Australı ı l Unı ı

Strategic & Defence Studies Centre ANU College of Asia & the Pacific





Chinese Power and the Idea of a Responsible State in a Changing World Order

Rosemary Foot



The Centre of Gravity series

About the Centre of Gravity Series

The Centre of Gravity Series is the flagship publication of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (SDSC) based at The Australian National University's College of Asia and the Pacific. The series aspires to provide high quality analysis and to generate debate on strategic policy issues of direct relevance to Australia. Centre of Gravity papers are 3,000-4,000 words in length and are written for a policy audience. Consistent with this, each Centre of Gravity paper includes at least one policy recommendation. Papers are commissioned by SDSC and appearance in the series is by invitation only. SDSC commissions up to 10 papers in any given year.



About the Editor

The Centre of Gravity Series is edited by Dr Andrew Carr, Senior Lecturer at the Strategic & Defence Studies Centre. He has published widely on Australian strategic and defence policy, Asia-Pacific Security and Middle Powers. The COG series was developed to improve the conversation and engagement between academic and policy communities and draw attention to the most significant strategic questions facing Australia and the Asia-Pacific. Any comments or suggestions about how to improve the series or topics of particular interest are warmly welcomed. Dr Carr can be contacted on:

- (E) Andrew.Carr@anu.edu.au
- (M) 0421 728 207



Centre of Gravity series paper #38

Photos courtesy of Zhang Zhenshi via Wikimedia Commons, Dutch National Archives, Narendra Modi via flickr.com, Pixabay, U.S. National Archives and Records Administration via Wikimedia Commons, Andrea Hanks via www.whitehouse.gov

© 2018 ANU Strategic and Defence Studies Centre. All rights reserved.

The Australian National University does not take institutional positions on public policy issues; the views represented here are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the University, its staff, or its trustees.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without permission in writing from the ANU Strategic and Defence Studies Centre. Please direct inquiries to andrew.carr@anu.edu.au

This publication can be downloaded for free at sdsc.bellschool.anu.edu.au/our-publications/centre-of-gravity-series

CRICOS#00120C

ISSN: 2208-7311 (Online) ISSN: 2208-7303 (Print)



About the author

Professor Emeritus Rosemary Foot is a Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford, and an Emeritus Fellow of St Antony's College, Oxford. In 1996, she was elected a Fellow of the British Academy. Author of several books, these include The Wrong War: American Policy and the Dimensions of the Korean Conflict, 1950-53 (Cornell UP, 1985); The Practice of Power: US Relations with China since 1949 (Oxford University Press [OUP], 1995); Rights Beyond Borders: the global community and the struggle over human rights in China (OUP, 2000); and, with Andrew Walter as co-author, China, the United States, and Global Order (Cambridge University Press, 2011). Two recent edited books include China Across the Divide: the domestic and global in politics and society (OUP, 2013), and, with Saadia M Pekkanen and John Ravenhill, The Oxford Handbook of the International Relations of Asia (OUP, 2014). Her research interests cover security relations in the Asia-Pacific, human rights, Asian regional institutions, and China-US relations in a changing world order. Her current book project involves the relationship between China and the norms of human protection.

This Centre of Gravity paper was given as a lecture, in honour of Professor Robert O'Neill, at the Australian National University on 28th November 2017. It is presented in revised and abridged form here.

Chinese Power and the Idea of a Responsible State in a Changing World Order

Rosemary Foot

Executive Summary

- Scholars and policy makers have long been preoccupied with ascertaining whether China is intent on overturning or supporting the dominant norms of global order.
- Maoist China appeared as a revolutionary challenger to global order norms, whereas Deng Xiaoping's China came predominantly to be seen as adapting to international society and beginning to act as a 'responsible state' in world politics.
- This view of China was reinforced not only by its behaviour but also by the academic understanding of how global norms could act to shape the responses of a state concerned about its international image.
- ❖ Under President Xi Jinping we witness a China more willing to determine for itself what represents 'responsible behaviour' in global politics. This is reinforced by Beijing's sense that the West is in decline while it is economically and politically resurgent. We have moved into a strongly enabling environment for China.

