

正义与和谐社会

“Harmonious Society”

Rise of the New China

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CHINA'S PRESIDENT Hu Jintao calls his vision for leading China into the twenty-first century *Harmonious Society* ((和谐社会, hè xié shè huì). From the recent dynastic periods to today, China's prolific history of lost global prominence, subjugation to colonial/imperial powers, civil war, the closed communist era, and the opening of China in 1978 must be understood through the lens of contemporary Chinese politics. President Hu has cast himself as China's champion. His ideals of checking Western power and mitigating foreign influences in a rising China resonate within China today. The question becomes whether China's ambitions will remain regional or will they extend to surpassing the United States as the de facto superpower to meet these ends in the 2030 time frame.

Harmonious Society is described by Hu as a “scientific development concept”¹ which shifts China's primary focus from a purely economic growth model to a more balanced, Confucian-style approach aimed at maintaining growth while addressing daunting social issues such as the wide gap between rich and poor, widespread environmental degradation, and government and corporate corruption.² The post-Mao Zedong China, beginning with Deng Xiaoping in 1978, remains authoritarian but has

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continued to build on policies promoting openness and integration with the international community. *Harmonious Society* is designed to foster more democratic and financial opportunity for citizens, allowing for some participation in government while maintaining firm, centralized control. The plan seeks to harness China's economic affluence, using it to increase influence on the world stage.

Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin, and Hu Jintao—representing the second, third, and fourth generations of leaders after Mao Zedong in the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)—embarked on incremental reforms to maximize China's economic potential while retaining strict authoritarian control. Together these leaders, the Politburo Standing Committee, Politburo, and Central Committee represent modern Chinese politics. Their reforms have enabled China to experience explosive economic growth over the past 30 years, which in the eyes of many allows them to retain the “Mandate of Heaven.” Yet, as witnessed at Tiananmen Square in 1989, the leadership will react harshly to dissent from its people to retain that mandate.

As a result of the People's 17th Communist Party Congress (CPC) in late 2007, Hu's position is secure until 2012. He consolidated power by garnering seats for his allies on key committees, to include the Politburo Standing Committee, while retiring older government officials with strong loyalties to previous generations. However, the new leaders placed in politburo and central committee positions represent the rising fifth generation. This generation will be pivotal in executing Hu's strategy and in guiding China's path in the near and midterm. Issues such as the Taiwan question, corruption and rule of law, environmental protection, resource procurement, and internal dissent represent the challenges facing this rising class of leaders as underscored by President Hu's address at the 17th CPC.³

China is a rising power, and this must be considered as future policy is crafted. Although an unforeseen event, such as a natural disaster or internal discord, could slow China's rise, it is clear that its vibrant economic affluence will translate into regional and global influence in the future. It is reasonable to predict that China's globalization-fueled economic growth will continue, which in turn, will present future Chinese politicians with an array of options to move the country's strategic direction.⁴ If the rhetoric emanating from the 17th CPC is to be believed, China will translate its affluence into peaceful regional leadership; however, the ongoing construction of a globally capable military whose capabilities extend beyond those of national defense can lead to a different postulation about actual intent. If Chinese

political intent is to match and eventually supplant the United States as the dominant global power, it will have the ability to do so. Hu’s vision of a “harmonious society” is a modern plan whose outcome subordinates foreign interests to its own, making it the “kingdom with no boundaries,” as was thought in the eighteenth-century Qing Dynasty. It is clear that the United States must place a high priority on its US-Sino strategy and be prepared for the challenge a rising China is sure to present.

Contemporary Politics in China

After Mao Zedong’s death in 1976, Deng Xiaoping emerged as China’s new leader and set out to craft a new Chinese strategy. Purged and forced to work in a labor camp during the Cultural Revolution before coming back into favor and rising as Mao’s successor, Deng understood firsthand the failure of the revolution with its isolationist posture and set a course to open China to the global market system. He concluded that while foreign encroachment was at the root of the “Bad Century,”⁵ it was essential to open China up to economic opportunity. This belief was a major departure from Mao’s philosophy and set China on the path toward the political situation of today.

Although credited with leading China’s resurging wealth in the modern era through his “Socialism with Chinese Characteristics” strategy, Deng was also responsible for giving orders that would enable the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) to crack down on political dissidents at the massacre in Tiananmen Square in 1989. Publicly, Deng praised the PLA for responding to the crisis with decisiveness, but privately, he reshuffled several key leadership positions which would ultimately position Jiang Zemin as his successor in 1992.⁶ China’s leaders demonstrated at Tiananmen that reforms which support China’s meteoric economic growth remain official policy, but the power elite will, in all cases, attempt to retain central control.

