

USA-CHINA: COOPERATION OR CONFRONTATION?

A case study in analytical history

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“We are at the very beginning of time for the human race. Our responsibility is to do what we can, learn what we can, improve the solutions, and pass them on.”

—Richard Feynman, *What Do You Care What Other People Think?* (1988)

There is a strong family resemblance about the misdeeds, and if you have all the details of a thousand at your finger ends, it is odd if you can't unravel the thousand and first.

—Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Valley of Fear* (1915)

SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS OF HISTORICAL EVENTS

US–PRC: competition or confrontation

This text is one of the documents which served in the writing of a book (in Chinese) co-authored with Pr. Zengru Di and Pr. Ruiqi Li. Before being integrated, it was extensively discussed. Parts which were unclear or dubious were explained and expanded. Whenever the initial formulation was too abrupt, it was made more consensual.

An other material used for the same book took its inspiration from the first chapter of “Pattern and Repertoire in History” (2002); in the table of contents below it is referred to as chapter 7

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TO BE COMPLETED IN FINAL VERSION

Preface

A parallel with astronomy

The main motivation for the present study can best be understood by making a parallel with astronomy and astrophysics.

For centuries human groups and civilizations have observed the sky and recorded the positions of the Sun, Moon, planets, comets and stars. Most often this led to sophisticated astrological models. Real science emerged on only two occasions:

- In Greece and the Hellenistic world from Eratosthenes of Cyrene (-276 to -195) to Ptolemy (100 to 170).
- In Western Europe with Tycho Brahe (1546–1601), Johannes Kepler (1571–1630) and Isaac Newton (1643–1727), a development which led to present-day astronomy and astrophysics.

In 1563 Tycho Brahe observed a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn, and noticed that the commonly used Ptolemaian tables were inaccurate. This led him to realize that progress in astronomy required systematic, rigorous observation. The so-called “Rudolphine Tables” which are based on his accurate observations were published by Kepler in 1627, 26 years after Tycho’s death¹. Brahe was a nobleman and courtier who was attracted to astronomical observation purely by personal interest. He was ready to forsake a wealthy position at the Danish court to fulfill his dream. One question which comes to mind is whether there have been similar individuals at the Imperial court in China for instance during the Ming dynasty. More information on this point can be found in the chapter entitled “What is to be done?”

It should be noted that, apart from their work in astronomy Ptolemy, Tycho and even Kepler authored books in astrology. At the beginning of each year Tycho had to present an Almanac to the king of Denmark predicting the influence of the stars on political and economic prospects. This anthropomorphic attitude was quite understandable for astrology was thought to be much more “useful” than astronomy. As a matter of fact, many civilizations, e.g. Chinese, Indian, Maya, Western, developed elaborate systems for predicting terrestrial events from celestial observations.

How does the scientific analysis of historical events proposed in this book parallel

¹The name “Rudolphine” is in homage to Rudolf II, former Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and main sponsor of this project.

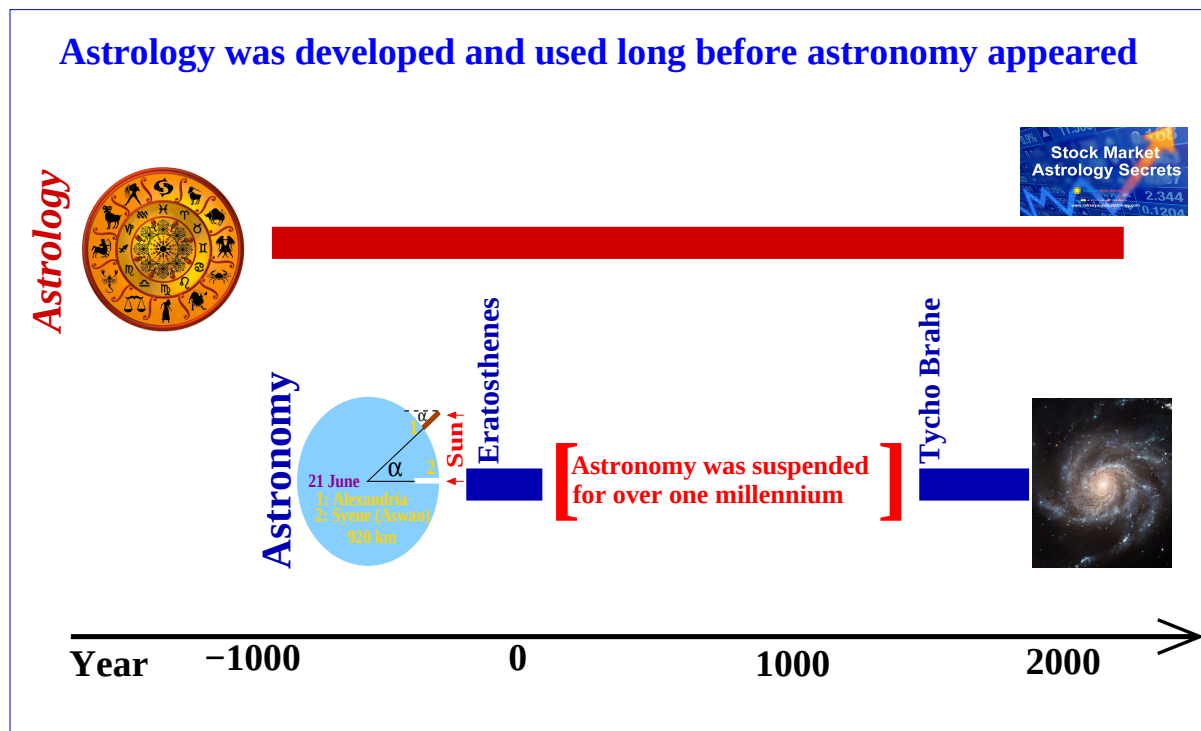


Fig. Pref.1a Respective development of astrology and astronomy. From a historical perspective astrology has been in existence for much longer than astronomy; it was developed in all major civilizations: Chinese, Greek, Maya, Persian. The small picture next to the name of Eratosthenes shows the clever experiment that he had designed and implemented between the cities of Alexandria and Syene (now Aswan some 920km to the south) in order to measure the radius of the Earth (his result was quite correct). It should be noted that in this calculation one must assume that the Sun rays are parallel which rests on the assumption that the Sun is far away. The long suspension which lasted over one millenium was a dark age during which previous knowledge was partly forgotten. Although Christopher Columbus was aware of the measurements made in Greece he misinterpreted the unit of measurement; otherwise he would have known that India was out of reach for his expedition.

the emergence of astronomy and its separation from astrology?

Following the invention of writing, for millennia human societies have recorded historical events. To recount facts rather than the thoughts and beliefs of the author was a first challenge. It seems that with the biographies of their emperors Chinese scholars were among the first to produce factual accounts [references and more details are needed]. In the west, Herodotus (-484 to -425) and Thucydides (-460 to -400) were two early historians. In contrast, when one reads the story of the Great Fire of London in 1666 as told by contemporary English writers one learns more about the Romans, the Bible and the justice of God than about the fire itself.

The key idea of what we wish to do

Because there can be no science of individual events (they can only be described) a crucial step on the way to scientific analysis is to build sets of *similar events*.

The idea is simple. What conclusion can an astronomer of the 16th century draw by

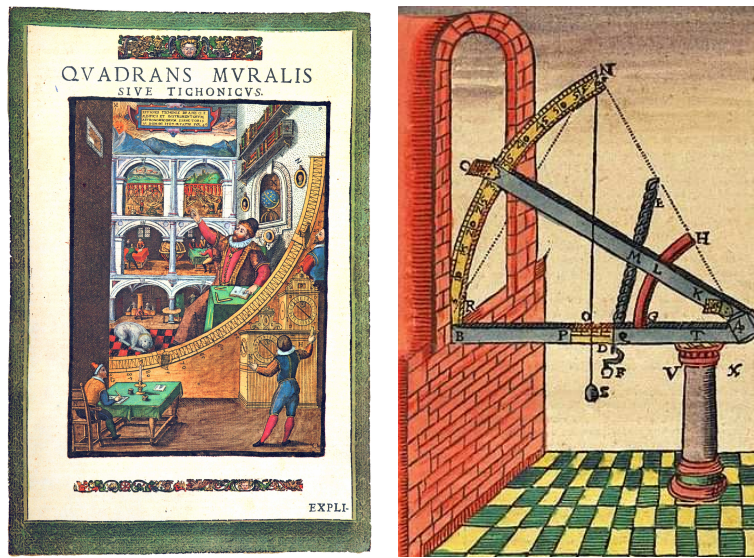


Fig. Pref.1b Two measurement devices used by Tycho Brahe. On the left a wall quadrant in the Uraniborg observatory on the island of Hven (or Ven) located between Denmark and the southern Swedish province of Scania. On the right, Tycho's oversized sextant. Source: Wikipedia article (in French) about Tycho Brahe.

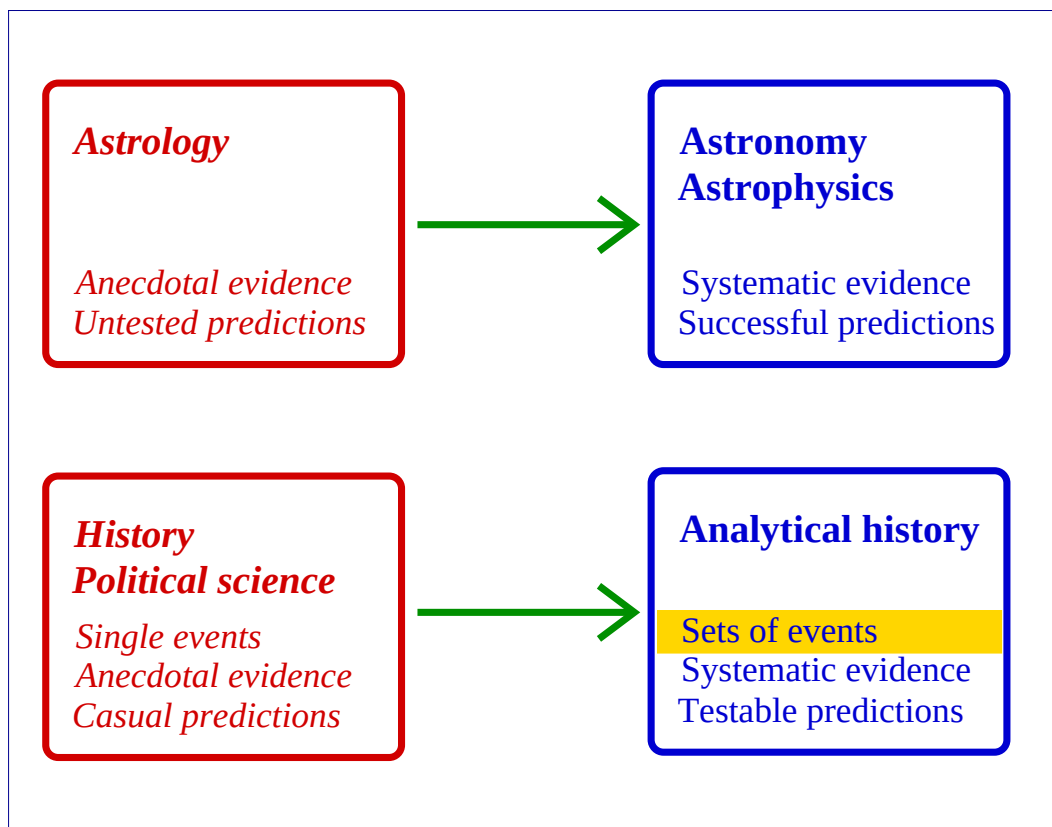


Fig. Pref.1c Switching to a scientific approach. The transition from astrology to astronomy took place in Ancient Greece and a second time in western Europe in the 16th century. In the transition to a scientific conception of social phenomena that we propose the focus on sets of similar events is fundamental. Although already emphasized by Vilfredo Pareto (1916) and by the French “Ecole des Annales” the importance of this step is still not well recognized; one may even say that it is less recognized in 2016 than it was back in 1916.

comparing the orbits of Venus and of comets? Basically none, because these objects are too different and the data for the comets too imprecise to be compared in an

A box intended for persons who know OOP

(Can be safely skipped by others!)

OOP is “Object Oriented Programming”. What is the gist of OOP? The key-step is to define a *class* of objects each of which has certain characteristics and certain pre-defined functions. Once a class has been defined, the programming language (say PHP or any other) allows you to spawn as many instances of the class as you like. Each of these realizations is an independent object with its own characteristics and functions, yet in some sense related to the class through which it was generated.

What we wish to do is the reverse procedure. We have collected a number of realizations which, for some good (or bad) reasons, we think have been generated by the same class (also called core-mechanism elsewhere in this book). Starting from this diverse collection of instances, what we want to do is to find out the common core-mechanism through which they can be generated.

If successful, this operation will bring a measure of order where there was none. Actually, this classification step is an essential pre-requirement in any science.

A box intended for persons who think they know dogs

(Can be safely skipped by others!)

Dogs can be very different in size, color, shape, behavior (think of dogs which are especially good at sniffing drugs). Yet, they are all called dogs for a very simple reason which is the fact that they can mate with one another. As a matter of fact, it is this requirement which, despite their diversity, defines them as a single species.

Now imagine that you have a collection of animals which comprises not only dogs but also other species: wolves (actually wolves are wild dogs), raccoons, rabbits hyenas, fennecs and others. Your task is to separate the dogs from the other animals. That will not be an easy task. If you take size or color as your main criterions you will surely fail. Obviously the mating criterion which should in principle give a clear answer is not easy to implement. Ultimately, the best procedure would be to perform a DNA analysis for each animal. This procedure will be costly and will take time but it is the only way to get clear answers

This example illustrates the kind of quandary in which one is when one tries to find out which historical events are related and which are not. As explained in the OOP box, the challenge is to find a mechanism through which all events can be generated.

effective way. However, if the same astronomer compares the orbits of Venus and Mars, he may well be led to the discovery of what we now know as “Kepler’s laws”.

It works the same way in the social sciences. In order to be able to draw any conclusion, one must compare events which are sharply defined and sufficiently similar.

This is the idea which underpins the whole book. That is also why we hope that

astronomers and astrophysicists may view it with some interest.

Analysis and prediction based on the categorization methodology

The method described above which is based on laws (like Kepler's laws) works well when the phenomenon can be described through a small number of parameters. As a particularly simple example, for a pendulum one needs only to measure its length to be able to predict its period. However, in other fields than physics the variability and number of parameters of the phenomena is often too high to make predictions based on laws. In such cases the law-based method must be enlarged into what we will call a categorization (or ascription) method. Let us illustrate this generalization through three examples.

- The evolution of a star depends upon several parameters, for instance its mass, age and color. Based on these parameters astrophysicists have defined standardized types. For each type its timeline is well defined. Therefore, when one wishes to predict the evolution of a new star one needs only to determine its type.
- The same method is used in medicine. Based on a number of observed symptoms, a doctor will decide that a case is influenza, tuberculosis or lung cancer. Thus, a medical diagnosis is just a special case of categorization. Here too, categorization entails prediction concerning the evolution of the disease.
- Categorization is also used in physics. Suppose one wants to predict how air flows around an airfoil. Getting such a prediction from first principles (that is to say by solving the Navier-Stokes equations of hydrodynamics) would be a very difficult problem. On the contrary, through categorization the problem can be solved rather easily. According to their shape, airfoils are ascribed to different families and in addition in each family there is a sub-classification based on an index number which describes a parameter, for instance the curvature. As examples of such families one can mention the following: NACA 0012, Eppler E 193, Wortman FX 75-141. So, in order to make a prediction for a new airfoil one needs only to determine to which family it belongs and what is its index. Of course, for this method to work, all standard airfoils must have been tested in wind tunnel experiments. As there are hundreds of different shapes this represents an extensive research program.

For historical events the variability is even higher than for stars, diseases or airfoils. In addition the classification work has hardly started. That is why at present time the categorization method can be used only in a fairly rudimentary way. For further progress the key is to identify and define many families of similar events. In medicine the classification of diseases took centuries. Currently, the "International Classification of Diseases" (ICD-10) comprises thousands of classes. This suggests that one needs to be patient but also that this classification work must be pushed forward as vigorously as possible.

A tortuous road

The road which led to the publication of the present book in Chinese was fairly long and tortuous. A first draft was written in French in 1993. An English version was published by “Harvard University Press” in 2002, and finally this version destined to the Chinese public is a completely new book largely based on examples taken from Chinese history. What it has in common with the two previous publications is the methodology and the main concepts.

The story which led from the French draft to the present book may be of more than anecdotal interest for it illustrates the fact that it is not easy to publish something new, and, once it has been published, to spread the message to other scholars.

Although there are many publishers in western countries it is not easy to break the barriers of fashion and one-track thinking. Actually, finding a publisher turned out to be easier in China than in France.

Back in 1993 the French draft was proposed to several publishers. Invariably it was brushed aside, most often on the ground that it is a topic “which does not square with our publication program”. How can a new approach conform to a pre-existing program? In the hope that British or American publishers would be more open, the French draft was translated into English with the help of co-author Tony Syme who was at that time teaching at Oxford University. However, when the English draft was proposed to US and British publishers the same answers started to pour in. Eventually, in the fall of 1998, in an attempt to win support from distinguished American colleagues, one of the co-authors (BR) decided to visit the United States. Thanks to an invitation from Prof. Samuel Williamson he could spend two months at Harvard and from there he also visited several other universities in New York State, Arizona, California, Illinois Michigan and West Virginia. By chance a miracle happened. After being invited to give a talk at the “Harvard Department of Sociology” (on 29 September 1998) by Prof. Stanley Lieberman he had the opportunity to have lunch with Michael Aronson of “Harvard University Press”. This started a sequence of events which would lead four years later to the publication of “Pattern and Repertoire in History”. In this outcome one should also mention the support of Prof. Charles Tilly who was one of the pre-publication reviewers and also suggested the book’s title.

However, after the publication of the book, between 2002 and 2017, all attempts to interest historians in this new methodology misfired. In the following lines we try to understand why.

The need of well targeted comparisons

With the benefit of hindsight the reason appears fairly clearly. The approach advo-

cated in the book relies on making appropriate comparisons. This methodology was introduced by sociologist Emile Durkheim (1858–1917) and it is described in the book shown below.

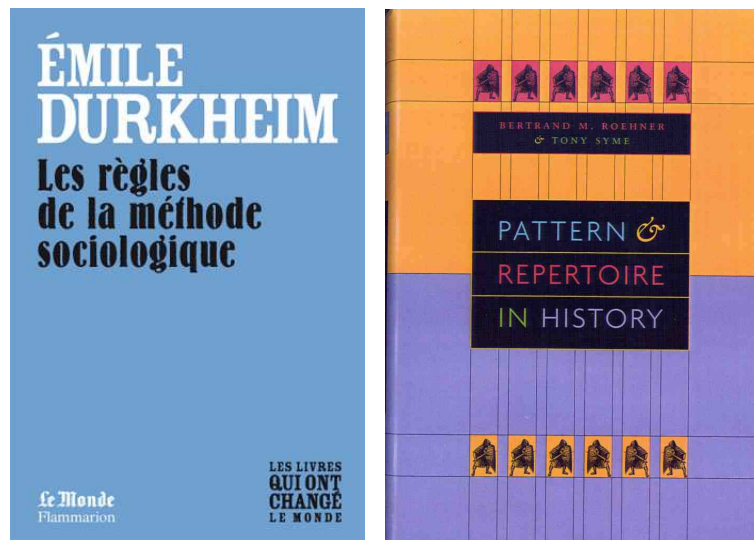


Fig. Pref. 2 Two books, one project. Durkheim’s book was published in 1894. Entitled “Pattern and Repertoire in History” the book on the right was published in 2002. The English translation of Durkheim’s book is: “Rules of sociological method”. Despite being more than a century apart, the two books have basically the same purpose, namely to transform sociology and history into testable sciences. Durkheim’s book as well as his subsequent study of the phenomenon of suicide (1897) explain how, by comparing “natural experiments”, one can implement the methodology of experimental physics in fields in which direct experimentation is impossible. In “Pattern and Repertoire in History” the authors apply Durkheim’s approach to the study of historical events. *Source: The two books are freely available on line.*

However, very few historians have been willing to use the comparative approach advocated by Durkheim. One exception is Marc Bloch (1886–1944). In 1924 he published a study which was later translated into English under the title “The royal touch”. It provides an excellent example of what we mean by “comparison of events which are sharply defined and sufficiently similar”. The royal touch consists in the fact that in France and England the king was (allegedly) able to heal some diseases just by touching sick people. This is certainly a well defined phenomenon. Unfortunately, this kind of comparative research remained fairly unique and isolated. In a somewhat loose form comparative history remained popular in France during the 1950s and 1960s mainly thanks to the “Ecole des Annales” which was founded by Marc Bloch. Then, in the 1970s, both in Europe and in the United States, historical research turned back to the study of single cases: one country, one time interval, one phenomenon. For instance: “A study of unemployment in Germany, 1925-1935”. On such a topic one can tell a story but one cannot do any science; whether or not the study comprises an econometric model, it will remain only a description. Science needs testable predictions and the later require *several instances of a given effect*.

An example of a failed attempt

The same year as Durkheim's book, appeared a study (Lacombe 1894) whose purpose was to make history into a science. However, instead of following Durkheim's rule stating that social phenomena should be studied like "things", that is to say as if they were natural phenomena, the author uses an anthropocentric approach entirely based on the psychology of the individual man. In other words, he was trying to explain our societies by relying on the human brain, a system of much greater complexity.

The method of experimental physics and observational astrophysics

The methodology of experimental physics is based on comparative analysis. For instance, as a first step one measures the period of a pendulum. As a second step one repeats the observation to check if the phenomenon is reproducible. Clearly this is unnecessary for a pendulum but may be important for a system that is more chaotic. Then, one changes one parameter, say the length of the pendulum, to see how the period will be affected. These are exactly the steps that we wish to implement in studying social phenomena and historical events.

Let us give an example. As a first step one observes the suicide rate of unmarried young adults in France in the year 2000. Secondly, by comparing the rates in 2000 with those in 1999 and 2001 one can check whether the phenomenon is reproducible. Indeed, in successive years the rates are the same within a margin of $\pm 5\%$. Then, one changes a parameter, say the number of family links. This leads to the observation that married persons (without children) have suicide rates which are 2 or 3 times lower than those of unmarried persons of same age. Moreover, married persons *with young children* have suicide rates which are even lower than those of childless married couples. In other words, the suicide rate decreases with the number of family links. This is true not only in France but in fact in all countries, including China, for which reliable data are available (Richmond et al. 2016).

Admittedly, this was an example in sociology rather than in history, although in our opinion the two fields should be seen in a unified way. A more historical illustration is provided by separatist disturbances. The analysis of a broad set of cases conducted in Roehner (1997, 2002) shows that the level of separatist violence in a region α of a country A is mainly determined by two parameters: (i) the degree of isolation of α with respect to A . For instance, usually α is in a remote corner of A . (ii) the degree of autonomy enjoyed by α before it became part of A and how well this situation was accepted in past centuries. The first parameter is geographical whereas the second is historical. In other words, one is here in the same situation as in the case of the pendulum. In Roehner (1997) about 40 cases were analyzed in terms of these parameters. Almost all cases were from the 20th century. By including cases belonging to more distant past centuries (provided one can find data

sources) it should be possible to double or triple the number of cases. This is also what astrophysicists are doing when a more powerful telescope allows them to watch more distant stars; as one knows, farther away means that the stars will be seen as they were earlier in the past.

For the two phenomena that we have just mentioned the variability was small and the sample of documented events was large. These are favorable circumstances which may be fairly rare. In a general way data availability will be the main limiting factor. However, such practical obstacles do not call into question the methodology itself. Even when less cases are available, the categorization method provides a good way to introduce order and patterns where there had been none. Then, in the course of time this classification can be made sharper. Similarly, ever since its introduction at the beginning of the 20th century the “International Classification of Diseases” has undergone a great development.

Manifesto for viewing the world in comparative perspective

The following example about managing big cities suggests that in human affairs making comparisons does not come naturally. It is easier to remain focused on the little world in which one lives than to look outside. However, this may be less true in China. For instance, in Chinese academia there is a time-honored tradition of taking inspiration from western countries. Although interrupted from 1949 to 1975, this tradition was quickly resumed in subsequent years and it remains well alive up to present time (2017) even though, in a number of fields, China was able to take the lead.

How to manage big cities

All large cities are confronted to similar problems: cars versus public transportation, pollution, homeless people sleeping in the streets, selective waste sorting, and many others. Some cities are able to solve these problems fairly well whereas others are overwhelmed by them.

However, for a city which wishes to learn how to do the solution seems easy. It should send a delegation to study the management of successful cities and then implement these methods in their own city. To our best knowledge this is *not* often done. This suggests that to adopt a comparative standpoint is not something natural. Actually, a close examination of the solutions that worked elsewhere should be mandatory. At least such a comparative study would give a clear understanding of the means that do work even if putting them into effect may, for a variety of reasons, not be easy.

Banking on the time-honored Chinese tradition of careful observation

Our experience of the past 25 years convinced us that the approach proposed in

this book will appeal foremost to persons who take pleasure in making detailed and well focused observations. This is more a question of turn of mind than one of professional education.

The effective cures developed by traditional Chinese medicine show that there is in China a custom of skillful and careful observation. Why do we put an emphasis on observation? For the obvious reason that without Brahe's careful observations there would have been no Kepler's laws and therefore no break-through by Newton. With respect to traditional medicine one can observe that the first scientific Nobel prize² attributed to research done in China relied partly on the traditional descriptions of the health effects of various compounds. Conducted in the early 1970s, this research relied on a symbiosis of modern experimental observation and extensive knowledge accumulated by traditional medicine.

It is true that traditional medicine is still promoted and practiced nowadays but in academic circles the mood is more to follow the trends set by highly regarded American universities and western journals. It might seem that this is in line with the spirit of the "New Culture Movement" of the 1910s and 1920s. However, this movement was fairly selective in what it wanted to borrow from abroad. From introducing "Vernacular Written Chinese" (also called "Modern Written Chinese") in replacement of "Classical Chinese" which had become outdated and too rigid, to greater emphasis on science, to women's liberation the efforts and achievements of this movement are impressive; at the same time its association with the "May 4, 1919" and "May 30, 1925" movements which had an anti-imperialist perspective made it suspicious of the real intentions of western countries toward China. The "New Culture Movement" is illustrated in the figure below by two persons who took an active part in it while in their 20s.

Coming back to our question, developing analytical history will require the careful and rigorous handling of a vast amount of historical data and it seems that in China there is a time-honored tradition for doing that. Like "Sleeping beauty" it may just be waiting for a revival.

That is why we are convinced that, in contrast with western countries but faithful to its own tradition, China will provide a fertile soil where the present approach will thrive and bear fruits.

The present book and beyond

In this book we will use the comparative methodology in a fairly loose way in the sense that we will not try to set up exhaustive lists of similar events. Often we will

²The physicists Tsung Dao Lee and Chen Ning Franklin Yang were still Chinese citizens when they were awarded the Nobel prize in 1957, but although they had been educated in China their research work (including their doctoral research) had been done in the US.



Fig. Pref.3 Toward a revival of the “New Culture Movement” ? Ms. Xiang Jingyu (1895 - 1 May 1928, executed by KMT), left, and Ms. Cai Chang (1900–1990), center, were early members of the “New People’s Study Society”, founded by Mao Zedong in Hunan in April 1918. This society was itself one of the components in the “New Culture Movement” which promoted a selective adoption of some western cultural ways. Their lives attest that getting wealthier which is a key objective in the west was definitely not one of their goals. Instead, they put themselves at the service of the people. Will this spirit of the “New Culture Movement” experience a revival as suggested by the panel on the right which is the cover of the “Sleeping beauty” story? Sources: Various Internet websites

limit ourselves to only two or three cases; nevertheless this will give the “flavor” of the phenomenon under consideration.

Our main objective is to make the book interesting and easy to read. We would like to convey to readers the satisfaction and exhilaration experienced when one realizes that an episode which has just made headlines in the news is in fact modeled on a well-known pattern defined by prior forerunners. This awareness is important because it is the first step in predicting how the episode will likely unfold.

Readers who would like more systematic investigations in which one tries to set up fairly large samples of cases can find such studies in Roehner (1997a,b).

Comparative history in China

We have emphasized that in the west, apart from isolated historians like Marc Bloch, very few historians have tried the comparative approach. Before closing this preface one must of course ask “What about comparative history in China?” In a sense, Karl Marx’s philosophy should have been a catalyst. Through his books he appears mostly as a philosopher and economist, but in many of the 400 articles that he wrote for the “New York Daily Tribune” he draws parallels between similar events which had occurred in different places. In short, he had certainly the turn of mind of a comparativist. His book on the coup of the 18th Brumaire (Marx 1852) goes in the same direction. Did this aspect of his work have an imprint on some Chinese historians? We do not know.

There is a well known Chinese historian, Ray Huang, whose approach is said to be bordering on comparatism. One can be sure that Huang was not influenced by Marx for he was in fact on the Nationalist side before emigrating to the United States in the wake of the Communist victory. One is tempted to draw a parallel between

Huang and the French historian Fernand Braudel for both try to look at historical events from a distance and to focus on the main processes. In other words, they both *assume* that there are mechanisms which have a broad validity. Huang shows how such mechanisms have worked out in China but he does not attempt to show that they were also at work in other places. In short, Braudel (1967) and Huang (1988) proposed a conceptual framework that needs to be substantiated and tested through upcoming comparative studies.

Needless to say, if there are currently comparative historians in mainland China we would be happy to know them and also possibly to meet them. Any information which would help us to get in touch would be greatly valued. Many thanks in advance.

Finally, before closing this Preface, it may be appropriate to discuss the distinction between normative and factual history.

Official and normative history versus factual history

Positive versus normative economics

Economists commonly distinguish positive (also sometimes called factual) economics which describes “what is” that is to say bare facts from normative economics which explains “what ought to be”.

- An example of a positive statement is as follows. “In 2010 income inequality was higher in the United States than in France”.
- An example of a normative economic statement is as follows: “The price of milk should be three euro a liter to give dairy farmers a higher living standard”.

However the distinction between positive and normative statements is not always straightforward. The main reason is because, apart from openly acknowledged preferences, there are also inclinations that are accepted implicitly. For instance, it is a commonly accepted belief (except possibly by some ultra neoliberal economists) that high income inequality is less desirable than moderate inequality. This would make our previous example of a factual statement also partly normative. The question becomes even more involved when one observes that inequality can be measured in various ways (e.g. by the share of total income received by the top 1% or by the Gini coefficient). In other words, the same situation may be viewed differently when assessed through different metrics.

However, it seems clear that no matter how difficult it may be, one should always try to separate factual from normative facets. Not to do that can only lead to confusion and bias.

Official and normative history versus factual history

While important in economics, this distinction is even more crucial in history. A simple reason is that most historians write the history of their own country which leads them to adopt a particular national perspective. For instance, in the account of an anti-colonial conflict, the same warriors will be called terrorists by one side and freedom fighters by the other. As another example, there is a French king who is called “John the Good” (1350-1364) but whose reign actually was a complete disaster for the country. His army was defeated, he was taken to England as a prisoner and his kingdom sank into chaos. Why he should be called “the Good” remains a total mystery.

Comparative history and factual history go hand in hand

In his book “Rules of Sociological Method” mentioned earlier, Emile Durkheim says that social phenomena should be studied “from outside”, exactly in the same way as physicists study natural phenomena. In a similar vein the French historian Marc Bloch was telling his students that no chemist would ever say that oxygen is “good” whereas chlorine gas is “bad”. Nevertheless, in reading their dissertations, he found out that it was very difficult to prevent them from blaming or praising. Accounts in which one uses the words “mistake”, “wrong”, “crime”, “rehabilitation”, “reparation” clearly belong to normative history.

In this respect the best antidote is certainly to adopt a comparative perspective. One may deplore the great number of lives lost in the American Civil war, but a comparative study of civil wars quickly leads to the conclusion that all civil wars are ruthless and brutal conflicts which bring about much misery for the population. The American Civil War is no exception.

We are told that in China it took almost two decades to write an official history of the Communist Party because it had to be approved by the leadership. Similarly, in the United States after each war or occupation of a foreign country professional historians working for the Department of Defense produce an official historical account. For instance the history of the American occupation of Japan comprises no less than 45 volumes. Despite this large size there are many facets of the occupation which are purposefully omitted because they are at variance with the representation of the occupation that the State Department wants to give.

These are clear examples of normative historical accounts. On the contrary, throughout the present book, we try to restrict ourselves to factual history. Remaining focused on a comparative perspective greatly helps to achieve this objective.

Reading advice

In comparative analysis one difficulty is that one is led to analyze many cases which may have occurred in various countries and with which readers may not be familiar. It is of course impossible to explain all cases in detail for it would require a book of 2,000 pages. So, what is the solution?

A possible solution is Wikipedia.

It may be true that some Wikipedia articles are biased or not well informed, however by and large it is a very helpful tool. So, we would suggest to our readers that every time they are not familiar with a question mentioned too briefly in the book, they can get a closer view by reading the corresponding Wikipedia article(s).

PART 1

Scientific analysis of historical events: Five case studies

Bertrand Roehner¹

Provisional. Version of 20 June 2017. Comments are welcome.

This part proposes several case studies to illustrate the method of “analytical history”, a scientific and testable analysis of historical events which was introduced in a book published in 2002 (Roehner and Syme 2002). This method relies on the time-honored principles of experimental physics according to which science can begin when, by repeating an experiment, one is able to get (more or less) the same result. Failing that, one is in the domain of anecdotal evidence from which no science can originate. If one accepts that, as many historians say, historical events are unique and cannot be compared to one another, then no testable understanding can be developed. Comparison is really the keystone and hallmark of science. For instance in the field of astrophysics the extrasolar planets are crucial for understanding the creation of our own solar system. Until their discovery, astronomers could observe only one instance. Single instances can be described but they cannot be understood in a testable way.



Fig. 1 Artist representation of an exoplanet. Comparison is the linchpin of science. Knowing the characteristics of extrasolar planetary systems will give us a testable understanding of our own solar system. In the same way, comparison with other stars allows us to test our understanding of the Sun. It is true that each exoplanet or each star is in its way unique but that should not preclude comparison.

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Chapter 1

What motivated the attack of September 11, 2001?

In contrast with forthcoming chapters, this one is not about the US-PRC competition. It should be seen as an illustration of the methodology of comparative analysis that we use throughout the book. In the rest of the book, just to prevent the accounts from becoming too long, comparison will most often be limited to only two or three cases. Here, in contrast, the set of similar cases will contain 9 events. We will also explain in detail how these events should be selected. Obviously, this is a crucial point. In other words, this chapter should be considered as an explanation of the methodology.

When one tries to explain the methodology of analytical history one of the main difficulties is to find events with which most persons are familiar. This is not easy for, in most countries, the citizens know the history of their own nation but have only a vague knowledge of the history of other countries. For instance, it would be quite interesting to conduct a survey about how much American or French people know about the history of China. In order to overcome this difficulty we examine in this chapter an event with which many may be familiar, namely the attack of September 11, 2001 against the “World Trade Center” in Manhattan.

Usually, when terrorist actions (e.g. bombings, shootings) occur, the public opinion is left clueless. The actions appear to be random but at the same time it seems difficult to admit that actions requiring careful planing and preparation are completely random. The point we wish to make in this chapter is that one gets a clearer view by analyzing *families of similar attacks* instead of considering them individually. The key is that when a country A is targeted by recurrent attacks, particularly when there is a family likeness between them, then it is most often because a state B wants to obtain from state A something that cannot be obtained through negotiations. Several episodes of this kind could be described. Here we focus on 9/11 because, as already said, it is the most well known. Another episode would be the wave of bombings³ which occurred in France in 1986-1987; they were connected to the Eurodif dispute⁴

³At the following dates. In 1985: 23 Feb, 8 Mar, 7 Dec. In 1986: 3 Feb, 4 Feb, 5 Feb, 17 Mar, 20 Mar, 8 Sep, 12 Sep, 14 Sep, 15 Sep, 17 Sep. Most of these attacks were small bombs in stores or in the subway.

⁴Before the Islamic Revolution of 1979 Iran had become a partner of Eurodif and as such was entitled to a part of the enriched uranium 235 produced by the installation. Whereas natural uranium contains only 0.75% of uranium 235, nuclear power plants require 3% enriched uranium. Iran wanted France to lift the embargo that had followed the Revolution.

between France and Iran.

In March 2017 one of the authors (BR) gave a lecture on the topic of this chapter at an interdisciplinary workshop for scientists held in Galway on the west coast of Ireland. As it was a fairly small audience, he started to ask all participants what was their opinion about the motivation of the attack of 9/11. Most of them said it was a way for Al-Qaida to show its strength to the whole world. In other words, 9/11 was seen as a kind of public relations operation without any *specific* purpose.

In what follows we show that an analysis of 9/11 through the method of comparative analysis leads to a completely different answer.

However before we start we wish to emphasize that, as any other event, 9/11 can be described in two very different ways.

Two modes of description

Fig. 1.1 illustrates two different ways of describing and analyzing historical events; one is the chronological (also called longitudinal) description while the other is the comparative (also called transversal) description.

- The longitudinal description is illustrated on the the left-hand side; it consists in listing what happened in chronological order with as much accuracy as possible. Fig. 1.1 gives 4 important moments but one could give much more. For instance one could record the time when each airliner departed from its airport and what trajectory it followed. This way of describing events is the most commonly used by historians for it is the ordinary way of recounting a story

- Besides this standard way we introduce a comparative perspective whose objective is to find the core-engine of the event under consideration. For demographic, sociological or economic phenomena such a comparative perspective is commonly used. For instance, one may compare birth rates or suicide rates or national income growth rates in different countries. This is commonly done but usually in a purely statistical way rather than in a problem oriented perspective. However, it is fairly uncommon to use a comparative perspective for historical events such as 9/11. In Fig. 1.1 the events included in the comparative perspective on the right-hand side are four of the events mentioned in Table 1 (it is only for lack of space that the other 5 events cited in the subsequent table were not included)..

