

## Emerging New World Order and China's Presumption of International Relations: An Analysis

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### Abstract

*In world politics states experience rise and fall- economically, militarily and socially. The post-World War 2<sup>nd</sup> era was troubling to the Chinese policy makers. World was dominated by the US and USSR-China would not dominate in the presence of these two super powers-however it continued to develop its technology and economy. Collapse of the USSR created a gigantic vacuum in the world which provided a great opportunity to the US to bring its own world order for peace and promotion of democratic values. In the meantime, China developed its security and strategic relations in all regions. It has defined its own world order – China's outlook about International relations, now, being discussed by the western Scholars and they, mainly, have consensus that China's world order will take place when it has completed its Belt Road Initiative. China's Theory about IR is different than the academic Theory of IR. China is shaping its own International Relations that are annoying its competitors- the US.*

**Key Words:** BRI, China, Interest, International Relations, US, World Order

### Introduction

Since the beginning of this world many nations rose and eclipsed. Either it was Roman Empire or Persian Empire, Ming dynasty or Habsburg dynasty, Ottomans or Moguls, Imperial Spain or Portugal, Great Britain or France, rise and fall of all these nations show some clear patterns that are more or less similar (Kennedy 1989,677). Several historians have given detailed account of the similar causes of rise and fall of nations. However, the strategy to rule, the method to lead the masses and the Order of each empire varied (Kennedy 1989, 677). Today we observe the United States (US) as super power state while Peoples Republic of China is considered to be the second in the race- it may declare itself a super power when it has achieved its international economic and political goals. China will continue to grow as a formidable power and wage economic war that would be enough to devastate (Vejile, 2017) the US.

In recent years there has been much debate on evolving conflict between the US and China. Some of the very prominent study of post-cold war era focused on it. Samuel Huntington's "*Clash of Civilizations*" is a landmark study as it depicts the 21<sup>st</sup> century to be a century of Clash among Western, Muslim and Confucian civilizations (Huntingto, 1996) though his thesis proven wrong because this century is a century economic cooperation and competition. Whereas the offensive Realist Mearsehimer predicted in his book "*Tragedy of Great Power Politics*" that China would be a contestant for Global rule. Indeed, China has put itself on the way that would increase its capability to characterize it as a "superpower". How did the US establish the (New) World Order and dominated the International System and how China's World Order is

altering the present Order? How Chinese theory of International Relations is different than the US world order? We will investigate these questions empirically and theoretically.

China's worldwide economic project, Belt Road Initiative (BRI), has immensely upset the US world order-China in fact has successfully developed its relations with the regional and global actors-and waning the US world order.

### **China's Historical Outlook**

China is located on main land Asia. While its history dates back to 221 B.C. China's historical perspective of government is to consider itself to be the sole sovereign government of entire world. Emperor of China was not just the sovereign head of China instead he was considered to be the head of "All under Heaven" (Ravagnoli, 2007) . Modern China's policies are a hallmark of this historical concept alloyed with Mao's concept of universal harmony. Mao in his philosophy urged Chinese to blend the Confusian culture with the modern socialist concepts and make China reach the glory of ruling "All under the Heaven" (Mingming, 2012) once again. Till the 1st World War, China kept itself isolated from rest of the world despite being located on a very central position. However, after its independence China started participating in international organizations and forums such as United Nations (Maull, 2018). It was a sign that China had accepted Westphalia world order (Escobar, 2019), however, with an intention to modify its rules according to its requirements.

Even after adapting a position in International forums- China kept developing itself without challenging the powerful states and by staying low profile. This was the lesson learnt by China during western imperial centuries 1500 to 1900 (Valentina, 2013) . Historically speaking, China warded off French delegates that have to come to start trade with China, however, the emperor of *Ming Dynasty* categorically rejected their offer (Paull). The consequences were grave, as resultantly China failed to keep its development level up with modern European world and failed to maintain its position as central empire of the world leading the nation that claimed to be the sovereign ruler of "all under the Heavens" to the level where they fought war on opium with Britain and were ultimately called opium nation (Marshall, 2019). But modern China has reached the top notch institutions of the world it pursued a policy that was an amalgam of what was the prime requirement of Westphalia world order i.e. cooperation , participation, and its historic roots of staying relatively low profile and developing its elements of national power. By the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century China was able to shake the balance of power of the world (Yang, 2013). As we know that after the fall of USSR, the US became the single super power –and unipolar world became more pernicious. It's pertinent to mention that China became a matter of concern for the US soon after Korean War concluded but that concern was not regarding a challenger for super power status instead it was more of a bigger nation adapting communism, an American nightmare of Cold War era (Joravsky, 1949).

