplomat.com/2013/02/5-ways-china-could-become-a-democracy/1/>) Recut Justin

“Happy ending” would be the most preferable mode of democratic transition for China. Typically, a peaceful exit from power managed by the ruling elites of the old regime goes through several stages. It starts with the emergence of a legitimacy crisis, which may be caused by many factors (such as poor economic performance, military defeat, rising popular resistance, unbearable costs of repression, and endemic corruption). Recognition of such a crisis convinces some leaders of the regime that the days of authoritarian rule are numbered and they should start managing a graceful withdrawal from power. If such leaders gain political dominance inside the regime, they start a process of liberalization by freeing the media and loosening control over civil society. Then they negotiate with opposition leaders to set the rules of the post-transition political system. Most critically, such negotiations center on the protection of the ruling elites of the old regime who have committed human rights abuses and the preservation of the privileges of the state institutions that have supported the old regime (such as the military and the secret police). Once such negotiations are concluded, elections are held. In most cases (Taiwan and Spain being the exceptions), parties representing the old regime lose such elections, thus ushering in a new democratic era. At the moment, the transition in Burma is unfolding according to this script. But for China, the probability of such a happy ending hinges on, among other things, whether the ruling elites start reform before the old regime suffers irreparable loss of legitimacy. The historical record of peaceful transition from post-totalitarian regimes is abysmal mainly because such regimes resist reform until it is too late. Successful cases of “happy ending” transitions, such as those in Taiwan, Mexico, and Brazil, took place because the old regime still maintained sufficient political strength and some degree of support from key social groups. So the sooner the ruling elites start this process, the greater their chances of success. The paradox, however, is that regimes that are strong enough are unwilling to reform and regimes that are weak cannot reform. In the Chinese case, the odds of a soft landing are likely to be determined by what China’s new leadership does in the coming five years because the window of opportunity for a political soft landing will not remain open forever.

#### Transition solves aggressive pursuit of domination and heg impact

Michael Mandelbaum 19, PhD in political science from Harvard University, Christian A. Herter Professor Emeritus of American Foreign Policy at The Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies., March, "In Praise of Regime Change," Commentary, https://www.commentarymagazine.com/articles/in-praise-of-regime-change/

If revolution, as the word was defined in the last century, has become obsolete, its successor, regime change, has become discredited. The American military engagements in Haiti, Afghanistan, and Iraq not only failed to yield democratic governments; they proved, in the last two cases, costly to the United States, both in lives and treasure. The American public has, consequently, little appetite for more such ventures. Yet there is another type of regime change to consider: the peaceful replacement of dictatorship by democracy through the efforts of local people rather than the American military. That’s occurred with heartening frequency over the past four decades, and, in 2019, it has greater relevance and importance than ever. Such regime change offers the solution to the most dangerous challenge facing the United States and its friends and allies. That challenge comes from the ambitions of three major countries to overturn the existing political arrangements in their regions and to expand their own power and influence at the expense both of their neighbors and of the United States. All have already used force for this purpose. In Europe, Russia has seized Crimea and invaded and occupied eastern Ukraine. In East Asia, China has laid claim, contrary to international law, to virtually the entire western Pacific, where it has built artificial islands on which it has placed military installations. In the Middle East, Iran has funded, trained, equipped, and directed military forces outside the control of the local government in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen. At best, these revisionist ambitions portend Cold War–like political and military competition in the three regions. At worst, they will lead to wars involving the United States. These aggressive policies have, in each case, a variety of sources. But they have one major cause in common. Each of these aggressive governments is a dictatorship operating in what is still a predominantly democratic world, and each feels an acute need for domestic support and political legitimacy. To be sure, the rule of the current Russian, Chinese, and Iranian governments rests ultimately on coercion, but Vladimir Putin, Xi Jinping, and the Iranian mullahs are wary of relying on coercion alone to remain in power. The leaders of Russia and China, in particular, are known to monitor public sentiment carefully, if not obsessively. For the purpose of