In order to explain more clearly the difference between the longitudinal and transversal descriptions one can consider the simple case of the fall of an apple from a tree. In this case the chronological view would be to describe the steps which led to this event: the apple has become too heavy; its stem has become dry; the branch has been shaken by a gust of wind. Clearly, even the most detailed account will never

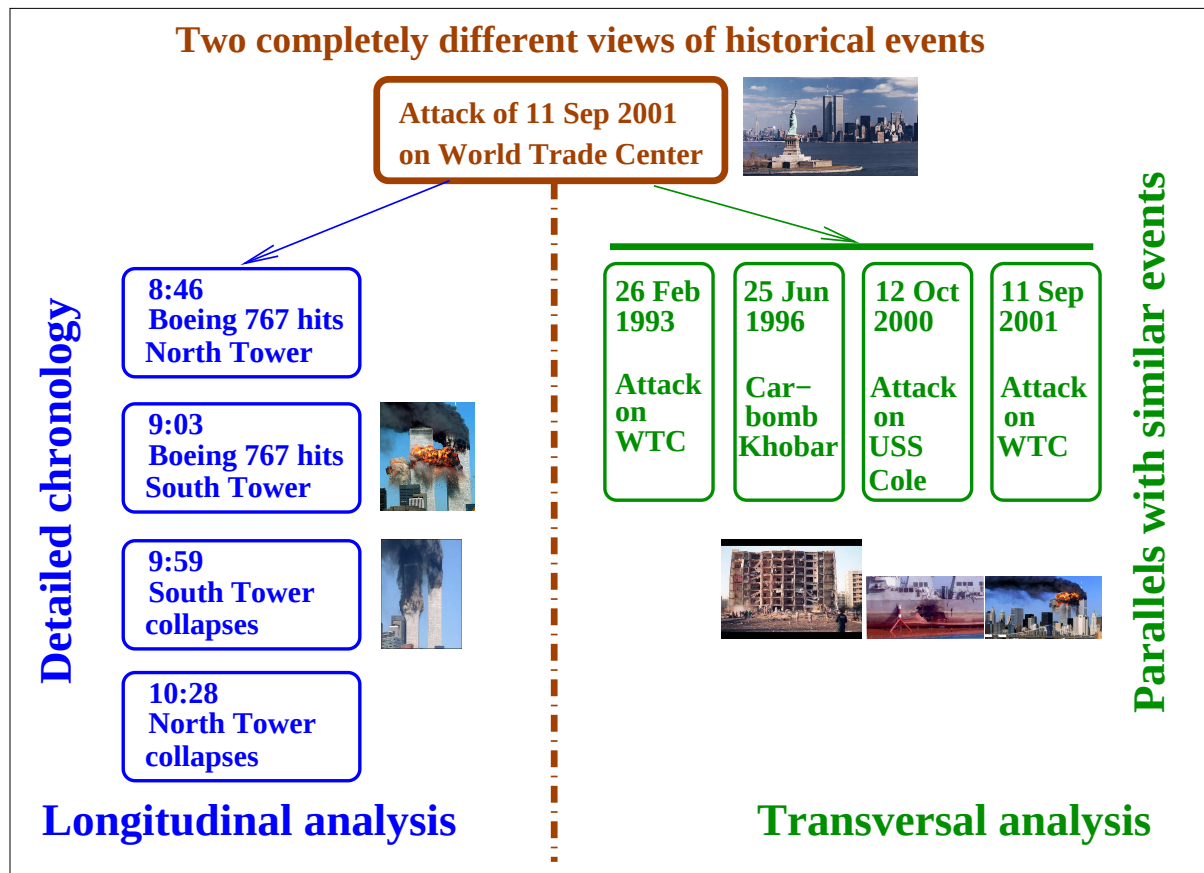


Fig. 1.1 Detailed chronological account versus parallels with “similar” events. The standard way of writing history is to rely on chronological accounts. Taking a comparative view as is done on the right-hand side implies that one must first define how the word “similar” should be understood. In this respect it is important to realize that one encounters exactly the same difficulty in physics. For instance, Newton drew a parallel between the fall of an apple from a tree and the “fall” of the Moon toward the Earth which, at first sight, was not at all obvious.

tell us anything about the force of gravity. In contrast, the comparison with other similar cases such as the fall of pine cones or rain droplets will direct the analysis into the right direction, namely that there is a hidden force which is at work. However, it is only the crucial step taken by Newton who made a parallel with the “fall” of the Moon toward the Earth which eventually revealed the true nature of the force of gravity as well as its universality.

As revealed by the example of the fall of the apple, the main difficulty is to define the comparison set in an appropriate way. Here we explain how this can be done in the case of the 9/11 event.

Unraveling the attack of 9/11

In discussing the occurrence of historical events, usually not just one but rather *several* factors can be mentioned as possible causes. Thus, for the Great Depression in the United States there were financial causes such as the stock market crash of

October 1929 or economic causes such as the world wide overproduction of grains. On the contrary, for an event like the attack of September 11, 2001 there can be only one factor. The reason is simple: 9/11 was planned by a small group of people in the same way as a military action is planned by army headquarters in time of war. Needless to say, any military action has a well defined purpose. In a similar way, the master minds of 9/11 certainly had a definite objective⁵. In what follows we wish to prove that their objective was to obtain that US troops leave Saudi Arabia.

However, nothing convincing can be said if the analysis is limited to a single event. In contrast, from a comparative perspective it becomes fairly clear that 9/11 was in protest to the presence of US troops in Saudi Arabia.

Once a whole family of similar events has been selected (Table 1.1) one can give the following arguments.

1 US forces stayed in Saudi Arabia from 7 August 1990 to August 2003. This was perceived as an outrage against Islam. The high profile attacks listed in the table started in 1993 and ceased after 2003 thus covering almost the same time interval. The time lag between 1990 and 1993 can be attributed (i) to the time it took to prepare the first (and ambitious) attack against the World Trade Center. (ii) To an attempted dialogue with the Saudi king (see below the “Addendum” subsection).

We must remember that Saudi Arabia has a special status with respect to the presence of “infidels” (i.e. non-Muslims). The city of Mecca in the south-west of Saudi Arabia is considered the holiest city in Islam; only Muslims are allowed to enter it. Medina (500 km north of Mecca) is considered the second holiest city and, similar to Mecca, non-Muslims are prohibited from entering the sacred core of the city. Since 1986 the Saudi King bears officially the titles of “Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques” and “Servant of the two holy places: Mecca and Medina”.

Between 1990 and 2003 there were 9 bold, high profile attacks against embodiments of US power such as embassies, ships, troops or the World Trade Center. These attacks are listed in Table 1.

After August 2003 there were no other attacks of that kind.

In 2003 Saudi Arabia denied the United States permission to use its facilities at Prince Sultan Air Base to attack Iraq.

2 The attacks which took place in Saudi Arabia were directly aimed at American

⁵When we wrote this in the first version of the chapter it was rather a working hypothesis. A few months later it received a confirmation when we discovered the declaration made on 23 August 1996 by Osama bin Laden (see below the subsection entitled “Addendum”). Note that for this confirmation to be valid we do not have to assume that he was really one of the master minds of the attack only that he was in contact with them and that his statement reflected the common belief of this group of people.

Table 1.1 High profile attacks against US interests while there were US troops in Saudi Arabia

	Year	Date	Place	Number of US fatalities	Description
	1990	Aug 7	Saudi Arabia		<i>The first US troops arrive in Saudi Arabia</i>
1	1993	Feb 26	New York	6	First attack against the World Trade Center
2	1995	Nov 13	Riyadh	5	Bombing of US-run training center of Saudi National Guard
3	1996	Jun 25	Dhahran	19	Car bomb against Al Khobar residential building
4	1998	Aug 7	Nairobi	12	Car bomb against US embassy
5	1998	Aug 7	Dar es Salaam	0	Car bomb against US embassy
6	2000	Oct 12	Aden harbor	17	Bomb attack against a US Navy destroyer Cole
7	2001	Sep 11	New York	2,600	Attacks against the two towers of the World Trade Center
8	2002	Oct 8	Failaka Island	1	Attack against US Marines on a training exercise
9	2003	May 13	Riyadh	9	Four simultaneous bombings of western enclaves
	2003	Aug 26	Saudi Arabia		<i>The last US Air Force personnel leave Saudi Arabia</i>

Notes: Nairobi is in Kenya, Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, Aden in Yemen and Failaka Island in Kuwait. The bombings of Aug 7, 1998 occurred exactly 8 years after the arrival of US troops in Saudi Arabia. According to the “Los Angeles Times” of 26 June 1996, 23 Americans were killed in this attack. The bombing of May 13, 2003 occurred on the first day of a visit in Riyadh of Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Sources: Various articles from the “New York Times” and the following articles from Wikipedia and CNN:

(1) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1993_World_Trade_Center_bombing

(2) http://edition.cnn.com/WORLD/9511/saudi_blast/11am/

(3) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khobar_Towers_bombing

(4,5) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1998_United_States_embassy_bombings

(6) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Cole_bombing

(7) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/September_11_attacks

(8) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Faylaka_Island_attack

(9) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riyadh_compound_bombings

Timeline: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_terrorist_incidents_in_Saudi_Arabia

Withdrawal of US troops: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_withdrawal_from_Saudi_Arabia.

personnel.

3 The attacks of 1998 on the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania took place on 7 August which, it is said, was the day when US troops had arrived in Saudi Arabia 8 years earlier. Following the attacks, a group calling itself the “Liberation Army for Holy Sites” took credit for the bombings. However, in the Wikipedia article about the bombing this claim is dismissed.

4 Nine of the fifteen persons who took part in the attack of 9/11 were Saudi citizens.

We said that these actions were high profile attacks. This is obviously true for the 9/11 attacks and the attack against the warship USS Cole, but the other attacks also showed careful preparation and high technical competence. For instance, despite being about 800 km apart the two attacks in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam occurred

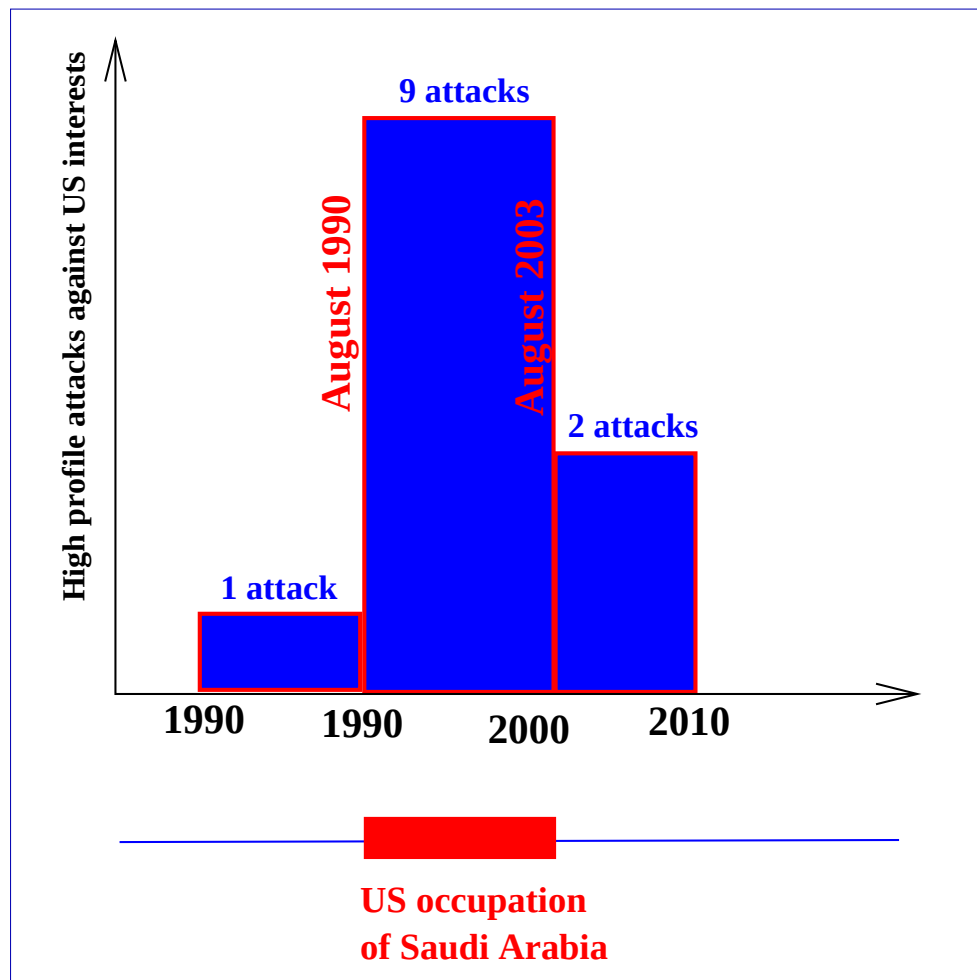


Fig. 1.2a Histogram of attacks against US interests. Outside of the time interval 1990–2003 there were three attacks against US interests that can be considered as “high profile”: (i) the Lockerbie destruction of a Pan American airliner (21 December 1988), (ii) Attack on the US consulate in Jeddah, a Saudi port: 9 non-American persons were killed (6 December 2004), (iii) Bombing of the US consulate in Karachi (Pakistan): 5 persons were killed, including one American diplomat (2 March 2006). *Source: Wikipedia, Lists of terrorist incidents.*

almost simultaneously at 10:30am and 10:40am respectively and used bombs which had a power equivalent to 10 tons of TNT.

It can be observed that in the articles published in the “New York Times” about the attacks that took place in Saudi Arabia it is of course mentioned that they were in protest against US presence in Saudi Arabia. Yet, in the attacks carried out in other countries this reason is hardly ever mentioned.

Answer to a possible objection

A possible objection to the previous explanation may come to mind. If the attacks were a protest against the presence of US forces in Saudi Arabia why were they not all carried out on Saudi soil? One possible answer is to observe that as Saudi Arabia is a very repressive regime, it may have been difficult to set up appropriate networks there. Similarly one can suppose that the attacks of Nairobi and Dar es Saalam may

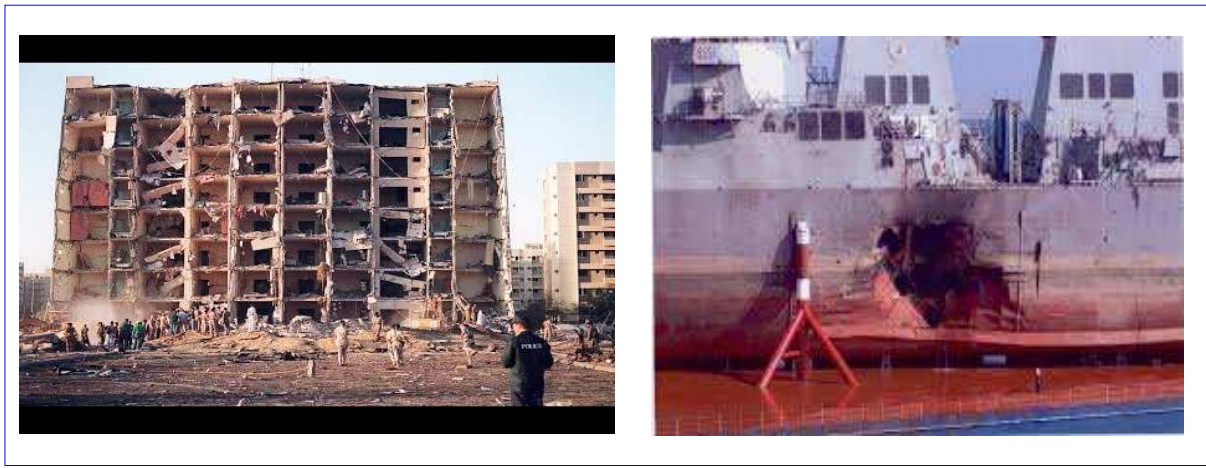


Fig. 1.2b Bombings in Saudi Arabia and Aden. (a) The Khobar buildings in the city of Dhahran housed 2,000 US Air Force personnel assigned to the nearby Dhahran Air Base (now called King Abdul Aziz Air Base). In 1996 a car bomb attack targeted one of these buildings. (b) In 2000 the destroyer USS Cole was attacked in the port of Aden while refueling. The picture was taken after the ship had been loaded on a rescue ship to be transported back to the United States. After the withdrawal of US troops there was no other high profile attack.

have been decided because networks already existed there. In order to check the validity of these explanations one would need detailed knowledge of how the attacks were planned.

Just another conspiracy theory?

It is a common rule that every terrorist attack brings about a number of conspiracy theories. It could be argued that our interpretation is nothing more than such a conspiracy theory. There is a major difference, however in the sense that almost all conspiracy theories focus on only one case for which they claim to provide new (and often unverified) information. As they are about only one case, these theories are not testable. In contrast, by including a set of cases, our explanation becomes testable. Thus, the occurrence of a high profile attack directed against US interests in Saudi Arabia *after* the withdrawal of US forces would throw our interpretation into doubt. It would not completely contradict it for there can of course be two separate and overlapping terrorist campaigns under way at the same time. This, however, would make the task much more difficult for one would need to identify two strains instead of just one.

How to select the events which belong to the same strain?

The previous example can illustrate an important aspect of the comparative methodology, namely the selection of events which can be considered as belonging to the same family of recurrent events⁶. During the time interval considered in Table 1 there

⁶If in the past we can identify a series of events which tend to repeat themselves this regularity can be used to make

were also other attacks that we did not include. For instance, we did not include the Oklahoma bombing of 19 April 1995, the Bali bombing of 12 October 2002 and the Mombasa attack of 22 November 2002.

Why?

- [Oklahoma bombing, 19 April 1995.](#) A powerful car bomb exploded outside a federal building killing 165 persons. If one remembers that apart from other federal services the building also housed the US Secret Service and recruiting offices for the US Army and Marine Corp one can say that the attack was clearly directed against US interests. However, the reason of the attack was completely different from those listed in Table 1. As often, the date of the attack gives an indication. On April 19, 1993, a standoff between FBI agents and Branch Davidians ended in a fire that destroyed their compound near Waco in Texas killing 74 occupants. Also (but perhaps unrelated) on the very day of the attack Richard Snell, the founder of a US supremacist group who had contemplated an attack on the same building, was executed for murder in Arkansas.

- [Bali bombing, 12 October 2002.](#) One obvious reason for not including the Bali bombing is that it was not directed against US interests. Of the 202 persons killed only 7 were US citizens whereas 88 were Australians. However, this criterion alone may not be sufficient for in the Nairobi bombing there were also over 200 fatalities of which only 12 were US citizens. In addition it is true that in Bali almost at the same moment (in fact a few minutes earlier) a small bomb detonated outside the US consulate in Denpasar, the capital of the Bali province. However it caused no death and only minor damage.

- [Mombasa \(Kenya\), 28 November 2002.](#) A car bomb exploded outside the “Paradise Hotel”, an Israeli-owned hotel, killing 13 and injuring 80. Among the dead there were 3 Israelis and 10 Kenyans. Almost at the same time attackers fired two surface-to-air missiles at an Israeli charter plane which missed their target.. Obviously these attacks were not directed against US interests. A group which claimed responsibility for the attack said it wanted to draw attention on the plight of Palestinian refugees on the 55th anniversary of the partition of Palestine. Indeed, the date of the attack was one day before the anniversary day of the United Nations vote of 29 November 1947 which decided the partition.

- One can also mention that on 8 November 2003, a suicide truck bomb exploded in Riyadh in the Muhiya residential area inhabited by Saudis and Arab foreigners. Some 18 persons were killed but the selection of the place reveals that this attack did not target US interests, at least not directly.

On the other hand it should also be mentioned that some high profile attacks occurred

predictions for similar events in the future. A similar approach was developed by Prof. Jürgen Mimkes (2017).

before the time interval considered in Table 1.1. This is not really a problem for no claim is made that high profile attacks started in 1990. However, the frequency of such attacks increased sharply after 1990. As examples of high profile attacks before 1990 one can mention (i) The Beirut car bombing of 23 October 1983 which was directed against the barracks of US Marines and French servicemen. It was said that it used the same kind of explosive (namely a gas enhanced device) as the bombing of 1993 against the World Trade Center. It is still unclear who planned the attack but its level of sophistication suggests that it benefited from the resources of a government. (ii) The so-called Lockerbie bombing of a Pan American airplane in December 1988 for which the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi took responsibility in 2003. Thus, in the decade 1980-1989 there were 2 high profile attacks whereas in the decade 1993-2003 there were 9.

In the present case the distinction between events which should be included and those which should be excluded was fairly clear. However, it should be observed that it would be difficult to define strict criteria. Many factors may play a role such as the date of the attack or the technical characteristics of the bomb. As we will see in a moment one meets the same difficulty in medicine and even in physics.

Addendum: Excerpts of the “War on the US” proclamation issued by Osama bin Laden on 23 August 1996

The word “Addendum” in the title refers to the fact that the proclamation made by Osama bin Laden became known to the authors only in late September 2017 that is to say several months after the first draft of this chapter had been written. This fatwa (a word which refers to a religious ruling in Islam) is of interest for two reasons.

- Although it is a fairly long document, it has basically only one objective namely to denounce the occupation of Saudi Arabia, “the land of the two holiest sites, the cradle of Islam, the source of the Prophet’s mission and the site of the Kabah by the Christian army of the Americans”. This shows how painful this occupation was for Muslim people.
- It explains why a guerrilla warfare was the only means that remained after all pleas made to the Saudi king remained unanswered.

Here are a few excerpts:

1 Many scholars, preachers and youth were arrested in the land of the two Holiest sites upon the instructions of America. Most prominent were Sheikh Salman al-Udah and Sheikh Safar al-Hawali.

2 The King has violated the prophet’s command by allowing the crusaders into the Arab Peninsula. The Prophet said on his deathbed: “Expel the infidels from the Arabian Peninsula”. He also said “If it should please God Almighty that I live, I will expel the Jews and the Christians from the Arabian Peninsula”.

3 We expect the women in the land of the two holiest sites and other places to do their part by boycotting American goods. The combination of the economic sanctions and the Mujahideen military attacks will help defeating the enemy. The youth know that the disgrace and shame that afflicted the Muslims, through the occupation of their sacred places, will not be removed except by Jihad and explosives.

Bombing by western aircraft and terrorist attacks

Here is another case in which the possible motivation of terrorist attacks was covered up whether intentionally or not.

Between November 2015 and May 2017 there have been many terrorist attacks in France carried out by so-called jihadists. Often in the message that they left behind them before engaging in the attack and being killed, the perpetrators stated that it was in retaliation of bombings conducted in Iraq by French aircraft. However, as a French citizen, one of the authors (BR) was very surprised that in their accounts and comments French media hardly ever mentioned such possible links. Was that attitude sheer blindness or was it by purpose lest the public may ask bombing missions to be discontinued?

As a specific case one can mention a failed bombing attack on 19 June 2017. The djihadist named Adam Djaziri rammed his car into a police van in Paris, and was killed in the accident. Gas containers and several weapons were allegedly found in the car. A few days later the media revealed that on 29 May Djaziri had sent letters to several newspapers. Of this 6-page document the media gave only one sentence, namely that he asked the French government to discontinue the bombings by French aircraft in Syria. However, in line with all other cases, this single sentence was immediately dismissed and forgotten.

Instead of remaining focused on France we should of course consider similar cases. After the attack of 22 March 2017 in London, one of the authors (BR) asked one of his English colleagues whether the British media had acknowledged a possible connection with the participation of British aircraft in the bombing of Iraq and Syria. It seems that, as in France, such a link was almost never mentioned.

We can broaden the field of observation even more. It turns out that there have been similar attacks in Australia, Belgium, France Germany, Russia, Sweden, the UK and the US. Of these countries, Sweden is the only one which does not conduct bombing missions. However, it is part of the anti-ISIL coalition consisting of 66 nations led by the United States ⁷. Conversely, it seems there is only one country, namely the

⁷As of July 2015 the coalition consisted of the following countries:Albania, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia,

Netherlands⁸, which had done bombing missions without however experiencing a terrorist attack (at the date of 13 May 2017).

In short, even independently of the statements left by the perpetrators, the comparative analysis and particularly the high correlation between bombing missions and attacks suggests the existence of a close link.

Clearly this raises the question of why the cover up of this connection by western media is so well respected. Are they not said to be “free media”?

This wall of silence is especially astounding when one considers that day after day such attacks give rise to lengthy reports in the media; the issue of how security can possibly be improved is addressed over and over again. Yet, the plain idea that there may be a connection with the role assumed by the coalition countries in Iraq, Libya and Syria is never alluded to.

In the media (whether newspapers, TV or Internet) I have read numerous articles asking: “How can we improve security?”. Many ways were suggested (more police forces, better intelligence and so on) but none of these articles ever suggested “May be we should discontinue our bombing campaign and our participation in the coalition”.

Definition of families of “similar” phenomena in physics

Experimental physics, which so far has been the most successful of all scientific fields, is entirely based on comparing the results of experiments performed under different conditions. In other words, for physicists the comparative approach presented in this chapter should be quite natural. That was indeed the case at the end of the 19th century but no longer nowadays because over the past century physics has become more and more guided by theory.

We have said above that even in physics it is not always obvious to decide whether an observation should be included into one family or another. This can be illustrated by the case of the free fall of an object. Ideally, free fall means fall in vacuum. However, if the density of the object is much higher than the density of air then a fall in air can be considered as a free fall. However, as the density of the object decreases the fall will less and less follow the law of free fall. Whether a given observation should be included into the “free fall family” or into the “viscous medium fall family” depends

European Union, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kosovo, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, Turkey, Ukraine, UAE, UK and the US. Is it not amazing that all these countries were convinced they had a legitimate right to interfere in those civil wars, whether in Iraq, Libya or Syria. In the Vietnam war, also a civil war, less than half a dozen countries had assisted US forces.

⁸Canada conducted only refueling and reconnaissance missions.

very much upon what is the accuracy of the measurement.

Why a high noise level complicates scientific analysis

Another observation may be of interest regarding the question of making comparisons in experimental physics.

It turns out that the first accurate test of Newton's law was based on astronomical observations for the planet Mars done by Tycho Brahe and Kepler. At first sight this could appear surprising. Would it not have been easier to set up an experiment in the laboratory?

What made planets of great interest is the fact that they are moving without friction, a characteristic which is not easy to implement in laboratory experiments. The movement of a pendulum is probably one of the closest approximation of an experiment with little friction. Not surprisingly, from Galileo (1600) to Friedrich Bessel (added mass, 1828), to Léon Foucault (rotation of the Earth, 1851), the pendulum played a great role in the development of classical mechanics.

For the same reason, it was much more challenging to understand experiments whose results change when they are repeated. That is the case of experiments which involve turbulence or quantum mechanical effects. It is hardly surprising that the explanation of such phenomena occurred only in the 20th century. For instance the photoelectric effect was investigated by Albert Einstein in 1905 and his predictions were confirmed experimentally by Robert Millikan in 1914. Both Einstein and Millikan were awarded the Nobel Prize for their discovery.

The previous discussion can be summarized by saying that observations in which the signal to "noise" ratio, s/n , is low are much more difficult to understand than those for which this ratio is high.

High level of noise in recurrent historical events

Because recurrent historical events may contain a high level of noise⁹ their observation and interpretation may be tricky. However, there can be little doubt that by increasing sufficiently the size of the sample of events one will be able to extract the same kind of regularities as observed in physics. By making historical records more easily available worldwide, the Internet will greatly facilitate this quest.

⁹Moreover, in contrast with turbulence or quantum effects this noise is not purely random which creates an additional difficulty.

Chapter 2

US-PRC competition for world leadership

To give an idea of the diplomatic influence of the United States in the present world (2017), it may be useful to list the 66 countries which took part in the US-lead coalition against ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria).

Afghanistan, Albania, Arab League, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, European Union, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Republic of Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, South Korea, Kosovo, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malaysia, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States.

There is also a so-called “Small Group” which includes the most active countries in this coalition.

Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Iraq, Italy, Jordan, Kuwait, New Zealand, Netherlands, Norway, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Turkey, UAE, UK, US.

It can be observed that there are a number of countries (and among them several major powers) which are *not* taking part in this coalition, namely: China, India, Pakistan, The Philippines, Russia, Switzerland and almost all countries of Latin America.

This preliminary observation gives a taste of the situation of the world in 2017.

Introduction

World leadership seen in the light of mankind's history

All remaining chapters of the first part of this book are about the competition for world leadership currently under way between the United States and the People's Republic of China. From a historical perspective this is a question of crucial importance. Why? The answer is simple. In the history of mankind the situation enjoyed

by the United States since 1945 is the first example of a worldwide hegemony of such a scope: economic, military, political, cultural, scientific.

It is true that the Roman Republic which was followed by the Roman Empire dominated the Mediterranean world but at that time China, India and Persia, not to speak of pre-Columbian empires, were major players too. Moreover, even in the Roman Empire itself Latin shared its hegemony with Greek especially in the eastern part of the empire.

From 1840 to 1914 the British Empire was the sole super-power but never to the extent reached by the US after 1945. It had military outposts in its colonies and in a few other countries (e.g. China) but none on the territory of other great powers such as the US, Germany, France or Russia. Although the universities of Oxford and Cambridge were known worldwide, their influence was by no means comparable to the present domination of US universities.

Finally, it can be observed that in the wake of the Second World War and then of the Cold War the Federal government has developed a very effective machinery aimed at spreading the US model overseas through the well coordinated action of the Senate, State Department, Department of Defense, Treasury, Department of Justice, together with the networks of American media and universities.

What can be expected from growing Chinese economic influence?

The prevalent opinion in the Chinese public seems to be that economic growth will solve all problems. For instance, once mainland's income per capita will surpass Taiwan's it is expected that the Taiwanese people will be happy to join the PRC just as the people of East Germany gladly joined West Germany in 1990. Is this realistic?

More broadly are the PRC's core interests better respected now that China is the world's largest economy in terms of foreign trade than they were in the past? A brief look at two core-questions, namely Taiwan and Tibet show that it is rather the opposite.

- Over the past 30 years, instead of declining, US sales of weapons to Taiwan have substantially increased.
- Regarding Tibet, one can observe that between 1959 and 1990 there was not a single meeting between US presidents and the Dalai Lama; then, between 1990 and 2014, there were nine.

Such observations raise the question of whether the United States really wants to share world leadership with another power. As discussed in the next section, from a historical perspective situations of shared leadership have indeed been quite uncommon.

Will the insight provided by comparative analysis enable us to view such issues more

clearly? In what follows readers will be able to judge by themselves.

Condominium or competition? A historical view

A condominium is a territory that two powers agree to rule in cooperation. For instance, Britain and France agreed to establish a condominium over the archipelago of New Hebrides in the Pacific Ocean which lasted from 1906 to 1980 after which the territory became independent under the name of Vanuatu. This concept describes fairly well the win-win relation of cooperation that the Chinese government wishes to establish with the United States.

However, history suggests that relations of cooperation between two dominant powers have been rare. On the contrary, cases where two great powers came in conflict because they did not wish to share the leadership seem very common.

Classic cases

A classic example is the case of Sparta and Athens, two major city-states in Greece who came into conflict in the Peloponnesian wars. The first one lasted fifteen years from -469 to -445 and the second lasted almost thirty years from -431 to -404. In these long conflicts, Athens held the role of a maritime power while Sparta was rather a continental power.

Also in the antiquity but two centuries later, the three Punic wars (-264 to -146) opposed two contenders for dominance in the western Mediterranean, namely the Roman republic and the Carthaginian Empire. Rome was a rapidly ascending power in Italy and after more than a hundred years and the loss of thousands of soldiers from both sides, Rome conquered Carthage's empire, completely destroyed the city, and become the most powerful state of the Western Mediterranean. It would keep that position for over four centuries in the west and until the 15th century for the eastern part of the empire.

Endless rivalry in western Europe

In more recent times, a long series of wars (from 1754 to 1815) opposed France and Great Britain for dominance in western Europe. It is worth mentioning that these wars were already world wars because they extended to the colonial possessions of the two powers in North America, the Caribbean islands and India.

The first World War opposed Britain, France and Russia on the one hand to Austria-Hungary, Germany and Turkey on the other hand, once again for dominance in Europe.

The special case of the UK submitting to US domination

Among western countries one case where dominance shifted from one power to an-

other without an open conflict was Britain and the United States. Britain had been the super-power of the 19th century although by no means to the same extent as the US is nowadays. It lost its economic dominance at the end of the 19th century and after 1945, it lost also its political dominance along with its colonial empire.

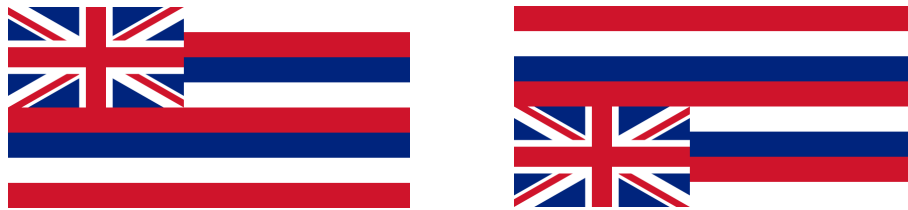


Fig. Flags of the kingdom of Hawaii. Left: Flag before the suppression of the monarchy by the US. The Union Jack in the upper corner was probably related to British help in restoring the monarchy. **Right:** Inverted flag used by groups of native Hawaiians.

Mild British reactions to the US take over of Hawaii

June 1887 was marked by the celebration of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee (that is to say the 50th anniversary of her coronation) where monarchs from all over the world were invited. One of the invited guests was the king of Hawaii; this was not surprising because the kingdom of Hawaii had a close connection with Britain as attested by its flag which figured the Union Jack in one corner. The king sent his wife and princess Liliuokalani to represent him. On their way from Hawaii to Britain they visited Washington where they were received by President Grover Cleveland. In London Queen Victoria gave them an official audience at Buckingham Palace during which she recalled that King Kalakaua had already visited her in 1881.

However, at the same moment, on 30 June 1887 a new constitution (the so-called "bayonet constitution") was imposed to the king by American businessmen supported by their militia. In an attempt to request help the king contacted the US Minister as well as the British, French and Japanese representatives but they all suggested that he should comply. Written by a group of Americans, the new constitution deprived the king of most of his power. It was never ratified by the Hawaiian Kingdom's legislature.

On 4 July 1894, the Republic of Hawaii was proclaimed by the same group of people connected to US planters. It was recognized by the US government as a protectorate in August 1894. In July British troops wanted to land in Hawaii for a drill but permission was refused to them (NYT 1 July 1894). On 20 July 1894 the New York Times announced that Britain was ready to discuss with the new Republic about a Reciprocity Treaty. This was an informal recognition.

In 1895 the deposed Queen Liliuokalani was tried by a military commission. Six of her supporters had already been sentenced to be hanged and their sentences were commuted only after the Queen signed her abdication. When Hawaii was eventually annexed in 1898 the Crown Lands which were quite considerable were seized by the United States government.

With regard to the competition between Britain and the US in the Pacific there was an interesting episode in 1887 and 1894. The account given in the Box shows that, although formally supporting the Hawaiian monarchy, Britain in fact did not really object to its suppression.

Did the British government not realize that the annexation of Hawaii would put the US in a dominant position in the Pacific? More likely, there may have been a tacit power sharing understanding. The Atlantic Ocean, the Mediterranean Sea as well as the Indian Ocean would be in the British sphere of influence, whereas the Pacific Ocean (and especially its eastern part) would be in the US sphere of influence.

Additionally, it can also be observed that the annexation was carried out very cleverly in a step-by-step process: permission given to foreigners to buy land (1848), bayonet constitution (1887), suppression of the monarchy and US protectorate (1894) and finally annexation (1898).

Incidentally, it can be mentioned that a similar step-by-step course of action occurred in the annexation of:

- Texas: independence of a Texas Republic from Mexico in 1836 followed by annexation in 1845 which in turn led to the US-Mexican war of 1846-1848.
- California: independence of a California Republic from Mexico in June 1846 followed by annexation in 1848 in the wake of the US-Mexican war.

Situation in eastern Asia

It seems that under the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) and the first part of the Qing dynasty (say 1644-1820) there were less major conflicts in eastern Asia than in Europe for no other country was in a position to challenge the leadership of China.

Two different methods of analysis of conflicts

Method 1: listing causes of conflict

When two countries seem to be on a collision course, the standard way to predict what will happen is to list the possible causes of friction and conflict. The problem is that, ranging from political to economic or military matters, there is an infinite (and indefinite) list of factors. Some are of cardinal importance whereas others are merely incidental and circumstantial. Moreover, the main difficulty is that once such a catalogue of sources of conflict has been set up, it is impossible to draw any conclusion unless one can rely on a well-defined model. Without such a model, drawing conclusions will be a subjective and arbitrary process. Let us illustrate this difficulty by an example.

A common cause of conflict is when two countries compete for leadership. The

Seven-year War (1756-1763) and the Wars of the Revolution (1793-1815) were conflicts which opposed Britain and France for a leadership position not only in Europe but also in America and Asia. As a matter of fact, these wars were already world wars. Similarly the wars between France and the Austrian Empire opposed the two main powers of continental Europe. More recently, the Cold War was obviously a competition for world leadership between the US and the USSR.

However, in the decade 1940-1950 Britain ceded its world leadership to the United States without any open conflict. Quite on the contrary, to this day, Britain remains the closest ally of the United States. This example suggests that a specific cause of conflict can lead to very different outcomes depending upon the “circumstances”. As such circumstances can be assessed in very different ways by various analysts, this approach will lead to subjective and untestable conclusions. In short, although at first sight it may appear as the most natural, this approach is unsatisfactory.

Method 2: relying on previous episodes

In a well known statement, the Greek general and historian Thucydides (-460 to -400) wrote:

“I shall be satisfied if what I have written is useful for those who wish to know what happened in the past and, human nature being what it is, may well happen again”.

A similar idea was expressed by Karl Marx in his essay entitled “The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon” (1852)

“People make their own history, but they make it under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past. The traditions of all the dead generations burden, like a nightmare, the minds of the living.”

In other words as an alternative method, Thucydides and Marx suggest to compile previous episodes and to use them as guides for the future.