Policy Recommendations

- ♦ Countries outside of China need to develop a more nuanced understanding of Beijing's relationship with dominant global norms.
- On some policy issues, it seeks a larger voice and role within existing institutions and thus does not constitute a major challenge.
- ♣ In other areas, it is working to aid the decline in certain normative values, arguing that it is the strong and developed state that is the best guarantor of world order and the security of the individual.
- ♦ The West should act to counter China's arguments where they are weak, inconsistent and retrogressive, and reinvigorate its support for the values of human rights and democracy.

It is a great privilege and pleasure to give the Professor Robert O'Neill Lecture, and also to be here at the ANU under the auspices of the Visiting Des Ball Chair in Strategic Studies. My thanks to SDSC for the valuable opportunity to engage with the academic life of the ANU, and to Professor Evelyn Goh for her expert hosting of my visit.

Bob and I were at the University of Oxford together for much of the time that he held the Chichele Professorship in the History of War. He was a hugely supportive presence. Bob demonstrated how to combine an interest in contemporary security issues with appreciation of historical context and historical change. His work in the areas of war, strategy, and international relations, together with his willingness to engage with students as well as with the policy world were inspirational. Fortunately, for me, we shared research interests, particularly with respect to security relations in East Asia, the origins and development of the 1950-1953 Korean conflict, and the role of China in regional politics.

I put China at the centre of my analysis tonight. I won't talk explicitly about the war proneness of the Asia-Pacific region, though this lecture series is traditionally focused on war studies. But I will talk about a potential cold peace, or wary coexistence, as defining features of the Asia-Pacific region and perhaps of global politics too.

In 1999 I was at the ANU for a conference commemorating 50 years of the People's Republic of China (PRC) organized by Professors Greg Austin and Zhang Yongjin. On that occasion, I gave a presentation with a title similar to the one I use for this lecture. I asked then whether China could be viewed as a 'responsible state' as measured against some of the dominant norms associated with post war order. These included norms such as the non-use of force except in self-defence as referenced in the UN Charter; the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons as codified in the 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT); and the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

That lecture was published first in 2001 as an article in *The China Journal*, and then in an edited book that derived from papers given at the 1999 conference. In 2017, nearly twenty years later, I find myself pondering some of the questions I raised in 1999, but with somewhat different responses.

To explain the bases of these differing responses in 2017, I want to illustrate the interlocking of several moving parts: first, changes in the way that we, as analysts and observers, study China's behaviour in its effects on global order, and secondly, changes in China's own position globally and regionally in both a material sense as well as in reference to its government's own understanding of its status in today's international society.

More specifically I want to understand the shift from a preoccupation with Maoist China as revolutionary challenger to global and regional order, where conflict was often to the fore; to Deng Xiaoping's China, where Beijing was perceived mainly as an adapter to global and regional international society; and now to China, especially under President Xi Jinping, as shaper, creator, and perhaps as challenger of the major norms associated with contemporary international society.

Predominantly, norms have been perceived as signifying the appropriateness of certain behaviours, as well as constraining those behaviours. With respect to China in the second decade of the 21st Century, it is the staying power of that external form of assessment that I now want to question.

Maoist China

Indeed, this lecture is built around a series of questions. I begin by asking why, post China's Reform and Opening -- that is after 1978, through to the late 1990s/early 2000s -- the writing on the PRC emphasized predominantly China as *adapting* to the extant global norms? Why was China seen basically (though not entirely) as a 'system maintainer' to use Samuel S. Kim's oft-quoted phrase?

I argue that this was mainly because of the abruptness and directness of the move away from Maoist China and also because of the scholarly interpretation of how global norms operate in world politics. The behavioural change after Mao seemed so startling. When Mao Zedong was China's paramount leader, his country was broadly regarded as one not playing by the rules of the game, whether examined in terms of diplomatic practice; on matters involving the use of force; or in reference to Beijing's respect for multilateral institutions.