The Chinese policy shift [ grand strategy] specifically after Xi Jin Ping became the president is something that alarmed US policy makers as 25 years vision of Xi Jin Ping, his mass connectivity programs e.g. BRI , China's leadership role in regional as well as international forums like Security Council, General Assembly, Shangri Cooperation Organization (SCO), AIIB etc all gave rise to Thucydides Trap. Greek

historian Thucydides explained the rising power in Greek, "It was the rise of Athens and the fear that this instilled in Sparta that made war inevitable." The past 500 years have seen 16 cases in which a rising power threatened to displace a ruling one. Twelve of these ended in war (Allison, 2017).

### **World Order and the United States**

The US is a state located in North America with profound geography, economy, military and human resource. Unlike China, US has always enjoyed a geographical position that has protected it not only from foreign intervention but also from any hostile and imperialistic neighborhood as well. One similarity between the both states' historical attitude is that both states wanted to live in isolation because the world order of that time was Europe oriented. After the 1<sup>st</sup> World War the US tendered a good bye to its isolation and started participating in global affairs explicitly. By the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> World War European nations were wrecked to the level that they were unable to maintain European world order. After the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War the world became bipolar- with US and USSR as arch competitors. The period of clashes between two super powers continued till 1991 when ultimately the USSR [communist] disintegrated and the way for the US led world or global order was open (Schroeder, 1994).

### **Explaining the World Order**

World order is one of the widely discussed terms in International Relations. World order is apolitical as well as philosophical term which basically studies the idea that how such a system can be established on international level that possibility of wars decrease and prospects of peace and development increase. Several scholars have attempted to explain the term e.g. Bull (1977) has given its definition as, "patterns or dispositions of human activity that sustain the elementary or primary goals of social life among mankind as a whole".

Falk has given a much elaborated definition of the term World Order. He says, "focuses on the manner in which mankind can significantly reduce the likelihood of international violence and create minimally acceptable conditions of worldwide economic well-being, social justice, ecological stability, and participation in decision-making processes" (Falk, 1977). Hence concept of world order not only deals with the power politics and international relations but "it also takes account of the issues of man to man level that is of economic differences, social injustices, humanitarian issues and this is what makes world order a system, a complex geo political array of social economic political and strategic entities of world and their relation with the actors of world" (Falk, 1977). The problem in international politics today is not "failed states" like Afghanistan but a "failed world," a disordered world of chaos. While many would see world disorder as a political or an economic problem –that would be solved by a better political or economic system- world chaos is a conceptual problem: "to order the world we need to first create new world concepts which will lead to new world structure (Challan, 2008).

Since 18<sup>th</sup> century world order of European imperialism was on its climax. However, the 20<sup>th</sup> century dawned with a challenge to European world order as it was challenged by the 1<sup>st</sup> World War (1914-1919), establishment of League of Nations

(1919), Russian Communist Revolution (1917) and failure of League of Nations. All these events crumbled European imperialism and its world order- it led to the creation of the newly independent states all around the world. There was a shift in world order from being multipolar to bipolar in the post 2<sup>nd</sup> World War epoch – that age immensely increased the rivalry between the with US and USSR till the collapse of the USSR (Muzaffar, et. al, 2017)

Idealist proved to be utopian with the failure of League of Nation. So their notion of peace through institution could not withstand (Carr, 1939) .Now was the time for a 40 years period of cold war between the US and USSR. The US supported the Liberalist notion while USSR tried to give the message of salvation of world through an offshoot of Marxism that was communism. Both states tried to establish a world order of their making. Liberals wanted cooperation and development through institutions and diplomacy while communists wanted to revolutionize the world system by class revolution and government control of commodities and capital (Hook, Spanier, 2015).

With the fall of USSR in 1991 cold war ended and another shift in world order was witnessed and it was unipolar world order - it was the US “New World Order” – to promote liberalism, democracy and peace. But this philosophy remained mirage.