At first sight such a method may seem tricky to implement. What episodes are we going to compare? On what criteria are we going to select and compare them? One should realize that astronomers of former times were facing the same difficulty. The movements they were observing in the sky were of many kinds: the Moon, the planets, satellites of Jupiter or Saturn, comets, stars. It would make no sense to compare orbits belonging to what we now know as being different families of objects.

In using this second method the crucial difference is that before trying to draw any conclusion we first wish to set up what can be called collections of similar events. For astrophysicists it became possible to really understand how stars work once they could rely on sets of observations respective to diverse families of stars: small versus

large, young versus old, red versus yellow and so on. Such a data set allows them to test their explanations. If one has observations for only one star no tests can be made. In other words, it is only by moving from data for a single event to data for a set of events, that it becomes possible to develop a *scientific* understanding.

In what follows we will illustrate the comparative approach by focusing on several facets which seem relevant for the question of the relationship between the United States and China.

From embargo to expanding bilateral trade

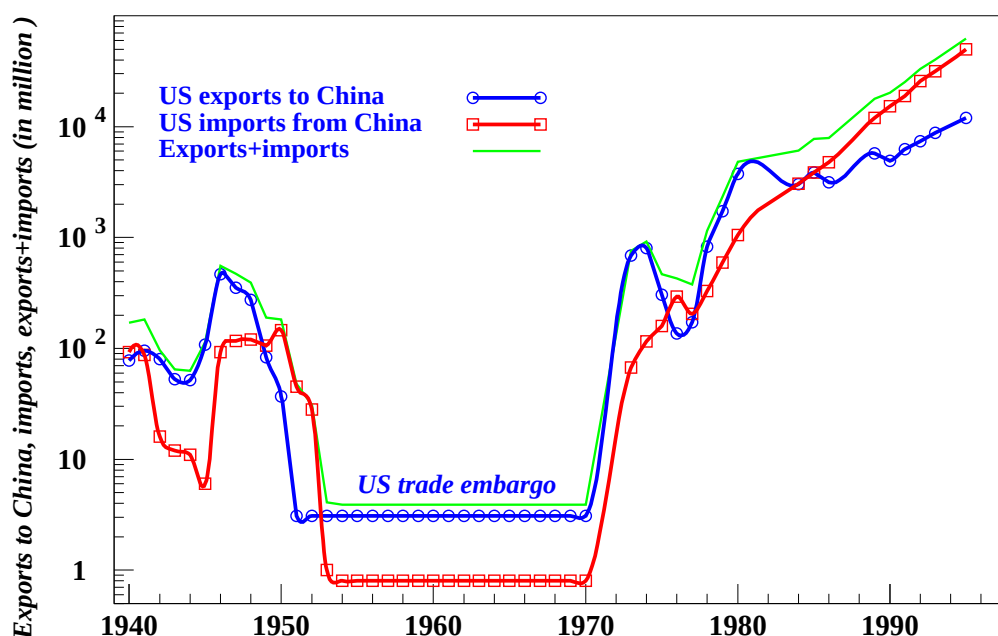


Fig. xa Trade between China and the United States, 1941–1995. In its most restrictive form the US embargo on trade with China lasted from 1951 to 1971. According to official US data, the exports were strictly zero. Because zero cannot be represented on a graph with a log-scale, 0 was replaced by 0.8. For some reason, the imports from China were not altogether zero but fluctuated at very low levels; we replaced these random fluctuations by their annual average. The embargo was partly lifted in the wake of President Nixon's visit. However, after 1974 one observes a temporary fall in US exports which lasted until 1978; one wonders if it was somehow related to the resignation of President Nixon in August 1974; if so, it would suggest that his policy toward China was not well accepted. *Sources: Historical statistics of the United States (1975, p.903,905), Statistical Abstract of the United States (various years).*

The fact that there was a trade embargo during the Korean War (1950-1953) is of course not surprising. However, when the Korean War ended, instead of being lifted or at least brought in line with the embargo on trade with other Communist countries it was made more restrictive. In the mind of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles the purpose of this policy was to raise popular discontentment in China that could lead to protests and to the dismissal of the Communist regime. At the same time, all

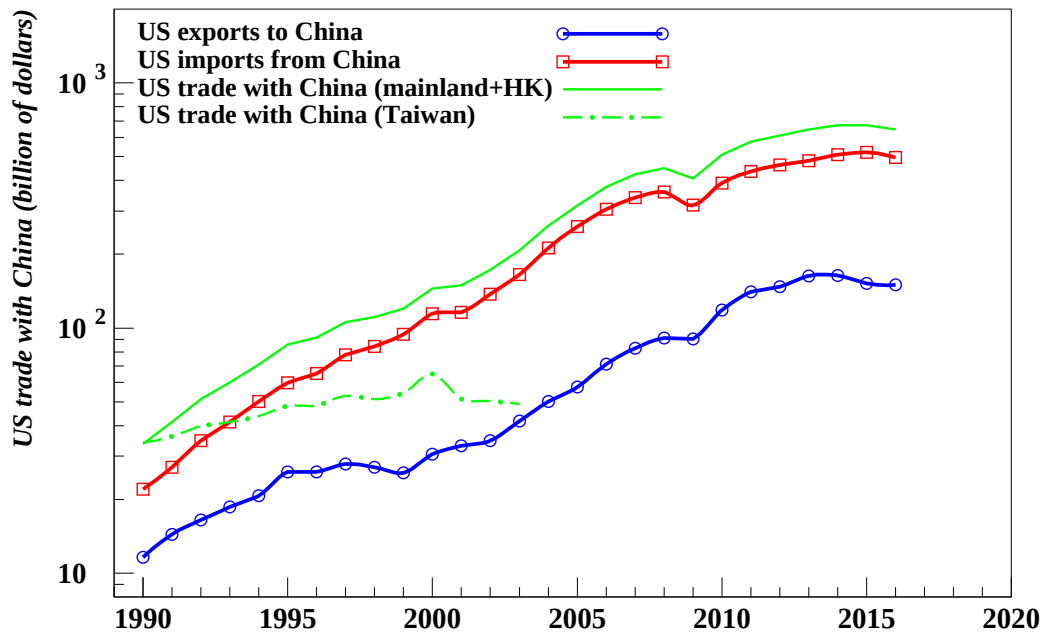


Fig. xb Trade between China and the United States, 1990–2016. From 1990 to 2016 mainland’s trade with the US was multiplied by 19 which represents an annual growth rate of 11.6% (multiplication by 2 in 6.6 years). After 1990 the trade with Taiwan appears to experience a sluggish growth; this is certainly due to the fact that Taiwan’s trade had experienced a very rapid growth in the decades before 1990; in the 16 years between 1965 and 1980 it was multiplied by 34. On a per capita basis in 1990 Taiwan’s trade with the US was 50 times higher than for the mainland. *Sources: China mainland and Hong Kong: US Bureau of the Census; China, Taiwan: Statistical Abstract of the United States, various years.*

US allies were asked to follow the same rules. Two organizations called COCOM (“International Coordinating Committee on Strategic Trade with Communist Countries”) and CHINCOM were set up on the initiative of the US with the purpose to control the trade of the 17 US allies which were supposed to follow the same policy.

The China visit of President Nixon in 1972 did not end the embargo but it was brought in line with the rules which then applied to other Communist countries.

The graph shows clearly that low trade level was the effect of the of US policy and not at all the wish of the Chinese leadership. On the contrary, both Premier Zhou Enlai and Chairman Mao wanted to develop trade. Actually, after the support of the

Soviet Union began to dwindle in the wake of the visit of Premier Nikita Khrushchev to the USA in 1959, the economic situation of China became very difficult. That is probably why China welcomed the opening made by President Nixon even though the two countries were at that time still involved in the Vietnam War.

Fig. xb shows that in recent years the expansion of trade has slowed down. On average for the period 1990–2016 it was 10% per year, but between 2011 and 2016 it was only 2.3% on average. The same saturation effect had occurred for Taiwan: from 1965 to 1980 there was an annual growth rate of 24% but, as can be seen on the graph, after 1990 there was almost no further increase.

Financial cooperation or competition?

Of course, no country will say openly that it does not wish to share leadership. In order to find out what is really the situation we must observe what is the real attitude of the US and China.

The revealing case of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

In this respect the creation of the “Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank” (AIIB) provides a test which is quite revealing.

The creation of this bank was proposed by the government of China in October 2014. It aims to support the building of infrastructure in the Asia-Pacific region. As of May 2017 it had 52 member states while another 25 are prospective members. Among the 77 members and prospective members are almost all close allies of the United States (following the name of the country is the date of ratification or the date of prospective membership for a few recent members): Australia (Nov 2015), Bahrain (May 2017), Canada (Mar 2017), Israel (Jan 2016), the Philippines (Dec 2016), New Zealand (Dec 2015), Norway (Dec 2015), Qatar (Jun 2016), Saudi Arabia (Feb 2016), South Korea (Dec 2015), UK (Dec 2015).

The US and Japan are the only major powers which are not members.

The internationalization of the renminbi is another cause of contention as will be seen below.

Integration of the RMB into IMF’s SDR basket

Until 30 September 2016 only four currencies were represented in the “Special Drawing Rights” (a kind of international currency, see below) basket, namely the US dollar, the euro, the Japanese yen and the British pound. In order to allow the integration of the RMB with a share of 11% some of the pre-existing currencies had to accept a reduction of their own share.

The story of this integration is an interesting one, but before coming to that we must



Fig. 2.1 On 30 September 2016 the IMF celebrates the integration of the Chinese currency into special drawing rights currencies. Mu Jiashan, a contemporary master of Chinese art, presents a painting to IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde who wears a traditional Chinese costume on the day when the IMF announced the launching of the Special Drawing Rights (SDR) basket that includes the Chinese currency (RMB). The proposition had been approved by IMF officials and managing director on 15 November 2015 and then, on 30 November 2015, by the 24 executive directors of the IMF Board. It was Lagarde who promoted Zhu Min, a former Chinese central bank official, as a “Deputy Managing Director” at IMF. When Zhu retired in July 2016, another Chinese central banker, Zhang Tao, filled the position. *Source: Xinhua News Agency.*

explain the function of the SDR

Function of the SDR (Special Drawing Rights)

Despite its weird name the SDR is a currency. Often when this role is to be emphasized it is denoted by its currency code XDR. The XDR was created in 1969, that is to say at a time when the US dollar was still indexed on gold ($1 \$ = 0.888\text{g}$ of gold) but was called into question outside the US. When the XDR was created there was no consensus about the role it should play (hence its weird name). The overall idea was to offer a way to increase the supply of money at a moment when the dollar was in short supply and no longer trusted. However, after the dollar was disconnected from gold, its supply could be increased at will and it became the reference currency worldwide, therefore making the XDR almost useless.

At this point it must be said that, as a currency, the XDR has severe limitations, for instance the fact that only central banks (as well as a number of other institutions) can hold it. This limitation prevented its use in connection with international trade. Being involved in only few transactions the XDR is a highly illiquid currency. For

years, its main use was as a reserve currency and even in this function it was of marginal importance. As of January 2011, the XDR represented less than 4% of global foreign exchange reserve assets¹⁰.

It is only in the wake of major financial crises that monetary experts remember the existence of the XDR and consider increasing its role. The last time this happened was in March 2009 that is to say at the height of the crisis which had started in October 2008. Not surprisingly, it was China which, through the voice of the chairman of the “People’s Bank of China” (that is to say China’s central bank), voiced its displeasure at the current international monetary system. To be sure, China was not the only country to be unhappy with a system in which the dollar played such a dominant role for a dollarized world allowed the US to impose unilateral sanctions on foreign countries (e.g. Iran or Russia) or foreign banks (e.g. the French bank “BNP-Paribas” or the “Deutsche Bank”) just by threatening an embargo on their supply of dollars. The situation could well be summarized in the words of an Irish folk song of the 19th century:

“Our foes were united and we were divided.

We met and they scattered our ranks to the wind”.

For changing a system that is used by such a large number of countries, there must be a credible alternative. The introduction of the euro in 2002 may have been seen as creating a possible alternative but this prospect had to be quickly dismissed on account of the political weakness of the eurozone countries¹¹.

The economic emergence of China created a second chance for an alternative. As it is easier to amend a system already in existence than to create a new one, China suggested an extension of the role of the XDR. As such a change might ultimately lead to creating an alternative to the dollar, one can understand that the US was against it¹².

We can now return to the question of the integration of the RMB in the SDR basket. The main role of this basket is to define the value of the XDR with respect to the other currencies which belong to the SDR basket. The same system is used in many countries. For instance, the Singapore dollar is valued with respect to a basket of foreign currencies, except that in this case the composition of the basket is not made public.

The SDR basket is re-evaluated only every 5 years, and the currencies included as

¹⁰Source: Wikipedia article entitled “Special drawing rights”.

¹¹As an illustration one can mention the following fact. In February 2017 the central banks of some 15 countries had publicly announced that they were holding RMB in their foreign currency reserves. Although this list included England, Hungary and Switzerland, it did not include the European Central Bank. Needless to say, neither did it include Japan or the United States. (Owen 2017)

¹²It was of course also against an enlargement of the role of the euro. For more details on this point see Roehner (2015).

well as the weights given to them can then be changed. The weights for former time intervals are shown in the table below.

Table 2.1 **Weights of the 5 currencies which comprise the IMF's SDR basket**

Period	USD	DEM	FRF	JPY	GBP
1981 – 1985	42.0%	19%	13%	13%	13%
	USD	EURO	CNY	JPY	GBP
2011 – 2015	41.9%	37.4%	0%	9.4%	11.3%
2016 – 2020	41.7%	30.9%	10.9%	8.3%	8.1%

Notes: USD=US dollar, DEM=German mark, FRF=French franc, JPY=Japanese yen, GBP=Great Britain pound, CNY=Chinese yen=renminbi.

Source: Wikipedia article entitled “Special drawing rights”.

It can be seen that giving an 11% share to the RMB was made possible mainly by the reduction of the shares of the European currencies: the euro lost 6.5% and the British pound 3.2%. Besides, the Japanese yen lost 1.1%. The US dollar kept its former share almost unchanged.

IMF case study illustrating the strength of US control

It is often said that, like many other international organizations set up in the wake of World War II, the IMF is dominated by the United States. However, little evidence is usually provided in support of this view. Here we describe one specific episode which illustrates how the IMF works. In particular it will demonstrate how the United States disposes of a veto right, if not formally, at least practically.

When one reads the press releases of the IMF one gets the impression that all decisions are taken by consensus on the basis of reports prepared by IMF staff writers. In short, it seems that political leverage plays no role. Closer examination reveals that this is rather a smoke screen.

In 2010 the executive board approved a plan whose purpose was to increase the voting power of emerging nations and in particular of China; under the plan the Chinese voting right would be increased from 3.8% to 6.1% and the one of India from 2.3% to 2.6%. That plan also included a doubling of the amount of funding available to the IMF for bail out purposes for instance for countries like Greece or Ukraine.

This plan could not be adopted and implemented without the agreement of the United States for the following reason. 85% of the Fund's voting power is required for any decision to pass but as the US holds 16.5% of the voting rights it enjoys a blocking minority which is equivalent to a veto right. Before the board director representing the US could cast his approval the plan had to be approved by the US Congress. It

turns out that for some reason the US Congress was not in a hurry to discuss the plan. In 2014 it was still waiting to be discussed in spite of the efforts of the Obama administration to bring it on the table. This long delay led several IMF members, and particularly Brazil, to start discussions aimed at finding a way out of this stalemate. The managing Director, Christine Lagarde, also set up a committee to find a solution. Eventually the US Senate approved the changes in December 2015 thus paving the way for the implementation of the reforms.

It is difficult to understand why the US Congress was reluctant to take up this discussion for it affected US interests only marginally by reducing the US voting right from 16.7% to 16.5%. As long as this percentage would remain above 15% the USA would continue to keep its virtual veto right.

In other words, it is clear that any reform which might really affect US interests, for instance the extension and strengthening of the SDR advocated by China, will never be allowed to pass by the US Congress.

Under the current organization¹³, China's voting right of 6.09% is slightly below Japan's voting right of 6.16% which is of course not in line with the respective weight of the two countries in international trade.

Economic facet of the power struggle

GDP growth

After 1815 and for about one century Great Britain was the super-power of the time. In spite of the fact that British hegemony never ever reached the level attained by US hegemony in the decades following 1945¹⁴. The emergence of Germany as a possible competitor was a source of concern for the British ruling class and also for the British Admiralty.

Economic growth was faster in Germany than in the UK. When taken together Austria-Hungary and Germany represented in 1913 a bloc of 118 million people; that is 2.6 times the population of the UK; their combined GDP was 1.4 times the British GDP¹⁵. Fig. 2.2a,b show two things.

- Back in 1913 time was working against British dominance in Europe and in favor of German dominance. Although its political role was still small, the US was emerging as the economic world leader.

¹³IMF press release entitled "IMF executive directors and voting power, 19 May 2019.

¹⁴For instance, the role of sterling in 19th century world trade was much less widespread than the worldwide trade dominance of the US dollar in the period after 1945. For more details about US hegemony in Europe one can read Roehner (2015)

¹⁵It is true that the British colonies (which included India) had a population of over 350 millions and a GDP almost equal to the GDP of the UK; in contrast, the GDP of the German colonies was negligible.

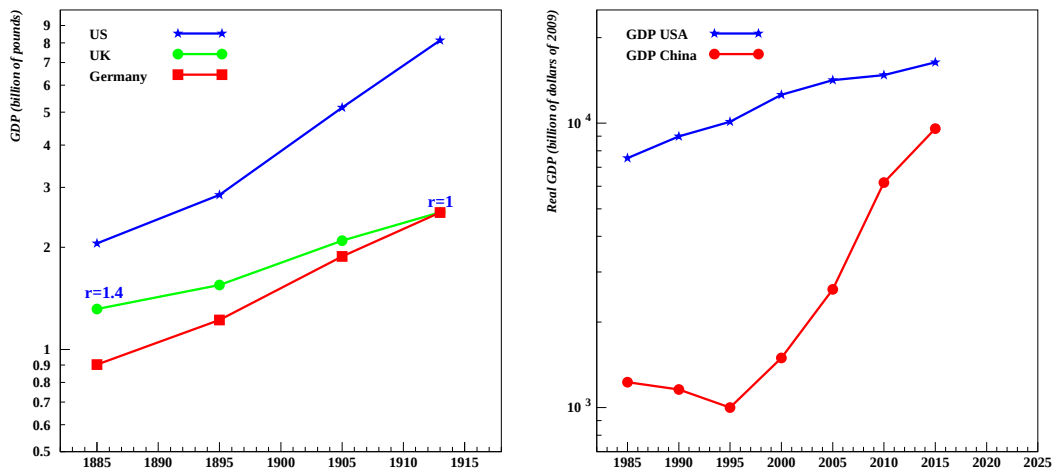


Fig. 2.2a,b Growth of gross domestic product (GDP) (a) USA, UK and Germany (b) USA, China. (a) Over the 28 years 1885-1913 the average growth rates in the US, UK and Germany were 5.0%, 2.4% and 3.7% respectively. The r variable is the ratio GDP of UK divided by GDP of Germany. In 1913 the GDP of Austria-Hungary was 40% of the GDP of Germany which means that the combined GDP of Germany and Austria-Hungary was 1.4 times the British GDP. The exchange rates were as follows: 1 pound=4.87\$, 1 pound=20.7mark. For the US the data refer to the national product rather than the domestic product but this makes little difference. (b) The decline in the GDP of China seen between 1985 and 1995 was due to a high inflation rate and to a substantial devaluation of the renminbi against the dollar. Sources: (a) *Historical Statistics of the United States* (1975), Liesner (1989). For Austria-Hungary the GDP figure comes from Broadberry et al. (2006). (b) US: Federal Reserve, Bank of St Louis, China: China Statistical Yearbook (CPI), websites "Trading Economics" (exchange rate), Chinability (GDP at current prices in RMB).

- The GDP of China will probably surpass the US GDP around 2020. Clearly on the economic side time is working against US dominance.

Foreign trade

As of 2016 the foreign trade of China was still largely dependent upon the United States and its close Japanese ally, a situation which made it vulnerable to a trade war (see Fig. 2.3).

Role of the RMB in the bond market

Almost non existent in 2000 the Chinese RMB bond market was the world's largest in 2013 with a total of RMB 36 trillion (\$5.8).

Even more importantly, in 2015 London started to issue bonds in RMB. Why is this of great importance? If other major countries issue RMB-denominated bonds Chinese authorities may hold such bonds without exchange rate risk. This would represent a significant improvement over holding US Treasury bonds that may lose value if the RMB appreciates against the US dollar.

Chinese foreign direct investment

Chinese outbound foreign direct investment (FDI) has grown from \$10 billion in

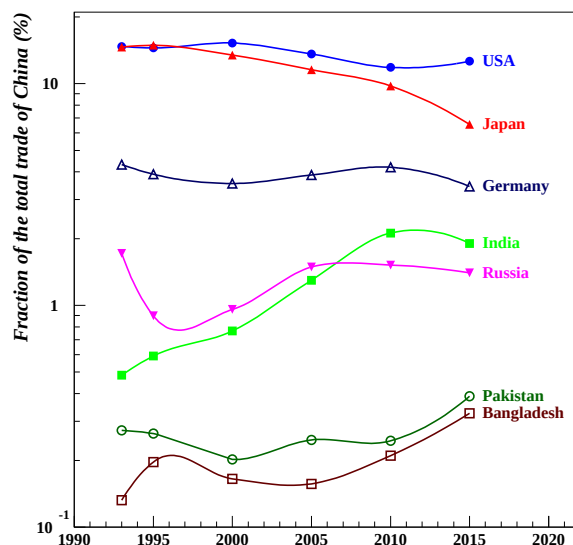


Fig. 2.3 China: total foreign trade by country. Total trade means exports+imports. The figures also include the trade which goes through Hong Kong. In the years immediately after 1997 the part of Hong Kong was significant but in 2015 it was much smaller; for instance for the trade with Japan it was only 10%. Perhaps the development of the “Silk Road” project will lead to an increase in the share of Asian countries but that will probably take several years. *Source: “Comtrade” database of the United Nations.*

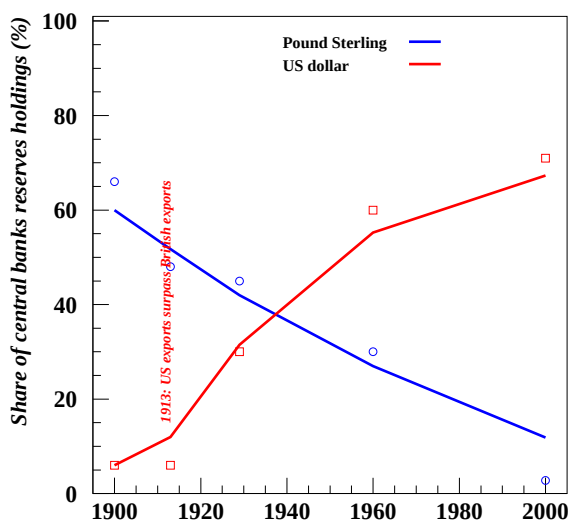


Fig. 2.4 Share of central bank reserves of the pound sterling and dollar respectively. The US GDP surpassed the GDP of Great Britain in 1872 but this was not of great significance because in addition to its domestic part, the economy of Great Britain also incorporated the vast British Empire. That is why world trade is a better indicator. In 1913 US exports surpassed British exports. Needless to say, by increasing indebtedness toward the United States, the two world wars damaged the international standing of the pound. *Source: Chinn et al. (2008), Persaud (2004).*

2005 to \$86 billion in 2013 that is to say at a rate of: $\exp(\log(86/10)/8) - 1 = 30\%$, in other words three times faster than the growth of GDP. In 2013, China was already the 6th largest outbound FDI investor.

In the first quarter of 2017 Taiwan saw the 27th consecutive quarter of net capital outflows; this represents a time span of 6 years and 3 quarters. In Q1,2017 Taiwanese invested US\$2.6 billion abroad while foreign investors injected US\$0.93 billion into the economy during the period. Although these figures represent only a few percent of the domestic investment which in 2015 was equal to \$117 billions, they suggest that Taiwan is not seen as a promising investment place by foreigners.

Replacement of the pound by the dollar as the main reserve currency

Fig. 2.4 shows that the dollar surpassed the pound as a reserve currency some 27 years after US exports surpassed British exports. Applying the same rule to the RMB case, one would expect the RMB to surpass the dollar as a reserve currency by $2013+27=2040$. Needless to say, for the USD-RMB case many conditions are different which means that the 27 year interval should be seen as giving an order of magnitude, just as in physics. In other words, 27 years means that it should not be 5 years nor should it be 70 years.

If one wishes to discuss the respective conditions, the most important factor is probably the First World War. The replacement of the pound was certainly accelerated by the financial difficulties which accompanied the First World War. In other words 27 years is probably an under-estimate. Thus, one would rather expect the RMB-USD transition to occur in the decade 2040-2050.

For the dollar to get from a share of 40% to a share of 70% took about 50 years. Thus, the RMB may become the dominant reserve currency by 2100. Again, this figure should be seen as giving an order of magnitude in the sense of physics.

The RMB as a trade currency

The reserve currencies held by central banks are not the only measure of the role of a currency. Another indicator is the currency's share in financial and commercial transactions. One difficulty is the fact that it is not easy to distinguish financial and commercial transactions. For instance one might think that Foreign Exchange transactions are purely financial transactions. It is indeed true that a high percentage of them are short-term (within less than 1 day) speculative transactions but nevertheless some of them are done for the purpose of foreign trade. Moreover, in many big commercial transactions the buyer gets a loan for instance from the US Import-Export bank. Hence, once again, financial and commercial transactions are tightly connected.

Why is this distinction between “paper” transactions and “real” transactions important? In the speculative game of paper transactions the RMB plays a negligible role (less than 1%). On the contrary, in real trade it plays a significant role (over 10%). However, as it is difficult to make a clear distinction the whole picture remains some-

what uncertain.

China surfs on a synergy wave

Notion of products-synergy

The classical and neoliberal conceptions of economics are based on individualism and competition. They ignore the key-importance of synergy. What we have in mind is not only synergy between employees but also synergy between products. Engineers who wish to build new drone prototypes need a whole set of components: from lightweight materials to electronic sensors to engines and telecommunication devices. If they can buy them within one or two weeks instead of 2 or 3 months their work will progress five times faster. In China it is possible to order highly technical devices on TaoBao or AliBaba. This brings about a crucial *products-synergy*.

One of the co-authors (BR) experienced this on several occasions. Here are two examples.

- To repeat the Besnard cell experiment (a well known experiment in physics) we needed aluminum powder with a grain diameter not larger than 5 micrometers. It was not available on Taobao but we could find it on AliBaba. It is true that most of the AliBaba sellers were selling it by ton however by chance there was one company which was offering packages of 500 g. This was still 10 times more than what we needed but the price was so low that it was not an obstacle.

- For another experiment we needed a set of sieves with mesh sizes ranging from a few micrometers to a few millimeters. It was available on Taobao and was delivered within 3 days.

Effect of products-synergy on economic growth

Products-synergy is not only crucial in engineering but in a broader way for economic growth. In a study of economic growth in China and industrialized countries (Baaquie et al. 2016) we compared labor productivity in agriculture and industry. In China, on average over 1990–2015, GDP/employee was 4 lower in agriculture than in the rest of the economy. This was expected and did not surprise us. However we were quite surprised to see that the two productivities increased at almost the same rate: 6.0% per year in agriculture versus 7.8% in the rest of the economy (i.e. a ratio of 1.3 instead of 4). No doubt this is the effect of synergy. As an illustration consider the introduction of mobile phones into Chinese villages. They will make detailed weather forecast available which will be quite important to optimize the working schedule; they will allow seeds, fertilizer or tools to be ordered faster and more easily. In other words agricultural productivity also benefits from the introduction of new devices even if the latter are not farming devices. This is how products-synergy

fosters economic growth.

Products-synergy hubs seen as business incubators

The Silicon Valley effect can be seen as a spatial version of the products-synergy effect. A high density of information technology professionals produced a synergy effect. China has no Silicon Valley but many of its big cities are in the course of becoming business incubators for a variety of products, e.g. mobile phones, drones, high speed trains, electric cars, artificial intelligence applications¹⁶ and so on.

Early Chinese technological breakthroughs

Currently (i.e. in June 2017) there are at least four major sectors in which China is the world leader.

1 **Mobile phones.** In a “New York Times” article (Mozur 2016) which is entitled “China, not Silicon Valley, is cutting edge in mobile tech” one reads: “The trope that China copies the US has not been true for years and in mobile it’s the opposite: the US often copies China”.

2 **High speed trains.** Such trains have been in existence for decades in Japan, France or Germany, but there has been little integrated international development. In contrast, several Asian countries have agreed to develop high speed trains in conjunction with China.

3 **Drones.** In the Wikipedia article entitled “Unmanned aerial vehicle” there is only one line about China which says: “As of 2016 China had exhibited many UAV designs, and its ability to operate them was beyond other countries”. This is probably due to the fact that most of the article was written several years ago. In an article published recently in “Forbes” (Joffe 2017) one reads “The first battle for dominance in the consumer drone market has played out, and China won.” As of 2014, the leading civil UAV companies were DJI (China) with \$500m global sales, Parrot (France) with \$110m and 3DRobotics (US) with \$21.6m.

4 **Nuclear power plants.** Several innovative nuclear power plants are currently under construction in China. Although these plants are based on European and US designs it is highly likely that in coming decades China will buy the patents and develop its own designs just as was done for high speed trains.

Regarding nuclear power plants a comparison with Japan may be enlightening. In 1999, the US company Westinghouse sold its nuclear business to “British Nuclear Fuels Limited” (BNFL). Then, in February 2006 BNFL sold Westinghouse to the Japanese company Toshiba. At that point, Toshiba had only a 67% share. In Septem-

¹⁶There is currently much talk about artificial intelligence. This is not really new however. In the 1980s it was expected that the mythic Japanese “Ministry of International Trade and Industry” (MITI) would develop new human-like robots and computers. Thirty years later one must recognize that robots made little progress whereas automatic translation made some but is still unsatisfactory in many respects. May be artificial intelligence is just too challenging.

ber 2011, Toshiba bought 20% more from a minority stock holder.

Then, came a series of technical and accounting disasters.

- In December 2016 Toshiba revealed that its investment in Westinghouse could have a negative worth (it was bought for about \$5 billion) due to cost overruns at 4 AP1000 nuclear reactors it was building in the US¹⁷. Paradoxically, a design objective of the AP1000 developed by Westinghouse-Toshiba was to be less expensive to build than other “Generation 3” reactors.

- On 29 March 2017 Toshiba’s Westinghouse filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy leaving the 4 half-finished reactors in the southeastern US to an unknown fate. Westinghouse has a total debt of \$9.8 billion. Toshiba itself had to sell one of its most valued business component to survive. The two reactors in Georgia had received from the Federal Government a \$8.3 billion loan guaranty which means that if the loan cannot be repaid by Westinghouse this amount will be covered by the government.

- Interestingly, there are also 4 AP1000 Westinghouse reactors currently under construction in China. It will be interesting to compare the fates of the US and Chinese reactors. All four Chinese AP1000s were scheduled to be operational by 2016, but were over two years late. The “Sanmen Nuclear Power Plant” in Zhejiang Province is projected to be commissioned in late 2017. It will be the first AP1000 reactor to start operation worldwide.

¹⁷A NYT article of 29 March 2017 made the following fairly vague statement that the projects are “three years late and billions over budget”.

Chapter 3

National activation in China and other countries

The notion of “national activation” can be seen as paralleling the momentum of a massive body like a truck or a ship in Newtonian mechanics. During a phase of national activation a country resolutely pushes ahead as new opportunities open for further expansion.

The concept of national activation was introduced in 2002 in “Pattern and Repertoire in History” (Roehner and Syme 2002). At the end of the chapter devoted to this notion there is in substance the following observation regarding South East Asia in the 21th century.

In South East Asia several of the conditions for a process of national activation have been brought together, namely a strong increase in the resources of the state, rapid demographic growth, democratization allowing large layers of the population to participate in public debates. But this has not, for the moment translated into the type of national activation observed in Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries.

It seems that in the 15 years since 2002, several countries in South East Asia and particularly China and India have come closer to a state of national activation. Below we explain why it can be considered that China is currently in a phase of national activation. This should have important consequences regarding its foreign and defense policy.

First of all, however, we wish to attract the reader’s attention on an important distinction between endogenous and exogenous factors.

Endogenous vs. exogenous factors in national development

It is well known that the long history of China has been marked by a succession of phases of expansion followed by phases of contraction, separatism and sometimes even dislocation. However, it would be an oversimplification to think that the contraction phases resulted solely from internal factors. The example of the Qing dynasty shows this quite clearly.

Expansion during the first half of the Qing dynasty

The Qing dynasty lasted 269 years from 1644 to 1912. In its first 70 years it was a successful expansionist dynasty. As one knows its last 70 years were much less successful. Yet, the efficiency of its internal organization was probably neither better nor worse than during the first decades. Yet, what a difference in terms of military success and expansion!

The Dzungar War (1687–1757) was a long conflict which opposed the Dzungar Khanate to the Qing dynasty and their Mongolian vassals. Qing victory ultimately led to the incorporation of Outer Mongolia, Tibet and Xinjiang into the Qing Empire.

Contraction during the second half of the Qing dynasty



Fig. 3.1 China, the cake of kings and emperors. In this political cartoon, Britain, Germany, Russia, France, and Japan are dividing China. William II of Germany is squabbling with Queen Victoria. The girl symbolizing France (i.e. so-called Marianne) is diplomatically shown as not participating in the carving and is depicted as close to Nicholas II, as a reminder of the Franco-Russian Alliance directed against Germany. *Source: Published in the French magazine “Le Petit Journal” (16 January 1898). Reproduced from the “French National Library” in the Wikipedia article entitled “Qing dynasty”.*

Less than one century later the very same Qing dynasty was defeated by Britain in the First Opium War (1839-1842) with the result that the Emperor had to accept the Treaty of Nanjing (1842). Through this treaty China ceded the island of Hong Kong to Britain in perpetuity and accepted the establishment of 5 treaty ports at Shanghai, Canton, Ningpo, Fuchow, and Amoy. France secured concessions on the same terms as the British, in treaties of 1843 and 1844.

Drastic change in the strength of foreign forces

Between 1757 and 1842 the main change was not endogenous but consisted in the fact that the enemies of China were much stronger. We are told that the Dzungars used camel mounted miniature cannons in battle. That was fairly clever but probably much less effective than the big guns and long range rifles in use in western armies and navies. As one knows, the First Opium war was followed by several other western aggression wars, each of which made the Qing dynasty weaker.

In summary, although it may seem to be a convenient criterion, territorial changes should not be taken as the sole measure of the success of a dynasty. This can also be illustrated with the example of the Southern Song dynasty (1127–1279).

Successes of the Southern Song dynasty

Although it lost control of the northern part of China as a result of its defeat in the Jin-Song Wars (1115–1234), the Southern Song dynasty was one of the most brilliant and innovative dynasties. It was marked by great inventions (e.g. gunpowder and the compass) and the development of maritime trade and explorations. For instance, the majority of the Chinese coins found in archaeological excavations conducted in Somalia and Tanzania are from the Song Dynasty.

National activation

When one follows the history of various nations it appears that in most of them there are periods of social mobilization and national activation. More specifically, when a society ends the domination of the aristocracy and moves to an organization that allows large sections of the population to participate in the management of public affairs, a process takes place which increases social interaction and produces a state of national activation. History has shown that greater interaction usually results in greater social efficiency, self-confidence and innovation.

$$\text{National activation} = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{New creed} \\ + \\ \text{Surge in self-confidence} \end{array} \right.$$

It has also been shown that one of the possible outlets for these new forces is territorial expansion.

There is no shortage of examples of this phenomenon. Several cases are mentioned

Table 3.1 Some examples of periods of national activation in various countries

Country	Time period	Message	New Army	Territorial Expansion	Main leader
Sweden	1580 – 1700	Protestantism	Conscription	Baltic	Gustav I Vasa
England	1640 – 1680	Puritanism	Professional	Ireland	Oliver Cromwell
France	1789 – 1815	Citizens' rights	Conscription	Europe	Napoleon Bonaparte
Germany	1860 – 1918	Nationalism	Unified army	Europe	Otto von Bismark
China	1925 – 1950	Land reform	People's army	No	Mao Zedong

Notes: The time intervals in the second column are merely indicative for it is clear that such social mobilizations did not halt suddenly. In France, despite the military defeat of 1815, the revolutionary spirit continued to be alive as shown by the occurrence of the revolutions of July 1830 and February 1848. The latter spread to almost all European countries. Similarly, in China the revolutionary spirit outlived the victory in the civil war.

In spite of the fact that the 17th century Swedish army was already based on conscription this feature was still something new in 1789. By the expression “unified army” we mean that the German army was no longer split in regiments from Baden, Brandenburg, Saxony and other components of the Holy Roman Empire. The analogue in present time would be to move from NATO which is a collection of national components under US command to a true European Army.

in Table 3.1. One can mention Sweden and England in the 17th century. France in the wake of the Revolution of 1789, Germany in the period after the national unification of 1870, Japan in the post-Meiji era, Russia after the Revolution of 1917, Israel in the decades after its refoundation in 1947 or Russia in the 21th century. We will give more details about some of these cases in a short moment.

As observed above, whether or not territorial expansion is possible depends very much upon the international situation. For instance the expansion of Sweden between 1600 and 1709 was facilitated by the fact that it had many weak neighbors such as Estonia, Livonia, Latvia or Pomerania. Even if no territorial expansion is possible the state of national activation can be recognized by a number of other features.

- 1 Spreading a message
- 2 Increase in population
- 3 Spread of instruction.
- 4 Widespread interaction between people belonging to various social classes.
- 5 Fast economic development.
- 6 In many cases, armed forces who had previously relied on mercenaries started to employ citizens.
- 7 Territorial expansion

We will now take a closer look at these different aspects.