Immediately upon coming into power, for example, the new PRC government refused to take on automatically the diplomatic obligations that it had inherited from the Chinese Nationalist government.



As it was put at that time, Beijing wanted to "open a new stove", "sweep the house clear before entertaining new guests." The arrest in Shenyang of US Consul-General Angus Ward on 24 October 1949, did not augur well for the idea that diplomatic immunity would be respected.²

Later, during China's Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, over a dozen countries severed diplomatic relations with the PRC because of the behaviour of China's diplomats in overseas postings. In Beijing, the British mission was set on fire.

Turning to the use of force and Beijing's support for liberation struggles, Maoist China represented a new challenge here too offering support for Kim II Sung's bid to unify the Korean peninsula through force of arms, and to Ho Chi Minh's forces as they struggled to expel the French and later the American forces from Vietnam.

Beijing often gave material and verbal support for armed struggles in what was then termed the 'Third World', though as Peter Van Ness argued in his major study³ this support was given on a selective basis. Remember too the alarm raised - not just in the West but in Africa also - by Premier Zhou Enlai's statement in Somalia in 1964 that "revolutionary prospects are excellent throughout the African continent," followed by Lin Biao's essay Long Live the Victory of People's War, published in 1965, which argued for a united front with the oppressed and poor in the Third World who were struggling against imperialist western aggressors. At the 1955 Bandung Conference of Asian and African countries, Zhou called for the various delegations to put aside their differences and band together on the "common ground" of overturning the "sufferings and calamities of colonialism."4

This is not a vision of a country interested in global order, stability, or evolutionary change, but one that saw virtue in contention and struggle as the way to upend the unjust post-war international order.

The PRC under Mao also seemed to see little to no benefit in post-war multilateral institutions. Arms control negotiations and treaties were depicted not as a global public good but as a means of establishing hegemonic control and the Bretton Woods institutions as leading predators in a capitalist economic order. The Special Committee for UN Peacekeeping Operations was described as part of a plot to convert the UN into a "US-controlled headquarters of international gendarmes to suppress and stamp out the revolutionary struggles of the world's people."5

It was not just the rhetoric that was challenging, China's material power also seemed to be increasing – economically and militarily. The United States estimated that Maoist China was growing at an annual rate of 7% or 8%, and all on the basis of a political-economic model that rejected that offered by the liberal-capitalist west.

Furthermore, US armed forces were held to a stalemate

on the Korean battlefield in 1953, leading a US National

Security Council staff study to summarize that military outcome as a feat "of no mean proportions and instructive as to the extent of Chinese Communist military capabilities." Chinese forces, the study stated, "fought with courage, aggressiveness, and with notably few desertions." Hardly surprising, then, that US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, referred to China as "the wave of the future."6

There was always more going on than this depiction suggests: certainly, Beijing appeared to be a radical socialist revolutionary state but it was also one that wanted the respect of other powerful states in the international system including the seat on the UN Security Council. But overwhelmingly, Maoist China's behaviour was interpreted as reflecting a desire to challenge the existing international order and not behaviour designed to ensure Beijing's steady movement towards entering the club of great powers.

The Deng Xiaoping era

Post-Mao China's decision to engage in a policy of reform and opening under Deng Xiaoping saw a very different China emerge. If we look at those same three features of diplomacy, military force, and multilateralism China's behaviour appeared to show a desire to fulfill the requirements for full entry into international society.

For example, China established diplomatic relations with many governments, including with the United States (1979) and South Korea (1992), even though this had important and negative knock-on effects for Beijing's relations with socialist Vietnam and North Korea. It no longer emphasized struggle and upheaval, but stressed it needed a peaceful international environment, regional and global, in order to concentrate on its primary goal of economic development. Good relations with Hong Kong were important to this with the territory acting as the conduit between the mainland and the worlds of business, finance and investment. Certainly, the use of force against any overt Taiwanese move towards independence was taken as read; but essentially China worked to stabilize this relationship too, putting aside the resolution of the unfulfilled sovereignty project. Overall, China projected itself as a pacific state engaged in a peaceful rise.