In a discussion with a Japanese delegation, Deng explained China’s Marxism and socialism in uniquely Chinese terms, making the linkage between the Bad Century and Socialism with Chinese Characteristics: “To adhere to Marxism and to integrate it with Chinese realities—in other words, to seek truth from facts, as advocated by Comrade Mao Zedong—it is crucial for us to adhere to Marxism and socialism. For more than a century after the Opium War, China was subjected to aggression

and humiliation. It is because the Chinese people embraced Marxism and kept to the road leading from new-democracy to socialism that their revolution was victorious.”⁷ Going forward, Socialism with Chinese Characteristics can thus be interpreted as firmly held power by the elite party members without the shackles of ideological definitions of Marxism and socialism. In this construct, challenges to the lack of congruency between China’s open market reforms and its failure to improve human rights and freedom are unsuccessful. Yet, for the West, it is hard to label China as fully communist, given its economic policies—this is where the phrase “with Chinese Characteristics” becomes useful to its leaders.

The party power structure solidified in the transition from Deng to Jiang. Deng ran the party and nation from the position of chairman of the central military commission and paramount leader. The presidency was reestablished as the leader of the party and the nation with Jiang’s installation in 1993. The premier is the secondary leadership role. The three top governmental or party bodies are the Politburo Standing Committee, Politburo, and Central Committee. Their members are selected every five years at the CPC in a closed process, not visible outside of the party’s elite.⁸

In the Jiang and Hu administrations, this process and the associated party structures, as shown in figure 1, have stabilized. It was common in Mao’s and Deng’s era for outgoing senior officials to be investigated and imprisoned to discredit criticism of incoming leaders. Constitutional reforms stabilizing government structures now allow for peaceful exits from government and logical successions with the party elite. For example, Hu gained 10 years of experience on the Politburo Standing Committee before rising to be president.⁹

Institutionalizing key positions and power structures enables party factions to compete in a stable system and supports long-term planning that has been a Chinese cultural characteristic. The recent 17th CPC reaffirmed this stability. Although President Hu was able to meet his goal of placing younger protégés on the Politburo Standing Committee, he was not allowed to trim the number of positions on the committee from nine to seven (see fig. 1)¹⁰ for the purpose of retiring more members whose support came from the previous president Jiang.¹¹ Although the resultant personnel changes seem to indicate that Hu will have power limited by those with close ties to Jiang Zemin, the failure to select Jiang Mianheng,

son of Jiang Zemin, may well signal that Jiang’s influence is rapidly dissipating, leaving Hu with a consolidated position.¹²

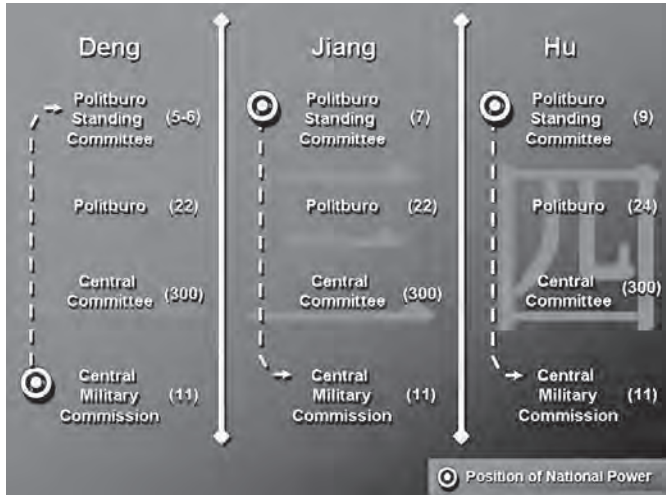


Figure 1. Organizational structure of China’s government

President Hu made pledges to increase democratic opportunities for citizens. He said, “People’s democracy is the lifeblood of socialism.”¹³ In the coming years the CCP will work to offer “socialist democracy” where urban and rural areas can have a role in electing deputies to the people’s congress.¹⁴ It is also envisioned that the public will gain access to hearings that shape some facets of public policy.¹⁵ Whether or not these reforms come into reality remains to be seen, but the tenor of Hu’s address is indicative that measured democratic participation will come into existence.