generating the support they believe they need, however, these dictators have few options. None can afford to indulge in the most common source of 21st-century legitimacy: democracy. For genuinely democratic politics would sweep them all away. Ideology was an important basis for autocratic regimes’ claims to rule in the 20th century. But ideology is unavailable to Russia and China, which have renounced, in the first case, and effectively abandoned, in the second, orthodox Marxism-Leninism (and in China, Maoism as well). The Iranian regime retains an ideological foundation—the Persian-Shia version of Islamic fundamentalism—but few Iranians outside the regime believe in it. Authoritarian Russia and China, although not Iran, have relied on economic success to produce support for, or at least acceptance of, their rulers; but their economic performance and future economic prospects have taken a turn for the worse. The Russian economy depends on the sale of energy. The price of oil reached record heights during Vladimir Putin’s first stint as president, which generated income that underpinned the high levels of popularity that he enjoyed. The price has since fallen and is unlikely to return to its peak, which makes Russia’s economic outlook a gloomy one. As for China, the ruling Communist Party presided over three decades of double-digit annual growth based on the large-scale movement of labor from the countryside to the cities, massive investment, and ever-growing exports. That model for growth has run its course: China needs a new one that, even in the best of circumstances, will not deliver the extraordinary advances to which the Chinese people have become accustomed. The Islamic Republic of Iran has seen only economic failure since its establishment in 1979, and unashamedly so. Its founder, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, said that the regime he installed was “not about the price of watermelons.” Still, the country’s poor economic performance, now aggravated by American sanctions, has increased the public’s already considerable discontent with its clerical rulers. In the face of this common predicament, the three revisionists have turned to the one source of support on which they believe they can rely: aggressive nationalism. This underlies the policies that all three use to threaten their neighbors. In this way, aggression is a form of regime protection. Putin, Xi, and the Iranian clerics tell the people they rule that such policies are designed to achieve regional dominance, which, for reasons of history and culture, they deserve. The Russian, Chinese, and Iranian governments also justify their aggressive foreign policies as necessary to ward off the hostility of their enemies—above all the United States—which, the dictators tell their subjects, are bent on weakening, subverting, and even destroying Russia, China, and Iran. Putin claimed that the Maidan Revolution in Ukraine in 2014, which triggered his invasion of that country, was part of an anti-Russian plot by the West. The Chinese government has repeatedly denounced what it alleges are American efforts to thwart China. The mullahs have, from the outset of the Islamic Republic, made opposition to the United States, “the Great Satan,” a cornerstone of their rule. Such evidence as there is suggests that this political tactic works for all three regimes. Putin’s aggressive policies in Ukraine and Syria, for example, have raised his popularity among Russians. The successful employment of such policies in bolstering each regime’s standing at home increases the temptation to employ it repeatedly, which makes Europe, East Asia, and the Middle East increasingly dangerous places. In sum, the roots of the greatest international problem that the United States and its friends and allies face—the Russian, Chinese, and Iranian challenges to the global order—lie in the nature of the regime that governs each country. The solution to the problem, it follows, is to change those regimes, and to change them not just to any other form of government but specifically to democracy. Democracy here means liberal democracy, a combination of popular sovereignty, whereby the people choose the government through free and fair elections, and liberty—the protection of religious, economic, and political freedom. The historical record shows that, in the modern era at least, liberal democracies seldom if ever go to war with one another. This is so because democracy’s basic features counteract the age-old incentives for armed conflict. Popular sovereignty, for example, imposes a check on the government’s freedom of action, including the freedom to wage war. Democracies resolve domestic differences by peaceful means and so are inclined to act similarly with respect to international disputes. None of this is to say that the spread of democracy guarantees the elimination of war: Nothing can do so. What has come to be called the “democratic peace” theory does not rise to the level of an iron law of politics because there are no such laws. It is to say, however, that were Russia, China, and Iran to become full-fledged democracies, each would surely conduct less belligerent foreign policies toward its neighbors.

#### Democratized China increases cooperation and solves major security hotspots – Sino-Japanese war, Sino-Indo war, etc.