Beijing appeared to be a radical socialist revolutionary state but it was also one that wanted the respect of other powerful states.

In this period, Beijing joined large numbers of international and non-governmental organizations. These encompassed the Bretton Woods institutions and various treaty and negotiating arrangements connected with arms control, such as the NPT. Later, in 1996, it signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. It also signed various human rights conventions, including the Convention Against Torture, and became a leading contributor to UN peace operations. The list is familiar.

In the academic literature, at least in some significant parts of it, China was frequently seen as being "socialized" and as being in quite good standing in the international regimes that made up the substance of international life. The China example thus reinforced the academic literature on the power of global norms to shape behaviour. A state such as China had seemingly felt pressure to join up to many of these international regimes, because it wished to be viewed as a responsible player in the system.



Again, the record was by no means perfect: the Tiananmen Square bloodshed and Beijing's resistance to moves towards domestic democratic governance were notable features of concern. But, overall, key actors such as President Bill Clinton, could find reason to praise China - referencing its actions towards North Korea, South Asia, and Iran in the nuclear weapons related areas. Eventually, Beijing joined the World Trade Organization, at the time making substantial concessions to gain entry. Margaret Pearson, one of the top analysts of China and international economic institutions, concluded in this era, it is "difficult not to be impressed with the speed, magnitude, and depth of China's integration into the global economy in the post-Mao era."7 In the area of arms control, Alastair Iain Johnston and Paul Evans could report on the basis of multiple interviews with arms control specialists and documents intended for internal circulation in China, that Chinese elites believed they had to join the treaty process "because it was part of a world historical trend, because it

was part of China's role as a responsible major power, because it would help improve China's image," the latter especially important after the damage caused by the 4 June 1989 crackdown.8

The Chinese government itself in this period reinforced this sense that it was sustaining not challenging the order but instead seeking the status of a responsible actor in global politics. In response to any criticism of its domestic arrangements and domestic political system, leaders argued that they had done enough to satisfy the rules of international society: the Party/State had united the country, ended decades of civil war, sustained civilian rule, pacified most of the country's land borders, and brought hundreds of millions out of poverty.

In the scholar William Callahan's view, Deng Xiaoping's and Hu Jintao's descriptions of China's world role, both confirmed that China would contribute responsibly by not "disordering the world." Xi Jinping himself put it similarly if more bluntly in Mexico in 2009 lashing out at western criticism of China. As he put it: "First, China does not export revolution; second, it does not export famine and poverty; and third, it does not mess around with you. So what else is there to say?"

Questions for the contemporary era

There is more to say, not least because China's accelerated resurgence has transformed its standing in world politics. We ask another question of China and its role in the world now – that is, whether China is setting out intentionally to reshape global order, challenging the ideational neo-liberalism prominent in the 1990s, moving the order towards a more pluralist acceptance of difference, towards a more statist, less cosmopolitan or less solidarist conception of global order.

Why have we reached this particular stage in the analysis of China's role? Why believe that, unlike in the past, China is more actively shaping global order? Partly it is to do with our tools of analysis -- the academic understanding of how global norms operate. We have moved towards the understanding that some states – especially those with strong state institutions -- are capable of deconstructing global norms at the national level and then feeding national preferences back to the global level. We give greater prominence to the power of state agency – the idea that norms are not handed down from the global realm to be accepted or ignored at the local level, but can in fact be reconstituted as a result of global-local interaction.

Turning to the more empirically-based arguments that help to explain the Chinese role as norm creator and shaper, these relate to developments in China itself, the nature of the current global order, and relatedly the loss of confidence in the 1990s liberal model of world order. With the confluence of these developments, we have moved into a strongly enabling environment for China.