Dr. David Shambaugh, professor of political science and international affairs at George Washington University, cites that the rationale for the CCP to expand participation may be found in the International Department of the CCP’s analysis of Eastern European implosions and collapses.¹⁶ This analysis concluded these implosions were caused by:

- poorly developed economies, cut off from international markets and technologies,
- ruling parties that were divorced from their populaces—no grassroots level,

- collaboration between the Catholic Church and unions in the Polish case,
- external subversion by the United States and United Kingdom, and
- loss of control over security services which had overly repressive policies.¹⁷

According to Shambaugh, the Chinese also conducted in-depth analyses of the former Soviet Union, North Korea, Cuba, and Vietnam.¹⁸ They attribute the demise of many authoritarian systems, such as those in Central Asia, to the influence of American NGOs, assessing that they fomented revolution in these countries. The International Department of the CCP recognizes Singapore as a model worthy of close examination. It admires how Singapore's ruling People's Action Party (PAP) has been able to remain low key but maintain total control. In Singapore, the ruling body never relinquishes power, but the façade exists of a government that involves population participation coupled with an open-market, prosperous economy.¹⁹ It may be a model for "Democracy with Chinese Characteristics," but its track record on human rights and freedom is far more liberal than China's current model, and the gap between rich and poor is not so profound. It is clear that the Chinese are interested in learning lessons from other governmental systems and in finding replicable models for adaptation in China to support Hu's call for socialist democracy.

In the global political environment, Dr. Nancy Tucker, professor of history at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, sees China's increasing involvement in world institutions as a trend that will continue into the foreseeable future.²⁰ China's experience with regional organizations, such as APEC and ASEAN, or on the global level at the United Nations and the UN Security Council is indicative of a strategy to influence regional and global issues. As China increases its engagement internationally, Dr. Tucker envisions an increase in conflicting priorities with other nation-states, but that China culturally would prefer not to have the top position in these organizations but rather would prefer to be the "number two."²¹ This is reinforced by a 3,000-year-old term that Deng Xiaoping brought back in guiding future Chinese leaders. It is "tao guang yang hui," which translates to "hide brightness, nourish obscurity." Dr. Larry Wortzel, director of Asian Studies for The Heritage Foundation, explained the translation of Deng's meaning to congressional leaders as, "Put your brightness in your quiver behind your back and then nourish your capabilities secretly."²² Deng's intent was to

bide time in bringing back China's prominence—create the impression of China's gradual awakening and opening; in essence, a gradient of reform—a political strategy that is still intact today.

Deng, Jiang, and Hu: Gradual Reform

From 1978 to today, from Deng to Hu, China's strategic course has been additive, each leader's course building on the previous, each new evolution more ambitious. It reflects a gradient of incremental steps, beginning with the "24 Character Strategy" set in motion by Deng.

The 24 Character Strategy refers to 24 Chinese characters which are and translate to:

冷静观察，站稳脚跟，沉着应付，韬光养晦，善于守拙，绝不当头。

Observe calmly; secure our position; cope with affairs calmly; hide our capacities and bide our time; be good at maintaining a low profile; and never claim leadership.²³

It compliments his call to "hide brightness, nourish obscurity." Both ideas guide leaders to commit to the long-term outlook in charting China's course without invoking conflict among global actors.

Deng himself was responsible for the most significant deviation of the strategy to date: the massacre at Tiananmen Square. China came under the spotlight from the world community as well as the Chinese themselves, who to that point had revered his leadership in the transition from Mao. "Xiaoping," with different syllabic emphasis translates in English as "small bottles." The protest, made globally visible by Mike Chinoy of CNN reporting from the square, was thousands of Chinese smashing small bottles to the ground in solidarity for the victims—a practice which continued on college campuses for many anniversaries after the massacre.²⁴

A major consequence of the massacre was altered political succession, with the reins of power being passed on to Jiang Zemin, mayor of Shanghai and party chief, rather than the disgraced Zhao Ziyang, general secretary. Although Deng followed through by cracking down on the protests, he held the inner circle responsible for letting the situation get out of control. In a larger sense, the lesson from Tiananmen for Deng and those who came after him was to articulate clearly to the populace not to confuse open markets with open (democratic) society.

President Jiang remained true to Deng's reforms and maxim "it is glorious to be rich" by introducing his vision called the "Three Represents," which calls for advancement in economic development, cultural development, and political consensus. The drive to pursue national wealth aggressively continued

while greatly increasing investment in the PLA and opening up very limited democratic opportunity at local levels to make the CCP attractive to more Chinese. Deng's vision was focused on the densely populated eastern coastal region. Although foreign investment soared, corruption and scandal followed, with the rural areas not benefiting as much from his strategy. The prosperity gap widened sharply. These were key challenges to be addressed when President Hu Jintao took office in 2002.

Hu's "scientific development concept," also known as *Harmonious Society*, calls for economic prosperity as in Deng's and Jiang's visions. However, Hu seeks to control growth while focusing on the social issues that have grown since China's opening of its markets. His approach runs congruent with Confucian analects. Confucian philosophy emphasized personal and governmental morality, justice, and social correctness.²⁵ At the 17th CPC, Hu reiterated in his address that democratic opportunities would expand, wealth and prosperity would increase in the rural and western regions, the rule of law would be supported, environmental issues would be addressed, and corruption would be controlled.²⁶ History, philosophy, Deng's foundation, and the lessons learned at Tiananmen, serve as linkages for Hu and the new ruling elite to make these pronouncements about China's strategic direction.

