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# China's Growth as a Superpower: Is US Threatened?

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## ABSTRACT

*This paper aims to demonstrate in respect of the growth of China as economic and military transformation, under the current Communist regime, also to critically analyze the potential to seriously threaten the future security of the United States. The paper first looks at the economic reforms that have radically changed the Chinese economy. Thereafter, the paper presents the major changes that have taken place concerning military transformation, equipment up-gradation, and power projection capability. The strategic policies of the US are also discussed. The paper then focuses on the argument that shows that China could threaten the United States. The paper concludes by noting that China is a Communist country that is dissatisfied with its status in the world and working to improve the status by becoming the most Superpower nation. Overall the paper discusses the growth of China, its transformation in military power, and also the up-gradation in the technical area of China. The paper also aims to discuss the relationship between China and United Nations. The paper also discusses whether the US is threatened by China's growth as a superpower.*

**Keywords:** Superpower, transformation, reforms, communist regime.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The History of China is a mixture of various situations including charming and intricate situations. China's culture was changeable from time to time. It consists of a peaceful and war-like situation in the nation. China was ruled by various warlords. On the other hand, when we see China has also experienced peace and active trade with its neighboring countries for a long time. It can also be seen that many a time china became inaccessible due to outside influence. Due to these hurdles in the working of china, it has a complex culture.

In the previous centuries, China faced a very extremely difficult situation. China faced various politically influenced wars from neighboring countries and this civil war affected the political parties of China i.e., the Chinese Communist Party and the People's Republic of China.

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However, this was the beginning of another period of isolation where China attempted to revitalize itself. But after a period, China was successful in becoming self-sufficient in approximately all resources and technologies.

With the development of China, it will also be the point to observe what will be the effects of developing china as a superpower. But in today's time if anything is not instability of polity in the nation. Due to the emergence of China as a Superpower relations between the US and China have been more difficult. However, the US ultimately granted China most-favoured-nation (MFN) trading status and connected with China for importing huge products from china. All the nations have different opinions for the modernization of the Chinese military, some are saying that China is just updating old equipment while some are very much concerned about the forceful nature of China and its developed military power.

#### **(A) Research Objectives**

This paper is to illustrate the condition of the US in times of emerging of China as a superpower and emerging of China as a superpower nation and to discuss the relationship of China and the United States which will help to come out to a conclusion whether the US is threatened with the growth of China as a superpower.

#### **(B) Research Methodology**

This paper probes into the actual growth of china as a superpower nation and its effect on the US by using Secondary data throughout the paper. The secondary data has been used after evaluating various books and articles like Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross, *The Great Wall, and the Empty Fortress*, and much more.

#### **(C) Review of Literature**

To carry out this research several books, commentaries and journals were referred. Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross, *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress* were meticulously analysed to elaborate the topic, various articles, research papers, and journals were considered also various online journals and material used while writing the research paper.

#### **(D) Research question**

China is growing day by day and China's growth as a superpower is a very long journey which is a result of hard work and various reforms done by agencies of china. It grew in respect of technology as well as military which resulting in a superpower nation. Its reforms were very effective which helped a lot in becoming a superpower nation. China's growth is threatening various nations because when china has limited power then even china used to misbehave with

other country and if it becomes a superpower then it will disturb the public peace of peaceful countries. But the question is whether the US is also threatened by its growth. If a sly country got developed more than other countries then usually other countries will get threatened. So here is the question of whether the US is threatened by the growth of China as a superpower nation having advanced military techniques and advanced technology. As per the reports, China threatens different countries including the US, India in one or another. China also threatens the import/export market. It is so true that china exports various products to almost all the countries including India and the US at a very low cost but on the other hand, China is also dependent on other countries.

### **(E) Hypothesis**

China is a sly country and when a country like China gets power more than other nations then it will overreact and will try to disturb other nations to show its power which may result in disturbance of public peace. When China becomes a superpower it may threaten other nations and might be the United States. China is becoming more and more powerful day by day in technical as well as military with the help of different reforms. It is expanding its business throughout Asia and most of the countries have economic relations with China. China is also giving employment to a large number of workers hence it has a lot of workforces. It is well known to everyone that the relationship between China and the United States is very complex. Both the nations have adopted a wary arrogance towards the other as a potential opponent but have meanwhile maintained an extremely strong economic partnership with each other. It has been described by various world leaders and academics as the world's most important bilateral relationship of the 21st century.<sup>3</sup> But internally the united states see China as a threat to the established order in its drive for regional hegemony in East Asia now, and a future aspirant for global supremacy. So, in my opinion, United States is at threat due to the growth of China as a superpower.

## **II. ECONOMIC REFORMS THAT PERIODICALLY AFFECT THE CHINESE ECONOMY**

The Chinese economic reforms are very effective and helpful to improve the Chinese economy. Previously, the Chinese economy was subjected to ownership of the state and planning of central. From 1950 to 1973, Chinese real GDP per capita grew at a rate of 2.9% per year on average. This placed it close to the middle of the Asian nations during the same period.

Around 1970, the Chinese economy entered into a period of stagnation, and after the death of

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<sup>3</sup> Clinton seeks stronger Asia ties” BBC News. 16 Feb 2009 Retrieved 7 April 2010

Mao Zedong, the Communist Party leadership turned to market-oriented reforms to salvage the failing economy.