Spreading a message

In order to gain momentum any social movement must rely on a gospel by which we

mean a message in which the participants believe and that they may try to spread to neighboring areas. Gospel is of course a religious term and in some time periods the message took indeed the form of a religious movement, e.g. Christianity or some of its special creeds such as Protestantism or Puritanism, but it can also be a political message such as the rights of citizens after 1789 in France, Communism after 1917 in Russia or people's (and especially farmer's) rights in the Chinese Revolution of 1925-1949.

In the history of mankind there have been hundreds of peasant revolts. To our best knowledge they were all crushed, the only exception being the uprising led by the Communists in China¹⁸.

Yet, as is well known, their opponents of the Kuomintang did not call them “Communists” nor “peasants” but “bandits”.

In the second half of the 20th century, the neoliberal gospel has spread from the US to all western countries, and even to some extent to China. In contrast with the gospels of the French, Russian or Chinese revolutions this gospel did not spread among common people but among economists, business people, lawmakers, or media groups.

In world history the spread of gospels represents a phenomenon of great importance. It would be of great importance to understand what are the key parameters which control it.

Population increase

Population estimates suggest that in 1840 the population of China numbered 412 millions (Ho 1959). If this figure is correct, it means that in the 113 years between 1840 and 1953 (year of the first census) the growth rate was $(694 - 412)/(412 \times 113) = 0.60\%$. Then, in the 63 years from 1953 to 2015 it became $(1382 - 694)/(694 \times 63) = 1.57\%$. Despite the one child policy the growth was 2.6 times faster (see Fig. 2.2)

A similar effect can be observed in France after the Revolution of 1789. Between 1740 and 1792 the population increased from 24.6 million to 28 million (Wikipedia article entitled “Demographics of France”) which represents an average annual rate of $(28 - 24.6)/(24.6 \times 53) = 0.26\%$. Then, from 1792 to 1846, it increased from 28.0 to 36.1 that is at a rate of 0.54% . One might think that this was due to improvements in healthcare, but in the following 50 years the increase was from 36.1 million to only 39.9 which is a rate of 0.19% . Thus, in the 50 years following the Revolution, despite the wars, the population growth rate was about twice as fast as before 1789

¹⁸A partial list is given in the Wikipedia article entitled “List of peasant revolts”. In this list some revolts are marked as having been successful. However when one reads the corresponding accounts one realizes that they were not successful by themselves but only by supporting the appropriate contender in a civil war. The French peasants who burned castles in 1789 were in a sense successful but only because the nobility was swept from power by the uprising in Paris. Incidentally, the Communist uprising in China is *not* mentioned in the Wikipedia list.

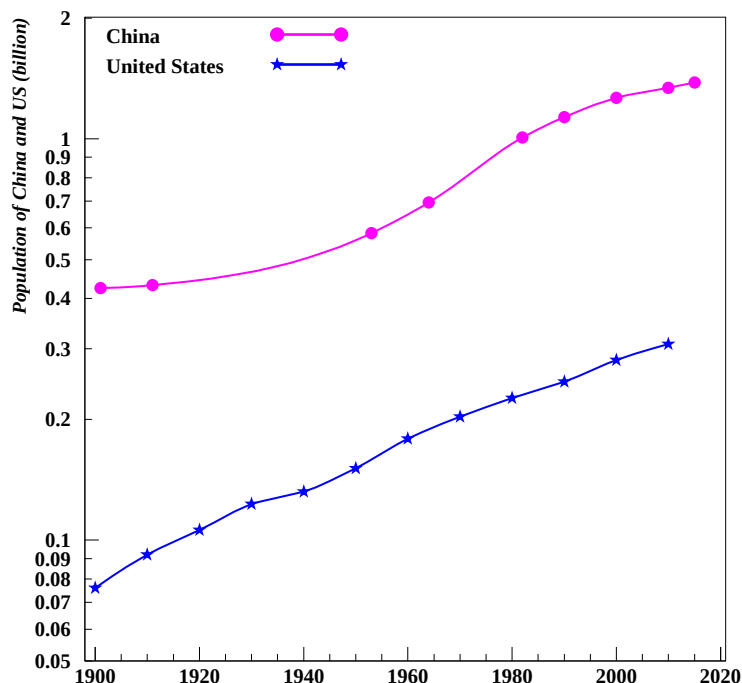


Fig. 3.2 Growth of the population of China and the United States. Whereas the growth of the Chinese population was endogenous, in the US immigration played an essential role. Before 1945 the immigrants came mostly from Europe; after 1960 they came mostly from Mexico. *Sources: Wikipedia articles entitled “Demographics of China” and “Demographic history of the United States”.*

and after 1846.

Spread of instruction

A spread of instruction resulting in a fast increase in the percentage of people able to read and write. happened in China after 1949 (see Fig. 2.3).

After the success of the Revolution in 1949 and even before 1949 in the liberated areas the literacy campaign wished to educate not only the school age children but also adults. For that purpose children were told by their schoolmaster to teach their parents every day one new character. In other words, the children became themselves schoolmasters within their own family or village. In this way, as shown in Fig. 3.3, progress was fairly fast. If there are physicists among our readers they may observe that this mechanism is similar to the phenomenon of ferromagnetism. In ferromagnetism each atom located in the magnetic field of an external magnet becomes itself a little magnet. The contributions of all these little virtual magnets add together and create an internal magnetic field which is usually much stronger than the initial field. Replacing “magnetic field” by “teaching” we see that each schoolboy and schoolgirl became a little magnet in its own. As a result, the teaching of the schoolmaster was strongly amplified.

One decade later a fairly similar method was used in Cuba after Fidel Castro came

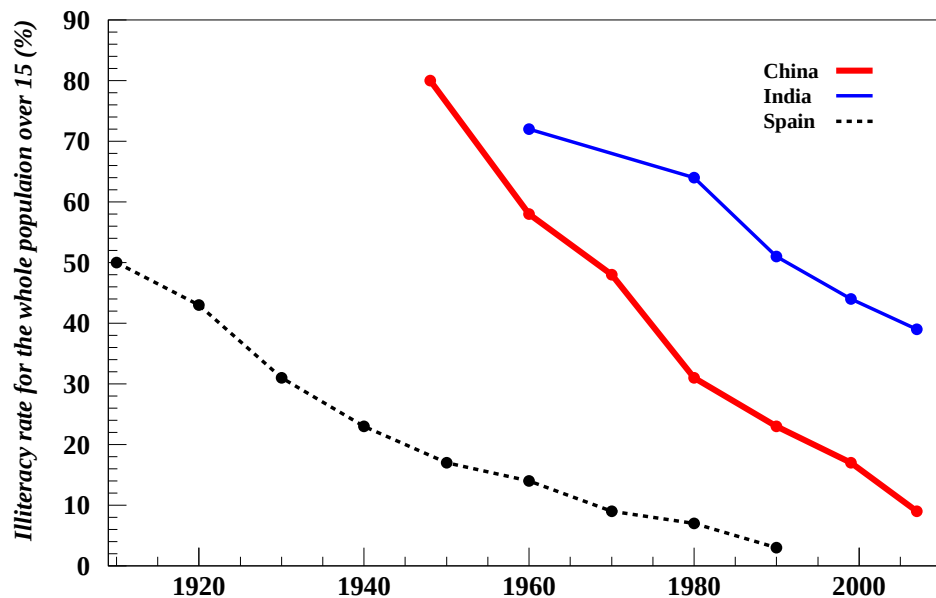


Fig. 3.3a Illiteracy percentage in the whole population over 15. Officially, in Communist China literacy was defined as the ability to recognize 1,500 characters. Sources: Jan (1964), Peterson (1994), Tempest (1997), <http://www.asianinfo.org/asianinfo/china/pro-education.htm>, <http://www.nationmaster.com/country/ch-china/edu-education>

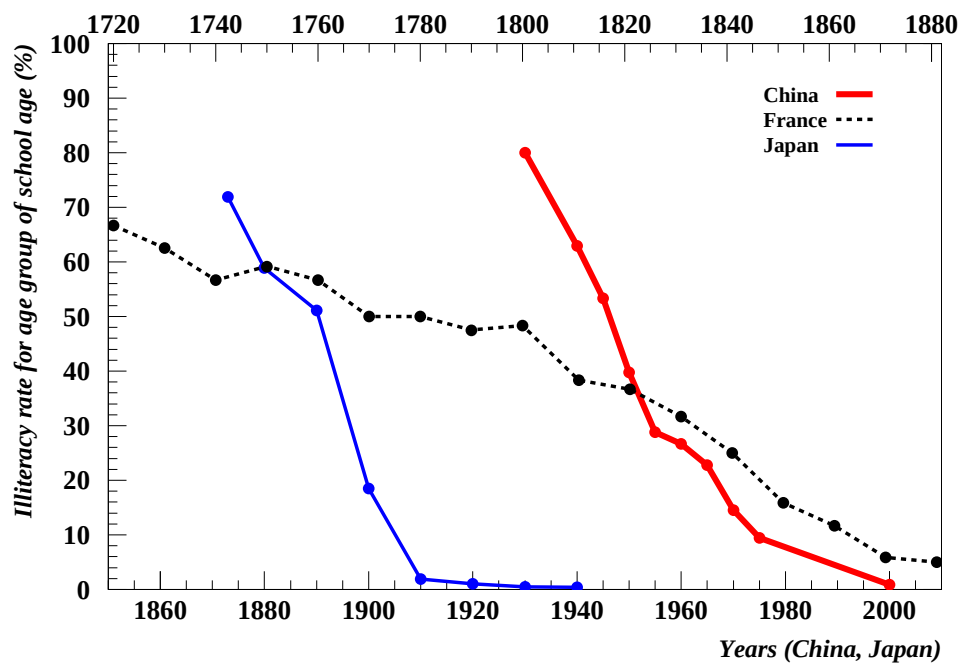


Fig. 3.3b Illiteracy rate for age group of school age. The upper horizontal scale is for France. With this metric the fall can become much faster than by taking into account the whole population. Sources: See Fig. 3.3a.

to power in 1960. Cuban rural illiteracy was at that time as high as 42% but it fell rapidly to less than 5%. If one wants to judge the success of a political regime education may be a better criterion than GDP per capita for it is clear that the US embargo which lasted from 1960 to 2015 was a serious obstacle for the economic

development of Cuba.

Interaction surge

Removal of social barriers

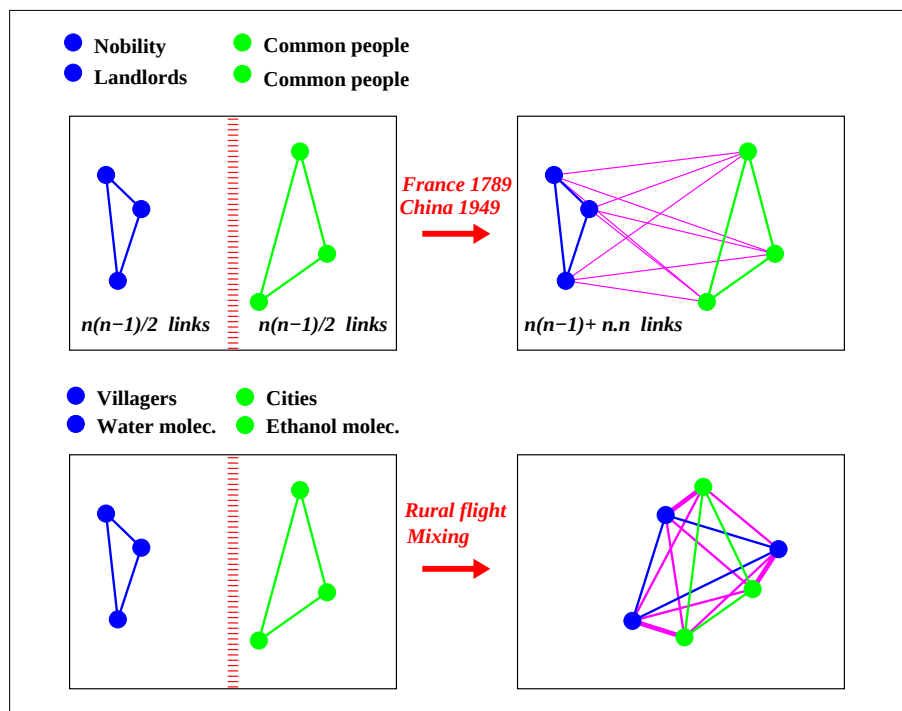


Fig. 3.4 Increasing interaction by removing barriers The increase in interaction may happen in two ways: (i) Top: Removal of the social barrier between two social groups whose individuals are represented by the blue and green dots; in this case $n = 3$. For instance in France and China before their respective revolutions there were rigid barriers between rich and common people. (ii) Bottom: Removal of social barriers and in addition relocation of the blue and green individuals in a way which brings them closer to one another; an illustration is the process of rural flight which brings villagers into cities. In this second case there are not only more links but the blue-green links become stronger. A physical parallel is the mixing of water and ethanol (i.e. alcohol). In the mixture the water molecules establish new links with the ethanol molecules. This process results in a substantial release of heat which in turn increases the temperature of the mixture by 4 or 5 degrees, an observation that everyone can easily repeat and verify.

Before 1949 there was a deep divide in the Chinese population between the peasant majority and a minority of landowners and business people. The situation was similar to the division which existed in France between the nobility and the common people. In both cases removing this separation increased inter-individual interaction. Here is a simple illustration.

Contrary to the English language which has only one form to address someone else, namely “you”, in French there are two forms: “tu” which is used for friends and “vous” which is for persons whom one does not know well. After the Revolution of 1789, the “vous” form was abolished. Thus, at least for a few years, a soldier would say “Comment vas-tu citoyen General?” [How are you doing citizen General?]. This language change reveals a will to eliminate the partitions existing between people.

The figure shows that this process can take two forms. In the first the spatial locations do not change which means that villagers have more rights but remain in their villages. In the second, the distances between the blue and green dots decreases. This corresponds to the case of rural flight that is to say when villagers move into cities. This case is similar to what happens when water and alcohol molecules are mixed together in the same container.

The case of the Cultural Revolution

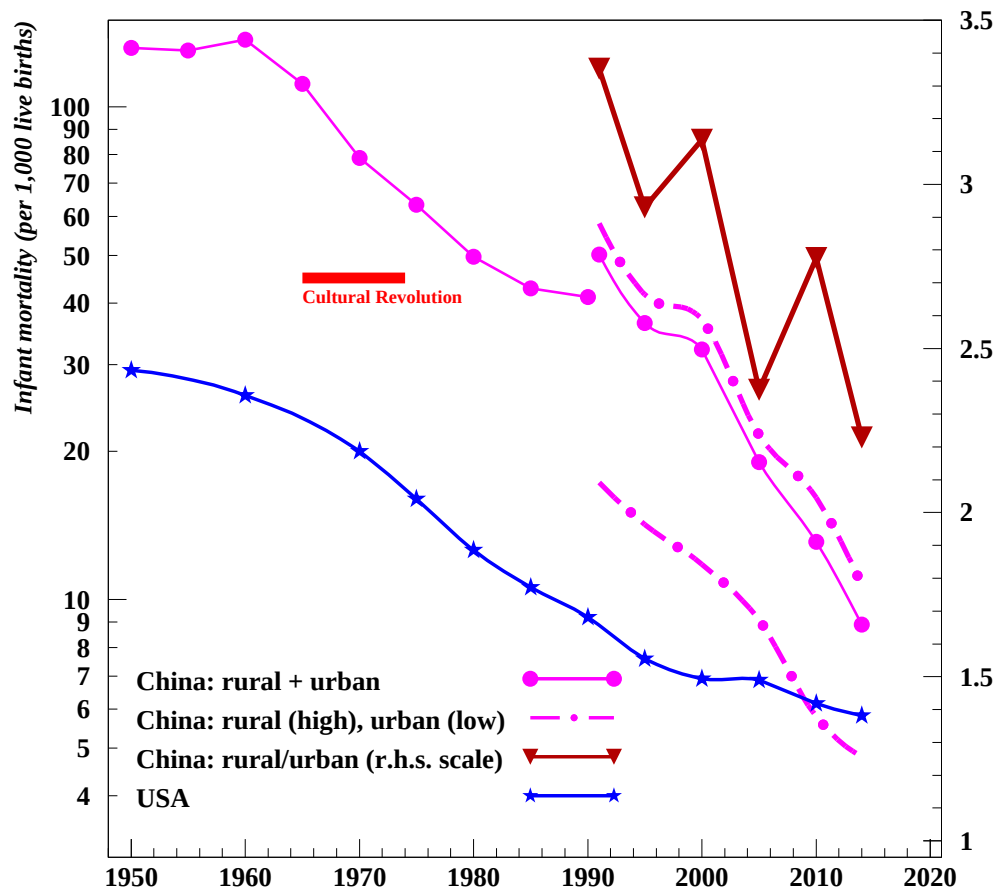


Fig. 3.5 Infant mortality in China and in the US. The upper and lower dashed lines represent the rural and urban population respectively. Given the composition of the Chinese population it is not surprising that the global curve is close to the rural curve. There was (and still is) an important gap between rural and urban areas. From 1950 to 1990 we do not have separate data, but the curves after 1990 clearly show that the one for rural areas is quite close to the global one; this is of course natural because in those years the rural population outnumbered the urban population. Thus, the graph shows that from 1950 to 1965 the rural rate hardly fell. Sources: China, 1950-1990: Knoema website (a search engine specialized in databases); China, 1990-2014: China Statistical Yearbook; USA, 1950-2014: National Vital Statistics Reports 65,4,30 June 2016.

Even today (2017) that is to say 50 years after the events, the Cultural Revolution remains a controversial and sensitive topic. There are several theories about why and how it was started. According to some it was a power struggle at the top (but then

why did it last so long), according to others it was because Chairman Mao wanted to bridge the wide gap which still existed between cities and countryside, particularly in terms of health care¹⁹. Still others say that it was an attempt to get rid of the bureaucracy of the party elite. According to the following excerpt (4 April 2017 entitled “Donald Trump, Xi Jinping and the Mao factor”) this seems to be the view held by the American TV network CNN.

The Cultural Revolution movement began as Mao called on the masses to topple a corrupt power structure dominated by party elites, but it ended up paralyzing China for a decade.

Did it really paralyze China for a decade?

- It is true that, as shown by the graph, the GDP of China fell in 1967 and 1968 but from 1969 to 1971 it grew at an average annual rate of 14.4%, quite a remarkable performance for a supposedly disorganized and paralyzed country. On average from 1966 to 1973 the GDP grew at an annual rate of 7.0%.

- One may also recall that China exploded its first hydrogen bomb on 17 June 1967, that is to say at the height of the Cultural Revolution, and launched its first satellite on 24 April 1970.

In short, the claim about the chaos brought about by the Cultural Revolution seems somewhat exaggerated.

The Cultural Revolution had many aspects. Here we will be interested only in one of them namely the fact that students and intellectuals were sent to spend several months (sometimes a few years) in villages. Clearly this was an attempt to close the gap between cities and countryside where, at that time, 75% of the Chinese population was still living.

If we had a method for measuring social cohesion before and after the Cultural Revolution it would be interesting to see if it increased or decreased.

An indirect indicator is infant mortality, that is to say the death rate of babies between birth and the age of one year. This indicator is considered to reflect not only the quality of healthcare but also of living conditions. The graph shows that infant mortality decreased at a much faster rate during the Cultural Revolution than in the 17 years from 1950 until 1966. This suggests that the attempt to reduce the gap between countryside and cities was successful at least to some extent.

Rural flight Some 20 years after the beginning of the Cultural Revolution villagers started to move massively toward the cities. Clearly, this was a radical way to close the rural-urban divide. This migration created many large cities to the point that presently a city of 10 millions is considered in China as a medium-size city; this

¹⁹As doctors preferred to work and live in cities rather than in the countryside healthcare had improved very little there.

stands in contrast with the United States where New York is the only city with a population over 10 millions. Not surprisingly, together with the development of automobile circulation, such high population densities also led to pollution problems. It will be interesting to see whether in the coming decade this problem will be solved or not.

Fast economic development

Fig. 3.6 shows that in the 67 years between 1950 and 2016 the real (i.e. adjusted for inflation) GDP of China was multiplied by 100 which corresponds to an average annual rate of $r = \exp[(\ln 100)/67] - 1 = 7.3\%$. This chart also shows a remarkable continuity between the pre- and post-opening era. It can be observed that for all its turmoil the Cultural Revolution had in fact little influence on the economy except in 1967–1968.

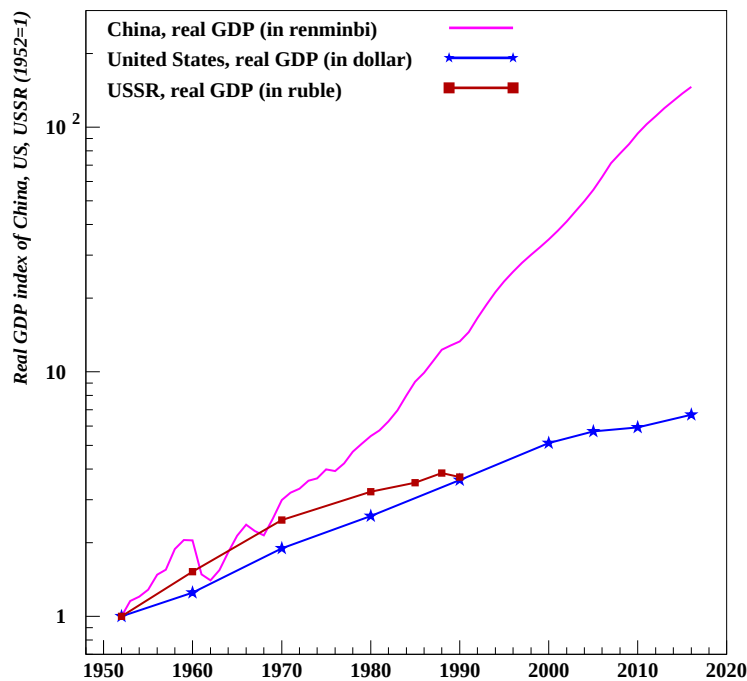


Fig. 3.6 Growth of the inflation adjusted “Gross Domestic Product” (i.e. real GDP) of China, the US and the USSR. The three curves are indexes in the sense that they start from 1 in 1952; this in order to make the comparison easier. Otherwise, they are defined as the real GDP that is to say the current GDP divided by the consumer price index. It fell markedly in 1960–1961 after the failure of the “Great Leap Forward” and the food scarcity which resulted in some provinces. In 1967–1968, probably as a result of the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese GDP fell again (at an average annual rate of 4.9%) but in 1969–1971 it increased at an annual average rate of 14.4%. After 1991, in spite (or perhaps because) of the advice given by US advisers, the GDP of the Russian Federation fell dramatically. Sources: China: Internet website entitled “Chinability”; US: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. USSR: Firth et al. (1998).

The growth record of the USSR may come as a surprise. This is because most often the Soviet GDP growth is estimated in dollars and it turns out that from 1950 to

1990 the official exchange rate of the Soviet ruble was multiplied by 6.6. In 1950 the rate was 4 rubles per dollar whereas in 1988 it was 0.58 ruble per dollar. As the ruble was not a convertible currency any exchange rate, whether official or unofficial, was artificial and meaningless. If the graphs expressed in dollars were based on the official rate, for the period 1952-1990 instead of being multiplied by 4 the the GDP would be multiplied by $4 \times 6.6 = 26$. Naturally none of the dollar curves that one can find on the Internet shows such an increase. Most of them display a GDP multiplied by a factor 2.5. This shows that such curves were based on black market estimates of the exchange rate. Such estimates are of course highly uncertain. According to one account (Trefilov 2015) in 1988 when the official rate was 0.58 ruble per dollar the black market rate was 33 rubles per dollar, i.e. 57 times more.

When expressed in rubles (as in Fig. 3.6) the average annual growth rate of the Soviet GDP was 3.4%.

Social activation in the armed forces

In any revolution or indeed in any major social movement, armed forces play an essential role. If the insurgents cannot set up effective armed forces they will be defeated and their movement will be crushed. One could find many cases illustrating this point. Let us mention two.

- The **Taiping movement** lasted from 1850 to 1864. Begun in the south of China it sought the conversion of the Chinese people to the Taiping's version of Christianity, the overthrow of the ruling Manchus, and a wholesale transformation and reformation of the state. Eventually the western powers helped the Imperial government to defeat it. The fact that the death toll was estimated to be of the order of 30 million (10% of the population of China) shows that it was a large scale movement.

- After **the Revolution of 1917** in Russia, the western powers and Japan sent expeditionary forces to Russia to aid the anti-revolutionary white forces. According to the Wikipedia article entitled "Allied intervention in the Russian Civil War", even the newly founded "Republic of China" sent 2,300 troops to Russia. Other countries sent larger numbers. Japan sent 70,000, Czechoslovakia sent 50,000, Greece sent 23,000 and the US sent 13,000. The US force comprised two parts: one numbering 5,000 and called the "American North Russia Expeditionary Force" was sent to the port of Arkhangelsk in north-west Russia, while the other numbering 8,000 and called the "American Expeditionary Force Siberia" was shipped to Vladivostok from the Philippines. Altogether the Allied forces numbered some 140,000. Clearly, had the Russian Red Army not been organized in an effective way, the Revolution would have been crushed in the same way as the Taiping rebellion.

After the end of the war against Japan some 100,000 US troops were sent to China, supposedly to move the Japanese soldiers back to Japan. In fact, many Japanese

troops sided with the **Kuomintang against the Communists** and were not moved to Japan until several months later. After 1945 US troops continued to train, arm and support KMT divisions as they had started to do during the war²⁰. To many, the rapid collapse of KMT troops after 1947 came as a surprise. However, if one considers the situation of the soldiers in the Red Army (which was renamed “People’s Liberation Army” or PLA in 1945) and in the KMT army respectively, this outcome becomes more understandable. The contrast indeed was quite dramatic. KMT troops were commonly inducted by force, the funds destined to support them were often embezzled by corrupt officers. On the contrary, in the Red Army the officers shared the same food and living conditions as the soldiers. As a result, prior or during battle, whole KMT divisions changed side.

In support of the claim that in the 1940s the PLA was really an army of a new kind one can mention the testimony given by US personnel in the box below.

Jan 31, 1949: US testimony in the wake of the occupation of Tientsin by Communist troops.

We were favorably impressed by the conduct of the officers and men of the People’s Liberation Army. They refused gifts of any sort, the only thing they would accept being hot water or tea. In houses they did occupy they frequently offered to share their meager rations with their hosts particularly with the children. They patrolled the city protecting property. Along the business street they placed guards over stores whose windows had been shattered. The “front line” troops have largely moved on and have been replaced by troops which are less “elite”, but even the present troops are behaving admirably. About one week after the liberation of the city it became possible to send mail to other cities in the liberated area but not to cities in the KMT area.

Source: Records of the US Department of State relating to the Internal Affairs of Korea, microfilm, reel 8, available at the “National Library of China”.

One may wonder why this account about the liberation of Tientsin was in a file about Korea. It is because three members of the “Economic Cooperation Administration” in Tientsin (ECA, a US government agency set up in 1948 to administer the Marshall Plan) arrived in Seoul on 22 March 1949. This is an interesting precision because it shows that when they released their account the men were no longer in China. In other words, it can be completely excluded that they published these good words to gain the favor of the PLA commander.

This testimony is all the more remarkable when one realizes that the French revolutionary armies which spread the gospel of the citizens’ rights throughout Europe did not always behave in a way in accordance with their creed.

²⁰More details can be found in Roehner (2016c)

Comparison with other episodes of national activation

In this section we describe some aspects of episodes of national activation in other countries. We will not attempt a systematic comparison. Our objective is rather to emphasize the similarities.

Spreading a message

Declaration of Human Rights (August 1789)



The same kind of cap seen on the head of a Greek statue of the second century. It became known as a liberty cap because it resembled the cap worn by freed slaves.



Fig. 3.7 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. On this painting by the French painter Jean-Jacques-François Le Barbier one can observe three things of particular interest. (i) At the top the radiating triangle with an eye inside which pushes aside the clouds symbolizes the reign of reason. The same masonic symbol appears on the one dollar banknote next to the motto “In God we trust”. (ii) The lady on the left-hand side symbolizes the French people after it broke its chains. (iii) The red cap in the middle is an old symbol symbolizing freedom which is why it is sometimes called a “Liberty Cap”. Source: Wikipedia article entitled “Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen”, public domain.

As an illustration of the message spread by the French Revolution we mention some of the articles of the “Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen” adopted in August 1789 by the National Constituent Assembly.

- Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. (Article 1)
- The principle of any sovereignty resides essentially in the Nation. No body, no individual can exert authority which does not emanate expressly from it. (Article 3)

- The citizens are equally admissible to all public dignities, places, and employments, according to their capacity and without distinction other than that of their virtues and of their talents. (Article 6)

These statements marked a sharp change with respect to the situation prevailing hitherto.

- Previously, the son of a noble man inherited his status. Thanks to it he could get access to positions, particularly in the army and navy, to which common citizens were not entitled.
- Previously the principle of all sovereignty did not reside in the Nation but in the person of the king.

At that time the only republic in existence in Europe was Switzerland. Thus, by adopting such a declaration and trying to spread its principles to neighboring countries, France exposed itself to the hostility of all European kingdoms.

Recurrent appearances of the Liberty Cap

Incidentally, the case of the Liberty Cap in Fig. 3.7 illustrates the fact that the elements used in historical events have a life of their own whose time scale much exceeds the human life span. After being worn by freed slaves in antiquity, the Liberty Cap appeared in several episodes of the history of France.

Here are a few examples.

- On 23 February 1358 an armed fraction of the Parisian population invaded the “Palais de la Cité” which was the residence of the kings of France until the 14th century. Their leader, Etienne Marcel, then asked Charles V to wear a red and blue Liberty Cap (Wikipedia article in French entitled “Charles V”).
- The Liberty Cap was seen again in an anti-fiscal revolt in 1675, the so-called “Révolte des bonnets rouges”.
- In June 1792, in a repetition of the scenario of 1358, the Parisian population invaded the King’s palace and asked Louis XVI to wear the Liberty Cap.
- The bottom panel of Fig. 2.6 shows that the Liberty Cap was used in April 2017 in a political demonstration in support of a candidate (i.e. Jean-Luc Mélançon) in the Presidential election.

Conclusion

Recently, a Chinese science fiction writer, Liu Cixin, has achieved great fame in China with the publication of a trilogy whose first volume is entitled “The three body problem”. It was published in mainland China in 2006, translated into English in 2014 and into French in 2017. In 2015 Liu was one of the winners of the “Hugo Award for Best Science Fiction Novel”. As shown below, there are three good

reasons to mention this book in the conclusion of this chapter.

Is there a national activation in Chinese literature?

Liu Cixin was not the first Chinese author to receive a prestigious western award. Gao Xingjian was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2000. Born and educated in China, he came to France in 1986 (at the age of 46) and became a French citizen in 1998. Although some of his books were written in French, most of his work is in Chinese. Then, in 2012 Mo Yan became formally the first Chinese citizen to receive the same Nobel Award. Because science fiction is a very popular genre in China, Liu has probably more readers and followers than Gao or Mo especially among young people. In a sense his success points out the beginning of a process of national activation in the field of culture and art.

However, in terms of science fiction production the market is still largely dominated by American authors. In fact Liu shared his prize of 2015 with 5 other authors who were all Americans. Moreover, among the winners of the Hugo award in previous years the proportion of US authors is over 90% (the list is given in the Wikipedia article entitled “Hugo Award for Best Novel²¹”). In other words, although the case of Liu Cixin suggests that something is simmering, it also tells us that to reach parity with the US in terms of science fiction production may take longer than to reach parity for annual GDP.

Historians tend to study one body problems

The title of Liu’s book can be linked to an observation made at the beginning of this chapter. The three body problem designates the study of the interactions between three objects, for instance the Sun, Earth and Moon. Whereas the three body problem is a very difficult case, the two-body problem (i.e. just the Sun and Earth) has been the bread-and-butter of Newtonian astronomy. Although of no interest in astronomy the one body problem (i.e. just the Sun or Earth alone) is the bread-and-butter of historians for all too often they tend to forget the many interactions that the country which they study has with its neighbors. The success or failure of a country depends as much on its neighbors than on its domestic policy.

In a one-body perspective it would be easy for Chinese science fiction writers to develop and expand their activity. However, American science fiction writers will not willingly give up their overwhelming share of the huge Chinese market. Along with the organizations which represent them such as the “World Science Fiction Society” (WSFS) and the “World Science Fiction Convention” which awards the prizes, they will do their best to sell translations of their own novels to the Chinese public. In recent years, the Chinese “Science Fiction World Group” was the entrance

²¹The Hugo award is named in honor of Hugo Gernsback (1884-1967), an American science fiction writer.

door for US novels. In the 20 years following its creation in 1979, it has translated into Chinese 157 foreign novels, almost all of which were by US writers. L. Tidhar (2003) writes that in the early 2000s, US science fiction novels of the 1940s and 1950s were still the backbone of the Chinese science fiction market.

The fact that it took 8 years for Liu's trilogy to be translated also tells us that it will not be easy for Chinese authors to enter the American market.

It will be really interesting to see what will happen in the small world of science fiction in the next decade.

Liu Cixin

The biography of Liu Cixin tells us something which may be of interest in relation with the project presented in this book. By education he was a scientist and he worked as a computer engineer in a medium-size city in Shanxi province. In 2006, when the "Three body problem" was published, he was 43. In other words, his activity as a writer was developed mostly as a free-time hobby.

The present book is also mostly (though by no means exclusively) destined to scientists and it is our hope that among our readers some will develop this vision of history through their own research as a free-time hobby.

Chapter 4

Silk Road vs. containment policy

Introduction

The title of this chapter involves two very different notions.

- “Silk Road” refers to a project of economic development for west and central Asia proposed in November 2012 by Chinese Secretary General Xi Jinping. It is based on the idea of fostering economic growth by improving communication infrastructure. In this sense it is fairly easy to understand. This is one of the reasons why it does not require much additional explanations. The second reason is that at time of writing (2017) it is still too early to assess how successful it will be.

- “Containment policy” is a notion which is far less obvious and that is why 80% of the content of this chapter will be devoted to it. This concept was developed and implemented by the United States during the Cold War. As containment cannot be effective unless it is operated by a large number of countries it requires a complicated and ambitious strategy. First, one must secure faithful allies, then one must convince them to form a network under US leadership. Finally, one has to convince these countries that it is in their interest to oppose and ostracize the adversaries of the United States. As none of these steps is obvious it required the State Department to invent and implement very smart policies. In addition, in order to work well, these strategies have to be kept hidden as far as possible. For the historian, this is an additional challenge. In order to convince our readers that our account is not merely a kind of conspiracy theory it will be necessary to give several historical illustrations. However to prevent this chapter from becoming too lengthy, such historical accounts will be given fairly succinctly and will be supplemented by additional online references where, if they wish so, our readers can find more explanations and at the same time check that what we say is indeed correct.

As this chapter unfolds it will become clear that military cooperation is one of the key components of containment policies. This raises a question. How will Silk Road projects and containment policies come in interaction? The two agendas seem to operate at completely different levels. This question will be considered in the last

part of the chapter.

Ideally, military cooperation may exist on a power parity basis. However, when one of the partners is vastly more powerful, then cooperation quickly leads to subordination. This is why military cooperation between two unequal partners is the method of choice for creating a network of vassal states. Did you ever wonder why advanced countries like Australia, Canada, Germany, Japan, South Korea or Turkey did not develop their own nuclear weapons. The reason is simple. They are all vassal allies of the United States and their overlord understands very well that as long as they have to rely on the US nuclear deterrence umbrella they will remain faithful allies.

Because vassal states are a key component of any containment policy we first need to explain this notion. This is all the more important in present time because this notion has so to say disappeared. In the vocabulary of 19th and early 20th century diplomacy the notion of zone of influence was commonly used. For instance, China had been divided into zones of influence with Japan being preponderant in the north, Britain in Shanghai (the so-called British Settlement) and in Guangzhou and France being also present in Shanghai in the French Concession and in the southern part of China bordering the frontier with Indochina that is to say present-day Vietnam. Nowadays however, the terms “client state” or “vassal state” have a distinct derogatory meaning and are no longer used except when one wants to deprecate a country. In spite of the fact that there are nowadays a great number of very small independent countries, any member of the United Nations is seen as a fully sovereign nation. For instance, in the Wikipedia article about “Saint Kitts and Nevis”, a former British colony and a member of the United Nations since 1983 there is not a single suggestion that it might belong to the British-US zone of influence. Yet, the currency that it uses, namely the “Eastern Caribbean dollar”, is pegged to the US dollar which basically means that the monetary policy is decided in Washington DC.

Outline of the chapter

In a first part we describe step by step and in fairly general terms (with the help of a number of diagrams) the process which leads to the creation of networks of vassal states. It is through such networks that the containment policies can and are implemented.

Before providing illustrative examples of how non-aligned states can be transformed into vassal states, we devote a section to the Silk Road project. This section is fairly short because at present time it is still difficult to see how this great project will work out.

Military occupation is the most frequently used method for transforming a country into a vassal state. This process started during the Second World War which gave

the United States many opportunities of military occupation. It has continued with slight differences in the decades following World War II. It turns out that the war time occupations were more successful (in terms of producing vassal states) than those who took place later on. This leads us quite naturally to wonder what is the reason.

Then comes a section about Africa. This continent deserves special attention for at least two reasons.

- i In contrast with Asia, it remained largely outside World War II. Therefore, except in North Africa, there was no US occupation.

- ii There have been programs of economic cooperation between African countries and China for several decades. These programs can probably give a foretaste of what will take place in the Silk Road project.

One may think that reducing the United States to its military role is too restrictive. After all it is also a great economic power. This is why we devote a section to the humanitarian role of the US. It will be seen that with respect to developing countries there is a wide gap between the objectives claimed by the State Department and actual realizations.

In the concluding section we briefly discuss some factors which may determine the outcome of the conflict.

Vassal states

Meaning of the words “overlord” and “vassal”

In Europe during the Middle Age an overlord was a lord having supremacy over other lords who were in fact his vassals. Nowadays the word is not much used but for some reason this word was chosen as the codename to designate the Battle of Normandy which followed the allied landing on 6 June 1944.