What remains unchanged from Jiang's administration is defense spending, which increased in March 2007 by 17.8 percent, making it the largest defense budget China has ever had on a per capita basis.²⁷ Rather than face the "too little, too late" plight of its original opening to the West over a century ago, China is working to build a world-class military which will present its leaders with options it has not had since the Ming Dynasty. The gradient from Deng to Hu discernibly follows a definite trend, or "trajectory"—a trajectory whose future path may be somewhat predictable.

What's next for China

China's trajectory is a steep curve. In the key economic metric, exports, China surpassed the United States in 2007, becoming the second largest exporter and is forecast by the World Trade Organization (WTO) to pass Germany in the next few years.²⁸ China now ranks second behind the United States in oil consumption at 7.88 million barrels per day.²⁹ The Congressional Research Service (CRS) references Global Insight's estimate that China's economy will overtake the US economy by 2013.³⁰ Global Insight predicts that in 2025 the Chinese economy will be 59 percent

larger than the United States'.³¹ Success in this area correlates with Chinese politics and the reform gradient established by Deng and expanded on by Jiang and Hu. Senior director for East Asian Affairs at the National Security Council, Dennis Wilder, plotted the trajectory and China's current position on the curve (fig. 2).³² Continuing on this trajectory to the “Rising China” quadrant entails meeting challenges that could knock China off this curve and move it in a different direction.³³ Internal discord, natural disasters, world recession/depression, or a crisis in Taiwan are examples of “wildcard” events that could alter the course. Chinese leaders are sure to have prepared contingency plans for the setbacks that can be foreseen, but unforeseen events will test them. Depending on which wildcard or combination thereof, the effect could be as benign as China's 2030 expectations taking many more years or as volatile as internal power disintegration or engagement in global conflict. In any case, to maintain its current Rising China trajectory, Chinese politicians will have to meet all of the challenges, wildcard or not. Moving into the Rising China quadrant by 2030 may yield more growth and freedom in China, but it does



Figure 2. China's trajectory toward free-market democracy

not necessarily mean that the United States and other nations will not confront serious challenges in the Rising China environment in terms of commerce, defense, and global politics.

China's course also depends on the rising fifth generation of leaders continuing to advance Hu's *Harmonious Society* reforms. From the 17th CPC, the new selections to the Politburo Standing Committee include

two potential successors to Hu in 2012. They are his protégés, Xi Jinping (Shanghai party chief) and Li Keqiang (Liaoning party chief).³⁴ Apart from successors, it is clear that many of the new fifth-generation leaders have risen under Hu's mentoring. The fifth generation is also called the "lost generation," because many did not have formal schooling opportunities during the Cultural Revolution; yet, most of those rising in the political ranks recaptured college educations and postgraduate degrees when China opened in 1978.³⁵ They meet another Hu criterion for selecting emerging leaders in that they are all in their late forties to early fifties—very young by Chinese standards. Age is a factor for top-tier leaders. The turnover rate for the Politburo Standing Committee, Politburo, Central Committee, and the Central Military Commission will remain at 60 percent and higher per congress for the foreseeable future.³⁶ Dr. Li Cheng of the Brookings Institution conducted an analysis of the 103 highest-ranking, fifth-generation leaders. Common characteristics include:

- All had humble, hardship experiences during their formative years.
- A majority have postgraduate degrees (80 percent).
- Very few have technocratic governmental backgrounds (17 percent).³⁷
- Many are lawyers with foreign study experience in social sciences.
- Almost half are *tuanpai* (Communist Youth League) members (48.5 percent).³⁸

Both potential successors, Xi and Li, were *tuanpai* members. Although Xi has emerged from the 17th CPC as the frontrunner, their performance over the next five years will determine which will be selected at the 18th CPC as the new president. Dr. Li refers to this process as the new, "inner-Party democracy."³⁹ Promotion results from the 17th CPC make it clear that President Hu's influence and *Harmonious Society* or another parallel strategy will be China's path for at least the next two decades. The fifth generation of leaders from Hu's *tuanpai* students will form the leadership element in China for the foreseeable future.