### **Comparison of US and Chinese led world order**

#### **American World Order**

American world order initially focused on development of war devastated Europe through economic aid in the form of Marshall Plan (1948). Later on in 1949 NATO was created to integrate American allies in a military alliance- it was a security alliance. Purpose of economic, under the Marshall plan was to support to European, Asian, and African nations. In addition, NATO had to contain the domino effect of communism however after the threat of communism was successfully dealt America further strengthened its ground in Europe, East Asia, South Asia, Middle east, Africa and south America by larger propagation of Breton woods institutions i.e. World Bank and IMF ( Trebat, 2018).Dollarization of economy was another major lynchpin of the US world order that led to the replacement of Gold forex reserves of states with Dollar hence strengthening American economy worldwide ( Smart, 2018).

War against terrorism became the major goal of US administration under New World order after 9/11. America decided to diminish all such forces around the world before they reach American territory. For this purpose America made several alliance around the world, used her military might and invaded several countries mainly, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, and Syria .

For instance, , war on terror in Afghanistan is going on since 2001 however the sole power [ America] has out rightly failed in bringing any peace in the state instead a recent survey shows that majority of afghan nationals have been killed by US troops instead of Taliban. Middle East is the region where the US has been playing pivotal role for the last many decades, however, the efforts to democratize the region like “Arab Spring 2011” failed instead a series of civil wars erupted in Egypt, Libya,

Yemen and Syria resulting in massive refugee crisis and worst humanitarian crisis (Hussain & Latif, 2011).

The US, under the New World Order, relatively ignored the 3<sup>rd</sup> world countries. Instead of focusing on the development of the poorest regions of Africa and Asia, they were struck with “Kleptocracy” where the US and its allies dig out the resources of poverty struck African and war struck Asian countries and took them to US. South American states that totally complied with US controlled International Monetary Fund (IMF) are today highly indebted; Venezuela crisis is biggest evidence of this (Marshall).

American strategy to gain more allies and interfere in every conflict of the world has given boost to Arms Race. Instead of controlling nuclear proliferation US has instigated different powers of different regions to develop their nuclear programs and missile systems. US have done so by not acting as peace maker or mediator instead behaving as a great power with which smaller states bandwagon. Examples of such powers are Iran and Saudi Arabia in Middle East, North Korea in East Asia, India and Pakistan in South Asia.

The US World Order has been an instrument in deciding the destiny of world politics -according to its interest. This is not something new because every state that tops the hierarchy of World Order maintains the order that supports its policies. By the time the US was busy shaping world order of gaining and accumulating more power and making it impossible for any other state to become a competitor, China [carefully] was developing, itself, economically, militarily and socially. These two processes went on side by side till 2008 where China arranged Beijing Olympics Games (OG) and opened the ways for China to interact with outside world—OG “marked China’s emergence as a major global player” ( Sands, 2008). As we know China, itself, never claimed to be the aspirant for super power status. However the fastest growing [expansionist] economy, technology, and military are giving the signs of a future Chinese led World Order via BRI- which would upset the US made World Order.

### **Chinese Image of the World Order and International Relations**

The image of World Order was embraced for hundreds of year from around 1046 to 256 B.C. during the Zhou dynasty, (Tingyang, 2018). Thus the concept of China World Order and its view of International Relations are shaping the new world – however, Chinese IR is a newly developed school of thought which is developed by Chinese Scholars in order to explain international political phenomenon in the light of Chinese philosophy and history. Since 1980, the Chinese Scholars tried to determine the answers of some important questions, namely; will China be a proletariat state, how China defines national interest being a socialist state, will China be a revisionist power or status quo power. Different scholars determined different answers to these questions according to different frameworks. As study of all the answers presented to these questions and their comparison with ongoing practice of China will help Scholars predict the Chinese model of world order.

### **First Debate: Proletariat state or Normal Nation State**

Deng Xiaoping, Chinese politician, said in 1977 that world war 'could be postponed'. The CCP's 12th Congress in 1982 reiterated this judgment, but did not completely abandon the argument about the danger of war. Its report said that the danger of world war got more serious because of the rivalry of the two superpowers-US, and the USSR. Occurrence had shown that people all over the world, through joint efforts, would be able to disturb their strategic competition. In 1985, Deng argued, 'It is possible to have no large-scale world war in a relatively long period of time and it is hopeful that world peace can be maintained'. He stressed that the major issues of the world were peace and development (Dittmer, 1983).