The term “vassal state” was commonly used in the past. As a matter of fact many empires have set up vassal states for the purpose of controlling them without having to directly govern them. Other expressions used with similar meanings are: “client state”, “puppet state”, “subordinate state”, “protectorate” or (more rarely) “junior ally”. Such countries have lost independence in terms of defense, foreign policy (the two aspects usually go together) and often also monetary policy.

This loss of independence can be *de facto* or it can be recognized officially. As an illustration, the European Union should be *officially* referred to as a vassal state of the United States because its constitution (the so-called Lisbonne Constitutional Treaty) recognizes its dependence on NATO which is under the command of a US four star

general²².

From the time of the Zhou Dynasty (from -1046 to -770) until the Han Dynasty (from -206 to 220), vassal states existed in ancient China, such as the States of Chu and Qin. Then in -221 the Qin kingdom conquered the rest of China and united the country under the first emperor Qin Shi Huang which means “First emperor of Qin”.

First illustration through the extreme case of post-war Japan

It will be of interest to understand why this was an extreme case of vassal state for at the same time it will tell us an important feature of the overlord-vassal relationship.

After the defeat of Germany in May 1945 the western part of the country was occupied by the United States, Great Britain and France and it was ruled by the military commanders following the directives of their governments in their respective occupation areas. In other words, there was no longer any German government.

In Japan, a different policy was used in the sense that a Japanese government was kept in place but put under the control of the United States which was the main occupying power (there was also a small British and Commonwealth occupying force). This Japanese government had a prime minister and a number of ministries. Moreover, the general elections of 11 April 1946 brought into existence a Japanese Parliament. From then on, started a fiction according to which Japan was ruled by its government and Parliament. In reality however all the authority remained in the hands of the occupying force. This force comprised a well organized group of Civil Affairs Officers who were instead the real rulers of the country. Authorizations for foreign trade, industrial production, textbooks for the schools, and many other topics including the writing of the Japanese constitution, in short all decisions (even on very technical questions such as the reform of the Japanese judicial system) were taken by the Civil Affairs Officers under the authority of the US State Department.

What is remarkable is the fact that in the historical accounts published both in the US as in Japan the crucial role of the Civil Affairs Officers is completely omitted. There is a good rationale for that because the fiction of an autonomous Japanese government cooperating in a friendly way with US headquarters suits the wishes of the Japanese side (“not losing face”) as well as the goals of the US side (not humiliating a country which would become a close ally). That US historians do not wish to deviate from the account set forth years ago by the history section of the State Department tells us how far self-censorship may go²³.

Second illustration: China in 1946

²²Whereas its Secretary General (who has little power) may be of any nation its Commander-in-Chief is *always* a US four-star general appointed by the American president.

²³For a detailed (and more reliable) account, see Roehner (2016e).

During the Pacific War, China was an important ally for the United States, in particular because the Nationalist government gave the permission to open airfields from where US bombers could carry out raids on Japanese cities.

After the end of the war, the economic situation of the KMT government was difficult which put it in the situation of a vassal state dependent upon the aid and good will of the US government. This situation was clearly revealed by the terms of the “Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation” signed on 4 November 1946 by Chinese and US representatives.

In China the terms of the treaty brought about a wave of protests. Many Chinese businessmen denounced the treaty as being detrimental to China economic interests. Because of the difference in the level of economic development reached by China and the United States the manager of the Minsheng Shipping Company, He Shiyan, compared the treaty to an agreement between an adult and a boy in which each is supposed to carry a load of 20 pounds in a supposedly equal race. The “Shanghai News” said that the treaty robbed China of its customs and taxation rights²⁴.

The Chinese Communist Party designated November 4 as “National Humiliation Day” in the Communist-controlled area. On February 1, 1947, the Central Committee of the Communist Party declared it would refuse to acknowledge any treacherous treaties signed by the Kuomintang government, adding that the policy of the KMT government is contrary to the will of the Chinese people, and is pushing China into the chaos of colonization and collapse.”

Third illustration: France in 1958

It may seem paradoxical to mention a story involving General de Gaulle as an illustration of vassal states for during his 11 years as president of France he has done more than any other French leader to remove his country from the subservient situation that it had with respect to the United States when he came to power in May 1958. Precisely for that reason the following story shows that so strong was (and still is) US influence that even someone like him had to give “guarantees”.

In May 1958, that is to say, in the process of coming back to power General de Gaulle found it necessary to make a pledge about keeping France within NATO. This is what can be learned from the following account given by the US Embassy in Paris. The following account is excerpted from the “Foreign Relations of the United States”, an official publication of the US State Department.

On 21 May 1958 Mr. Henri Tournet, an aide of General de Gaulle, accompanied by Colonel Sternberg, Executive Officer of MAAG (Military Assistance Advisory Group) in France, visited the US Embassy. He gave guarantees re-

²⁴Sources: Mackerras 1982, p. 422, Shanghai News 26 November 1950, p. 2, Zhang 2002, p. 97.

garding de Gaulle's position on NATO that allowed the embassy to write to the State Department (on 1 June) "We have been assured from so many sources that De Gaulle will continue the policy of supporting NATO". (FRUS, 1958-1960, France)

Indeed, that is what he did during his first term. France left NATO only 7 years later during the second term of President de Gaulle.

Why are the European countries vassal states of the US?

The European Union comprises countries (e.g. Britain, France and Germany) who had been leading world powers in the past. Can they really be considered as US vassal states and why?

In what follows we summarize some of the facts but readers who would like to better understand how this situation arose are encouraged to read a volume especially devoted to this question. Written by one of the authors (B.R.) and entitled "How Europe became an American turf", it is available online (particularly on the "WayBack Machine" website) and in several University libraries.

Necessity of a deterrence force

The fundamental reason of the subservient situation of the European nations lies in their incapacity to ensure their own defense. France and Great Britain are the only European countries to have deterrent forces but the British force is highly dependent on the US because it relies on the submarine launched Trident missile which is made and maintained in the US. This leaves France as the only European nation who theoretically could have an independent foreign policy and actually, this was indeed the case under President de Gaulle that is to say from 1958 to 1969.

One could argue that it is quite possible to have an independent foreign policy without possessing a deterrence force. After all, Switzerland has no deterrence force, is not a member of NATO and seems to enjoy a fairly high degree of independence as attested by the fact that this country did not take part in any of the military campaigns led by the US in recent decades. Switzerland is a neutral country but this alone would not be sufficient to guarantee its independence. As a matter of fact, it does not need the US nuclear umbrella because it has no declared enemies²⁵. The example of South Korea shows clearly that a nation can be threatened even by a close neighbor and in that case the US deterrence umbrella becomes essential.

Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Japan, South Korea and more recently Turkey (Taiwan should also be added to this list, see below) are industrialised countries which

²⁵Nevertheless, Switzerland has introduced a regulation according to which each new house should have a small anti-atomic shelter in its basement.

would have the technical capability to develop a nuclear deterrent force. The fact that all these close US allies renounced to possess one is likely the result of US pressure. Through the articles published in the “New York Times” in the wake of the first French nuclear test of 13 February 1960 one realizes immediately that the State Department was very unhappy about it. Comparatively, the comments made in the same newspaper after the first Chinese nuclear test of 16 October 1964 were much more moderate.

The interesting case of Taiwan’s nuclear program

Taiwan is quite an interesting case because it shows that even when a close US ally tries repeatedly to develop nuclear weapons it is not allowed to do so. Incidentally, it also shows that for Taiwan the real choice is not between becoming a province of China and independence but rather between being a Chinese province or a vassal state of the United States. Before we start with this story it should be observed that the account²⁶ is incomplete in the sense that we do not know what means were used by the US to compell Taiwan to stop its program. After all, at that time Taiwan had the status of an independent country which was not only a member of the United Nations but even one of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

After the Chinese nuclear test Taiwan (then, the only Chinese entity recognized by western countries) started to develop a nuclear weapon program. In 1969, Canada sold to Taiwan a heavy-water nuclear research reactor. In this respect it can be recalled that the Trudeau government recognized the Peoples Republic of China in 1970, that is to say 9 years before the US. Taiwan was also able to buy low-grade plutonium from the US. The reactor went critical in 1973, and Taiwan set about creating a stockpile of weapons-grade plutonium.

Needless to say, Taiwans nuclear program was under careful surveillance by the United States. Washington ensured that the Taiwanese reactor fell under the control of the “International Atomic Energy Agency” (IAEA) which would prevent diversion of nuclear fuel for the purpose of building a weapon. On 25 October 1971 Taiwan is expelled from the United Nations (and also from IAEA) and its seat is given to the People’s Republic of China as the sole representative of China.

In 1976-1977, the IAEA inspected the activities at the military-run “Institute for Nuclear Energy Research” and discovered discrepancies in the Taiwanese program, an observation which triggered a US protest. Under US pressure (what pressure we do not know), in September 1976, the Taiwanese government promised to “henceforth not engage in any activities relating to reprocessing” (which referred to the production of weapon-grade plutonium).

²⁶Based mostly on “nationalinterest.org” and Wikipedia articles.

Despite that promise, in 1978 the US detected again a secret uranium-reprocessing program, and forced Taiwan to stop it (how, we do not know). After that Taiwan's nuclear weapons program went into a period of dormancy but in the mid-1980s, the program was restarted. In December 1987, Colonel Chang Hsien-yi, the deputy director of the program and a longtime CIA asset²⁷, defected to the United States with proof of Taiwan's nuclear program. The material was used to confront the Taiwanese government, which ended its nuclear program once and for all in 1988 (what pressure was applied, again we do not know). At this time Taiwan was thought to be less than two years away from a bomb.

During the 1995-1996 Taiwan Strait crisis, then Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui proposed to reactivate the program, but was forced to back down a few days later.

What kind of pressure did the US use to prevent Taiwan from going ahead with its nuclear weapon program. One possible threat was certainly to cut the US supply of conventional weapons and spare parts. This reminds us that if a country is entirely dependent upon one weapon supplier it can hardly claim to be independent. That is why many countries (e.g. India or Pakistan) prefer to rely on a range of suppliers rather than on a single one.

A last incident should be mentioned.

According to the US Department of Defense (and reported in the "Washington Post" of 26 March 2008), in August 2006 four secret nuclear missile fuses for Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missiles were mistakenly shipped from a warehouse in Utah to Taiwan. The mistake was discovered only 18 months later. These fuses help trigger nuclear warheads as the missiles near their point of impact. One American expert made the following comment. "Imagine how we would feel if the Russians accidentally shipped warhead fuses to Tehran. It would be hard for them to convince us that it was a mistake." The fuses were returned to the US but 18 months was of course more than enough to duplicate the technology.

Taiwan is protected against Chinese missiles by a "Patriot Advanced Capability 3" (PAC-3) defensive missile systems bought from Lockheed Martin at a cost of \$921 million (Taipei Times 2 February 2012).

NATO

It is often said that NATO is an organization dominated by the United States. In order to find out if this is really true one can try two different procedures. The first is The first is to observe that an alliance between unequal partner inevitably results

²⁷According to James Lilley, a former US ambassador and CIA station chief in Beijing, the operation was a great success for the State Department. He described it in the following terms (Chicago Tribune 21 DEcember 1997). "You pick a comer, put the right case officer on him and recruit him on an ideological basis, although money was also involved. Then, in the early 1980s, it began to pay off.

in the *de facto* domination of the strongest partner. The second method is to analyze the text of the Treaty. What do these two methods tell us?

Unequal partners

In terms of military power the United States is by far the leading power, not only among NATO members but worldwide. Washington's military spending (\$600 billion in 2015) is nearly three times that of all other NATO members combined. On the world stage, the \$600 billion represent three times the military spending of China (\$212 billion) whereas the combined spending of the other major powers (Russia, India, France, the UK, Saudi Arabia) amounts to only \$354 billion. Moreover, the US weapon production exceeds also by far that of all other nations combined. Under such conditions there can be little doubt that the US is in a dominant position, not only among NATO countries but also worldwide.

Historically, one can observe that the founding members of NATO (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom) were all occupied (partially or totally) by US troops during or after the Second World War. On the contrary, if one considers countries which were not occupied by US troops such as Finland, Ireland, Spain or Sweden none of them were among the founding members.

Who is in command?

At the head of NATO there are three positions.

- The “Supreme Allied Commander Europe” (SACEUR) who is a four-star US general appointed by the President of the United States. Since 1950, some 17 four-star US generals have held the SACEUR position. The first one was General Eisenhower and the present (October 2017) SACEUR is US General Curtis M. Scaparrotti. The SACEUR is the commanding officer of Allied Command Operations.
- The “Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe”
- The Secretary General of NATO.

The last two positions are usually occupied by non-Americans. In the media the name of the Secretary General appears very often whereas the name of the SACEUR is rarely mentioned. Whether intentional or not this gives the false impression that NATO is a multi-national organization among equal members. In fact, as far as military operations are concerned, it is the SACEUR who is in command, not his deputy and even less the Secretary General who, most often, is a civilian.

Naturally, because the North Atlantic Treaty itself was written by diplomats, it will also, as far as possible, convey the impression that all members enjoy the same rights.

The Lisbon Treaty (EU Constitution)

Most countries of the European Union (EU) are also NATO members but a few (e.g.

Sweden) are not. What does the Lisbon Treaty (which serves as the EU Constitution) say about NATO. As observed above, treaties are written by diplomats whose job it is to say everything in the softest possible way. Therefore, one should not be surprised that the Lisbon Treaty contains a fairly vague statement (Ch.2, Section 2, Article 42, Number 2, Second paragraph):

The policy of the Union shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States [i.e. those who are members of NATO] which see their common defence realised in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and be compatible with the common security and defence policy established within that framework.

In short, this article says that the foreign policy of the European Union must be compatible with the objectives of NATO, an organization dominated by a country which is not part of the EU. Is this not, from the very start, an admission of powerlessness?

Creation of networks of vassal states

It is because the creation of networks of vassal states is a key element of any containment policy that we will now consider their creation in more detail.

Creation of vassal states

In the process delineated in Fig. 4.1a,b the most difficult part is certainly the creation of vassal states which are the building blocks of the whole construction. Military occupation offered an excellent opportunity as shown in Fig. 4.1c.

After the war the Military Assistance Advisory Groups played a particularly important role.

Role of the Military Assistance Advisory Groups (MAAG)

After World War II the ECA (Economic Cooperation Administration) envoys and the MAAG officers played an important role for a very simple reason.

The US embassy could not interfere openly in the domestic affairs of the country but the ECA and MAAG officers could because their role was precisely to assist and advise. The function of the ECA officers was to control how the funding of the Marshall Plan was used; similarly the function of the MAAG officers was to control how the US military aid was used. In fact, under this pretext their role was much broader.

Contrary to the ECA officers whose role ended with the Marshall plan, the role of the MAAGs extends to the present day for military aid, advice and control is still continuing in the framework of NATO.

The importance of the mostly covert role played by the MAAGs is revealed by the

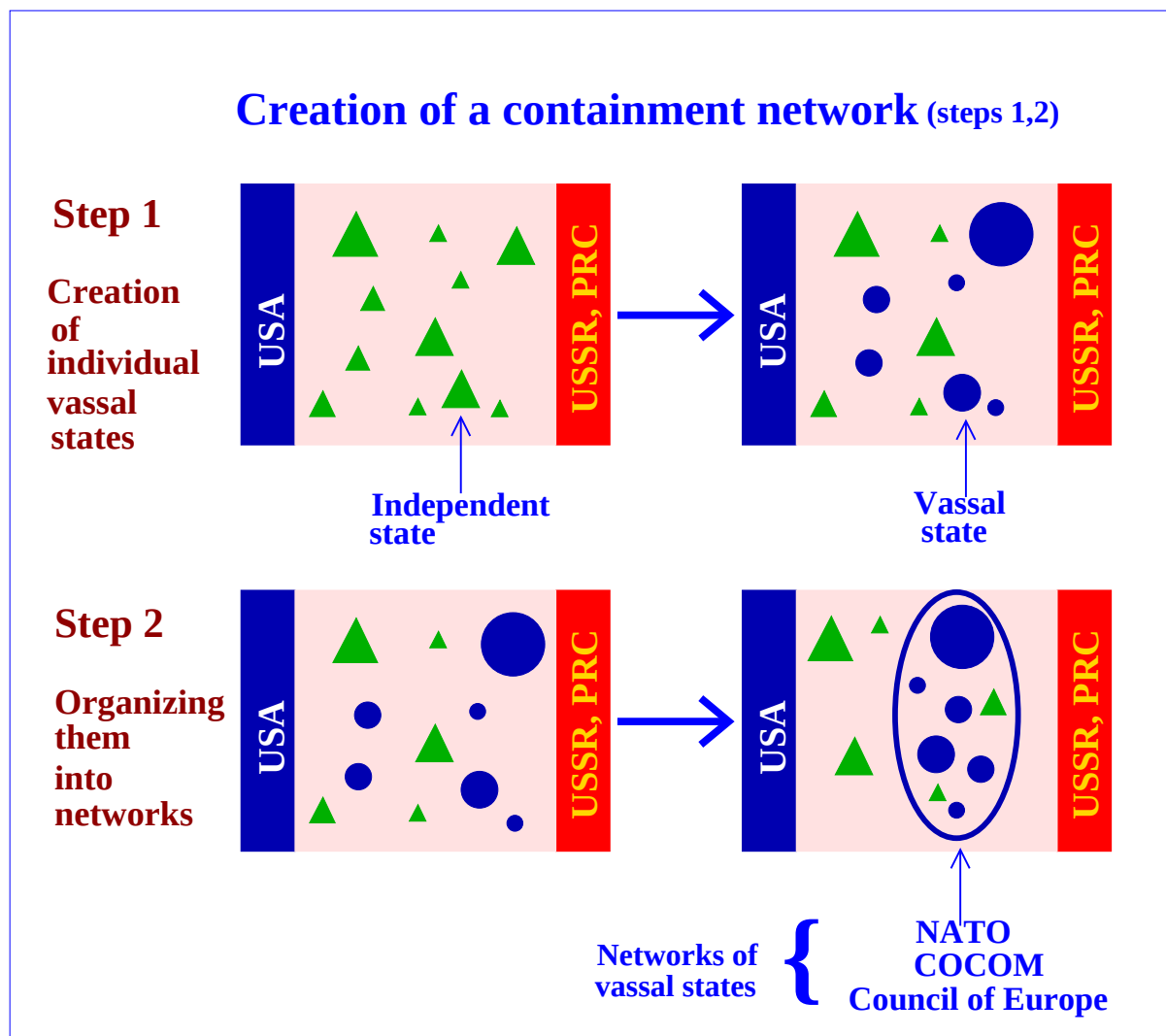


Fig. 4.1a The first two steps in the creation of a containment network. The reference to the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) and PRC (People's Republic of China) shows that the figure was drawn for the case of the Cold War between the United States and the Communist bloc. However, very similar methods were used against other adversaries of the United States, for instance Cuba after 1960 or Iran after 1979. In the case of Cuba, the network would be the OAS (Organization of American States). Although in the diagram the network is labelled "network of vassal states", it may also include a few independent (also called non-aligned) states. The COCOM acronym means "COordinating COMmittee for Multilateral Export Controls"; its purpose was to enforce the trade embargo. The "Council of Europe" was a loose organization which promoted human rights and democracy and publicized their violations in the countries of the Communist bloc; it was a very effective tool for public relations campaigns. In 2017, NATO had 28 member states whereas the Council of Europe had 47 member states. In July 1996 the COCOM was replaced by the so-called "Wassenaar Arrangement" (Wassenaar is the name of a Dutch city near The Hague) which has basically the same purpose. In 2017 this organization had 41 member states (including 27 of the 28 EU countries).

fact that at the US National Archives (called NARA which means "National Archives and Records Administration") the archives of these groups are still not publically available even for their activity in the 1950s, that is to say 60 years ago,

Similarity of containment networks in 1960 and 2015

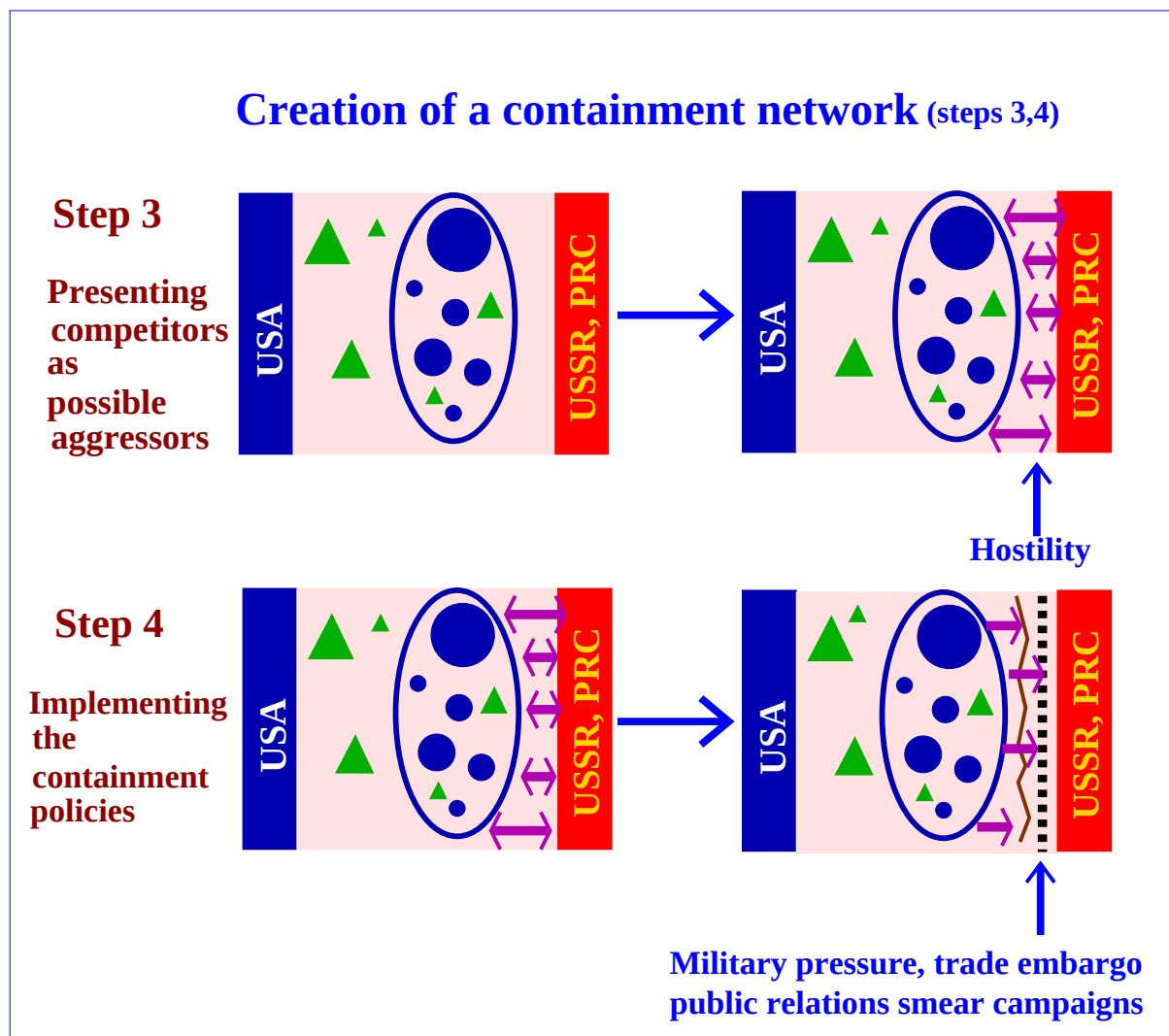


Fig. 4.1b Steps 3 and 4 in the creation of a containment network. Once the network of vassal states has been created one must raise the level of hostility between the two sides. Clever public relations campaigns are a key element in this phase. Once the western allies have been convinced to stand against the adversary, the implementation of the containment measures can start. Such measures are of course adversary dependent. For small adversaries like Cuba, the Dominican Republic or Iraq it can be attempted invasion. For important countries it will be trade embargo, military pressure (e.g. locating nuclear warheads in allied countries) and clever public relations campaigns.

Once a network of vassal states is in existence it is of course tempting to use it in order to isolate, curb and squeeze possible adversaries. Fig. 4.1d,e show that there is a striking similarity in the containment networks set up around Russia and China in 1960 and 2015.

Some significant changes are the following.

- 1 The most important change concerns the countries which formed the Warsaw Pact until 1990, namely the Baltic States, Bulgaria, East Germany, Poland and Romania. All of them now belong to NATO. There is really a paradox in the fact that although NATO has become useless after 1991, instead of becoming smaller it has

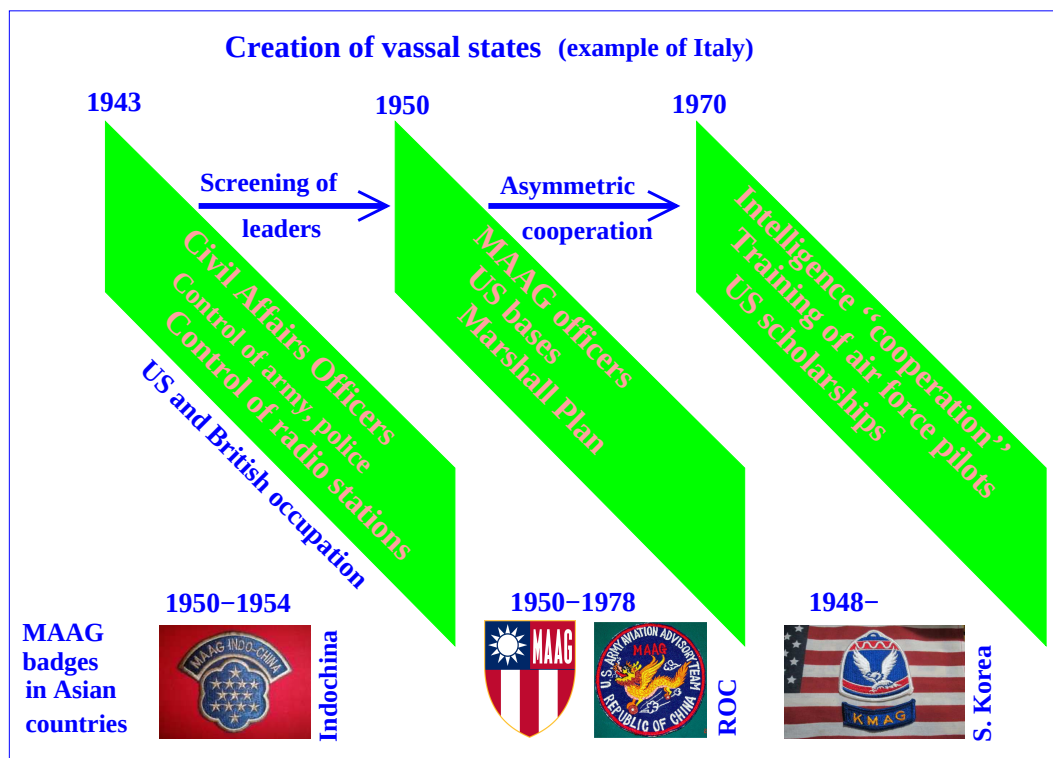


Fig. 4.1c Creation of vassal states. Italy was the first European country to be occupied. Subsequent occupations followed the same blueprint. This picture was drawn for Italy but there are many similar cases, e.g. Germany, Denmark, Japan, South Korea, Afghanistan, Iraq. The military occupation during World War II gave all authority to the allies to select the Italian leaders (in the political, administrative, education and media sectors) according to their wishes. Needless to say, the ability to speak English was also an important element of the selection process. The acronym MAAG means: "Military Assistance Advisory Group"; Indochina was the name of Vietnam until 1954 at the time when it was a French colony. ROC means "Republic of Korea" (Taiwan); KMAAG means: "Korean Military Advisory Group". The mission of the MAAGs was broader than just military. In a sense they took the succession of Civil Affairs Officers. There were (and still are) MAAGs in all western European countries. For instance in France MAAG officers played a role in the return to power of General de Gaulle (see text).

swollen from 12 initial members to 28 in 2015.

2 The other changes concern individual countries, for instance Iran, Pakistan and Thailand were fairly close US allies in 1960 but are no longer.

3 On this map we omitted Taiwan for until Ms. Tsai Ing-wen became president in May 2016 there was an attempt for greater cooperation with the PRC. This came to an end after her election. During her visit to the United States before starting her campaign she had received plenty encouragements, if not from the US government at least from Congress members and former government members.

4 Another important change (but which does not appear on the maps) is that in 1960 Indonesia under President Sokarno was an ally of China. There was at that time a strong Communist Party in Indonesia in spite of the fact that it is a Muslim country. However in 1965 there was a terrible massacre not only of the Communists but also of trade union members and leftists. The US State Department contributed to this

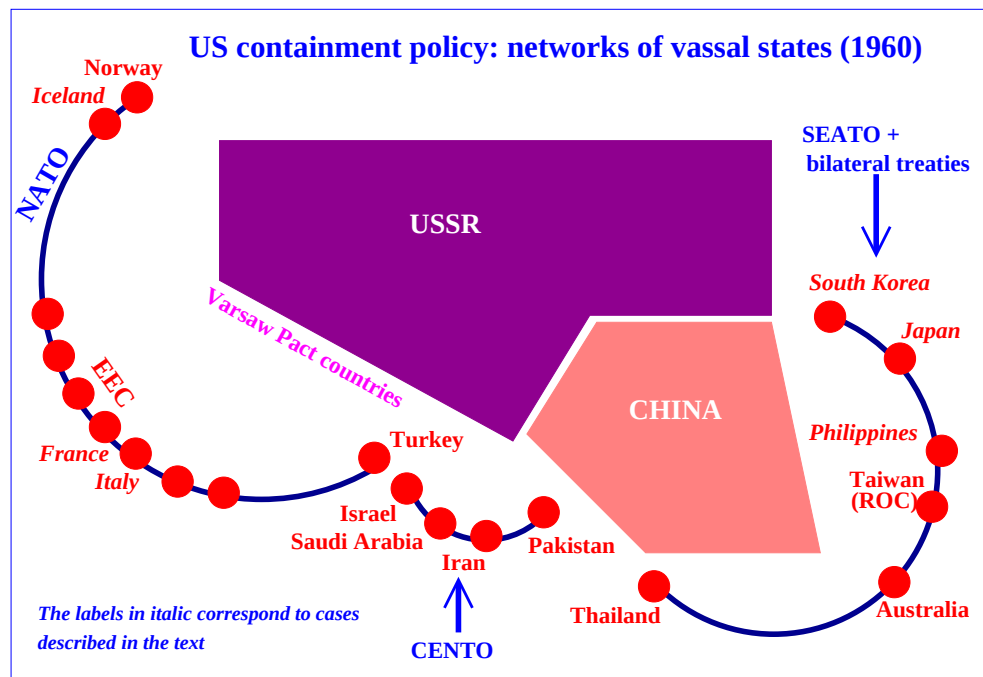


Fig. 4.1d Containment networks during the Cold War (1960). NATO means “North Atlantic Treaty Organization”. CENTO means “Central Treaty Organization” (Middle East). SEATO means “South East Asia Treaty Organization”. EEC means “European Economic Community” which was the name of the European Union when it was only a free trade zone. On this map Taiwan can hardly be omitted for in 1960 the “Republic of China” (ROC) was the only entity recognized by the US and a number of US allies. *Source: New York Times 14 January 1963.*

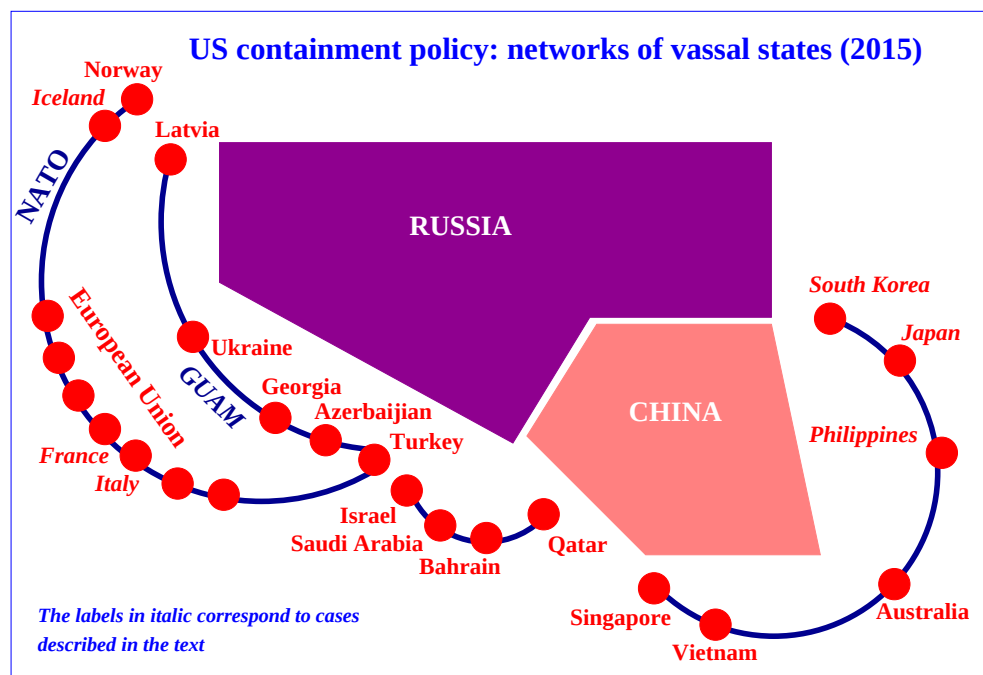


Fig. 4.1e Containment networks in 2015. In this case history really seems to repeat itself for with respect to 1960 there are only few changes in the countries taking part in the different networks.

purge by compiling lists of leftist people which were then transmitted to the army and paramilitary groups who carried out the massacres. As always in such cases, the

death toll is not well known but it is of the order of 500,000.

The Silk Road project in comparative perspective

To this day the Silk Road project is unique by its size and ambition. However, there have been other projects of economic development on a smaller scale. A parallel which comes to mind is the Marshall plan (1948–1952).

First, we discuss its political significance. Secondly we describe some of its economic aspects. Thirdly we explain why an infrastructure project in the European Union was, if not a complete failure, at least a missed opportunity. Finally, we devote a subsection to the language obstacle. This is a real problem in the European Union and will be an even more serious challenge in the Silk Road project.

East-west political significance of the Marshall Plan (1948–1952)

The Marshall Plan remained confined to western Europe because Soviet pressure did not allow east European countries to take part. Therefore, there was little room for any interaction. One of the few signs of interaction can be found in the attitudes of the Communist parties in France and Italy, the two only western countries which had substantial Communist parties. They denounced the Marshall Plan as a machinery directed against the Soviet Union and claimed that its purpose was to “Americanize” western Europe. As we will see below this was not wrong but due to US influence on European media such protests were probably not well understood in the public and in any case they did not prevent the Marshall Plan from being a resounding American success.

In order to explain the main differences between the Marshall Plan and the Silk Road project it is first of all necessary to describe the Marshall Plan²⁸.

Economic aspects of the Marshall Plan

Seen from the American side, the Marshall Plan was basically a way to subsidize US companies. Our readers may perhaps be surprised by this statement because this is not the way it is seen usually as is indeed reflected in its official name “European Recovery Program”. However, this is a simple consequence of the fact that the Marshall Plan aid had to be used to purchase US goods. It would be a mistake to think that the funds could be freely used by the respective countries. In fact, they were administrated jointly by the local governments and the “Economic Cooperation Administration” (ECA). Each European capital had an ECA envoy, generally a prominent American businessman, who would advise on the process. The ECA

²⁸The account given in the next subsection is mostly based on the Wikipedia article entitled “Marshall Plan”. As most Wikipedia articles it is fairly detailed and if, instead of reading only the summary given at the beginning, one has the patience to read it completely one can indeed get a fairly satisfactory account.

was a purely US government agency controlled by the US State Department and the Department of Commerce. Its head was the former president of “Studebaker”, a car company, and its members were mostly US businessmen.

It is often said (and in fact this sentence can be read in the Wikipedia article about the Marshall Plan) that the United States *donated* \$17 billion to help the recovery of the European countries. This is not really true however.

- Countries who had not been involved in the war and had not suffered from it, such as Ireland, Sweden or Switzerland, were also included. This already suggests that the objectives of the Plan were broader than just recovery. On the contrary, some countries which had been involved in the war were not included. A case in point was Finland which had been involved in the war on the side of Germany.

- Another frequent misconception is to think that all the funds were just grants. In fact, the funds were partly grants and partly loans. The percentage of the grant (i.e. “gift”) fraction was country-dependent. Here are a few examples. For Germany the funds were 100% loans although the amount to be repaid was reduced in 1953; for Ireland the funds were 88% loans; as a result, in 1969 the Irish Marshall Plan debt still represented 62% of the total Irish foreign debt; for the UK the loan fraction represented only 15%.

- In parallel with the Marshall Plan there was also a “Technical Assistance Program”. This program funded 24,000 European engineers, leaders, and industrialists to visit America and tour America’s factories and universities. This program also allowed hundreds of American technical advisers to be sent to Europe where they would teach the latest statistical methods to European managers. However useful these exchanges may have been, they were of course asymmetrical and their end result was to Americanize Europe. For the best and for the worse.

- A last word is in order regarding Germany. In this case the Marshall Plan was kind of a paradox. Indeed, at the same time as this recovery aid was received, the American de-industrialization program of Germany (the so-called Morgenthau plan) was still continuing which means that factories were dismantled, taken away or destroyed if they could not be removed. A typical example of this activity was the Blohm & Voss shipyard in Hamburg where explosive demolition was still taking place as late as 1949. Everything that could not be dismantled was blown up (Wikipedia article entitled “Morgenthau Plan”). By 1950 some 700 manufacturing plants in western Germany had been removed or destroyed.

Comparison between the Marshall Plan and the Silk Road project

In one sense the Marshall Plan was much more ambitious than the Silk Road project and in another it was much less.

It was more ambitious because its objective was political as well as economic. Its

purpose was to secure an enduring American influence in Europe. One must recognize that it succeeded very well. Some 67 years later the 16 countries which participated in the Marshall Plan are still faithful US allies; most of them are even part of NATO, a military organization completely controlled by the US government. The creation of the European Union did not change anything in this respect, quite on the contrary.