Aaron Friedberg 11, PhD in Government from Harvard, professor of politics and international affairs @ Princeton University, “Hegemony with Chinese Characteristics,” <http://users.clas.ufl.edu/zselden/coursereading2011/friedberg.pdf> Recut Justin

Though not everyone is convinced, it is likely that a more democratic China would ultimately create a more peaceful, less war-prone environment in Asia. In the view of some realists, domestic reforms will only make Beijing richer, stronger and hence a more potent competitor without deflecting it from its desire to dominate East Asia and settle scores with some of its neighbors. It is undoubtedly true that even if, in the long run, China becomes a stable, peaceful democracy, its passage will prove rocky. The opening of the nation’s political system to dissent and debate is likely to introduce an element of instability into its foreign policy as new voices are heard and aspiring leaders vie for popular support. As one observer, economist David Hale, ruefully points out: “An authoritarian China has been highly predictable. A more open and democratic China could produce new uncertainties about both domestic policy and international relations.” Nationalism, perhaps in its most virulent and aggressive form, is one factor likely to play a prominent role in shaping the foreign policy of a liberalizing Middle Kingdom. Thanks to the spread of the Internet and the relaxation of restraints on at least some forms of “patriotic” political expression, the current regime already finds itself subject to criticism whenever it takes what some “netizens” regard as an overly accommodating stance toward Japan, Taiwan or the United States. Beijing has sought at times to stir up patriotic sentiment, but, fearful that anger at foreigners could all too easily be turned against the party, the regime has also gone to great lengths to keep popular passions in check. A democratically elected government might be far less inhibited. U.S.-based political scientist Fei-Ling Wang argues that a post-Communist regime would actually be more forceful in asserting its sovereignty over Taiwan, Tibet and the South China Sea. As he explains: A “democratic” regime in Beijing, free from the debilitating concerns for its own survival but likely driven by popular emotions, could make the rising Chinese power a much more assertive, impatient, belligerent, even aggressive force, at least during the unstable period of fast ascendance to the ranks of a world-class power. The last proviso is key. Even those who are most confident of the long-term pacifying effects of democratization recognize the possibility of a turbulent transition. In his book China’s Democratic Future, Bruce Gilley acknowledges that democratic revolutions in other countries have often led to bursts of external aggression and he notes that, since the start of the twentieth century, pro-democracy movements in China have also been highly nationalistic. Despite these precedents, Gilley predicts that, after an interval of perhaps a decade, a transformed nation will settle into more stable and cooperative relationships with the United States as well as with its democratic neighbors. Such an outcome is by no means certain, of course, and would be contingent upon events and interactions that are difficult to anticipate and even harder to control. If initial frictions between a fledgling democracy and its better established counterparts are mishandled, resulting in actual armed conflict, history could spin off in very different and far less promising directions than if they are successfully resolved. Assuming the transition can be navigated without disaster, however, there are good reasons to believe that relations will improve with the passage of time. One Chinese advocate of political reform, Liu Junning, summarizes the prospects well. Whereas a “nationalistic and authoritarian China will be an emerging threat,” a liberal, democratic China will ultimately prove “a constructive partner.” This expectation is rooted in more than mere wishful thinking. As the values and institutions of liberal democracy become more firmly entrenched, there will begin to be open and politically meaningful debate and real competition over national goals and the allocation of national resources. Aspiring leaders and opinion makers preoccupied with prestige, honor, power and score settling will have to compete with others who emphasize the virtues of international stability, cooperation, reconciliation and the promotion of social welfare. The demands of the military and its industrial allies will be counterbalanced, at least to some degree, by groups who favor spending more on education, health care and the elderly. The assertive, hypernationalist version of China’s history and its grievances will be challenged by accounts that acknowledge the culpability of the Communist regime in repressing minorities and refusing to seek compromise on questions of sovereignty. A leadership obsessed with its own survival and with countering perceived threats from foreign powers will be replaced by a government secure in its legitimacy and with no cause to fear that the world’s democracies are seeking to encircle and overthrow it. A democratic China would find it easier to get along with Japan, India and South Korea, among others. The trust and mutual respect that eventually grows up between democracies, and the diminished fear that one will use force against another, should increase the odds of attaining negotiated settlements of outstanding disputes over borders, offshore islands and resources. A democratic government in Beijing would also stand a better chance of achieving a mutually acceptable resolution to its sixtyyear standoff with Taiwan. In contrast to today’s ccp rulers, a popularly elected mainland regime would have less to gain from keeping this conflict alive, it would be more likely to show respect for the preferences of another democratic government, and it would be more attractive to the Taiwanese people as a partner in some kind of federated arrangement that would satisfy the desires and ease the fears of both sides. For as long as China continues to be governed as it is today, its growing strength will pose a deepening challenge to American interests. If they want to deter aggression, discourage coercion and preserve a plural, open order, Washington and its friends and allies are going to have to work harder, and to cooperate more closely, in order to maintain a favorable balance of regional power. In the long run, the United States can learn to live with a democratic China as the dominant power in East Asia, much as Great Britain came to accept America as the preponderant power in the Western Hemisphere. Until that day, Washington and Beijing are going to remain locked in an increasingly intense struggle for mastery in Asia.