Report of the 13<sup>th</sup> National Conference of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) shows that in the debate to choose a course of action between either to keep following Leninism and as a result having a revolutionary role against global imperialism in the form of capitalism, or, getting on a track of peaceful development (China Today, 1987), China chose second option.

### **Second Debate: Realist or Liberalist**

This debate was majorly about the national interest of China. As to what would be the interest of China and how should that interest be pursued. Realists answered this question in realist notion of power. They claimed that gaining the material power should be the interest as war is inevitable (Demir, 2017). Issues like Taiwan will help the US interfere in the country in such a condition getting military and economic prosperity should be the sole national interest. However, liberals supported the idea of flourishing economy but through institutionalism. They proposed China to integrate herself into international institutions and become a part of globalized world (Demir, 2017).

International institutions and organizations could provide China with the best opportunity to take advantage of globalization and greatly reduce China's opportunity cost in the process of opening up to the outside world. Second, international institutions would exert positive influence on China's international behavior. In the process of joining international institutions, China engaged itself in communicating, imitating, and learning, and as a result, China would pay more attention to multilateralism and participate more actively in multilateral activities (Demir, 2017). Third, international institutions interacted with China's domestic institutions and influenced the latter's domestic political processes.

### **Third Debate: A Challenger or a Peaceful Riser**

Zheng Bijan in 2003 made a statement that China will choose a path of "Peaceful Rise". This statement was highly contended by Realists because according to them it was not possible for a state to rise peacefully as history shows. Liberals on the other hand think that institutions would help China not only raise peacefully in cooperation with other states but also give an international role to China. These debates give the clues about the policy directions of China. If these debates and practices of China are compared several arguments can be developed;

- China wants to rise in a way that would be different than past Global Powers.
- China wants to pursue economic development as the interest of not only the people of China but also the people of entire world, following its historical concept of ruling all under the heavens (Bijian 2005; Smith 2017; Challan 2012; Yaqing, 2005; Qin, 2011).

After Huntington's claim of probable clash of civilizations in 21<sup>st</sup> century, where he claimed the civilizations to be west against Islam and Confucianism, China has started getting along with the Islam. Despite having some trouble with the religious fundamentalism, China is finding allies in Middle East. Moreover its neighbor Pakistan is considered to be its closest ally. China is not impressed by Islam as we see Xinjiang is a problematic region in China, however, in the war of civilizations China would have to increase its number of allies and according to Huntington "Islam would provide it with a whole civilization of allies for achieving its interest" (Huntington, 1996). China needs economic supremacy [expansion] and for this purpose it has initiated BRI in 2015. BRI enables China to access to world markets-BRI (Mecaes, 2018), in fact, BRI has brought several new regional and global partners-they are supporting the world wide BRI. China may have potential to alter the US world order which would be the Chinese World Order when BRI has completed in 2049 [estimate].

### **Conclusion**

This paper has analyzed New World Order in comparison with newly emerging Chinese theory of International Relations. China, unlike the US, is intending to have a peaceful rise but without compromising on its core objectives in the world. There is one similarity between the rise of the US and China that is, in the post WorldWar11 period, the US used its economic might as an instrument to gather support from Europe by rescuing it out of war devastation, China too is allying with weaker nations of the world by providing them economic incentives however there are reports of tactics like debt trap and intellectual copy right theft.

The US desired to democratize the entire world in a fashion that has been followed by the US as liberal democratic world [peaceful]. China, however, not only desires to revise the old patterns, style and the concepts of International Relations and liberal democratic order but also it wants to revive its past glory- domination. The US has largely used military might in order to prevent its cold war enemy [USSR] while today's China is more inclined to economic and technological achievement that may guarantee a Single Super China- in International Politics and Relations both.

Geography, has always, favored the US in its attempt to reach strategic victory over USSR- that finally defeated its great rival in 1991-long Cold War ended. However China is located in a position that is very central and hub of the US allies. This too will determine the steps taken by China and due to this strategic difference that would be different from the one used by the US back then- BRI would play a pivotal role in shaping the New Chinese World Order.

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