From an economic perspective the Silk Road project is much more ambitious than the Marshall Plan because it aims at *integrated development*. For instance a railroad link between China and Europe can come into existence only if all the countries through which it must go are in agreement. In contrast, the Marshall Plan was restricted to individual national development.



Fig. 4.2 Silk Road projects. This article of the Xinhua news agency was probably one of the first to mention the Silk Road project. It was published in November 2012, shortly after Xi Jinping had become party leader. At that time, the project was still very provisional; the left-hand map combines the historical silks roads and the new projects. The right-hand picture illustrates a lively style of promotion which at that time was fairly new in Chinese political public relations campaigns. *Source: Xinhua, 24 November 2012.*

Three other parallels for the Silk Road project

Apart from the Marshall plan three other parallels can be mentioned

- During the “New Deal” period under president Franklin Roosevelt (1933–1944) important infrastructure development projects were undertaken in the USA. They were continued by Roosevelt’s successors until the end of the 1960s approximately. The aim of these projects was to ensure integrated national development altogether from the East to the West coast and from Alaska to New Mexico.
- During the past three decades China has carried out infrastructure work in African countries. Characteristically, most western media present this Chinese presence in Africa in a negative light. This is probably a harbinger of what we will read and hear about the Silk Road once the project will be more advanced.

- Infrastructure development in the European Union. What could have been a splendid opportunity for integrated development was in fact botched for ideological reasons (see below)

With respect to the Silk Road project there are similarities but also great differences.

The most obvious similarity is of course the fact that these projects are about building new infrastructure but, as already said, the Silk Road project is much more ambitious in the sense that it aims at creating an integrated network of infrastructures across several independent countries. To our best knowledge there was no similar operation on such a large scale in the history of mankind. It is similar to what the Roman Empire had done in the Mediterranean area but on a much larger scale. In the case of the Roman Empire all the countries around the Mediterranean sea were part of the Roman empire. This made of course infrastructure development much easier than when many independent countries are involved.

The missed opportunity of infrastructure development in the EU

Developing new infrastructure was also a facet of the policy of the European Union in admitting new members from southern and eastern Europe where infrastructures were notably inadequate. However, such plans consisted basically in funding national governments without ensuring any real integration at the European level. In this respect it was like the Marshall Plan. Setting up an integrated railroad network for the transportation of cargo and passengers would have been a great project but was probably ruled out by the neoliberal orientation of the European economic policy. Instead of promoting such a railroad network, the European Commission favored the privatization of railroads. Instead of advancing integration this policy contributed to segmentation. It was continued even after the British privatization program of railroads had shown how bad privatization works for transportation networks. In this connection one should recall that initially that is to say back in the 19th century all European railroad companies were private. It is only because one after another they went bankrupt that they had to be bailed out and were eventually nationalized. The same is true in the United States.

A crucial challenge: surmounting the language obstacle

In a project which involves dozens of countries the language question plays a crucial role. If Chinese advisers and engineers cannot speak directly with national leaders the collaboration will not be very good. In Africa, the problem was somewhat simpler because through colonization English, French and Portuguese had become the main languages. Many Chinese students who learned French or Portuguese did so for the purpose of spending several years in the service of Chinese companies in African countries.

For the Silk Road project many more languages will be required. Fortunately, in many former Soviet Republics Russian may serve as a bridge language.

The rest of this chapter is mostly devoted to the containment policy. There is indeed a mystery and a paradox there which needs to be explained. It consists in the fact that almost all countries which take part in the containment policy also accept US military bases on their territory. In the history of mankind this is probably the first time that one country has so many overseas military bases. Why do so many countries (including major powers like Japan, Germany, the UK, Spain or Italy²⁹) accept such bases on their territory is a first mystery. In addition it appears that the very existence of the bases make these countries politically dependent upon the United States. This is a second mystery.

Silk Road: resistance in the US and in western countries

Some US allies, and in particular the UK under Prime Minister David Cameron, have taken an active role in the creation of the “Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank” (AIIB).

On 24 October 2014, 21 Asian countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the AIIB in Beijing³⁰.

Then, some 5 months later, in early March 2015, the UK announced that it had decided to apply to join the Bank, becoming the first major Western country to do so. The decision was criticised by the US Obama Administration. A US government official told the “Financial Times” that the British decision was taken after “no consultation with the US.” In response, the UK indicated that the subject had been discussed between Chancellor Osborne and US Treasury Secretary Jack Lew for several months preceding the decision. Osborne announced that “the City of London would become the base for the first clearing house for the yuan outside Asia”. Several other European states, including Germany, France and Italy followed the UK’s decision to join the AIIB. The US opposition to the AIIB, as well as its attempt to dissuade allies from joining, was seen as a manifestation of its multifaceted containment strategy.

That was in 2014–2015.

In early 2018 the French President Emmanuel Macron and the British Prime Minister Theresa May visited Beijing in succession. Both hailed the beginning of a close co-

²⁹ As a matter of fact, the list of the countries which are of some strategic importance and do *not* harbor any US base is fairly short. Among them one can mention: China, France, India, Iran, Russia, Vietnam (for how long?).

³⁰ China, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, India, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Mongolia, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Vietnam. Indonesia’s joining was slightly delayed due to their new presidential administration not being able to review the membership in time. Indonesia signed the MOU on 25 November 2014. The US allegedly tried to keep Australia and South Korea from becoming prospective founding members. However, both Australia and South Korea applied to join the bank in March 2015.

operation with China but in fact none of them accepted to sign the “Memorandum of Understanding” about the Silk Road project that was proposed by the Chinese side. An article published in the “South China Morning Post” (1 February 2018) says that May “did not wish to sign a MOU and that she hoped Britain and China could work together on the initiative to ensure it met international standards”. This requirement to meet “international standards of governance and transparency” had already been used as a reason for not participating in the AIIB by US State Secretary John Kerry on 5 November 2014 (Reuters 5 Nov 2014).

In its conclusion the “South China Morning Post” article says that PM May has neither the courage nor the resources to take this major step forward, like former prime minister David Cameron did with the AIIB.

In short, as of February 2018, several governments from Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe have signed MOUs on the belt and road plan but none of the western countries have officially endorsed it so far. This shows fairly clearly that in the 3 years between November 2014 and February 2018 the resistance to Chinese plans of economic expansion, instead of abating has become stiffer.

If one wants to identify the country which plays the key-role in this crusade against China one can mention two decisions taken by the US administration in January 2018.

- The deal between Huawei and US carrier ATT which would have allowed Huawei smartphones to be sold in the US was opposed by US lawmakers on national security grounds. One should add that without an agreement with a US carrier Huawei can sell its phones to only 10% of the US customers (which is the percentage of customers not engaged with a carrier).
- “Ant Financial”, the electronics payment affiliate of China’s Alibaba Group, was forced to abort a deal with MoneyGram, a Texas-based money transfer company after failing to win approval from the “Committee on Foreign Investment”, a congressional panel that reviews foreign purchases of American companies.

Creation of vassal states through military occupation

Overview

Apart from the military occupations directed related to the war against Germany and Japan there have been many occupations by US armed forces. In the subsequent list the expression “UN mandate” refers to the fact that the occupation was approved by the Security Council of the United Nations. In international law military occupations without UN mandate are deemed to be illegal aggressions.

- 1 Iceland (1940–1945)

- 2 China (1945–1948),
- 3 The Philippines (US colony until 1948)
- 4 Vietnam (invited by South Vietnam government, 1955–1975),
- 5 Lebanon (UN mandate, Aug 1982–Mar 1984)
- 6 Grenada island in the Caribbean Sea (no UN mandate, Oct 1983–Oct 1985)
- 7 Panama in Central America (no UN mandate, Dec 1989–Sep 1994)
- 8 Saudi Arabia (Saudi permission, Aug 1990–Aug 2003)
- 9 Somalia (UN mandate, “Operation restore Hope” in 1993–1994)
- 10 Kosovo (UN mandate, June 1999 and ongoing)
- 11 Afghanistan (UN mandate, starting in 2001 and ongoing),
- 12 Iraq (no UN mandate, Mar 2003–Dec 2011, resumed in 2014)

In a general way these occupations were less successful than the postwar occupations. Some (e.g. Vietnam, Somalia or Afghanistan) had been military failures. In others, e.g. Iceland, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, the countries did not accept to keep US bases on their soil indefinitely. The cases of Iceland, South Korea and Grenada will be discussed in more detail below.

Example of base building

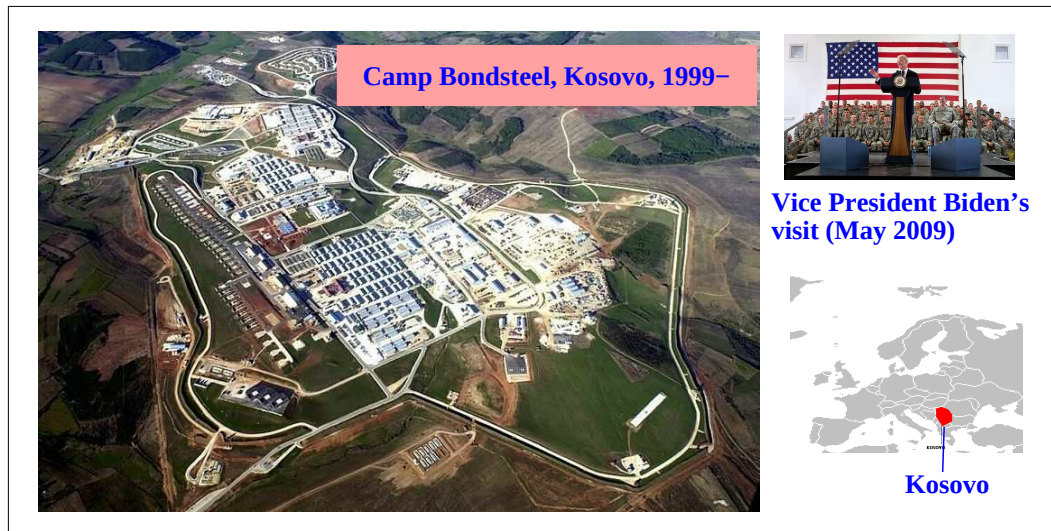


Fig. 4.3 Camp Bondsteel, a US base in Kosovo. The construction of this base was started in 1999 that is to say immediately after the occupation of Kosovo by NATO troops in June 1999. It is probable that this project had been planned some time earlier for otherwise the design phase may have taken one year or more. *Source: Wikipedia articles entitled “Camp Bondsteel”.*

In the above list several of the occupations, e.g. Somalia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq were led by the US but involved many countries. For instance, the so-called Kosovo force (KFOR) which occupied Kosovo for the count of NATO comprised initially 50,000 troops from 39 nations. However, the US was the only country which took advantage of this occupation to build a massive military base, namely Camp

Bondsteel, which has an area of 4 square kilometers and a capacity of 7,000 troops. Although officially designated as the KFOR headquarters, Camp Bondsteel was built by the US and is 100% controlled by the US.

From the perspective of the host country, a US base (or more generally a foreign military base) has short term advantages but poses long-term problems. Among the short-term benefits is the fact that it employs a local workforce first for building the base and then as civilian employees. Among the long-term problems the most serious is the fact that the base becomes surrounded by a ring of bars and hotels which provide services in prostitution, gambling and possibly drugs. This is of course an unavoidable consequence of the fact that the bases have young and mostly male populations.

Winning hearts and minds or establishing close links with the leaders?

On 4 May 1965, US President Johnson declared “We must be ready to fight in Vietnam, but the ultimate victory will depend upon the hearts and the minds of the people who actually live out there”.



Fig. 4.4 The challenge of winning hearts and minds. Together with the containment policy comes the challenge of winning the hearts and minds of the population. “Balikatan” is the name of the annual military exercises between the Philippines and the United States. It is a Tagalog (i.e. the language of the Philippines) word meaning “shoulder-to-shoulder”. In 2017 it was the 33rd iteration of Balikatan. Usually it takes place in April and lasts 10 days. It involves military as well as humanitarian exercises. The present picture was taken near the village of Tiptipon in the province of Jolo. For the purpose of a public relations operation US Marines pose with villagers and Philippine Marines during the exercise of 2006. The sign in the middle of the picture reads: “We are glad being with you for a short time. Everywhere you go, we are always with you.” *Source: Wikipedia article entitled “Balikatan”*

Is this really the ultimate objective of military occupation? Examining the episodes of former American military occupations will help us to answer this question. It will be seen that the real target is not the good of common people but rather the hearts and minds of foreign political leaders.

It appears that the US post-war military occupations of Italy, Germany, Japan and South Korea were highly successful in the sense that all these countries have remained close US allies, even accepting permanent US bases on their soil up to the

present time.

Occupation success or failure? The cooperation conjecture

What makes a successful occupation? Tentatively, as a conjecture, one can suggest the following explanation based on the strength of interaction.

The occupations of Italy, Germany and Japan were not only military occupations. In fact, thousands of so-called *Civil Affairs Officers* came into the respective countries along with the troops. Who were they? They were military officers selected for their knowledge of the language and then trained in the US during several months to make them able to rule the occupied country. This concerned all facets of the activity and life of a country: police, agriculture, transportation, health care, education, culture, and so on.

The fact that in 1945 there were many Americans of German, Italian or Japanese origin made it fairly easy to solve the language problem. Once they were established in their respective functions in the occupied country the Civil Affairs Officers started to work with local people in order to carry out their duty. The cooperation with local people was not an option but rather a necessity because without aides they would not have been able to fulfill their mission. Naturally, when the occupation came to an end it was natural to choose among these aides the persons who would take over as heads of the ministries or departments. In short, this was a process of “nation-building” in the sense that the new leaders would be pro-American Italians, Germans or Japanese citizens.

In what follows this explanation will be called the cooperation conjecture. It rests on three requirements

- There must be competent Civil Affairs Officers able to speak the local language.
- The occupation must last long enough (say, a few years) for a cooperation to develop.
- If there is an ongoing civil war in the occupied country the US must be on the side of the winners. In cases where the main reason of US intervention was to advice and prop up one of the two sides (as for instance in China, or Vietnam) a defeat of their allies constitutes of course a serious setback.

Does the cooperation conjecture account for the observations reported above? Instead of examining all the cases we will rather focus on two cases, namely Iceland and South Korea.

Case-study 1: Military occupation and base building in Iceland

The case of Iceland is fairly simple. The reason of its occupation was to prevent

a possible occupation by Germany. In this case there were no civil affairs officers, therefore little cooperation and then only with the Icelanders who could speak English. In addition, it must be observed that it was a massive occupation. The troops numbered about one fourth of the Icelandic population. Not surprisingly, the outcome was that the relations between the population and the US forces turned sour. The occupation was seen as an invasion (which indeed it was); there were numerous incidents between the population and the servicemen. When at the end of the war the US asked permission to keep a permanent base in Iceland, the Icelandic assembly voted against it. It was only by applying much political pressure and by playing with the fear of an occupation by the Soviet Union (however unlikely it was) that the US could reverse the first decision.

The “Keflavik Naval Air Station” was tolerated for 50 years because in addition to US financial compensation it employed almost one thousand Icelanders. Moreover, as it was far away from Reykjavik there was in fact little interaction between the population and the military. However, in 2008 when the US tried to negotiate a reduction of the lease and no agreement could be reached the base was closed. It has remained closed ever since in spite of the fact that the US expressed some interest in a new station aimed at monitoring Russian submarines³¹.

There is a similar story for the US bases in the Philippines. Despite the fact that, until 2016, all Philippine governments were very friendly to the US the American bases were closed in 1992. Two factors seem to have played a major role in this decision (i) the numerous incidents between the troops and the population and (ii) US reluctance to guarantee that no nuclear weapons would be stored on the bases. It is true that in this case US military presence was resumed only 6 years later through the “Visiting Forces Agreement” (VFA) signed in 1998, and was extended in 2014 through the “Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement” (EDCA) which gave the US the five bases cited in the figure. The fact that formally the bases are only leased temporarily makes little difference.

Case-study 2: Occupation and nation building in South Korea

In this case the Civil Affairs Officers did not know the Korean language because there was only a small community of Korean Americans. Therefore, their aides were recruited among the South Koreans who knew English. They consisted mainly in two groups: (i) Koreans who like, Syngman Rhee, had spent almost all their life in exile (ii) Koreans who had been in contact with American missionaries. Neither of these groups was really able to represent the interests and feelings of the Korean population. Thus, although there was indeed a process of cooperation, the Koreans who came to power in August 1948 when South Korea became again a sovereign

³¹More details can be found in Roehner (2016a).

country were not trusted by the population. On the day of the general election of 30 May 1950, the South Korean police arrested 112 persons including 30 candidates accused to be financed by the banned Communist Party. Nevertheless the population expressed its defiance as revealed by the comment made in the New York Times on 1 June:

“Independents won the Korean elections. The vote is regarded as a defeat for the current administration and a rebuke to the regime’s police methods”.

In a sense the Korean War which started 4 weeks later saved Syngman Rhee’s regime, at least until 1960 when it was replaced by the dictatorship of President Park sanctioned by the US State Department.

In short, in South Korea, until 1990, despite bogus elections, the despotic puppet governments had in fact little popular legitimacy. However, as is characteristic of countries under military occupation, South Korean armed forces have very close links with the US military. In this respect one may recall that they were created, armed, trained and nurtured by the US³².

Case-study 3: The (apparently) very successful invasion of Grenada

As a third example we present a case that was described as a highly successful invasion by all US medias. It concerns a country which is even smaller than Iceland, namely the island of Grenada in the Caribbean Sea which has a population of 110,000 (2017). Its small size makes it simpler to analyze.

A former British colony, Grenada became independent in 1974. In 1979 a left wing government headed by Maurice Bishop came to power in the wake of a revolution supported by the population. Like Fidel Castro in Cuba, Bishop was a lawyer and a charismatic leader. Precisely for that reason he was not seen with favor by President Reagan.

Thus, a few days after 282 US Marines had died in an attack in Lebanon, Grenada was invaded by a force of 8,000 US Marines. Apparently this was a very successful invasion. On the Wikipedia article entitled “Grenada” one reads the following.

When US troops withdrew from Grenada in December 1983, Brathwaite of the National Democratic Congress was appointed prime minister. The first democratic elections since 1976 were held in December 1984 and were won by Herbert Blaize who served as prime minister until his death in December 1989.

Blaize was a friend of the United States as were also the prime ministers who came after him, particularly Keith Mitchell who held the position for some 16 years. According to the New York Times, the population was so happy with the US invasion

³²More details can be found in Roehner (2016b).

that a “a bronze monument to the 19 American servicemen killed in the invasion of Grenada was unveiled at St. George’s [capital of Grenada] University on the first anniversary of the landing” (NYT 21 Sep 1984).

This account is not completely true, however. There are several important reservations.

- **Bombing incident.** Was the invasion just a police operation which removed bad leaders without hurting the population? Not really. A mental hospital was bombed by mistake making an undetermined number of victims (NYT 22 November 1984).

- **Elections under military occupation.** Most importantly, not all Marines left the country in December 1983. 250 US troops remained in Grenada. Their withdrawal started only in April 1985 and ended in October 1985 (NYT 22 November 1984 and 8 February 1985). Needless to say, after the invasion the head of the police was removed and replaced by someone friendly to the invaders. Under such conditions, a force of 250 was sufficient to keep control of the country. This means that during the election of December 1984 the country was still under US military occupation.

It must be put to the credit of the US State Department that it is very clever in organizing supposedly democratic elections in countries occupied by US troops. Japan in 1946 was an early example, South Korea in May 1948 was another, Grenada was a third, Afghanistan in 2004 was a fourth and Iraq in 2005 a fifth. It is well known that just by shrewdly enacting a number of technical rules an election can be manipulated. For instance in the election of December 1984, with 36% of the votes the Labour Party was second but got only 6.6% of the seats. This is a fairly unusual arrangement for in most electoral systems seats and votes are more or less in proportion at least for the two major parties.

- **Feelings of the population.** In contrast to what can be read in the NYT articles published in the 1980s, a later article (NYT 14 October 1996) raises some doubts about the real feelings of the population. It turns out that in 1996 the Pentagon wanted to build a small US base in Grenada. Openly it was to be a gift for the coast guards of Grenada. The real purpose was to establish a satellite station which would be part of a network of stations located on five other Caribbean islands. Although the Prime Minister Keith Mitchell had already given his approval without even informing the population, the residents were quite opposed to it. “It’s a Trojan horse, and we don’t want it here” said one of them and the same NYT article adds that:

“Any mention of an American military presence in the nation of Grenada, involves sensibilities found nowhere else in the English-speaking Caribbean.”

- **Corruption of Prime Minister Mitchell.** The fact that the prime minister of

Grenada is corrupt (see below) does not come as surprise for indeed it seems a fairly general rule that governments of client states are corrupt. Why is this so? Two reasons come to mind. (i) Being obedient is usually rewarded by financial aid. As this aid is delivered to the client government (and not directly to development projects) it is an obvious incitation to corrupt practices. (ii) Being subservient often means favoring foreign interests over national interests. The civil servants who are told to do that (may be despite their own feelings) may think that this deserves a reward. The following statement from the US embassy in Bridgetown (Barbados) emphasizes the corruption of Prime Minister Mitchell. However, this dispatch (made public by Wikileaks³³) is dated 8 March 2006 which means that the revelations did not prevent Mitchell from being re-elected in 2013.

Keith Mitchell's ten-year tenure as Prime Minister of Grenada has been tarnished by numerous allegations of corruption. This situation was highlighted in February by the conviction in the US on fraud charges of a Grenadian German-born businessman Eric Resteiner who reportedly paid a US\$50,000 bribe to the PM in exchange for being named a Grenadian Ambassador. Mitchell has also been linked to several offshore banks that defrauded investors of millions of dollars before collapsing.

In 2004 and 2005 after the island was hit by two hurricanes which destroyed many homes and buildings, it got fairly little American aid. But, according to Wikipedia, after the hurricane of 2004, the People's Republic of China paid for the new \$40 million national stadium and provided the aid of over 300 workers to build it.

Conclusion: How well does military occupation work for gaining influence in a country?

What do the previous case studies tell us?

In line with the cooperation conjecture, they suggest that whether in Kosovo, Iceland, South Korea, Grenada, or also Afghanistan and Iraq, occupations by US troops did not bring about warm relations with the population. Leaders friendly to the US may remain in power, bases may continue to be accepted but in most cases one does not have the impression of a cheerful relationship.

The episodes of US military occupation which occurred during and shortly after World War II brought about a large set of close and faithful allies, namely the European NATO countries and also Australia, Japan and New Zealand. As seen in previous subsections, the bases in Iceland and South Korea led to results which were more mixed.

When military occupations did no longer involve able Civil Affairs Officers they

³³<https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06BRIDGETOWN429>

were much less successful. They brought with them the usual pitfalls of military occupations, i.e. incidents with the population and prostitution. Most often the fidelity of the leaders of the occupied countries was bought by corruption.

In recent years the same model based on military cooperation was tried in several Asian countries. One can mention Outer Mongolia, Uzbekistan (in 2001 Karshi-Khanabad Air Base was leased and used by the US), Kyrgyzstan (Manas Air Base was also leased by the US in 2001). However, Karshi-Khanabad was vacated in November 2005 and Manas was vacated in June 2014.

The role played by missile shields against alleged aggressors

In 2016 and 2017 there has been much talk about the American THAAD anti-missile system installed in South Korea. This was only one episode in a long series of similar cases. The scenario is always the same.

1 For good or not so good reasons a country is singled out as a potential aggressor. In the case of THAAD it was of course North Korea. Other countries are presented in the same way elsewhere. In the Middle East it is Iran, in Eastern Europe it is Russia. In western media China is already presented as an aggressor in the South China Sea. Tomorrow China will probably be described as a global threat just as was the Soviet Union in the 1980s. In this respect one can remember the deployment of the Pershing missiles in Europe which is summarized in the Box.

2 As a protection the United States proposes to sell missile shield systems to the countries under threat: In Asia, South Korea and Japan; in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries; in Eastern Europe, Poland and other countries.

3 Needless to say, the personnel in charge of such systems must be trained by US advisers, the system itself must be maintained and revised periodically by US technicians. This gives the United States a permanent presence and a voice in the defense policy of the countries in question.

Creation of containment networks

Once a number of vassal states have been created, the next step is to organize them into networks for a network will work more effectively than a set of isolated countries.

Containment networks have two fairly different aspects:

- i Containment by a network of US military bases.
- ii Containment by a network of vassal states.

(i) is easier than (ii). Why?

For (i) one only needs the permission of the country where the base is intended. In the case of a rather poor country (see the example of Kosovo described previously),

Anti-Pershing protests in Europe (1980-1986)

In 1979 the military commander of NATO (an American general) decided to deploy new nuclear missiles in Western Europe: 108 Pershing II missiles and 464 cruise missiles. All 108 Pershing II missiles were to be emplaced in West Germany replacing older Pershing Ia missiles. Of the cruise missiles, 160 were to be placed in England, 96 in West Germany, 112 in Italy, 48 in the Netherlands, and 48 in Belgium. This deployment was presented as a response to SS20 deployment by the Soviet Union. There was a big difference however. The Pershings could target the launching sites of Soviet intercontinental missiles whereas the SS20 were regional missiles which could not target US ICBMs. An equivalent to the Pershings would have been SS20s deployed in Canada and Mexico. Despite huge protest demonstrations in Germany between 1981 and 1984 the Pershings became operational in Germany in 1986. The protesters argued that the Pershings were in violation of the German constitution which prohibited West Germany from preparing for an offensive war but the argument was discarded by the German Constitutional Court.

it may be sufficient to promise financial compensation. On the contrary, for (ii) the countries composing the network must be willing to cooperate. When the network is created for the sole purpose of serving US strategic interests the level of cooperation may be low. This is what happened for the GUUAM network described below.

Military containment by networks of US bases

Containment is a policy which was used during the Cold War against the Soviet Union. It consisted in surrounding the Soviet Union with US bases hosted by allies. That was the purpose of NATO in western Europe. In this respect, one can remember the so-called “missile crisis” of 1962 which occurred after the United States had deployed nuclear intermediate-range missiles on its bases in Italy and Turkey³⁴.

The United States has hundreds of military bases and facilities overseas³⁵, some are very large (like the Ramstein base in Germany which has about 10,000 personnel) while others are small outposts (e.g. radar stations). The figure below shows some of the bases around China.

As a revealing example one can observe that Taiwan does not only buy sophisticated weapons from the US but under current President Tsai (2016-) of the DPP (Democratic Progressive Party whose program welcomes independence) it takes also part in military exercises with US forces.

Containment by networks of vassal states: the case of GUUAM

³⁴The *real* (as opposed to the fabricated version propagated by US media) story of this Cold War episode which brought the world to the brink of a nuclear war can be found in Schwarz (2013).

³⁵A list can be found on Wikipedia at the following address:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_military_bases
 It seems that this article has not been translated into Chinese yet.

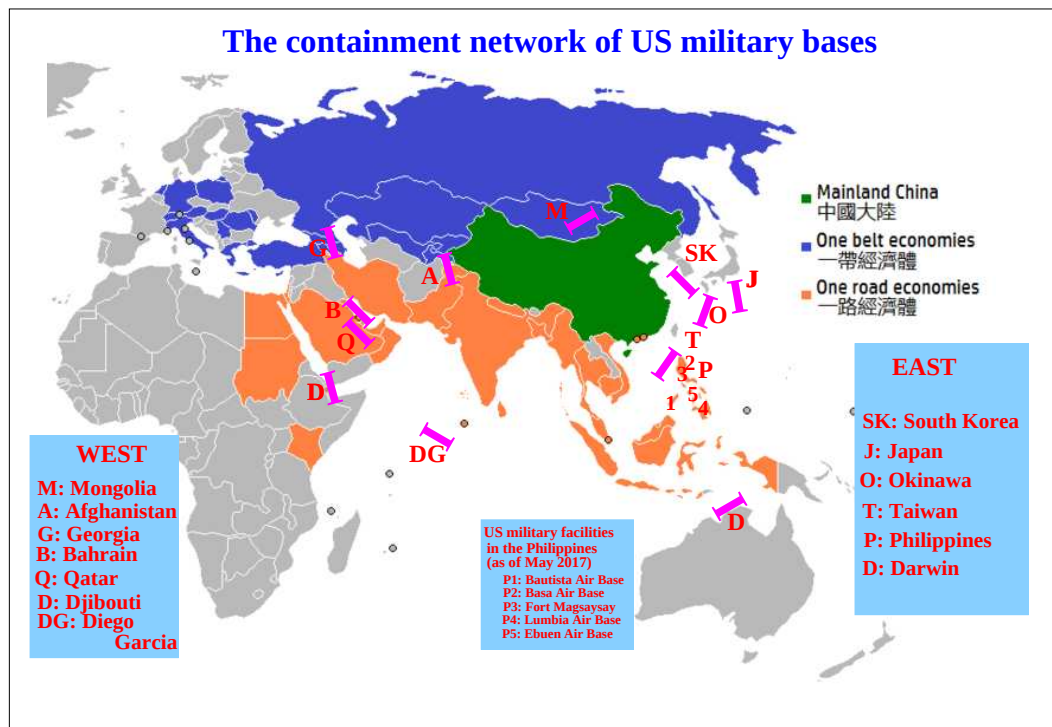


Fig. 4.5 Networks of US bases surrounding China. It can be observed that all eastern containment countries have been occupied by US forces during or after World War II. The list in the middle gives the bases in the Philippines. In contrast, most western containment bases are hosted by more recent US allies. All countries that are mentioned host US bases except Mongolia which was included because from 2002 on, it has hosted an annual US-Mongolian military exercise called “Khaan Quest”. There are many other US bases, particularly in Europe which are not shown here. It can be noted that from 2001 on there were also US bases in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan which were closed in 2005 and 2014 respectively. *Sources: Wikipedia articles entitled “Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement”, “Karshi-Khanabad Air Base”, “Manas Air Base”, Rozoff (2010). Incidentally, it can be observed that although this map contains Chinese characters, it was certainly not made in Beijing for Taiwan is not displayed with the same green color as the mainland; it was probably designed in Hong Kong.*

The acronym GUUAM stands for: Georgia, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldavia. In addition Latvia (one of the Baltic countries) and Turkey were “observers” that is to say associated states of this network.

During the Cold War, the Soviet Union and the PRC were encircled by several alliances led by the United States. On the west there was NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization). There were also counterparts of NATO in the south and east, namely CENTO (Central Treaty Organization, an outgrowth of the former Bagdad Pact) and SEATO (South East Asia Treaty Organization which included Australia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand). Incidentally, does the occurrence of the expression “Treaty Organization” in the names of the three bodies not suggest a common origin, probably to be found in an office of a division of the US State Department?

The creation of the GUUAM network was a repetition of the Cold War containment policy (Lafargue 2005). Founded in 1996 with the support of the “Council of Eu-

rope”, GUUAM was intended to advance military co-operation between its members in close collaboration with the United States. In short, it was the same objective as NATO. The five members shared a common platform in refusing the presence of Russian forces on their territory. One of the main aims of GUUAM was the building of an oil supply network that would be independent of Russia. Not surprisingly, Beijing viewed GUUAM as an encirclement mechanism aimed not only at Russia but also at China.

How successful was GUUAM so far?

The short answer is that it has almost disappeared. Here are a few steps.

- After Uzbekistan left the organization in May 2005, its acronym was changed into GUAM.

- After 2008 the organisation had been largely inactive with no other GUAM summit taking place.

- In 2013 the president of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, was reelected for a third term. Whether he was an ally of Russia or the USA can be seen very easily through the comments respective to the election. President Putin found it “fair”, whereas according to the US State Department it “fell short of international standards”. Even though Azerbaijan did not formally leave GUAM it became inactive.

- Ukraine and Georgia constituted the hard core of the organization. However, a deep rift appeared respective to former Georgian president Mikheil Saakashvili. After he lost the 2012 election, he immediately left Georgia and went to Ukraine. Shortly after he left, he was indicted on multiple criminal charges. In Ukraine Saakashvili energetically supported Ukraine’s Maidan movement and the 2014 Ukrainian revolution. On 30 May 2015 Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko appointed Saakashvili Governor of the Odessa region. Ever since Saakashvili had been given refugee status in Ukraine there have not been any top-level meetings between the leaders of the two countries.

In summary, one can say that GUUAM was far less successful than NATO.

Military-economic competition in Africa

The word “containment” may have a spatial and geographical interpretation, namely that this policy tries to prevent the expansion of Chinese influence beyond its border. Although this view is indeed correct particularly from a military perspective, it is too limited. Actually, “containment” has a strategic and geopolitical meaning. Africa provides a good illustration.

Economic role of China in African countries

Although it is far away from China, both spatially and culturally, there has been a

long-standing Chinese policy of infrastructure development in Africa which can even be seen as a forerunner of the Silk Road project (see Fig. and Box).

Dam built by China in Ghana

[Wharton panel on China-Africa, Univ. of Pennsylvania, 19 Jan. 2016](#) Aubrey Hruby, co-founder of the “Africa Expert Network” and co-author of the 2015 book “The Next Africa: An Emerging Continent Becomes a Global Powerhouse”, described a dam project that Ghana had with the World Bank that was stalled for about 7 years. There was a social audit, an environmental audit but nothing got built. “Eventually, writes Hruby, president of Ghana John Kufuor (2001-2009) went to China in 2006 and they started digging in about one month”. Somewhat more seriously the Bui Dam project was completed within 5 years; it delivers 400 megawatt.

What factors are fueling the continuing negative view of China in Africa? In Hruby’s opinion, many in the US government have an “obsession” with the China-Africa relationship that blinds them to a more global [and realistic] view.

The 2007 “Pew Global Attitudes Survey” asked Africans in 10 countries to compare the influences of China and the US in their own countries. In 9 of the 10 countries, by margins of 60% to 90%, African respondents said Chinese influence was good. These percentages substantially exceeded those for the US.

Increasing US military intervention in Africa: the case of Niger

Niger is a small and poor country in west Africa. Its main resource consists in exporting uranium. The US military have been in Niger intermittently for more than 20 years; as many as 800 troops are deployed in the country to advise and train local forces; the US also maintains drone bases in Niger (Time Magazine 6 November 2017, p. 6).

Usually Niger hardly ever appears in US news reports but on 4 October 2017 four US troops from Special Forces (so-called “Green Berets”) were killed in an ambush as they were on a training mission with Nigerien troops. This incident raises a question: how can there be a surprise ambush in broad daylight in a desertic country that is closely monitored by US drones?

In the articles about this event (“Stars and Stripes” and “New York Times” of 5 Oct 2017) one learns that the US has about 645 military personnel in Niger to support local troops in counterterrorism operations. In neighboring Cameroon, 300 US military personnel are also deployed. Moreover, since 2013, unmanned American aircraft have been operated from a clandestine airfield in Niamey, the capital of Niger. More recently, Americans are also helping construct a drone base for French and American aircraft in Agadez which will be completed in 2018.

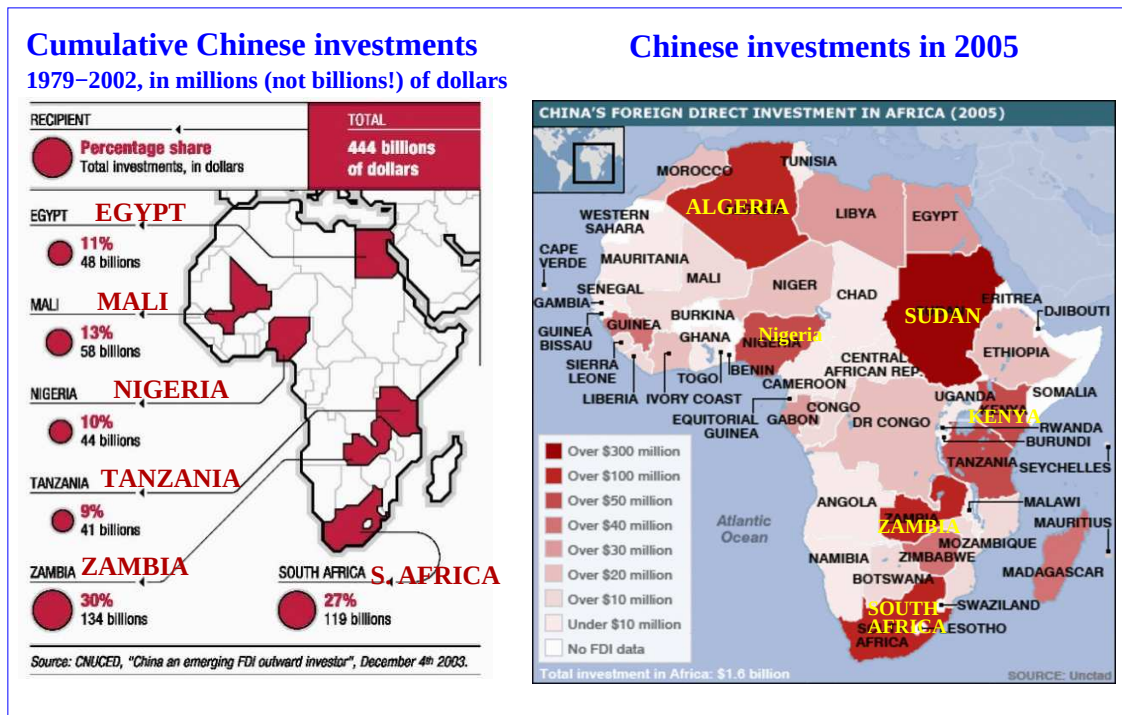


Fig. 4.6a,b Chinese investment in African countries. Left: Cumulative investment value 1979–2002; there is a mistake in the picture in the sense that “billion” should be replaced by “million”. Right: Investment in 2005. The new investments (Algeria, Sudan) are mostly related to oil. China surpassed the US as Africa’s largest trading partner in 2009. The trade between Africa and China reached \$210 billion in 2013. On the contrary, the trade between Africa and the US fell from \$140 billion in 2008 to about \$90 in 2013. Sources: UNCTAD 2003: *China, an emerging FDI outward investor*. UNCTAD is the acronym of “United Nations Conference on Trade and Development”. CNUCED is the acronym of the same organization in French (*Conférence des Nations Unies sur le Commerce et le Développement*).