#### Keeping regional ambitions in check is necessary to avoid *escalatory wars*

Brands & Edel 19. Hal Brands – Henry Kissinger Distinguished Professor of Global Affairs in the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments; Charles Edel – senior fellow at the United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney and previously served on the U.S. Secretary of State's policy planning staff. “The End of Great Power Peace,” 3/6/19. <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/end-great-power-peace-46282?page=0%2C1> Recut Justin

China is leading the way. Although Beijing has been a leading beneficiary of a liberal economic order that has allowed it to amass great prosperity, Chinese leaders nonetheless always regarded American primacy as something to be endured for a time rather than suffered forever. America’s preeminent position in the Asia-Pacific represents an affront to the pride and sense of historical destiny of a country that still considers itself “the Middle Kingdom.” And as Aaron Friedberg notes, China’s authoritarian leaders have long seen a dominant, democratic America as “the most serious external threat” to their domestic authority and geopolitical security. As China’s power has increased, Beijing has strived to establish mastery in the Asia- Pacific. A Chinese admiral articulated this ambition in 2007, telling an American counterpart that the two powers should split the Pacific with Hawaii as the dividing line. Yang Jiechi, China’s foreign minister, made the same point in 2010. In a modern-day echo of the Melian Dialogue’s “the strong do what they can, the weak suffer what they must,” he lectured the nations of Southeast Asia that “China is a big country and other countries are small countries, and that’s just a fact.” Policy has followed rhetoric. To undercut America’s position, Beijing has harassed American ships and planes operating in international waters and airspace; People’s Republic of China (PRC) media organs warn U.S. allies that they may be caught in the crossfire of a Sino- American war unless they distance themselves from Washington. China has simultaneously attacked the credibility of U.S. alliance guarantees by using strategies—island-building in the South China Sea, for instance—that are designed to shift the regional status quo in ways even the U.S. Navy finds difficult to counter. Through a mixture of economic aid and diplomatic pressure, Beijing has also divided international bodies, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), through which Washington has sought to rally opposition to Chinese assertiveness. All the while, China has been steadily building formidable military tools designed to keep the United States out of the region and thereby give Beijing a free hand. As America’s sun sets in the Asia-Pacific, Chinese leaders calculate, the shadow China casts will only grow longer. The counterparts to these activities are initiatives meant to bring the neighbors into line. China has islands as staging points to project military power. Military and paramilitary forces have harassed, confronted, and violated the sovereignty of countries from Vietnam to the Philippines to India; China has consistently exerted pressure on Japan in the East China Sea. Economically, Beijing uses its muscle to reward those who comply with China’s policies and punish those who don’t, and to advance geo-economic projects, such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), and Regional Comprehensive Economic Project (RCEP), designed to bring the region closer into its orbit. Strikingly, China has also abandoned its long-professed principle of non-interference in other countries’ domestic politics, extending the reach of Chinese propaganda and using investment and even bribery to coopt regional elites. Payoffs to Australian politicians are as critical to China’s regional project as development of “carrier killer” missiles. By blending intimidation with inducement, Beijing is seeking to erect a Sino-centric regional order—a new Chinese tribute system for the twenty-first century. It is trying to reorder its external environment to its own liking, a profoundly normal rising-power behavior that only seems odd or surprising against the abnormal backdrop of the post–Cold War era. It is using the wealth and power the U.S.-led international order helped it develop to mount the most formidable challenge that order has faced in decades. And it is doing so in full cognizance that this implies progressively more acute rivalry with Washington. Make no mistake—these efforts are having an impact. Chinese coercion short of war has dramatically shifted perceptions of power and momentum in the region, while the Chinese buildup has made the outcome of a Sino-American war more doubtful from a U.S. perspective. “America has lost” in Asia, president of the Philippines Rodrigo Duterte announced in 2016; Manila must now reposition itself accordingly. Similarly, RAND Corporation analysts assessed in 2015 that “over the next five to 15 years . . . Asia will witness a progressively receding frontier of U.S. dominance.” The region could soon hit a series of “tipping points” at which U.S. commitments to partners such as Taiwan, or even the Philippines and Japan, become less credible. As the power balance shifts, the United States could find itself in a position where it might actually lose a war in the Western Pacific—or it could simply lose the region without a shot being fired as countries make their calculations and accommodate Beijing. If China represents the greatest long-term challenge to