Authorities of China carried out the reforms in different stages. The first stage, between the 1970s and early 1980s, involved opening up of the Republic of China to foreign investment, and permission for business persons to start businesses. However, a large percentage of industries remained in the ownership of the State. The second stage of reform starts in the late 1980s and 1990s which involved the privatization and contracting out of many state-owned industries. In 2001, China joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) after which the private sector grew strangely, accounting for as much as 70 percent of China's gross domestic product by 2005. After which till the year 2013, remarkable growth occurred, with the economy increasing by 9.5% a year. On the other hand, certain political reforms were also launched by Deng in 1980 but eventually ended in 1989 due to some reasons. The accomplishment of China's economic reforms and the manner of their implementation resulted in immense changes in Chinese society in the last 40 years, including greatly decreased poverty while both average incomes and income inequality have increased. The reformation period has come to end during the guidance of Xi Jinping.

### **III. CHINA'S MILITARY TRANSFORMATION**

China's military transformation is one of the chief geostrategic growth of the 21st Century. Chinese military faced huge transformation with the support of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) which specifically experienced a trend of progress and alteration in the twenty-first century. It spent billions of dollars on modernizing the Chinese military. China's military reform has entered a new stage after a long period of struggle. With great hard work and huge investment, China has been proactively pushing its military transformation by striving to build a modern military force. For a long-time, it is working to improve its military forces and trying to build a self-relied military force. The development of the Chinese military feared East Asia, Europe, North America including many other nations. It developed from a peasant guerrilla force into what remains the largest armed force in the world. In the pre-modern period, the Chinese military does not have such developed equipment and techniques which they invented in the recent century. When we see the current status of the Chinese military it improved a lot. China secured 3rd rank in the world after the US and Russia which are securing 1st and 2nd rank respectively. It has a budget of \$216 billion with around 2,333,000 Active frontline personnel having 9,150 tanks, a total of 2,860 aircraft, and 67 submarines. The Chinese military has grown speedily in terms of both size and capability in the past few decades. But in terms

of workforce, it's the largest military in the world. It also has the second-largest tank fleet behind Russia and the second-largest submarine fleet behind the US. China developed a range of potential military technologies including ballistic missiles and upgraded aircraft. Hence, China's military transformation is huge and increasing day by day.

#### **IV. RELATIONSHIP OF CHINA AND THE UNITED STATES**

The relationship between China and the United States is very complex, it changes from a positive attitude towards each other to a highly negative one. As of 2021, the United States has the world's largest economy and China has the second-largest although China has a larger GDP when measured by Purchasing Power Parity(PPP).<sup>4</sup> Factually, relations between China and the United State have generally been stable but sometimes they also had open conflicts like, during Vietnam and the Korean War. When we see the present situation of the United States and China, they have mutual political, economic, and security interests but again there are many unresolved or pending disputes underlying below the desk between both these nations. As per the facts, China is the second-largest international creditor of the United States also these two countries remain in dispute over territorial issues in the South China Sea.

The relation between both countries worsened suddenly under the leadership of President Donald Trump. In 2018, the U.S. Department of Justice began an initiative known as the "China initiative" to "combat economic surveillance". As a result of the initiative the first study was published in 2020, The United State later introduced a trade war against China, Trump administration start banning Companies having trade with China that were dealing with companies linked with human rights abuse in China. It also imposed various new barriers on visas, especially for Chinese students and scholars. At the time of administration by trump, and especially since the US-China trade war began, it was assumed by various political observers that the new cold war is developing. By the end of May 2020, the relationship had weakened due to the responsibility of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **V. CONCLUSION**

China is a growing superpower nation and it put years and able to make nation technologically developed and under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, it has experienced a huge transformation, which has produced a tremendous economic improvement. China is now a most important trading nation which has built up a remarkable holding in foreign currency and they were also known for the fact that economic reform is the only way to achieve the status it

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<sup>4</sup> "World Economic outlook" International Monetary Fund. International Monetary Fund Retrieved 12 October 2014.

desires on its terms. It has also embarked on a path of radical change to both its military strategy and capabilities. Its strategic focus has now shifted to the offensive. The main theme is power projection and the ability to fight a modern war with advanced technology. China has also used its economic boom and change in military strategy to commence an ambitious military modernization program.

With the growth of China as a superpower nation, the United States is threatened at some level. As per past year experiences with china may have framed a picture about china i.e., China is a notorious country which might affect US economic as well as military forces if got powers to do so and it will be just to show off their power and take revenge of whatever done by Former President of America Mr. Donald Trump. It might cause heavy losses to United State as most of the trading America is doing with China and if china will turn around then America may not get the cheap product at lower cost and many more fears turned into a threat. Here is one of the famous saying of the former president of America Mr. Barack Obama:

*“I’ve been very explicit in saying that we have more to fear from a threatened China than a successful, rising China.”*

In the current century, after working hard for a long time, China is in such a good rank all over the world in various aspects whether it can be technology, military, or any other aspect of comparison within different countries. So, it cannot be denied that China is a hard-working country but china is a very notorious country and I think almost all the countries have trade relations with China. It is very difficult to cope up with various resources which only china can provide at a cheap rate.

Hence, what we can conclude from the above research is that China's can act indistinctly against the US as in the last tenure of Presidentship Former President Mr. Donald Trump disturbed China and its people which might be due to some issues going on but once china will be in such position that it could override over the United States in both Military as well as technological aspects and as we can see almost in whole world china is on first place in respect of Technology and respect to military it is just after the United States and Russia so China's growth as a superpower might be a danger for the United States.

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