Without the deaths of the three Special forces there would have been no report about US military presence in Niger.

Increasing US military intervention in the rest of Africa

How does the US try to check the spread of Chinese influence in Africa? Below we list a few recent developments which all suggest that, under the cover of fighting Islamism, the United States is steadily developing a military presence in Africa³⁶.

1 **Tanzania, on the island of Zanzibar (south east Africa), February 2013.** US special operations troops co-organized a conference for special operation forces from east African countries.

2 **Senegal (near Dakar), March 2013.** The US, 5 European countries and 8 African nations participated in exercise “Saharan Express”.

3 **Morocco, April 2013.** 1,200 US Marines and airmen participated in “African Lion 2013”, a military exercise held in Morocco.

4 **Chad (central Africa), March 2017.** American Special Forces have been con-

³⁶The sources are: Google, “US military presence in Africa”, Spring 2013); Turse (2013); Okeowo (2017); Cooper (2017).

ducting training exercises with troops from 20 African countries.

5 [Somalia \(north-eastern Africa\), 2017](#). Hundreds of US troops are training Somali soldiers, participating in ground raids, and providing aerial assistance. Brigadier General Donald C. Bolduc, the head of the “US Special Operations Command Africa” (AFRICOM) headquartered at Kelley Barracks in Stuttgart (Germany), told a journalist of the “New Yorker”:

“American soldiers are constantly on the radio with their Somali counterparts like ‘teaching a five-year-old how to ride a bike’ but they cannot make direct contact with the enemy.”

The following episode shows that, as in Iraq, Syria and Libya, US support to local warlords may lead to the disaggregation of Somalia.

6 [Puntland, Somalia \(east Africa\), April 2017](#). Puntland, which declared itself autonomous during the Somali Civil War, has militias belonging to powerful warlords. With the help of units from Syria and Yemen, ISIS took the coastal port of Qandala in October 2016. When the US stepped in to support Puntland’s effort to regain the territory, it made clear that the ground offensive would be led by the warlords. US military advisers helped them act properly and the US gave airborne reconnaissance and intelligence but did not carry out strikes. In roughly 10 days, the Puntland force pushed ISIS out from the port and left holding teams to prevent the militants from coming back. “They won’t have any ownership of it if we just hand it to them on a silver platter” Bolduc said. “They’re going to fight for it.”

7 [Malawi \(southern Africa\), May 2017](#). The US organized an “African Land Forces Summit” in Malawi. The American military spent \$1.2 million flying in and housing African military leaders. National Guard and reserve officers from all over the United States were brought in to chat with their African counterparts.

The same kind of support (i.e. training, advising, providing airborne intelligence, but no fighting) was given by US forces to KMT troops in the civil war in China and also to French troops during the Indochina War (also called “First Vietnam War”). In both cases it did not prove very successful.

The cases of Algeria, Malawi, Morocco or Tanzania show that US interventions are not limited to countries where civil wars are under way.

What about US humanitarian aid?

Perhaps some readers may find that we focused too much on the military aspect of US relations with foreign countries. For instance, the US State Department webpage about Uzbekistan says the following.

“In Uzbekistan US assistance goals are to improve livelihoods of citizens through support for the agricultural sector, address the threats of infectious disease and



Fig. 4.7 US military operations in Africa. Colonel Tom Davis, AFRICOM's Director of Public Affairs tells the media: "Other than our base at Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti, we do not have military bases in Africa, nor do we have plans to establish any." Strictly speaking, it may be true. But the Pentagon has several sorts of provisional bases, as for instance the "Special Operations Command Africa" (SOCAFRICA), the "Forward Operations Sites (FOS) or the "Cooperative Security Locations (CSL). The "Kenyan Ranger School" is one example of the military instruction facilities established in Africa. Source: <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2013/09/us-military-bases-africa>.

transnational crime, increase citizen input into government decision-making, and aid the government's efforts to ensure respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms."

What should one think of these good intentions? We will make three observations.

About fundamental freedoms

Is it not a paradox for a country which has been operating the CIA Rendition program for torturing people abroad to lecture other countries about "human rights and fundamental freedoms"³⁷?

There is at least one fundamental human right which is not enforced in the US, namely the right to form unions. The "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" of the United Nations says:

Article 23-4: Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

In the US this right is denied by many corporations (e.g. Walmart) with the tacit approval of the Federal Government. For the welfare of working people such a right is certainly more crucial than the right to put a ballot into a box every 4 years, a right seen by the State Department as the embodiment of democracy. Should this not make other countries suspicious about the aid they can expect to receive?

³⁷Not to mention waging illegal bombing campaigns without mandate from the UN Security Council.

The United States and Haiti



Fig. 4.8 The Republic of Haiti in the Caribbean Sea. Until it became independent in 1804 the name of Haiti was Saint-Domingue, that is to say the same name as the eastern part of the Hispaniola island. The name “Hispaniola” originates from the fact that it was the first island discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1492. Contrary to the eastern part which is Spanish-speaking, Haiti is French-speaking. *Source: Internet (country reports).*

A good “laboratory” for observing the humanitarian action of the US government is the **Republic of Haiti**. It is located in the Caribbean Sea on the doorstep of the United States, some 1,000 km south-east off the coast of Florida and only 500 km west of the US Territory of Puerto Rico. With a population of 10 millions it is the second most populated country in the Caribbean and the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere. Although Haiti became a sovereign nation in 1804, the first independent country in South America, for years western powers did not give it diplomatic recognition. The US recognized Haitian independence only in 1862. Moreover, western powers bankrolled and armed opposing groups and interfered in many other ways in internal Haitian affairs. For instance, there are currently (2017) international election commissions which approve or do not approve the results of the elections. Some other cases of interference are indicated below. The “American Colonization Society” (ACS) encouraged US free blacks to emigrate to Haiti and in 1824 and 1825 more than 6,000 African Americans migrated to Haiti, with transportation paid by the ACS³⁸. Moreover, in May 1861, a group of African Americans led by a colored evangelical bishop, James Theodore Holly, settled in a place 10 km north east of the capital of Port-of-Prince.

Haiti was occupied by US troops from 27 January 1914 to 15 August 1934 and again from 19 September 1994 through 2000³⁹.

³⁸Simultaneously, the ACS organized the migration of 13,000 free African Americans to Liberia.

³⁹Started as “Operation Uphold Democracy” the occupation continued as “Operation New Horizons”. In this respect

The 20-year long US occupation gave rise to an exercise in nation-building in the sense that it reshaped the Haitian government and formed its police and army⁴⁰. In 1917, the US State Department submitted a proposal to amend Haiti's Constitution to allow foreigners to own land. When Haiti's National Assembly refused to approve it, the occupying force disbanded the legislature and would not allow it to reconvene for the next 12 years.

In 2009 when the Haitian government passed a measure to raise the country's meager minimum wage from 24 cents an hour to 61 cents an hour, several US-based garment manufacturers that have factories in Haiti, including Levi's, Hanes and "Fruit of the Loom", protested to the US embassy in Port-au-Prince. The US Ambassador then told President René Préal to moderate the increase. As a result, the Haitian government agreed to limit the minimum wage to 31 cents per hour.

Just as a matter of comparison, the website of the US State Department describes its action in Haiti in the following terms.

"Assistance for long-term development and institution building is another pillar of US-Haiti bilateral cooperation. Priority areas include support for economic growth and poverty reduction, improved healthcare and food security, promoting respect for human rights, building stronger democratic institutions, and strengthening the Haitian National Police."

These are all laudable goals. Will they materialize in coming decades better than in past ones?

The crippling long-term effect of foreign interference

Haiti has the highest per capita number of foreign non government organizations (NGO) in the world. Many are not even registered with the Haitian government. As their funding does not go through the Haitian government they can circumvent it. The same can probably be said of the humanitarian aid of the State Department. After Jean-Bertrand Aristide was elected with 92% of the votes in 2000, he was removed in 2004 and flown to South Africa. In short, the strong and continued influence of the United States prevented the establishment of a stable, domestic, self-confident ruling class. The same observation applies to some extent to other close US neighbors such as Mexico or the republics of Central America.

For those of our readers who are physicists an analogy comes to mind. When the

Haiti was no exception. During the 20th century in the Caribbean, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Grenada, Panama were also invaded by US troops.

⁴⁰A characteristic of armed forces trained by the US is that they are prone to stage coups. As examples one can mention Haiti, South Vietnam, South Korea, Turkey, Thailand. As counter-examples one can cite the three successful occupations already mentioned, namely Germany, Italy, Japan; however the armies of these countries had long and solid traditions that the occupation did not change.

orbit of a natural satellite is too close to a big planet the satellite is progressively ruptured and eventually disintegrated by the strong gravitational tidal forces. The critical distance is called the Roche limit after Edouard Roche who studied it in 1848. For instance, if the Moon's orbit would be within 10,000 km of the Earth it would disintegrate. That is why Jupiter and Saturn have rings made of small blocks.

In the 18th century a spectacular illustration was provided by the the fragmentation of Poland under the influence of its three powerful neighbors: Prussia, Austria and Russia. In this respect, just as for satellites, a small size seems to be a protection as shown by the stable micro-states of Andorra (85,000 residents) and Monaco (38,000 residents) on the border of France or Luxembourg (570,000 residents) on the border of Germany.

How will the two agendas come to interact?

There is a confrontation between two political agendas that we may denote by E for “economic” and M for “military”.

- E refers to a plan for economic development, e.g. the Marshall Plan or the Silk Road project.
- M refers to cooperation plans based on military cooperation.

E and M seem to operate in two different spheres. How then will they come to interact?

“Win-win” or “loss-loss”?

The containment policy relies on the political influence that the US has in the respective countries. Obviously, all East and Central Asian countries would benefit from close political and economic relations with China. On the contrary, as increased tension hinders economic growth it is not in their best interest. However, recent events have shown that political and military considerations take precedence over economic goals. Thus, the US–South Korea agreement about the installation of a THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) anti-ballistic system resulted in China in a retaliation boycott of Korean products (video games, Lotte supermarkets, Korean cars). Needless to say, the aggressive language used by North Korea plays into the hands of the US State and Defense Departments which use this threat to bolster their influence.

The Silk Road project holds great promises in terms of economic development. However the examples of South Korea, Japan, Taiwan and Vietnam show that foreign political influence and security concerns can take precedence over the objective of economic development. The same process can be seen in Europe where economic sanctions against Russia certainly harm economic development on both sides. These

examples give a kind of blue-print for the future. By presenting Chinese economic influence as a threat, the US State Department may try to prejudice Silk Road countries against China and turn them away from taking part even if this attitude hurts their real interests.

As a more recent example, one can mention the case of Ukraine. Its elected president, namely Viktor Yanukovych, may have been corrupt but he was guaranteeing good relations not only with Russia but also with the Russian-speaking eastern part of the country. Yet, in February 2014, under US influence⁴¹, Yanukovych was removed in a coup and from then on, the economy of Ukraine started to crumble. Expressed in US dollars, the GDP fell by 27% between 2013 and 2014 and by 32% between 2014 and 2015 (<http://www.tradingeconomics.com>).

In short, it is not always the best and most reasonable solutions which prevail. That is why in the following sections we develop a comparative analysis of political and security factors.

Countries which dread Chinese hegemony

We mentioned earlier that India is one of the few countries which does not harbor any US base. However, on 30 August 2016 India and the United States signed a military logistics agreement which will allow US ships and aircraft to use Indian bases. As one does not really see why Indian aircraft would need to use US bases in the continental part of the US, this appears as a fairly asymmetrical agreement. India will be permitted to use overseas US bases (probably Diego Garcia, bases in Afghanistan, may be some others) whereas the United States will be allowed to use bases located in India itself.

So far we were interested in how the Silk Road project and the containment policy can win support from other countries. We emphasized that US allies may align themselves on the policy of the US State Department even though this is not in the best interest of their own development.

There is however also a class of nations which, without being direct US allies, may nevertheless be fearful of Chinese hegemony. India, Iran, Vietnam or even Russia may fall in this class. If one excepts Iran the other countries have had small scale military conflicts with China in the past 50 years. It may be of interest to recall them.

- Between China and India there have been two small-scale conflicts in 1962 and 1967 which caused less than 1,000 fatalities altogether. Then in 1987 discussions were started which led to a bilateral agreement in 1993.

⁴¹US Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland visited the Ukrainian opposition several times before the coup. A recorded phone discussion between her and the US Ambassador to Ukraine revealed her post coup plans: "I think Yats is the guy with the governing experience".

- In January 1974 a short clash between Chinese and South Vietnamese maritime forces resulted in China taking complete control of the Paracels islands in the South China sea. Five years later there was the short but fairly serious conflict of February-March 1979 which cost about 10,000 fatalities on each side.
- The long rift between China and Russia is well known. In the 1980s China was a strategic ally of the United States as shown by the fact that fairly sophisticated US weapons were sold to China. This suggests that, not surprisingly, the US State Department did its best to keep the split alive.

Ideally one could imagine that, despite being the leader of the “Silk Road” initiative, China will be able to keep a low profile so as to avoid antagonizing other Silk Road participants. The United States has developed a skillful sense in this respect. For instance, even though the US is its unquestioned leader, in western media NATO is usually presented as a multilateral organization.

Crucial importance of smart public relations campaigns

In the present confrontation it is hardly possible to predict the future for there are no close parallels. However, many former cases of confrontation strongly suggest that for each side it will be essential to wage clever public relations campaigns to win over the public opinion of the countries participating in the Silk Road project.



Fig. 4.9 Third party endorsement technique; this is a key-rule in all public relations campaigns. The rationale for this rule is quite obvious: if the speaker is also the beneficiary it amounts to self-advertisement and will not be trusted. There is a parallel rule for criticism. Thus, in a US public relations campaign, when a person criticizes China he or she must be Chinese for criticisms by foreigners will not be well accepted. *Source: Internet.*

For some of our readers, what is meant by “public relations campaigns” is perhaps not completely clear. The public relations industry was invented and developed in

the US; even today it is not well known in many other countries. For instance, in France the expression “spin doctor” (or its French equivalent) may not be known by many. Spin is achieved through providing a biased interpretation of an event. It differs from marketing or advertising in an important way. In marketing the “targets” know that they are reading (or listening to) an advertisement. On the contrary spin implies that the target does not know being manipulated. In other words spin uses disingenuous and deceptive tactics.

The “third party endorsement” rule

Another difference is the fact that public relations always use “third party endorsement” which means that the person who delivers the message is different from the person to whom it will benefit, as illustrated in Fig. 4.9.

To explain more clearly what is the public relations industry it is perhaps best to recall how it started.

In 1914 very few Americans wanted to get involved in the First World War. When it became clear for the administration of President Wilson that participation would give the United States a greater role in world affairs, it faced the challenge of convincing the Americans that it was indeed in their best interest to enter the war. For that purpose, a group of clever people designed smart messages and “bribed” journalists and newspaper owners to include them into their articles. The fact that it worked well was a clear proof that such techniques can be highly effective⁴².

The “self-criticism rule”

The “third party endorsement rule” applies to appreciative judgements (as in Fig. 4.9). On the contrary, critical judgements must come from the side which is criticized, in other words it must take the form of self-criticism. This principle has been widely used by the State Department in its smear campaigns. Thus, for disparaging Chairman Mao one will use the testimony of his private physician. Similarly, for giving an unflattering image of Prime Minister Zhou Enlai, one will use the service of a former CPC researcher. In both cases these persons were authorized to emigrate to the US which played into the hands of the US State Department.

In the following lines we give some illustrations which show how this technique works practically.

to be effective, criticism of President Donald Trump for his alleged links with Russia must come, not from the Democratic Party, but from the Republican Party to which he belongs. As an alternative one can also use statements made by organizations that are supposed to be neutral.

⁴²The Wikipedia article entitled “Spin” gives a fairly sanitized presentation without any striking example. It has a Chinese translation but which is very short.

The following excerpt from an article (7 October 2017) published in the “Guardian”, a British newspaper, shows how this technique is used.

First, there is a statement made by a prominent Republican. “The question of collusion is at the heart of the various investigations into links between Trump and Moscow. Even a senior Republican, Richard Burr, the chairman of the Senate intelligence committee, admitted it was an open question”.

As an illustration of how one can use a supposedly neutral source, there is in the same article a statement made by a retired CIA officer. “Many of my former CIA colleagues have taken the Steele reports [which describe the collusion yet without giving any sources] seriously.” wrote John Sipher, a former senior officer in the CIA’s National Clandestine Service.

When the target is a country, in order to be credible criticisms must come from citizens of this very country or of a supposedly neutral organization. The “Guardian” article gives the following illustration. “Evidence has emerged that Russians, posing as Americans, targeted Sanders supporters [Sanders is a Democrat who was in competition with Hillary Clinton in the primary election] with anti-Clinton messages”. It is clear that messages coming from Russians would have been rejected immediately. If a US newspaper wishes to criticize China, it may (for instance) cite statements made by Chinese citizens belonging to the “Falun Gong”, a semi-religious sect which, according to the Wikipedia article about it, has been supported since 1999 by several resolutions of the US Congress. It could also use a supposedly neutral source such as the French organization “Reporters without Borders”, thus overlooking the fact that (according to statements made by its leadership) this organization was funded by the “US State Department”.

Other public relations techniques

Apart from the “third party endorsement rule” and the “self-criticism rule” there are also other public relations techniques, for instance amalgamation or trolling (“bai mu” in Chinese). Our readers will be able to find more detailed explanations on Internet.

Ever since, and particularly with the development of TV and Internet, these techniques have been used on a daily basis by US public relations companies for their clients. They played a great role in the Cold War. Therefore it is likely that they will also play an essential role in the success or failure of the Silk Road project.

Chapter 5

“The Pacific as an American lake”

The title of this chapter is taken from a statement made by President Eisenhower at a Security Conference on 2 June 1954 as reported in the “Foreign Relations of the United States” (FRUS):

“We have got to keep the Pacific as an American lake.”

We will soon show that this statement describes pretty well US policy in the 20th and 21st centuries.

President Eisenhower’s declaration was reproduced in a volume of the ‘Foreign Relations of the United States’ (FRUS) which is an official US publication. However, the State Department will never issue an official statement saying the same thing.

What is on this question the position of China? On 18 May 2015, during a meeting in Beijing, President Xi Jin Ping told US Secretary of State John Kerry that:

“The Pacific Ocean is big enough for both his country and the United States”.

Such a statement is certainly consistent with standard diplomatic rhetoric. For any side to say the opposite would mean taking a very aggressive position. Thus, instead of relying on declarations it is safer to rely on bare facts. These show that:

- The US bases in South Korea are less than 400 km away from Qingdao.
- The extensive US bases in Okinawa are less than 600 km from Shanghai.

Needless to say, China has nothing similar on the eastern side of the Pacific. Even when it establishes minute military installations in islands of the South China Sea there are uproars in Washington which then reverberate in other western countries.

The history of the 20th century shows that every time another power tried to challenge American domination over the Pacific rim it led to war. These recurrent episodes will be recalled briefly in the first part of this chapter. Then, because the cases of the Pacific War, Korean War and Vietnam War are fairly well known, we focus on the episode of the war of 1904-1905 which is less known although quite as revealing.

Then we describe the so-called Taft diplomatic mission in the Pacific because it smartly set the tone of what would be the US attitude in the following decades. Led by Secretary of War William Taft (who would become president four years later), this 3-month journey was one of the largest American mission to Asia. Starting in

July 1905 it took place after a period of rapid US expansion with the annexation of the Philippines, Guam and Hawaii. Moreover, in the person of Alice Roosevelt, the young and pretty daughter of the president, it had an alluring flagship. The way US newspapers compare her to the aging empress Dowager is meant to reflect the contrast between the two countries: the young and bold United States versus the archaic and declining China.

Finally, we explain shortly how the United States is able to keep within its zone of influence the countries that it occupied in the wake of the Pacific War.

Origin of US supremacy in the Pacific

The key-point is that since about 1850 and without any major interruption the United States has been the dominant power on the Pacific rim. One may remember that in that time China was a weak and declining power. In the Pacific, the only competitors were the British and the Germans. In the second half of the 19th century, for a few decades, Russian expansion has cast a threat on the north-western rim of the Pacific. The United States purchased Alaska from Russia for 7.2 million dollars in 1867. Then, in 1905 the defeat of Russia in the Russo-Japanese war stopped Russian expansion. Japan has been a long-term American ally even after starting its conquest first of Manchuria and after 1933 of the rest of China. As a matter of fact, when the Nationalist government of China asked for US help, it got no positive reply from president Roosevelt. That is why, in a parallel with how Czechoslovakia was abandoned by its European allies in 1938, this episode was called a “Munich in the East”,

The steps through which the Pacific became an American lake are summarized in the following subsections.

Colonization of Hawaii

The archipelago of Hawaii was officially annexed by the United States only in 1898 but the colonization started much earlier. After 1820 American Protestant missionaries converted many Hawaiians to Christianity. Kamehameha III who reigned from 1825 to 1854 was the first Christian king. In 1836 the chiefs applied to the United States for a legal adviser and instructor in the science of government. William Richards was selected from among the American missionaries. Mr. Richards had a key role in the preparation of the constitution of 1840 under which Hawaii became a Christian constitutional monarchy⁴³.

From 1848 on, foreigners were allowed to own land in Hawaii. This had the same

⁴³This was probably the first instance of American people “advising” foreign leaders in the writing of their constitution. Many other cases would follow.

effect as elsewhere, namely that the land became concentrated into the hands of a small number of wealthy persons. The fact that the constitution of 1840 had guaranteed protection “to all the people together with their lands” did not change the final outcome.

Extraction of guano (1840-)

Under the “Guano Islands Act” of 1856 the United States occupied many uninhabited islands for the purpose of extracting guano, a source of saltpeter (i.e. sodium nitrate) useful in agriculture and for the production of gunpowder. In fact, the extraction of guano had started in the 1840s and according to the Wikipedia article entitled “Guano Islands Act”, more than 100 islands have been claimed for the US under this Act.

Annexation of the Philippines, Guam and Puerto Rico (1898)

In 1898 through the 3-month long Spanish American War, the United States came into possession of Guam, the Philippines and Puerto Rico.

The Pacific War (1941-1945)

In the wake of the Pacific War, the Pacific Ocean truly became an American lake.

Yet, in the course of history American ascendancy in the Pacific has been challenged on several occasions. Each time, the dispute was settled through a war. This is the topic of the next section.

Challenges to US hegemony in the Pacific

If, as stated by President Eisenhower in the citation at the beginning of this study, the Pacific Ocean is to remain an American lake, it means that eastern Asia should belong to the US zone of influence. In the past one and a half century, American ascendancy in north-east and south-east Asia was challenged four times.

1900s: Russia.

Around 1900 Russian expansion into Manchuria and Korea threatened British and American hegemony. As will be shown below, the US government responded by pushing Japan to confront Russia. This led to the Russian-Japanese War of 1905.

1940s: Japan

The colonization by Japan of Korea and Manchuria was well accepted by the United States especially in so far as it provided a check to Soviet expansion. Japanese leaders had a clear understanding of this point which is why they presented their initial penetration into North China as a way to support Chiang Kai-shek’s war against Communism. As the Kuomintang (KMT) was unable to extend its control over North

Table 5.1 Challenges to US hegemony in the Pacific

	Country which threw down the gauntlet	Time interval of the challenge	Buffer country	War	Duration of the war	Direct US action
1	Russia	1890 – 1905	Japan	Russo-Japanese War	1904 – 1905	No
2	Japan	1937 – 1941		Pacific War	1941 – 1945	Yes
3	NV+China	1945 – 1950	France	Indochina War	1950 – 1954	No
4	NV+China+USSR	1950 – 1976	South Vietnam	Vietnam War	1962 – 1975	Yes
5	China	2010 – 20??	Japan, Vietnam	?????	???? – ????	?

Notes: NV means North Vietnam. The term “buffer country” designates US allies who waged wars against their common opponent on behalf of the United States. Thus, France acted as a buffer country in the Indochina War (also called First Vietnam War) which was funded by the US, and South Vietnam played the role of a buffer puppet country in the Second Vietnam War.

Needless to say, every time the US took directly part in the war it had several allies: Australia, Britain, China, New Zealand, the Netherlands in the war against Japan; Australia, South Korea, Thailand in the Vietnam War. The Indochina and Vietnam wars were a challenge to US hegemony not by themselves but because of the “domino theory” which speculated that if one state in a region came under the influence of Communism, then the surrounding countries would follow through a domino effect. This theory was used as a justification for US intervention. The theory proved to be false in the sense that the US defeat in Vietnam was *not* followed by the fall of any other domino. Yet, successive US administrations must have found this argument convincing enough to get deeply involved in this conflict.

We left an interrogation mark in the last column of the last line, but there can be little doubt that if there is indeed a war, there will be a direct US intervention for there is no buffer country that can “do the job” alone.

China, this made indeed sense. That arrangement was accepted by Chiang Kai-shek through the He-Umezumi Agreement of 10 June 1935 (more details can be found in Roehner (2016c). The fact that this policy was not opposed by the United States is shown by the continuation of US exports, notably oil and weapons, to Japan. At the same time, in what was called a “Munich in the Orient”, Chinese requests for help were ignored. In any case it was better to keep North China under Japanese influence than to leave it open to Communist and Soviet penetration.

The Japanese attack on Shanghai in mid-1937 was a watershed for this was a part of China which was well under the control of the KMT and where there was no Communist or Soviet threat. Through this action and the subsequent occupation of most of eastern China, Japan threatened US hegemony. Four years later this led to the Pacific War.

1950–1972: China

Needless to say, the Communist victory in China was a set-back for the United States. As had been done earlier for the Soviet Union, a containment policy was put in place.

On the economic side on 16 December 1950 the US government froze Chinese assets in America. Moreover a trade embargo was put in place by the United States and

its allies. Probably few of our readers would know the meaning of “COCOM” and “CHINCOM”. This is indeed not surprising because, quite astonishingly, these important committees are *not* mentioned in the Wikipedia article about the foreign trade of China. The article suggests that the low trade level was a consequence of the self-reliance policy of the Chinese government. It was not and this misrepresentation can be corrected very easily by mentioning excerpts of an article published on 11 June 1971 in the American newspaper “The Washington Post”.

Its title is: “US ends ban on China Trade” and it says:

The President’s action lifts a 21-year-old embargo against trade with China permitting selected exports to China and the import of goods from China on the same basis goods from other Communist countries are admitted. The President’s order does not remove the prohibition against the shipment of locomotives to China (one of the key items the Peking government is said to want) and of aircraft.

This action did not free trade with China but it put it under the same rules as for other Communist countries. Before that, the embargo on trade with China was much stricter than the one for the other Communist countries. The later was managed by COCOM, an acronym for “International Coordinating Committee on Strategic Trade with Communist Countries”, an organization which had 17 member states (mostly NATO countries but also Japan) and was created and headed by the US (it was headquartered in Paris in an annex of the US embassy). Trade with China was managed by CHINCOM; it enforced a more restrictive embargo which was called the “China Differential”. Although the embargo started with the Korean War it was not lightened at the end of the war. On the contrary, following the wishes of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, it was made even stricter. The openly stated objective was to bring down the Communist regime by raising popular discontent. Around 1960 when the support of the Soviet Union started to crumble, the situation of China became really very difficult and it remained so until 1971⁴⁴.

Incidentally, regarding the embargo issue, one can draw the following comparison.

- It is reported that Chairman Mao was not pleased when Premier Nikita Khrushchev visited the United States in September 1959. His displeasure is quite understandable because at that time China was still under the very harsh embargo that we have just described.
- However, 13 years later, the North Vietnamese government was not pleased when in 1972 the Chinese government invited President Nixon while the Vietnam

⁴⁴According to the data published in the “Historical Statistics of the United States”, US exports to mainland China totalled 359 million dollars in 1947, 3 in 1959 0 in 1960 and 7 in 1961. According to the data published in Mitchell (1982) Japanese imports from China (including Hong Kong) represented 124 billion yen in 1970 (five times less than the imports from Australia) and then climbed to 528 in 1975.

War was still under way. It would end only in 1976, the year also marked by the death of Chairman Mao.

Regarding the Nixon visit it should be remembered that the United States switched diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to the PRC only on 1 January 1979, that is to say seven years after the landmark visit. This suggests that in the United States the policy of President Nixon was not well accepted by everybody. Actually the first major power which exchanged ambassadors with China was France; this occurred on 27 January 1964, eight years before the visit of President Nixon, and in a time when France had an independent foreign policy.

1973–2009: interlude

The two following decades from 1973 to 1991 were marked by a strategic cooperation between China and the US which was mainly directed against the Soviet Union. This was a time (especially after the end of the Vietnam war) during which the US was even willing to sell state of the art weapons to China. Then, in the 1980s, US companies started to establish joint ventures in China. After 1990, with the Soviet Union out of the game, there was no longer any need for a strategic cooperation with China. After all, the Communist party was still in power in China.

These decades were marked by US direct investment in China. However, such investments remained limited compared with investments in countries like Canada or Europe. According to the “Statistical Abstract of the United States” (2011), in 2009 the US direct investment position in China was \$50 billion which represented 1.4% of the total US investment abroad. It would make sense to add to this number the \$50 billion invested in Hong Kong. The total of \$100 billion should be compared with the investment in Singapore (\$77 b), Mexico (\$98 b), Australia (\$106 b), Canada (\$260 b), the UK (\$471 b), the Netherlands (\$472 b), or Europe as a whole (\$1,976 b).

2010-20??: China and Russia.

In 2010, the Obama administration initiated a shift in strategy aimed at bolstering the United States’ defense ties with countries in north-east and south-east Asia and expanding the US naval presence there⁴⁵.

This policy is often described as a containment strategy, but what does containment really mean? It is not only a static containment but in fact a more hostile attitude. As will be shown below it consists in encouraging close allies, namely Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, Vietnam, Australia to stand up against China.

Between 2009 and 2012 the United States has carried out its largest joint military exercises with South Korea since the Korean War and increased the US troop pres-

⁴⁵It was called a “pivot” to Asia, that is to say a rotation move toward Asia.

ence in South Korea (Ross 2012). In July 2010 in Hanoi, after extensive discussions with all the claimants to the islands except China, Secretary of State Clinton declared US support for the negotiating positions of the Philippines and Vietnam. In 2011, the United States and Vietnam signed a memorandum of understanding on defense cooperation. Moreover, Japan has signed strategic partnerships with the Philippines and Vietnam which complement their US ties (Ross 2012).

Taking advantage of the close ties with its allies, the United States is also developing new naval bases. In addition to the bases in Okinawa, the US Navy has now access to the new Changi Naval Base in Singapore and will soon have access to the Gangjeong naval base that is under construction in the south of Jeju Island off the south-west coast of South Korea and only 400 km away from the Chinese coast. The “temporary” bases in the Philippines have become permanent except in name. US Marines are stationed “temporarily” in Australia.

In short, we are back to a containment situation similar to the one directed against Russia in the 1900s. That is why it is important to give a closer look to this episode. This is the purpose of the next section.

The competition for predominant influence over Korea brought about three major conflicts.

- 1 The Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) which opposed China to Japan.
- 2 The Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) between Russia and Japan.
- 3 The Korean War (1950-1953) which opposed (mainly) the United States and the newly founded “People’s Republic of China”.

The United States took part directly only in the last of these wars. However, as will appear in the following sections, it already played an active diplomatic role in the wars of 1894 and 1904. This shows that even in a time when the British Empire was the dominant power and despite the fact that Britain was heavily involved in East Asia through its colonies of Hong Kong, India and Burma, the Pacific rim was already considered by the US State Department as belonging to the US zone of influence.

In the early 1890s although there was a muted US-GB rivalry in Hawaii, it seems that the British Foreign Office was ready to accept US predominance in the Pacific.

US role in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895)

Pre-Cold War containment policies against Russia

The expression “containment policy” was introduced around 1947 to describe President Truman’s policy with respect to the USSR. In that time the avowed objective

was to prevent the spread of Communism.

However, containment policies had already been used by western powers before 1945 and even well before the Revolution of 1917. Between 1850 and 1910 the purpose was to prevent the territorial expansion of Russia either southward towards the Black Sea or eastward towards Korea.

The first case occurred during the so-called Crimean War. In fact, this expression gives a wrong perception of this war for it was not at all confined to Crimea. It involved also campaigns by British and French forces directed against Russia in the areas of Saint Petersburg and in the island of Sakhaline in the Pacific. In other words, it was not a regional conflict but a large scale conflict.

Initially, Russia wanted to take advantage of the decay of the Ottoman Empire to expand its influence in the Balkans. This led to a war which was first limited to Russia and the Ottoman Empire. However, when the latter was quickly defeated, Britain and France entered the war to prevent a Russian victory which would have resulted in a territorial expansion.

Replace the Ottoman Empire by the Chinese Empire and the Balkans by Korea and you get the situation in north-east Asia. The policy of the United States, which was already the main power in the western Pacific, was smarter than the policy of Britain and France in the Balkans. Instead of helping China to withstand Russian expansion, the US State Department devoted this role to Japan. This was done in two steps. First, Korea had to be moved from the Chinese zone of influence to the one of Japan. This was accomplished through the Sino-Japanese war of 1894–1895. The second step was to remove the Russian pressure in this area which was indeed obtained through the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905.

After 1917 the role of Japan became even more important for it provided a bulwark against the spread of Communism in Manchuria (which had been part of the Russian zone of influence) and in the northern part of China. Had Japan restricted itself to its assigned role of containing Communism, there would have been no Pacific War. The attack against the United States in the Philippines, against Britain in Singapore and against the Netherlands in Indonesia was a strategic blunder of first magnitude.

In summary, as far as containment is concerned, we see that even prior to 1945, there were two cases: first the one directed against Tsarist Russia (1850–1910) and secondly the one directed against Soviet and Communist expansion in the north of China (1925–1939).

The regional context in north-east Asia

In 1890 Korea was a tributary country of China which means that there were Chinese troops in Korea and that the king was in a sense under Chinese protection. In other

words, by disrupting the rule of the king, Japan was at the same time weakening Chinese influence in the country. This was its main objective particularly for opening Korea to Japanese trade.

In the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905 the United States had a clearly defined objective, namely to stop the Russian progression toward the Pacific rim. The US agenda with respect to the Sino-Japanese war was less clear. On the one hand, a Japanese victory will weaken China and boost Japan, thus enabling it to oppose the Russian expansion. On the other hand, the Japanese expansion may come in conflict with the US “open door” requirement in Korea. So, to get the best on the two sides the US and Britain will support Japan, but after its victory they will limit its expansion and rights in Korea.

The excerpts given below also show that in 1893 the US was already the dominant power in the Pacific. This can be seen through the important role it plays in the Sino-Japanese war but also in the precedence it is able to secure over British interests in Hawaii. Naturally, through the subsequent conquest of Guam and the Philippines the US position will even become much stronger.

Chronology: 1890-1895

In the following chronology the page numbers refer to articles published in the “Chicago Tribune” on the date given in the first line of the corresponding paragraphs.

Feb 5, 1890 Impeding revolution in Corea [that was the spelling at that time]. There are indications that the reigning dynasty is about to be overthrown. (p. 5)

Jun 16, 1890 Insults to foreigners in Japan. Rumors that Russia has taken Corea. (p.3)

[This news shows two things (i) That anti-foreigner demonstrations are not confined to China (ii) That there is a permanent fear about Russia taking a solid position on the Pacific coast.]

Jul 5, 1891 China grows restless. Rumors of uprisings against foreigners, particularly missionaries. The news are alarming and the American fleet has been ordered to the open ports; the Admiral is doing what he can to protect our people. (p. 27)

[The occurrence of riots directed against foreigners and the ensuing military interventions of (mostly) British and US warships would be a permanent feature of the coming decades. The most spectacular case was of course the Boxer uprising of 1900 but there were many other cases of smaller proportion.]

Sep 21, 1891 Russia’s designs on China. It is ready to seize any opportunity to gain territory. Two months after their occurrence, the facts of Russia’s design during the recent Chinese uprising along the valley of the Yangtze River have leaked out; it in-

volved the steamers of the "Russian Volunteer Fleet". (p.9)

[The "Russian Volunteer Fleet" was a state-controlled ship transport association established in the Russian Empire in 1878 funded from voluntary contributions collected by subscription. It was based in Nagasaki. The nature of this uprising remains unclear but the article shows America's great and permanent concern about Russian plans in the Far East.]

Sep 27, 1891 The Kingdom of Korea with its 20 million people may soon be annexed by Russia. Recently, Korea abolished the Office of the Consul General in New York. (p. 7)

[Finding ways to oppose the Russian expansion toward the Pacific was the main goal of the US government in these years. In the present case what reactivated US fears was the closing of the New York Consulate, in fact in itself an event of rather small significance.

In a more general way, there was an inherent contradiction in the policy of western powers in China. Their objective was to impose an open door policy in order to boost their exports. However by weakening its central government (especially through western control of Chinese taxes and unequal treaties) they made China an easy prey for its powerful neighbors, namely Japan and Russia. In other words, there was a contradiction between short and long term western interests. This contradiction led to the carving out of Outer Mongolia by Russia, then to the Japanese invasion and eventually to the success of the Communists.]

Nov 15, 1891 The US has no designs on Hawaii. England was disturbed by an unwarranted report but in fact Uncle Sam's cruiser "Charleston" only visited Honolulu for the prosaic purpose of filling its coal bunkers. (p.4)

[In November 1891 such a statement already sounded fairly unrealistic. A little more than one year later the same newspaper would carry the strong title: "The US must have Hawaii" (see below at the date of 31 January 1893). Let us recall that Hawaii became a protectorate of the US in 1894 when the Queen of Hawaii was removed from power.]

Jul 18, 1892 Return of Reverend H.G. Appenzeller from Korea where he had spent the past 8 years. (p.8)

[This article (as well as subsequent ones) shows that there was a US missionary presence in Korea.]

Jan 31, 1893 The United States must have Hawaii. (p. 4)

[In sharp contrast with the article of 15 November 1891 (i.e. 14 months earlier) this article (as well as many subsequent articles) demands the annexation of Hawaii.]