the American-led system, the resurgence of great-power competition is even more acute in Europe. For many Russians, the post–Cold War era was not a time of triumph and tranquility. It was a time of weakness and humiliation, a period when Russia lost its great-power status and was impotent to resist the encroachment of U.S. and Western influence. As Russia has regained a degree of strength, then, it has sought to reassert primacy along its periphery and restore lost influence further abroad, often through measures less subtle and more overtly aggressive than China’s. Moscow has twice humiliated and dismembered former Soviet republics that committed the sin of tilting toward the West or throwing out pro-Russian leaders, first in Georgia and then in Ukraine. Following the latter conflict, Russian president Vladimir Putin invoked the concept of Russkiy Mir, or “Russian World,” staking a proprietary claim to dominance of the states on Moscow’s periphery. To further this project, Russia has also worked to weaken the institutions that maintain European security. It has sought to undermine NATO and the European Union via cyberattacks, military intimidation and paramilitary subversion, financial support for anti-EU and anti-NATO politicians, and dissemination of fake news and other forms of intervention in European and U.S. political processes. In 2016, Russian intelligence operatives reportedly tried to decapitate and overthrow the government of Montenegro to prevent it from joining NATO—a cold-blooded, if unsuccessful, act of competition with the West. In 2013, Russia’s chief of general staff, Valery Gerasimov, described such tactics as “new generation warfare.” That label describes a blending of military, paramilitary, economic, informational, and other initiatives to sow conflict and unrest within an enemy state or coalition, and it reflects the deadly serious nature of the struggle in which Russian leaders believe they are engaged. As Gerasimov’s writings indicate, military muscle and other forms of coercion are not Moscow’s only tools. Russia has simultaneously used energy flows to keep the states on its periphery economically dependent, and it has exported corruption and illiberalism to non-aligned states in the former Warsaw Pact area and Central Asia to prevent further encroachment of liberal values. And while Russia’s activities are most concentrated in these areas, Russian forces also intervened in Syria in 2015 to prop up Bashar al-Assad and expand Kremlin influence in the broader Middle East. Since then, Moscow has worked to position itself as a security patron to countries and actors from Libya to Iran, and thereby create a geopolitical counterpoise to U.S. influence. In doing all this, Russia has upended the basically peaceful European order that emerged after the Cold War and once again made interstate aggression a tool of regional politics. Its leadership has shown a penchant for risk-taking that has repeatedly thrown foreign observers off-balance; it has adopted bold and creative strategies that play on Western complacency and divisions. Russian leaders have explicitly called for the emergence of a “post-West world order,” leaving little doubt as to their dissatisfaction with any liberal international system based on American primacy. And as with China, these actions have been underwritten by a significant military buildup that has enhanced Russian power-projection capabilities and left NATO “outnumbered, outranged, and outgunned” on its eastern flank. “If I wanted,” Putin reportedly bragged in 2014, “in two days I could have Russian troops not only in Kiev, but also in Riga, Vilnius, Tallinn, Warsaw, and Bucharest.”29 That same year, secretary of state John Kerry was mocked for describing Russian behavior as something out of the nineteenth century. Yet what he captured was that Russia was simply behaving like Russia again. It was asserting its great-power prerogatives in ways that seemed anomalous only to those with very short historical memories. Finally, geopolitical revisionism is alive and well in the Middle East. Iran, the primary state author of that revisionism, is not in the same power-political league as China or even Russia. But it is a proud civilization that never accepted a Middle Eastern order led by Washington, as well as a revolutionary state that has long sought to export its ideology and influence. Amid the vacuum of regional power that was created first by the U.S. invasion of Iraq and then by the Arab Spring, Iran has been making its bid for primacy. “Our borders have spread,” announced Qassem Soleimani, the leader of Iran’s Quds Force, in 2011. “We must witness victories in Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria.”30 Iran has sought those victories by intervening, either directly or through proxy forces, in conflicts in Syria, Yemen, and Iraq; by promoting a sectarian agenda that seeks to polarize the region and create wedges for Iranian influence; and by investing in its nuclear program and niche capabilities such as ballistic missiles and special operations forces. As of mid-2018, the nuclear program had apparently been frozen for several years (although how long that would remain the case was becoming increasingly uncertain), but other initiatives have proceeded apace. And if Iran has fewer material means than other revisionist powers, it compensates—like Moscow—with asymmetric strategies and a high tolerance for risk. Iran used the Syrian civil war, for instance, as an occasion to flood that country with Shia militias, to push its military presence ever closer to Israel’s northern