The philosophy that these leaders will take forward is a broad form of the concept of *Harmonious Society*.⁴⁰ At the CPC, Hu took this Harmonious Society beyond the domestic and regional context in expanding the concept to "Harmonious World" for the purpose of shaping the world environment

in which China will operate. Hu’s overarching doctrine in foreign affairs is the 53-year-old *Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence*, which was the initial framework to reach a peace accord with India following the Chinese occupation of Tibet.⁴¹ Today the principles as publicly stated to be China’s universal approach to foreign relations are:

- Mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty,
- Mutual nonaggression,
- Mutual noninterference with each other’s internal affairs,
- Equality and mutual benefit, and
- Peaceful coexistence.⁴²

Hu said, “We will pursue an independent foreign policy of peace and unswervingly follow the path of peaceful development and a win-win strategy of opening up. We will develop friendship and cooperation with all other countries on the basis of the *Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence* and push for the building of a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity.”⁴³

This platform is consistent with the current Chinese trajectory, the reforms of the past three generations of leaders, and Chinese culture. Taken at face value, the Harmonious World concept is congruent with China’s increasing interest in global institutions and politics. The principals of “peaceful coexistence” and “equality and mutual benefit” are welcome to the global community and tie to Deng’s and Hu’s strategies.

However, the unprecedented buildup of China’s military and activism in forums like the UN Security Council or, most recently, the Six-Party Talks on North Korea nuclear proliferation do not seem to correlate to the five principles, but these actions make sense culturally from Sun Tzu’s writings and the pursuit of outcome through indirect means.⁴⁴ China is globally engaged today, and there are reasons to suspect that it is pursuing some of its national objectives via indirect means. Thus, as China continues on its current trajectory toward increased military and economic power, the expectation that it will be satisfied as a regional power or merely as a peer to the United States should not be depended on for planning.

The Road Ahead: Potential Disruptions to China's Current Path

What then is China's vector in a political sense for the future? The challenges on the horizon for China's leaders are complex and multifaceted. President Hu and his successors' decisions in building the *Harmonious Society*, and perhaps *Harmonious World*, will influence how China's leaders, structure, processes, and political system will evolve, both domestically and internationally. External entities—not just foreign powers but also influential bodies such as multigovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGO), and multinational corporations (MNC)—will shape political activity and decisions and not always favorably to the party's power elite.

Chinese Leadership Structure and Processes

From the selections to the Politburo Standing Committee and other key posts filled during the 17th CPC, President Hu has consolidated a strong base. Hu not only selected his successors, he had a large hand in developing them as leaders through the *tuanpai* program as well. The top fifth-generation leaders, with Xi and Li leading the class, are the products of Hu's investment in the *tuanpai* many years ago. The likelihood that this generation will remain devoted to and build on *Harmonious Society* is strong.

However, Hu's remarks at the 17th CPC could become a source of potential instability. If, from these statements, there is a sincere initiative undertaken to allow a small number of regionally elected candidates to participate on national-level committees or at the CPC itself, it could be a very small reform that evolves in the coming decades into a major shift in the composition of top Chinese officials. Depending on the voice from nontraditional players in the government and how they are received or tolerated, the concepts of *Harmonious Society* could be revised in the decades that follow. Deng was not able to envision the resulting unrest and social dissidence resulting from market reforms and economic openness. Hu recognizes a need to allow for a measured amount of voice and participation among the population; however, doing so could result in outcomes that no one can foresee.

Domestic Politics

President Hu has discussed challenges such as widening prosperity gaps, rule of law, and corruption mitigation openly at many public forums, including the 17th CPC. His government and those that follow will seek to champion these to keep domestic politics stable. The economy seems to be the clock they are working against. The rural areas have expectations of increased prosperity as envisioned in *Harmonious Society*, and the developed urban areas have expectations of more wealth. The current economic downturn, however, may threaten both. In the first three months of 2009, China's growth rate has slipped to 6.1 percent.⁴⁵ Despite this decrease in growth and the concomitant dislocation of nearly 20 million workers, all indications are that unless the economy turns sharply worse, China will likely manage to economically muddle through.⁴⁶ Should the economy enter a sharper downturn or the global crisis deepen into a depression, some level of disenfranchisement is to be expected. Further, during this period of relative economic stagnation, China will be more vulnerable to the effects of major natural disasters, pandemics, and environmental crises. Any of these, on top of the extant economic challenges, may alter the ruling elite's ability to stay the course.

International Politics

China is reinvesting a large part of its wealth into global influence, making international politics a priority. Its access in Africa now includes 44 of the continent's 53 states. The rationale for this may be driven by the need for resources, but the by-product from investing in African infrastructure, regardless of any ideological chasms, is improved global influence. Its efforts in establishing groups like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) or participating in preexisting bodies such as the UN, APEC, or ASEAN will continue to be vehicles of choice for China to exert itself globally.

The United States is not the only variable for which China's politicians must plan. In addition to instability in Africa—a problem most imperial powers have contended with at one time or another—Russia, India, and Japan are neighbors that fit more into the competitor rather than partner category. Historically, China had regrettable experiences with all these countries, and its leaders will likely remain suspicious in any bilateral or multilateral effort.