To begin with the China-related explanations: pertinent here is the shift in China's relative power, particularly after the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) of 2007-08 which saw China emerge as the world's second largest economy (or largest if we use Purchasing Power Parity measures), and with the second largest military budget. It also became the world's leading trading nation. China's economy was far less affected by that 2008 crisis than were the developed countries of the US and Europe.

Yet this material change is not enough on its own to explain the change in Chinese behaviour and approach. Though there was a shift in relative power, that change could so easily have been interpreted inside China as still insufficient for the government to move beyond the Deng Xiaoping admonition for China to 'bide its time,' and concentrate on economic development. Indeed, it is but a few years since Chinese elites were arguing that western calls for China to take on the responsibilities of a great power were simply designed to contain its rise and to overstretch its capacities.

So why the change? Leadership is key here. With Xi Jinping in power we see a China more confident in its global role and in what it can offer to the world. A number of decisions left in abeyance have been taken since Xi became China's President, such as a combat role for Chinese peacekeepers in UN operations, a more prominent role in global governance, and the establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, allegedly first mooted in 2002. Beijing has also been more willing to use its veto in the UN Security Council - six times with respect to the Syrian crisis over last five years.

Beijing is also more confident that its version of democracy – which it describes as non-confrontational, and as "institutionalized consultative democracy" -- is potentially the best way forward for other states as well as for China. That model brings about social unity, it argues, rather than the divisions that come from the adversarial nature of western democracy. As an October 2017 article put it, with capitalist democracy "the cracks are beginning to show, with many eccentric or unexpected results in recent plebiscites."¹¹

Thus, this is no longer a leadership that talks about not disrupting world order, but one that promotes a set of beliefs about the contributions that China can make to global governance, to the provision of global and regional public goods, and the contribution that the example of its own model of development and democracy offers to the world. Xi's 19th Party Congress speech in October 2017 reinforced this vision.

Moreover, the world into which this more powerful China has emerged is one that Beijing believes is more receptive to these Chinese ideas. It has become a looser international society, more global

than that of the Cold War era. Compared with the 1990s, there is a more obvious redistribution of power and a proliferation of values within which China can find a more comfortable home.

Reinforcing this sense of receptivity to its ideas is China's belief in the decline of the West. China points often to European and American crises of the last few years as proof that universal values are a chimera, western values are being swiftly undermined, and that the western states are simply hypocritical in the evident way they fail to live up to their declared values.

Moreover, China's narrative of a declining West matches that occurring in the West itself – the West's own loss of confidence in the 1990s liberal model reflected in a retreat from liberal democracy, from human rights promotion and protection, and from the belief in the power of the market economy to deliver beneficial results for the many.



There are many signs of this. For example, Freedom House in 2016 reported ten years of decline in respect for global freedom. According to its calculations, a total of 67 countries have suffered net declines in political rights and civil liberties and only 36 have registered gains. Thomas Pikkety's 2013 book *Capital in the Twenty First Century* sold one a half million copies in under two years, because inequality and wealth distribution had suddenly been noticed after the GFC in a way that had not been

Reinforcing this sense of receptivity to its ideas is China's belief in the decline of the West.

so before then. In terms of human protection and respect for international humanitarian law, outgoing UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in his 2016 report on the future of the norm of the Responsibility to Protect lamented that "brutal and intractable conflicts are devastating the lives of millions of people in almost every region, threatening the futures of entire generations." Ban also noted that all of the factors that were facilitating atrocity crimes were converging "against a backdrop of retreating internationalism, diminishing respect of international humanitarian law, and a growing defeatism about promoting ambitious agendas like protection." ¹¹³

Perhaps, more than this, we should understand this loss of confidence as coming from the deeper failure of the enlightenment project itself -- what Pankaj Mishra has described as a universal crisis for the project of modernity --

"an extensive failure to realize the ideals of endless economic expansion and private wealth creation," leading to the development of humiliating hierarchies, as well as disappointed expectations. As Mishra argues, this is unlike in 1919 when "only a tiny minority could become disenchanted with liberal modernity because only a tiny minority had enjoyed the opportunity to become enchanted with it in the first place." ¹¹⁴

This is a world, too, in which the United States – China's frequent benchmark for great power behaviour -- has retreated from its position of global leadership – problematic though that has always been. The US administration under President Trump focuses on a nationalist, sovereigntist state security agenda, makes friends with oppressors, and appears attracted to the ways in which they get things done. This US president also rejects the multilateralism that has been the dominant approach of the post-1945 order.