frontier, to arm its proxy, Hezbollah, with ever more advanced missiles and other weapons, and even to launch its first-ever military attacks on Israel itself. Likewise, it used the Yemeni civil war to provide Huthi rebels with the ballistic missiles that they subsequently fired at Saudi Arabia. Through these and other gambits, Iran has come into deeper conflict and even violence with traditional U.S. partners such as Israel, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, and it has fueled—while also benefiting from—intensifying strife across the Middle East. Most worrying, it has steadily ratcheted up the chances of an outright war that could easily take on regional dimensions. Each of these geopolitical challenges is different, and each reflects the distinctive interests, ambitions, and history of the country undertaking it. Yet there is growing cooperation between the countries that are challenging the regional pillars of the U.S.-led order. Russia and China have collaborated on issues such as energy, sales and development of military technology, opposition to additional U.S. military deployments on the Korean peninsula, and naval exercises from the South China Sea to the Baltic. In Syria, Iran provided the shock troops that helped keep Russia’s ally, Bashar al-Assad, in power, as Moscow provided the air power and the diplomatic cover. “Our cooperation can isolate America,” supreme leader Ali Khamenei told Putin in 2017. More broadly, what links these challenges together is their opposition to the constellation of power, norms, and relationships that the U.S.-led order entails, and in their propensity to use violence, coercion, and intimidation as means of making that opposition effective. Taken collectively, these challenges constitute a geopolitical sea change from the post-Cold War era. The revival of great-power competition entails higher international tensions than the world has known for decades, and the revival of arms races, security dilemmas, and other artifacts of a more dangerous past. It entails sharper conflicts over the international rules of the road on issues ranging from freedom of navigation to the illegitimacy of altering borders by force, and intensifying competitions over states that reside at the intersection of rival powers’ areas of interest. It requires confronting the prospect that rival powers could overturn the favorable regional balances that have underpinned the U.S.-led order for decades, and that they might construct rival spheres of influence from which America and the liberal ideas it has long promoted would be excluded. Finally, it necessitates recognizing that great-power rivalry could lead to great-power war, a prospect that seemed to have followed the Soviet empire onto the ash heap of history. Both Beijing and Moscow are, after all, optimizing their forces and exercising aggressively in preparation for potential conflicts with the United States and its allies; Russian doctrine explicitly emphasizes the limited use of nuclear weapons to achieve escalation dominance in a war with Washington. In Syria, U.S. and Russian forces even came into deadly contact in early 2018. American airpower decimated a contingent of government-sponsored Russian mercenaries that was attacking a base at which U.S. troops were present, an incident demonstrating the increasing boldness of Russian operations and the corresponding potential for escalation. The world has not yet returned to the epic clashes for global dominance that characterized the twentieth century, but it has returned to the historical norm of great-power struggle, with all the associated dangers. Those dangers may be even greater than most observers appreciate, because if today’s great-power competitions are still most intense at the regional level, who is to say where these competitions will end? By all appearances, Russia does not simply want to be a “regional power” (as Obama cuttingly described it) that dominates South Ossetia and Crimea. It aspires to the deep European and extra-regional impact that previous incarnations of the Russian state enjoyed. Why else would Putin boast about how far his troops can drive into Eastern Europe? Why else would Moscow be deploying military power into the Middle East? Why else would it be continuing to cultivate intelligence and military relationships in regions as remote as Latin America? Likewise, China is today focused primarily on securing its own geopolitical neighborhood, but its ambitions for tomorrow are clearly much bolder. Beijing probably does not envision itself fully overthrowing the international order, simply because it has profited far too much from the U.S.-anchored global economy. Yet China has nonetheless positioned itself for a global challenge to U.S. influence. Chinese military forces are deploying ever farther from China’s immediate periphery; Beijing has projected power into the Arctic and established bases and logistical points in the Indian Ocean and Horn of Africa. Popular Chinese movies depict Beijing replacing Washington as the dominant actor in sub-Saharan Africa—a fictional representation of a real-life effort long under way. The Belt and Road Initiative bespeaks an aspiration to link China to countries throughout Central Asia, the Middle East, and Europe; BRI, AIIB, and RCEP look like the beginning of an alternative institutional architecture to rival Washington’s. In 2017, Xi Jinping told the Nineteenth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party that Beijing could now “take center stage in the world” and act as an alternative to U.S. leadership.