The *Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence* as Chinese ideals would be tested if China decides that Taiwan must be taken back with force or if it

should decide that it needs to garner natural resources by blocking other nations' access in areas such as the contested Spratly Islands. These are potential sources of conflict Chinese leaders will seek to avoid if they are to realize their global goals, but short-term crises could evolve in ways that force them to abandon long-term strategy temporarily.

External Entities

An outgrowth of globalization and China's prosperity is the tremendous rise of per capita wealth and, therefore, the influence of external entities contributing to this success. To make their operating environments more stable and conducive to greater corporate success, multinational corporations have invested in social corporate responsibility (SCR) programs, boosting local communities' infrastructure, education, and environments in much the same way NGOs target their programs. NGOs operate similarly for their own objectives, but whether SCR or NGO money is being invested, the long-term effects are influences Chinese leaders will be cautious of due to the history of the "bad century." As stated earlier, the Chinese conclusion was that the Central Asian states fell due to subtle influences from the NGOs. Future leaders in China will be cautious as these efforts flourish but may find it impossible to reverse those that meet with widespread approval among the populace.

Guiding the *Harmonious Society* to 2030 will not be easy for Chinese leaders. The planning variable that will likely remain constant is that the ranking elite of the Communist Party will be in power well beyond the 2030 time frame. No other constants exist. Just like the surprise Tiananmen presented to Chinese leaders in 1989, they should be preparing today for how the Chinese political system will adjust to an environment that is certain to be dynamic and volatile. Instead of a smooth trajectory to the Rising China quadrant, these factors could alter the path to something more closely resembling figure 3.

Policy Implications

There is a wide range of thought from experts focused on studying China. However, given reform progress and economic trends experienced by China since Deng Xiaoping, there is broad consensus that at a minimum, China will rise to peer status in the international political system over the next 20 years.⁴⁷ Knowledge of Chinese culture, its history of



Figure 3: One potential Chinese trajectory toward 2030 -

foreign relations, and its rapid rise through the Deng, Jiang, and Hu eras is essential in designing a vision from which policies can be crafted. China's political power is centralized, but the political elite's activities traverse every element of Chinese society whether diplomatic, informational, military, economic, or cultural. Early Chinese philosophy, still in practice today, espouses indirect action, meeting goals in quiet ways, or creating contradictions to confuse or deceive as methods in achieving objectives. In the political arena, US policy makers should consider the following strategies.

Invest in Regional Alliances and Access

Chinese leaders may seek to weaken US influence in Asia, and globally, by eroding the strength of our partnerships. Therefore, we need to increase resources to enable our country teams to increase investment in relationships with traditional regional allies in addition to making inroads with countries where we have not had robust relations. US relations with India, Nepal, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam must improve between now and 2030. The United States would do well to strengthen its role and the roles of its allies in APEC and ASEAN. US engagement must be constructive and adaptive with regard to the wide range of cultural diversity perspectives in the region. It is also important to increase efforts in monitoring how China conducts diplomacy with the same actors, watching for opportunities that may arise.

Increase US-China Bilateral Opportunities

Before China ascends to peer status, the United States should pursue actions to partner with the Chinese wherever mutual interests converge. The Six-Party Talks on North Korea are an ongoing example of constructive collaboration with the Chinese. Shaping the opinions of the fifth generation of leaders and beyond will be important as China passes critical growth milestones. China's major investments in Africa represent an opportunity for collaboration. Space programs may represent another area where relations could be enhanced or deepened. Dr. David Shambaugh recommends a "Track II" approach, promoting unofficial contacts among nongovernmental actors aimed at advancing diplomatic efforts to enhance the policy dialogue between nations.⁴⁸ He also advocates for a reorganized China effort in the executive branch at the NSC and State Department to ensure China policy is not contradictory with other efforts in the region.⁴⁹

Provide More Options through Military Investment

China's politicians are investing aggressively in disruptive technologies that have the potential to give it an asymmetric advantage if left unmatched. The space and cyber domains will become vulnerabilities in the near term, given recent demonstrations of an antisatellite (ASAT) and cyber-attack capability. The United States needs to pursue leadership in developing directed-energy, nano, and robotic weapons and the countering technologies for our forces that may face them. Covert weapons programs should also be pursued to ensure the United States maintains its military advantage. This strategy strengthens US credibility with regional alliances and commitments and ensures decision makers are never option limited, should conflict with China manifest itself. America should increase its engagement with China and regional partners and cultivate an understanding of China's culture and history but should always retain the capability to approach the relationship from a position of strength and leadership. Given that China's current and follow-on generations of political leaders are established and that Chinese policy with regard to these investments is unlikely to change, the United States must match the developmental timelines with acquiring the right weaponry.