These features associated with a loss of confidence in the West but a new-found confidence in China enables the idea of a responsible state, or responsible great power to shift. It has shifted in China from the idea that it is responsibly adapting to global order norms, to the idea that it has earned a legitimate role in creating new institutions (such as the AIIB, the Belt and Road Initiative as well as the BRICS Development Bank), as well as reshaping some of those global order norms that it sees as deficient or threatening. With respect to the Security Council, it is starting to argue for a stricter interpretation of when instances of the use of force should be seen by the Council to be a threat to international peace and security; it is trying to row back on the idea that threats to human security are a threat to international peace. Within the Human Rights Council and elsewhere it has moved away from the idea of the universality and indivisibility of human rights (an idea it signed up to at the 1993 Vienna Conference on Human Rights) arguing instead that development should be the key goal and form the basis from which all other rights might eventually follow.

In many respects this newly confident China is arguing for something familiar, familiar in the sense that it sounds like a Cold War era version of international order - a late 1960s, early 1970s version - one which downplays human rights and human protection, tolerates non-liberal democratic forms of governing, places the security of the state above that of the security of the individual, and reinforces sovereign equality and non-interference in internal affairs as the fundamental building block of international society.

Global governance becomes, then, great powers managing relations between themselves – think NPT and other arms control arrangements between the Soviets and Americans in the 1960s and 1970s; or the spheres of influence approach evident in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, at least in relation to its first two baskets.

And while Chinese elites emphasize the value they place on economic globalization, are supportive of climate change mitigation efforts, and still perceive a value in international rules, this is at root a state-based rather than a solidarist approach to these issue areas. To paraphrase President Xi at the opening of the Belt and Road Forum in May 2017: in his selective historical treatment of the Silk Road, he stressed a world of difference; that we live in a world that is culturally diversified; that these differences should be acknowledged rather than engaged; that we operate in a world that is multipolar. If there was a nod in the direction of universalism, he saw that in the focus on economic development. As Xi put it: "Development holds the master key to solving all problems." ¹⁵

China's current narrative is, therefore, in some respects backward looking. It stresses that China itself is a source of order but not one that depends on the trinity of free market principles, liberal democracy, and human rights, or new interpretations of sovereignty. A pluralist system made up of strong, developed states is the answer.

Where does this leave us with respect to the question as to the degree of challenge that China poses to global order and dominant global norms? It leaves us with a mixed record: in some areas Beijing is searching for a reordering of state hierarchies and for a larger voice and role within the current normative order; in other areas it is seeking to aid the decline in certain values or redefine their meaning as well as to restrict certain forms of internationalism.

I am suggesting this is facilitated by various world order changes and can gather pace because the Chinese leadership has come to believe that its image requires less burnishing through the adaption to others' wants and desires than would have been the case in the Deng Xiaoping era. The benefits of its model have become plainer to others, so it believes, and thus have positioned it to determine who deserves the label of 'responsible state' in world politics. Xi Jinping's speech to the 19th Party Congress placed much emphasis on the idea that the path to independence and development -- especially for the developing world -- is via socialism with Chinese characteristics. As China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi further explained, China "can provide a new path for all developing countries to modernization." ¹⁶

Tensions and uncertainty

There are though tensions in China's positions and probable disappointments to come. First, the logic of its arguments: if China stresses an absence of universal values and stresses instead civilizational difference, it makes it difficult for it to lead on the basis of collective values that provide the legitimate underpinnings of that leadership role.

Secondly, there is also a growing tension between its recent statements that the world is diverse and that no one model has the monopoly on wisdom, and its growing emphasis on its own political-economic model as offering a way forward for many states.