Conclusions

China and its political leaders have been managing change at a voracious pace since Deng Xiaoping led the nation on its new course of

economic growth and openness. Chinese leaders’ inclination to promote economic liberalization while retaining authoritarian control does not seem sustainable in the years ahead when accounting for information proliferation; a rising, expectant, middle class; and an increasing need for resources. Perhaps the political leadership’s best acknowledgement of this can be found in the 17th CPC statements by President Hu. He openly embraces democracy with tractable plans to open up the government, targets the rule of law and corruption as areas for action, and commits to focus on rural areas to halt the growing income disparity. This alone establishes direction for the Chinese government that can be anticipated and for which the United States should plan.

US policy makers must weigh Chinese history, culture, and experience before assessing its intent with regard to regional or global politics. The United States has insufficient power to halt China’s rise, nor should it necessarily seek to do so, but a comprehensive plan on how to pursue the US-Sino relationship must be designed, resourced, and executed with the China of 2030 in mind. The current *leaders*, ever mindful of China’s history with foreigners and a perspective aligned with Confucius and Sun Tzu, have defined their paths, and so we must now define our own. **SSQ**

Notes

1. Hu Jintao, “Scientific Outlook Development” (lecture, Yale University, 24 April 2006). Hu’s definition is found in these quotes: “China will pursue a scientific outlook on development that makes economic and social development people-oriented, comprehensive, balanced and sustainable; We will work to strike a proper balance between urban and rural development, development among regions, economic and social development, development of man and nature, and domestic development and opening wider to the outside world; It is also rooted in the cultural heritages of the Chinese nation.”

2. Arthur Waley, trans. and ed., *The Analects of Confucius* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989). Because of the teachings of Confucius, the population will generally defer to the authorities unless the legitimacy of the regime is called into question. To call this legitimacy into question requires rulers to show that they are manifestly unjust or demonstrate that they cannot paternally lead the society. Should the government fail to lead justly or fail in its ability to lead its people, then the “Mandate of Heaven” is lost, and it becomes not only the right but the duty of every Confucian to oppose the incumbent administration. The central government’s actions in these matters are in keeping with this cultural backdrop. Addressing issues of corruption and the environment are in keeping with just rule.

3. Ibid.

4. Even in the midst of the current economic downturn, China’s GDP is still growing at an impressive rate. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) projections, updated in January 2009, suggest that despite the global recession, China’s economy will still grow by 6.7 percent in 2009 and 8.0 percent in 2010. IMF, World Economic Outlook Update: An Update of the Key

WEO Projections, 28 January 2009, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2009/update/01/pdf/0109.pdf>.

5. The “Bad Century” is the roughly 100-year period between the colonial victories in the Opium Wars and the beginnings of the Communist Revolution in the 1940s. China still regards this period of subjugation to the rule of the rest of the world as a time of humiliation. The contrast of this period with a prosperous “Harmonious Society” resonates within the Chinese people.

6. It is important to note that the Confucian “Mandate of Heaven” remains intact should a government survive a rebellion. Deng Xiaoping’s actions in this situation are consistent with the cultural underpinnings of the Chinese government.

7. Deng Xiaoping, “Build Socialism with Chinese Characteristics” (speech, Sino-Japanese Relations Conference, Beijing, 30 June 1984).

8. Carlos Pascual, “What Should We Expect of the 17th Party Congress?” *Transcript from Changes in China’s Political Landscape: The 17th Party Congress and Beyond Symposium, John L. Thornton China Center, 12–13 April 2007* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2007), 6, <http://www.brookings.edu/events/2007/0412china.aspx>.

9. *Ibid.*, 27, 35.

10. Figure 1 indicates the numbers in each partition of the government and where the highest level of national power was centered. The “bull’s eye” indicates from where the leader ran the government with an arrow pointing to a dual-role chairmanship. In the case of Jiang, his presidency ended in 2002 but he remained chairman of the CMC until 2004.

11. Joseph Kahn, “Politburo Reshuffle is a Sign for China,” *International Herald Tribune Asia-Pacific*, 22 October 2007.

12. In fact, three days after the close of the 17th CPC, press reports circulated suggesting Jiang Mianheng had been arrested. For details, see “CCP’s Highest Hierarchy Possesses Tape of Jiang Mianheng Leaking Secrets to Zhou Zhengyi,” *BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific*, 24 October 2007, <http://www.hkhkhk.com/engpro/messages/2346.html>. These reports appear to have been exaggerated, and Jiang Mianheng remains a vice president of the Chinese National Academy of Sciences. Nonetheless, his non-selection to the Politburo Standing Committee, as some had believed likely, suggests that Hu Jintao has sufficiently consolidated his grip on power that it can be said he is truly in charge of the Chinese governmental apparatus.

13. Hu, *Hold High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Strive for New Victories in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in All*, Report to the Seventeenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Beijing, 15 October 2007, <http://www.china.org.cn/english/congress/229611.htm>.

14. *Ibid.*

15. *Ibid.*

16. David Shambaugh, “Chinese Discourse about Democracy,” *Transcript from Changes in China’s Political Landscape*, 177–83.

17. *Ibid.* In each case, the Chinese conclusion is that the ruling body failed to take either direct or indirect action to counter the threat, whether that meant expanding economic opportunity, allowing limited democratic voices to counter subversion, or holding tight control on security services and their policies toward the populace.

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*, 183–84.

20. Dr. Nancy Bernkopf Tucker (professor, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, Washington, DC), interview by the author, 26 September 2007.

21. *Ibid.*

22. House, *China's Strategic Intentions and Goals: Hearings before the Committee on Armed Services*, 106th Cong., 2d sess., 2000, 13.
23. *Annual Report to Congress: Military Power of the People's Republic of China, 2007* (Washington, DC: Office of Secretary of Defense, 2007), 6.
24. Mike Chinoy, *China Live: Two Decades in the Heart of the Dragon* (Atlanta: Turner Publishing, 1997), 306.
25. John Pomfret, *Chinese Lessons: Five Classmates and the Story of the New China* (New York: Henry Holt Publishing, 2006), 128.
26. Hu, *Hold High the Great Banner*.
27. *Annual Report to Congress*, 25.
28. “WTO: China Outpaces U.S. in Exports,” *China Daily* (Beijing), 16 April 2007, www.chinadaily.com.cn/chinagate/doc/2007-04/16/content_851758.htm. While the *China Daily* predicted China would pass Germany in 2008, the WTO's 2008 report strongly suggests this did not happen, as exports and imports in the EU grew at nearly the same pace as China's. Nonetheless, the long-term trends still suggest China will pass Germany in the near future. WTO, *International Trade Statistics 2008* (Geneva: WTO, 2008).
29. CIA, *The World Factbook*, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2174rank.html>. [URL cited no longer operable; also updated figure in text]
30. CRS, *Is China a Threat to the U.S. Economy?* (Washington, DC: CRS, 23 January 2007), 15. This prediction, however, is among the earliest crossing points the authors could find. A survey of several other sources, including interviews with various brokerage houses and projections by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, yielded a median projection of the crossing point between the Chinese and US economies in the early 2020s. Regardless, it appears China's economy will almost certainly pass the US economy within the next 20 years.
31. *Ibid.*
32. Dennis Wilder (senior director for East Asian Affairs, National Security Council, The White House, Washington, DC), interview by the author, 25 September 2007.
33. *Ibid.*
34. Jayshree Bajoria, “Unveiling China's Political Future,” *Council on Foreign Relations.org*, updated 22 October 2007, http://www.cfr.org/publication/14477/deciding_chinas_political_future.html.
35. Pascual, “What Should We Expect of the 17th Party Congress?” 15–21.
36. *Ibid.*, 14.
37. This attribute differs from the third and fourth generations, who are predominantly technocrats.
38. *Ibid.*, 17. Hu Jintao was head of this organization during their membership.
39. *Ibid.*, 21.
40. Hu, *Hold High the Great Banner*.
41. Nancy B. Tucker, ed., *China Confidential* (West Sussex, NY: Columbia University Press, 2001), 225–26, 519.
42. *Ibid.*
43. Xinhua, “Hu Jintao, Top CPC Leaders Meet the Press” *China Daily*, 22 October 2007, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2007-10/22/content_6196354.htm.
44. Ralph Sawyer, *The Tao of Deception: Unorthodox Warfare in Historic and Modern China* (New York: Basic Books, 2007), 323–31, 354–55.
45. Keith Bradsher, “China's Economic Growth Slows in First Quarter,” *New York Times*, 16 April 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/16/business/global/16yuan.html?hpw>. As this article goes to press, recent estimates for second-quarter growth in China are hovering around

7.9 percent. See Joe McDonald, "China's Economic Growth Accelerates amid Stimulus," *Jakarta Post*, 19 August 2009, <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/07/16/china039s-economic-growth-accelerates-amid-stimulus.html>. Mr. McDonald reports for the Associated Press, Beijing office.

46. Christer Ljungwall, *Perspectives on Economic Growth and Stability in China* (Stockholm: Swedish Institute for International Affairs, 2009).

47. Statement is drawn from multiple interviews of a cross-section of China subject-matter experts, including senior representatives from the political, military, diplomatic, academia, corporate, NGO, and think tank areas; Washington, DC, and Singapore City, Singapore; 20–27 September 2007 and 6–7 October 2007.

48. David Shambaugh, "Facing Reality in China Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 80, no. 1 (Winter 2001): 60–62.

49. *Ibid.*, 63.