Thirdly, the successes associated with its economic model have owed rather little to Maoist or Marxist influenced socialism and much more to the Reform and Opening policies that allowed, in the early stages, for overseas Chinese to participate as investors and for the West and Japan to offer technology, training, and markets. Economic interdependence has been the key and within a neighbourhood replete with examples of positive development experiences.

General Assembly votes are overwhelmingly against the positions that Russia and China have been articulating.

Examples are important for illustrating some of these tensions in its policies. Starting first with the crisis in Syria, we witness a China (and Russia) that is unable to convince others that its Security Council vetoes are worthy of support. Few other non-permanent members of the Council have joined it in voting against Syria-related resolutions, or even in abstaining on those resolutions. General Assembly votes are overwhelmingly against the positions that Russia and China have been articulating.

Neither is Beijing able to lead in regional multilateral trade negotiations. Some twelve states at one time contemplated the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement without China. Eleven states are still contemplating it. China's preferred Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership negotiations are proving difficult to bring to a conclusion as states contend over market access, tariff systems, India's demand for greater services sector liberalization, and the like.

The Belt and Road Initiative has become overwhelmingly associated with President Xi, but as a project it generates as much disquiet as it generates interest. As Professor Shi Yinhong, an IR specialist based at Renmin University in Beijing, has warned, China needed first of all "to develop our own strength and capability" before engaging in massive and costly economic projects such as these.

Shi also pointed to the tensions between China's economic strategy and its military strategy. In his view, its new military capabilities, maritime claims, and competition with the US and Japan were damaging its soft power and increasing the risk of major state conflict.¹⁷

Internally, the stability and unity allegedly promoted by 'institutionalized consultative democracy' is not so obvious, as Chinese authorities make use of new personal surveillance technologies and continue to spend more on internal security than external security.

In working through these tensions between its aspirations and the likely outcomes, we are more likely, then, to face a China that is often frustrated, and therefore only selectively being offered the status markers, such as responsible great power, that it would like to attract. The extent to which this will generate destabilizing results depends on many factors, not least on the degree to which Xi can be seen to have advanced China towards the benchmark goals he has established. One other mistake in all of this is that, having set himself up as the paramount leader, Xi is capable of generating praise as well as blame. The probable consequences of one or other of these assessments add to the sense of uncertainty about China's coming role in world politics.

Policy Recommendations

- Countries outside of China need to develop a more nuanced understanding of Beijing's relationship with dominant global norms.
- On some policy issues, it seeks a larger voice and role within existing institutions and thus does not constitute a major challenge.
- ♣ In other areas, it is working to aid the decline in certain normative values, arguing that it is the strong and developed state that is the best guarantor of world order and the security of the individual.
- → The West should act to counter China's arguments where they are weak, inconsistent and retrogressive, and reinvigorate its support for the values of human rights and democracy.

Endnotes

- 1 Samuel S. Kim, "China's International Organizational Behaviour," in Thomas W. Robinson and David Shambaugh (eds.) *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 431.
- 2 Chen Jian, China's Road to the Korean War (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), esp. chapter two.
- 3 Peter Van Ness, Revolution and Chinese Foreign Policy: China's Support for Wars of National Liberation (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1970).
- 4 Quoted in Harriet D. Schwar and Louis J. Smith (eds), Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957 (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1986), Vol. 3, p. 251.
- 5 Quoted in Samuel S. Kim, "Thinking Globally in Post-Mao China," Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 27:2, 1990, p. 193.
- 6 These US perspectives can be found in *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1955-1957, Vol. 3, pp. 230-255, pp. 497-510, p.482, and David W. Mabon and Harriet D. Schwar (eds) *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1952-1954 (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1986) Vol. 14, pp. 289-90.
- 7 Margaret M. Pearson, "China's Integration into the International Trade and Investment Regime," in Elizabeth Economy and Michel Oksenberg (eds), *China Joins the World* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1999), p. 191.
- 8 Alastair Iain Johnston, and Paul Evans, "China's Engagement with Multilateral Security Institutions," in Johnston and Robert S. Ross (eds), *Engaging China: The Management of an Emerging Power* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 253.
- 9 William A. Callahan, China Dreams: 20 Visions of the Future (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 21 and p. 41.
- 10 Jochen Prantl and Ryoko Nakano, "Global Norm Diffusion in East Asia," International Relations, Vol. 25: 2, 2011.
- 11 "Commentary: Enlightened Chinese democracy puts the West in the shade," Xinhua, 17 October 2017.
- 12 Martin Wolf, "Capitalism and Democracy are the Odd Couple," Financial Times, 20 September 2017.
- 13 See United Nations, General Assembly, Mobilizing Collective Action: The Next Decade of the Responsibility to Protect: Report of the Secretary-General, A/70/999-S/2016/620 (22 July 2016), at http://undocs.org/A/70/999, p. 2 and p. 4.
- 14 Pankaj Mishra, Age of Anger: A History of the Present (London: Allen Lane, 2017), p. 13 and p. 26.
- 15 "Full Text of President Xi's Speech at Opening of Belt and Road Forum," Xinhua, 14 May 2017.
- 16 "Wang Yi talks about the essence of major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 19 October 2017, at www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1503756.shtml.
- 17 Shi Yinhong, "Amid Western uncertainties, China mustn't spread too thin," *Global Times*, 26 October 2016, at http://www.global times.cn/content/1013884.shtml.



MASTER OF STRATEGIC STUDIES

Australia's foremost Strategic Studies program, offered by the Strategic & Defence Studies Centre, at the Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs

A graduate degree combining the theoretical and practical expertise of leading academics and policymakers. Develop the analytical frameworks you need to tackle the regional and global strategic and security challenges of your career, and graduate a leader in your field. Students looking to undertake a major research essay under the supervision of a leading Strategic Studies scholar should consider the Master of Strategic Studies (Advanced) program.

Major courses include:

STST8002 The New Power Politics of Asia



Course
Convenor:
Professor
Hugh White

Asia is in the throes of a major power-political revolution, as a radical change in the distribution of wealth and power overtakes the old order and forces the creation of a new one. Explore three areas of the new power politics of Asia: the nature of power politics as a mode of international relations; the power politics of Asia today, what is happening and where it is going; and concepts that can help us better understand power politics.

STST8010 Strategic Studies Concepts and Methods



Course Convenor: Professor Evelyn Goh

Explore inter-disciplinary concepts, theories and methods that inform Strategic Studies academic research. Using the overarching empirical theme of the Cold War, investigate three areas: understanding critical developments during the Cold War; historiographical and methodological debates in the study of the Cold War; and theoretical and conceptual methods employed by scholars in the most influential works in Strategic Studies.

STST8027 Insurgency & Counterinsurgency in an Age of Terror



Course
Convenor:
Dr Garth
Pratten

To understand contemporary insurgencies in places such such as Iraq and Afghanistan this course establishes a strong historical framework by examining earlier conflicts from North America to Southeast and South Asia. It encourages students to evaluate contemporary counter-insurgency practice, including those campaigns being waged as part of the attempt to defeat transnational terrorism, against the backdrop of the evolution of counterinsurgency strategies.

Other courses you can study in your degree include: Strategic Studies; The Resort to Force: Understanding Military Power; Australian Strategic and Defence Policy; Great and Powerful Friends: Strategic Alliances and Australian Security; Strategic Studies Internship; Special Topics in Strategic Studies; Intelligence and Security; Nuclear Strategy in the Asian Century; China's Defence and Strategic Challenges; Why and How We Fight: Understanding War and Conflict; Contemporary Issues in Australian Defence Policy.

For more information visit: programsandcourses.anu.edu.au

Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs ANU College of Asia & the Pacific

Contact

T 02 6125 7017 E sdsc@anu.edu.au W sdsc.bellschool.anu.edu.au