Mar 9, 1893 If the United States does not annex the Hawaiian Islands civil war may

follow. In the past week there have been scenes of much enthusiasm in Hawaii as the “Stars and Stripes” were being lifted. (p. 4)

[Maintaining peace and human rights is a standard argument for foreign interventions by leading powers.]

Mar 30, 1893 The public interest attaching to Hawaii grows out of its central position in the commerce of the Pacific Ocean. Honolulu is exactly in the track of all steamers sailing to Australasia from San Francisco and Puget Sound. (p. 10)

[There is of course no doubt about the strategic position of Hawaii.]

Aug 12, 1893 What if China and Hindoustan [i.e. India] should arise in their might? Will China allow herself to be stifled in the folds of the European anaconda, or will this attempt to partition the largest nation of the world resurrect the ancient valor and endurance of the Mongol race? (p. 8)

[Today (i.e. in 2017) some 124 years after the question was raised, we are about to get an answer.]

Nov 12, 1893 Public opinion is adverse to Queen Liliuokalani’s restoration. Uncle’s Sam bayonets should not be used to prop up a decayed throne. Conspiracy theory is exploded. (p. 2)

[Knowing what we now know is it not remarkable how cleverly Hawaii’s annexation was acted and displayed.]

Jul 2, 1894 Japan wants to control Korea. Japan summoned the king and asked him to relinquish Chinese suzerainty. Both China and Japan sent troops. (p.7)

Jul 19, 1894 Japan is not seeking war and has no ulterior motives. Minister Dunn [Edwin Dunn, US envoy to Japan from 14 July 1893 to 2 July 1897] is instructed to seek peace. (p.5)

[In the present article as well as in the next, the “Chicago Tribune” wishes to hide the fact that Japan was seeking a pretext to start the war. In so doing, it probably adopts the position of the US State Department. For the US government the main priority was to keep Russia out of Korea. Replacing the weak Chinese suzerainty by a strong Japanese protectorate was a good way to reach this goal. As a result, during the whole war the US supported Japan.]

Jul 21, 1894 Outlook is decidedly peaceful. (p. 5)

[This title misrepresented the real situation. In fact Japan had sent a kind of ultimatum to Korea which asked for a number of institutional changes. Although the demands were accepted by Korea, the war nevertheless started 4 days later without any formal declaration of war being made.]

Jul 26, 1894 It is reported that the Japanese have attacked and sunk a Chinese troop

transport. On land, Chinese and Japanese troops are on the march toward each other. (p. 6)

[There were 1,000 troops aboard the troop transport which was sunk by the Japanese and this action took place prior to any declaration of war. As they were not rescued either by the Japanese nor by the Chinese escort ships, most of them drowned.]

Jul 28, 1894 Japanese score the first victories. Attempts to patch up peace will fail. (p. 5)

Jul 28, 1894 US Marines are dispatched to Seoul to protect the US legation. The King of Korea is a Japanese prisoner. (p.5)

Jul 28, 1894 In considering the Korean imbroglio there are three cardinal facts which must be kept in mind. (i) The abject condition of the native Koreans. (ii) *The tyranny and impudence of China.* (iii) The inadequacy of its claim to suzerainty. (p.5)

[In case there were still some doubts about the US position, this article removes them.]

Jul 28, 1894 The Japanese government wishes to engage Major Jeremiah R. Wasson of Iowa for leading one of the Japanese armies to victory over the Celestial Empire. (p.5)

[This wish has probably more to do with trying to win over the US than with a real Japanese intention. Indeed, nothing materialized.]

Jul 29, 1894 The Japanese have very little in common with the Chinese. The Japanese are bright, progressive, and susceptible to the influences of Western civilization. The Chinese are sturdy in their opposition to Western ideas. (p. 24)

[This was not really true for the Beiyang Army and the Beiyang Fleet were also modeled on western standards. It became far less true in subsequent decades.]

Jul 30, 1894 The Japanese Consul-General at New York explains that it is nonsense to say that the Japanese intend to take Korea. (p.5)

[Needless to say, nobody believed such a declaration but the very fact that it is nevertheless reported in the “Chicago Tribune” shows (once more) that the US is on the Japanese side.]

Sep 30, 1894 America holds a prominent position in Korea. (p.1)

[Three reasons explain that. (i) The presence of US missionaries (ii) The US-Korea “Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce and Navigation” of 1884 (iii) Moreover, the US had close relations with China and Japan, the two countries which had a prominent influence in Korea.]

Oct 25, 1894 Major Richter, a German adviser to the Chinese army, is disgusted with the Chinese and returned to Germany. (p. 7)

Nov 17, 1894 A new Treaty between the United States and Japan is about to be signed. It will give Japanese the right to immigrate to the United States, and to enjoy the same rights in the country as US citizens. (p. 5)

[This confirms the close connection between the US and Japan. In 1906, however, the San Francisco Board of Education enacted a measure which sent Japanese and Chinese children to segregated schools. The Government of Japan was outraged by this policy, claiming that it violated the 1894 treaty.]

Nov 23, 1894 Following up its respectful but peremptory declination of the offer of the United States to act as mediator between the contending parties, Japan has made a second proposition which shows its good will towards this country. [The US was a mediator in the Russo-Japanese war; this article shows that it was already trying to assume this role in 1894.]

Dec 7, 1894 The Chinese Council (the so-called “Tsung Li Yamen”) has decided to send a special Ambassador to Tokio fully authorized to negotiate a Treaty of Peace. This is the result of an intimation from US Minister Charles H. Denby [ambassador to China]. (p.7)

Dec 7, 1894 A constant passage of tens of thousands of levies from all parts of China to the north is going on. It would be a misnomer to describe these men as soldiers, because they are nearly all mere coolies, taken straight from their farms. (p.9)
[Some 50 years later, the same observation would apply to the soldiers of the Kuomintang armies.]

Jan 5, 1895 John W. Foster, ex-Secretary of State, has just arrived at Vancouver en route to Japan to act as counsel for the Chinese Commissioners. (p.5)
[It seems that US efforts to become a mediator take shape.]

Mar 12, 1895 Since the war between China and Japan began, numerous dispatches relating to attacks on American missionaries have been received. (p. 7)
[It seems that the fact that the US supported Japan was seen clearly by the Chinese population.]

May 7, 1895 Japan precipitately abandoned all Manchuria. Even the peninsula including Port Arthur is to be given up. (p.7)
[This was in result of pressure by Russia, Britain and France. This move was at first kept secret in Japan but on 13 June that is to say about one month later the “Chicago Tribune” had an headline saying that the submission to Russia, Germany and France irritates the Japanese people.]

Aug 21, 1895 The Chinese officials have refused to allow the American and British consuls to be present at the examination of the witnesses as to the recent massacre of missionaries at Ku Cheng (northern Fujian). (p.6) [11 British persons were killed by members of a semi-religious organization called the “fasting school” because its members adepts of vegetarianism. This action prefigured the Boxer rebellion.]

Main features

The main features resulting from the previous chronology can be summarized as follows.

- In 1894 it was the United States (not Britain) which was already the main power in the northern part of the Pacific rim.
- The US government supported Japan and played a prominent role in the peace negotiations.
- The pressure of Britain, France and Russia prevented Japan to get the full benefit of its victories, particularly in Manchuria.
- By several of its aspects, the war foreshadowed future Sino-Japanese conflicts, e.g. the poor quality of Chinese troops, or the occurrence of massacres such as the Port Arthur massacre by the Japanese army on 21 November 1894.

How the US persuaded Japan to go to war against Russia

The US attitude illustrated by the following articles can be summarized by saying that in the latent conflict between Russia and Japan in the Far East, the “New York Times” poured oil on the brewing fire.

A similar policy of fanning the flames, this time with respect to the discord between the USSR and China, was followed by this newspaper (as well as by the State Department) in the period 1976–1989 of strategic alliance between the US and China.

Context

At the end of the 19th century the US administration was able to persuade Japan that only war could stop the Russian expansion in Manchuria and Korea. The operation was a remarkable success. Not only was Russian expansion stopped but in a second phase, the United States hosted the peace conference, a role which was recognized by the attribution of the Nobel Peace prize to President Theodore Roosevelt in 1906. This was a remarkable achievement for a man who, as a volunteer, had led his “Rough Riders” fight in Cuba during the war of 1898 against Spain. Even in Norway, the attribution was disputed by some persons.

In Japan the war of 1904-1905 was a watershed. It set in motion the colonization and war dynamic that led eventually to the invasion of the whole eastern part of China.

Knowing what we now know, namely how the expansion of Japan eventually led to the Pacific War, it may seem very strange that the US encouraged Japan's ambitions in Korea in 1905 and even more strange that it did not try to stop it in the 1930s after Japan had attacked northern China. In order to make the story more plausible we need to explain briefly why Japanese expansion was in fact well accepted by the US, at least until 1939 and also why after this date cooperation suddenly changed into confrontation.

Until 1939 the Japanese occupation of Manchuria and China was more or less accepted by the United States as a bulwark against Soviet influence and Communist progress⁴⁶. Since November 1936 Japan had been, not only a member, but together with Germany, the main initiator of the anti-Comintern Pact. Paradoxically, the Nationalist government of Chiang kai-shek was also an anti-Comintern Pact member⁴⁷. After June 1941, in the eyes of western countries, being part of the anti-Comintern Pact was no longer an asset, it became a liability. Of course, this was temporary. After 1945, being anti-Communist was again seen with much favor by the State Department.

After the German invasion of June 1941, the Soviet Union was no longer seen as a threat but as a crucial asset in the war against Germany. It can also be recalled that after 1938 the Communist Red Army became, at least formally, a component of the Nationalist Army. For the US State Department these developments took away any remaining justifications of the Japanese occupation of China.

Chronology

But for the moment let us come back to 1905. In the three decades after the Meiji Revolution (1868) the modernization of Japan progressed rapidly to the point of making it capable of confronting a major world power like Russia.

At the end of the 19th century it was still Britain which was the super-power. Although her wish was also to stop the Russian advance in north-east Asia, she was rather in favor of a negotiated settlement. It should be remembered that around 1900 a large part of Britain's military resources were engaged in the South-African war against the Boers. Japan and Britain signed the Anglo-Japanese Alliance on 30 January 1902.

The following chronology describes how the US government had encouraged Japan

⁴⁶A sign of US acceptance can be found in the evolution of bilateral trade between the US and Japan. Between 1930 and 1939 Japanese imports from the US doubled whereas Japanese exports to the US increased some 20%.

⁴⁷See the Wikipedia article entitled "Anti-Comintern Pact". The Comintern was an international organization headed by the USSR whose objective was to spread Communism. In 1941, following its occupation by Germany, even Denmark became an anti-Comintern member; in June 1941 it arrested hundreds of Danish Communists many of whom were later deported. In France many Communists had already been arrested after the signature of the pact between Germany and the USSR.

to go to war against Russia (in this respect see the cartoons of Fig. 5.1a,b). It is based on New York Times articles. A fairly safe assumption is that this newspaper reflects the positions of the State Department.

Basically one can distinguish four themes in the news regarding this question.

- 1 Accounts of Russian advances in Korea.
- 2 The interests and objectives of Russia and Japan are incompatible.
- 3 Accounts of negotiations between Russia and Japan.
- 4 Japan is about to go to war against Russia.

Here, we will restrict ourselves to the news of the last kind. However, a more complete account involving all 4 themes can be found in Roehner (2016d).

Dec 4, 1897 Indications of a [coming] conflict between Russia and Japan. Russia is buying supplies and travelers report that the garrison at Vladivostok has been reinforced by the arrival of troops from the Black Sea.

[With the arrival of new troops it is not surprising that more supplies are needed. To conclude that it announces a war is perhaps too hasty.]

Dec 24, 1897 The Japanese Army is full of Russian spies disguised as Japanese.

[If that had really been true Japan would not have been victorious in the subsequent war.]

Dec 24, 1897 Russia is absorbing Korea. Her agents control the country, and Japan is getting ready for impending hostilities.

[This was simply untrue.]

Dec 27, 1897 Seventeen British warships back an ultimatum against Russian domination. Japan supports the British action. Her fleet of 30 vessels is awaiting the result of the protest against the dismissal of an English customs officer.

[To see three major countries go to war for the dismissal of a custom officer would be surprising. Indeed, nothing of that kind happened.]

Jan 1, 1898 Japan feels warlike. Captain Sakuzzi, who is in San Francisco, says Russia is treating his country shamefully.

[Should one attribute such a great importance to the declaration of a captain?]

Jan 22, 1898 Japan is prepared for war. St. James's Gazette says she could handle the Russian and German ships east of Suez alone.

[Barely two weeks after the agreement of 10 January 1898, the NYT speaks of war once again.]

Apr 6, 1898 There is a war feeling in Japan.



Fig. 5.1a,b Two cartoons illustrating the role of Britain and the United States in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905. (a) Britain pushes Japan against Russia while the USA is watching approvingly. (b) In this Russian cartoon the USA is pushing the horse of the emperor of Japan over the brink while Britain (in red) is trying to interpose itself. At that time Britain had an alliance with France which itself was a close ally of Russia. Although in 1902 England had signed a treaty with Japan, it was certainly not her desire to see Russia go to war and even less be defeated. It can be noted that on the Internet there are many cartoons which celebrate President Theodore Roosevelt as a peace maker. Probably the US State Department had already a good public relations service. *Source: Internet*

Apr 24, 1898 Russia makes friends with Japan for the sake of furthering her schemes. The Czar is increasing his military and naval forces so that he may *dominate the Pacific*.

[April 1898 saw the beginning of the short Spanish-American War. Through the annexation of Guam and the Philippines it marked a major step in US westward expansion in the Pacific. This brought the United States on a collision course with Russia.

The US fear that Russia was willing and capable of “dominating the Pacific” was probably exaggerated for at least two reasons.

- In 1867 Russia had sold Alaska to the United States for \$7 million. A country willing to dominate the Pacific would not do that.
- East Asia was just too far away from the economic center of gravity of Russia. It is true that it was also far away from the US west coast, with however the crucial difference of sea versus land transportation.

Whereas US concern regarding Russian global domination in the Pacific may have been misplaced, in Korea itself the threat was quite real. One should not forget that in 1882 the United States had signed with Korea a “Treaty of peace, amity, commerce and navigation”. It is only in the following years that the United States dropped its ambitions in Korea in exchange for Japanese acceptance of the colonization of the

Philippines (see the Taft-Katsura secret agreement of 29 July 1905).

Another major US concern was that Russia might get preferential treatment in China.]

Jul 26, 1899 Russia and Japan are arming, with a view to a possible conflict in Korea.

Nov 13, 1899 London. Hurry orders have been received by the builders of the Japanese battleship now in process of construction at Clyde Bank to complete the vessel as speedily as possible. The new ship, which will be one of the largest afloat, is to be finished by Jan. 1, 1900. It is believed that these instructions are the result of the increasing tension between Japan and Russia.

[Diplomatically England favored Russo-Japanese discussions. However it is clear that by selling state-of-the art warships to Japan England was encouraging Japan to confront Russia.]

Jan 13, 1900 Japan prepares for war to stop Russia's advance in Korea.

[It is probably true that Japan was preparing for war because this is the duty of the military. At the same time, however, there were negotiation attempts which showed that an agreement was not completely excluded.]

Jan 27, 1900 Japan may attack Russia. Great naval preparations suggest such an intention.

Apr 12, 1900 Japan to war with Russia? Muscovite naval officer says clash is inevitable and Great Britain will be drawn into it.

[This entry gives the impression that the diplomacy of Japan is decided by naval officers. It may have been true in the 1930s, but was it already true in 1900?]

Feb 17, 1901 Two powers want Korea. War between Russia and Japan became imminent in June 1900 and is still threatening.

Mar 9, 1901 A crisis has arisen owing to Russia's action regarding Manchuria. Great Britain is reported to have asked if the United States is prepared to take joint action with her. Japan is relied upon to take action in harmony with the United States and Great Britain.

[Previous articles have suggested that it was only Japan which felt worried and threatened by the Russian advance in Manchuria and Korea. This was certainly not realistic. Britain's exports to China surpassed by far those of other western powers or Japan. While much smaller, US exports to China were in rapid progression. Thus, the fact that Britain and the US were able to convince Japan to fight the war alone was a brilliant operation.]

Mar 22, 1901 It is Japan, which has every reason to see a distinct menace to herself

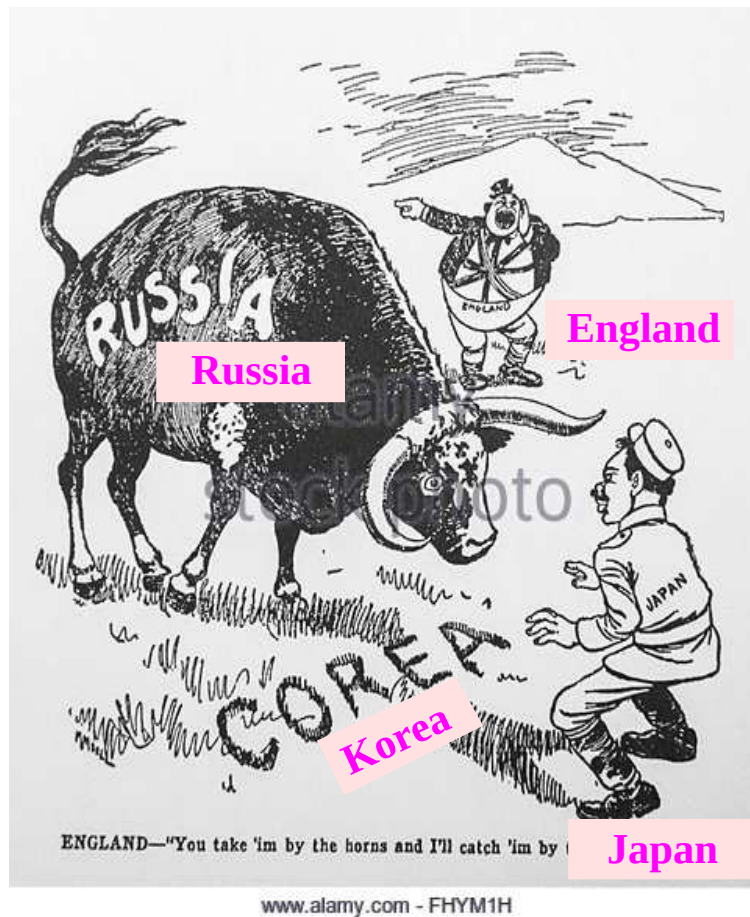


Fig. 5.2 England's advice to Japan. England says to Japan: “You take him by the horns and I will take him by the tail”. In the same line of thought one should remember that in the Crimean war (1853-1856) England, France and Turkey had opposed Russia's southward expansion. *Source: Internet. The cartoon was probably published in an American (rather than English) newspaper but we could not find which one.*

in the aggressiveness of Russia in North China.

[Russian advance in *Korea* understandably was a concern for Japan, but Russian advance in *North China* was also a concern for Britain and the US. In other words, this article is the continuation of the public relations campaign destined to convince Japan to go to war alone against Russia.

An article of the “San Francisco Call” (28 March 1901, p. 1) reports that a member of the Cabinet said that “the United States is not concerned with the political and territorial aspects of the Chinese situation but only with its commercial character”. This is a strange statement because obviously the three aspects can hardly be separated. Commercial agreements (such as the one of October 1903) with China were almost useless because the Chinese government was too weak to enforce them especially in peripheral regions like Manchuria.

Incidentally, there are two short news on the same page of this newspaper which give a striking picture of the situation in China. The first is that 8 anti-Christian rioters were beheaded at Changsha in the province of Hunan; the second says that 3 Chinese

were killed in Legation Street in Beijing by a German sentry.]

Dec 8, 1901 There are anticipations of a war between Russia and Japan. A British Army officer tells of the quiet preparations; regiments are stationed at all available points.

[Once again, these anticipations of war are based on fairly flimsy evidence provided by a simple officer.]

Mar 10, 1902 Russian military have been ordered to remove their families from Port Arthur because preparations are being made for a war with Japan.

[According to this article Russia was prepared for an attack on Port Arthur in March 1902. However, when it really occurred on 8-9 February 1904, Russia was taken by surprise.]

Jun 7, 1903 It is believed that war between Russia and Japan can hardly be averted.

Oct 8, 1903 Japanese in Korea want troops sent to protect them on account of the menacing attitude of Russia. The reply of Japan is not yet known.

[Once again, the NYT relies on mere rumors to fan the flames.]

On 8 October, [a commercial treaty was signed between the United States and China which opened the Manchurian ports Mukden and Antung to US commerce](#). The treaty contained also an article for the protection of American trade marks, patents, and copyrights in China (Chicago Tribune 9 Oct 1903). It seems that this treaty was mainly directed against Russian interests in Manchuria. An article of 8 November 1903 talks of anti-Russian agitation in America, a second of 28 November 1903 observed that "Russia resents American pressure" and a third of 19 December 1903 remarked that "America irritates Russia". All these little incidents together with the fact that they were duly reported in such an important newspaper as the "Chicago Tribune" show that there was a state of tension between Russia and the United States. The commercial competition in Manchuria was probably not the only reason. Although this point would deserve a closer investigation it cannot be undertaken in the framework of this chapter.]

Oct 12, 1903 Japan and Russia not far from war. One dispatch says Japan meant to declare war yesterday.

[This was written about 4 months before the war actually started.]

Dec 10, 1903 Russia menaces Korea. Eight warships, including two battleships, said to have arrived at Chemul-Po. This may end the negotiations with Japan.

[Yet, the negotiations continued until January 1904.]

Feb 6, 1904 Baron Hayashi [Japanese minister to Great Britain] says a Russian refusal to sign a Treaty regarding Manchuria will mean war.

Feb 10, 1904 A forerunner of the attack of 1941 against the Philippines and Pearl Harbor. Three Russian battleships and four cruisers were disabled at Port Arthur [Now Dalian (Liaoning, China) on the north west side of the Korean peninsula]. Two Russian cruisers were disabled at Chemulpo [now Incheon west of Seoul]. Troops were landed near Seoul and in northern Korea.

This episode is of particular interest (which is why it received a special title) because it shows that for starting a war the Japanese used basically the same tactical principles in this episode as in December 1941. One can emphasize the following features.

- The attack by Japanese torpedo boats on Port Arthur was a surprise attack in the sense that it preceded the declaration of war. It was the same at Pear Harbor: the war was declared as the Japanese aircraft were already in action over the Philippines and over Hawaii. It can be noted that Chemulpo was a neutral port which, apart from the Russian warships, also harbored American, British, French and Italian warships. That is why the battle took place at high sea off the port.

- The Japanese attack was a *combined operation* which involved landing of troops together with an attack on Russian battleships in port. Similarly, in 1941 apart from the attack on US airfields in the Philippines and on US battleships in Hawaii there was a landing of troops in the Philippines which, at that time, was a US colony.

Feb 10, 1904 Comment of Admiral Bowles: “It is in the interest of the United States that Japan should be victorious in this war”

Sep 5, 1905 Signature of the Portsmouth Peace Treaty.

Japanese reaction to the Peace Treaty

Sep 5-7, 1905 Anti-American riots in Tokyo, Yokohama and Kobe against the Portsmouth Treaty. In Tokyo four American churches were burned and the US Embassy had to be protected by troops. In Tokyo alone 17 persons were killed and 70% of the two-man police boxes were set on fire.

In most US sources these riots are described as being directed against the Japanese government. Actually the role played by the United States was also a key-target as shown by the following excerpt of a letter dated September 8, 1905 and published in the newspaper “Chicago Tribune”.

It is very sad to think of the Christian churches and mission property that have been ruined by mobs. We read of a Catholic priest’s residence being destroyed, a Methodist church being burned; and other acts of enmity toward Americans being done. You’d have expected such acts in China, where foreigners have

always been hated, but Japan has for years been considered as favoring western civilization. The ill feeling of the Japanese toward America is dramatically shown by their treatment of Mr. Edward H. Harriman⁴⁸ and his party in Tokyo. His name is so well known that the news of his having been attacked in the streets and stoned by a mob is quite shocking. The Harriman party was on the way to a dinner at the home of the minister of finance. Once recognized as American, the stones began to fly. Fortunately, he wasn't injured but Dr. Lyle, a person of his party, was struck on the shoulder and slightly hurt. The party was taken to the American legation and guarded by police.

The Taft diplomatic mission in the Pacific

As already mentioned at the beginning of the chapter the Taft mission of 1905 took place after the considerable US expansion in the US. Its objective was to confirm the new US rights and to export the model of a young democratic nation to the countries of the western Pacific rim, i.e. Japan, Korea (it became a Japanese colony only in 1910) and China.

Account of the incidents in Japan

The account about the anti-American incidents is confirmed by the testimony of the daughter of President Roosevelt who traveled to the Orient with the Taft mission of 1905. The mission went to Japan in July 1905, then to China and returned to Japan in October 1905. Here is what she says (Longworth 1933).

Since we had left Japan in July, the Treaty of Portsmouth had been signed, and Americans were about as unpopular as they had been popular before. I have never seen a more complete change. There was a story that bombs had been thrown at the Harriman party [that was of course an exaggeration] and we were told that if anyone asked, it would be advisable to say that we were English. The anti-American feeling, however, seemed to be confined to the populace. The officials were just as courteous and friendly as before.

An example of what went wrong in the late Qing dynasty

In a previous chapter we emphasized the importance of close interactions between the members of a society. In Miss Roosevelt's account of her visit to the Empress Dowager there is an episode which reveals how bad in this respect the situation

⁴⁸Although Mr. Harriman had no connection with the Portsmouth Treaty, he was close to the Roosevelt administration and his visit to Japan was at the invitation of the US ambassador in Tokyo. A railroad magnate, he was president of the “Union Pacific Railroad” and the “Southern Pacific Railroad”; he was also connected to the “Pacific Mail Steamship Company”. The object that he had in view was a plan for a round-the-world transportation line, under unified American control, by way of Japan, Manchuria, Siberia, European Russia, and the Atlantic Ocean. Such a railroad and steamship line would unite 4 of the most populous countries on the globe and would enable the United States to take a commanding position in the Orient. (excerpt of E.H. Harriman, “A biography”, Vol. 2.)

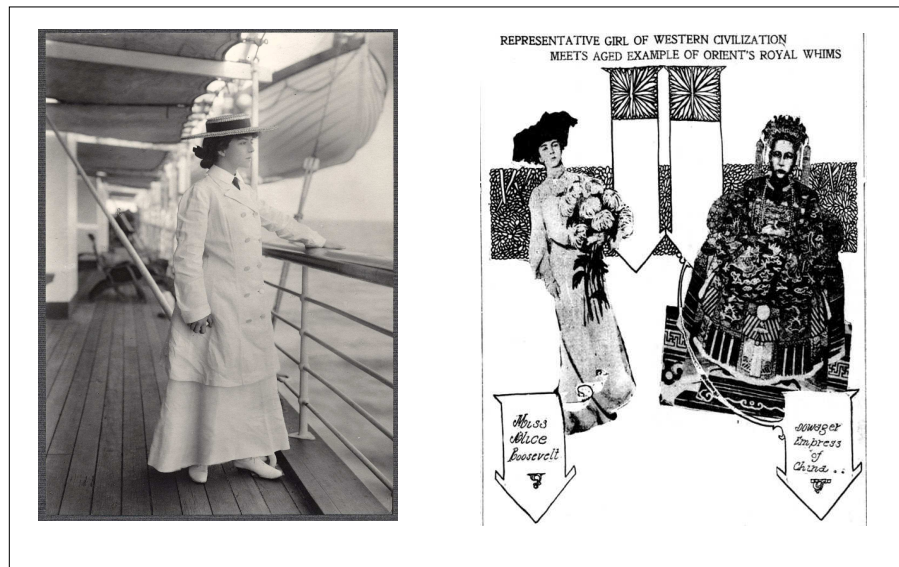


Fig. 5.3a,b Alice Roosevelt on her visit to eastern Asia. (a) Miss Roosevelt on the ship taking her to Japan. **(b)** Picture published in the Washington Post of 14 September 1905. On the left: miss Roosevelt, on the right the Dowager Empress of China. The caption at the top of the picture says: “Representative girl of western civilization meets aged example of Orient Royal whims. In her account Alice Roosevelt reported “though at the time we met her she was over seventy, one felt her charm. She by no means looked her age. On the lowest step of the throne sat the Emperor, a man in his early thirties; limp and huddled, his mouth a little open, his eyes dull and wandering, no expression in his face. We were not presented to him. No attention was paid to him. He just sat there, looking vacantly about. Source: <http://www.asia.si.edu/research/archives/alice/>

A revealing episode at the court of the Empress Dowager (Sep. 1905)

From the autobiography of the daughter of President Theodore Roosevelt (Longworth 1933)

After lunch, when we wandered about the gardens [at the Summer Palace] the Empress Dowager joined us. The interpreter was Wu Ting Fang who had been Minister [i.e. ambassador] in Washington. He stood between us, a little to the side, but suddenly, as the conversation was going on, the Empress said something in a small savage voice, whereat he turned quite gray, and got down on all fours, his forehead touching the ground. The Empress would speak; he would lift his head and say it in English to me; back would go his forehead to the ground while I spoke; up would come his head again while he said it in Chinese to the Empress; then back to the ground would go his forehead again. There was no clue to her reason for humiliating him before us. It was a curious experience to see this man kowtowing at one's feet. One literally had the feeling that she might at any moment say, “Off with his head” and that off the head would go.

When I told Father about it he thought it might have been to show us that this man whom we accepted as an equal was to her no more than something to put her foot on.

had become toward the end of the Qing dynasty. It is true that societies can be based on hierarchy and fear. That may work for a while but history suggests that human organizations work much better when based on the kind of synergy which

develops thanks to close interactions. An illustration was given previously through a comparison of the “Red Army” and KMT army.

Conclusion

The war and the Japanese victory was a watershed for Japan but also for the United States. After 1905 the United States assumed an ever greater role in China. As already observed, it is only after 1937 that American and Japanese interests in China really started to diverge. Prior to 1937, the action of Japan in northern China was seen as an effective contribution to the containment policy of Soviet Russia.

How does the US encourage his allies to confront China?

How does it work? France 2008 as a case in point.

In its principle the method is very simple.

Through its worldwide influence the US State Department will support foreign political leaders who promote its strategic objectives and ignore (or discredit) those who do not. Naturally, this is done indirectly and never openly. In order to appear on the “radar” of the State Department foreign political leaders must first signal themselves by some meaningful action. This is what the mayor of Paris did in May 2008⁴⁹.

Here is the story.

Because many of our readers may not be familiar with the French political landscape let us first describe the protagonists.

- The key-character is Bertrand Delanoë who was in 2008 the mayor of Paris. He belonged to the “Socialist Party” which, by the end of the year, would choose a new leader. The chosen leader then would have a good chance to become the Socialist candidate at the French presidential election of 2012.

- The second protagonist was a weekly rightwing newspaper called “Le Point” which is well-known for being what is called in Europe an “Atlanticist” media, that is to say one which advocates a close relationship (in practice a subservient one) with the United States.

- The third protagonist was the Dalai Lama. Although touring the world in the name of peace, it may be recalled that from 1956 until 1989 he openly supported and demanded Tibetan independence. After being awarded the Peace Nobel Prize in 1989 he changed his political program from independence to a large degree of autonomy but up to now he is still backed by the Tibetan government in exile in India which is itself supported by the Indian government. Needless to say, as all governments in exile, this one has for objective to gain sovereignty.

⁴⁹Naturally such an interpretation cannot be proven and it is obvious that any foreign leader would deny to be in the service of the State Department. The only thing that can be done is to highlight strange coincidences.

The story unfolded through the following steps.

Apr 22, 2008 The Dalai Lama was made an honorary citizen of Paris exacerbating tensions between France and China in the build up to the Beijing Olympics. The motion was backed by the mayor Bertrand Delanoë. While proposing the resolution at the city council, the mayor said that this is in “fraternal support to the Tibetan people who are fighting for their fundamental rights, their dignity, their freedom, and simply their life”. Such a statement must have been sweet music to the ears of the State Department.

Naturally in China it brought about different reactions. Thousands of demonstrators took to the streets of Chinese cities to denounce France and call for a boycott of French goods. (Irish Times 22 April 2008)

May 21, 2008 Delanoë published a book in which he describes his positions and program on problems of domestic and foreign policy; for instance he backed US intervention in Afghanistan.

May 22, 2008 “Le Point” devoted a long, laudatory editorial to Delanoë’s book in which his ambition to become the head of the Socialist Party was emphasized. Moreover, his portrait made the cover of this issue.

Jul 27, 2008 “Le Point” ran an article entitled “Delanoë is the favorite of the members of the Socialist Party”. The article described the result of a survey according to which Delanoë had the highest percentage of supporters. Needless to say, such surveys can be manipulated easily to give any desired result.

Nov 6, 2008 After being voted out by the members of the “Socialist Party” in a preliminary vote, Delanoë renounced to his candidacy for head of the “Socialist Party”.

Jun 8, 2009 Delanoë welcomed the Dalai Lama at the City Hall for a visit during which he received the “Citizen of Honor” award bestowed on him in 2008. He had already visited Delanoë on 16 October 2003.

This closes the Delanoë story. It can be added that, François Hollande, the person who became the Socialist candidate for the 2012 election and was indeed elected as president of France, was no less an “Atlanticist” than Delanoë. It is true that he did not meet with the Dalai Lama but in other respects (NATO, Snowden, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria) he carried out all the wishes of Washington.

The Delanoë story shows that the support of the State Department can help to fulfil part of the objective but the main part remains up to the candidate. Delanoë was probably just too old for becoming president in 2012 and in addition his neo-liberal program did not appeal to the members of the “Socialist Party”. Recently

Paris, 12 Sep. 2016: Meeting between Emmanuel Macron and the Dalai Lama



Fig. 5.4 Meeting between Emmanuel Macron and the Dalai Lama in a Parisian hotel on Monday 12 September 2016. At that time Mr. Macron was no longer Minister of Economy and he became the President of France only in May 2017; in other words, he had no official position. However, one can be sure that the US Senate was pleased with this meeting. On the left-hand side picture Mr. Macron receives a khata, a traditional Tibetan scarf. *Source: Internet*

the State Department has found a much better “horse” in Emmanuel Macron who became president in May 2017. Whereas Delanoë had the support of only one or two newspapers Emmanuel Macron was “put into orbit” through a tremendous media campaign which involved most TV networks (particularly BFM TV) and many newspapers. As early as August 2014 the magazine “Vanity Fair” (a French edition of the US magazine which has the same title) devoted a whole article to him. Its date, namely 28 August 2014, is interesting for it appeared only a few days after Mr. Macron was appointed “Minister of Economy and Finance”. As the writing of such a fairly long article must have taken some time, it is remarkable that it was ready so quickly. Let’s see whether or not President Macron will fulfill the wishes of his sponsors by being an obedient vassal.

We do not need to ask whether he will meet the Dalai Lama or not for he already did so (see picture) prior to being elected president. It is true that on 12 September 2016 the former minister of economy did no longer hold any official position in the French government.

Japan

Close economic and political cooperation between China and Japan would certainly benefit both countries but it would be a strategic disaster for the United States. Therefore it must not happen. One would expect this to be a high priority for the State Department. But how exactly is it implemented? In the present section we will take a closer look.

Various means can be used to raise the tension between China and Japan. Broadly speaking, one can mention the following.

- An essential condition is to prevent Japanese politicians who are favorable to China (e.g. Ichiro Ozawa or Yukio Hatoyama) from becoming prime minister and in case that nevertheless happens (after all Japan is a country where there are free elections) the experience should be as short as possible. An article in the New York Times of 23 January 2010 was entitled: “In Japan, the US is losing diplomatic ground to China”. But this situation did not last very long. Prime minister Hatoyama was driven out on 8 June 2010 after only 8 months in power.

WANG XIAOYING



Fig. xx A cartoon which illustrates prime minister Hatoyama’s short time in power. He felt caught between a rock and a hard place and resigned after only 8 months in power. The pressure from the US side came mostly through Japanese media, e.g. the “Japan Times” newspaper or the NHK TV channels. One can remember that the NHK was established during the US post-war occupation. Although in existence since 1897 the “Japan Times” was purged of its nationalist and leftist elements during the US occupation. The journalists tried to resist but their strike was broken. Thus, for Japanese citizens, the episode was seen as a domestic process. Signs of US discontent with Hatoyama’s policy can be identified only through a careful investigation. In short, it is a hidden and shrewd form of interference. *Source: Internet*

- Once the previous condition is fulfilled, it is relatively easy to maintain a state of tension by playing with various old grievances or by bringing up new ones such as the Senkaku/Diaoyu issue. In this respect it can be recalled that it was in Washington that the mayor of Tokyo, Shintaro Ishihara, announced that he was opening

a subscription to buy back the Senkaku Islands. More precisely the announcement was made on 16 April 2012 in a speech at the “Heritage Foundation”, a conservative and nationalist think tank.

Another episode which showed fairly clearly in which direction the wind is blowing occurred on 19 April 2014. Four days before the visit of President Obama, as a kind of welcome gift, Japan decided to build a radar station on the Japanese island of Yonaguni which is located some 200km south of the Senkaku islands. Building the radar base on this island which is much closer to China than to Japan’s main islands, will extend Japanese monitoring to the Chinese mainland itself. (Taipei Times 19 April 2014)

Needless to say, the tension generated by North Korea plays in the hands of the State Department by strengthening the strategic partnership of Japan with the US. The same observation holds for South Korea and even to some extent for the Philippines. The North Korean policy is now openly disapproved by the Chinese government. As a matter of fact, it is quite detrimental to China by isolating it with respect to these important neighbors. In contrast to the US which has almost no trade with North Korea, for China the economic sanctions have a cost.

A military conflict would likely be an even greater disaster for China⁵⁰.

In this respect, one can observe that the invasion of South Korea by North Korean forces at the end of June 1950 has had very negative consequences for China not only in Korea itself where it strengthened the dictatorship of President Rhee but also in Taiwan because it led the US to guaranty the security of Taiwan, something that President Truman had been reluctant to declare openly prior to the beginning of the Korean War.

The Philippines

The Philippine Senate voted in 1991 to close US bases at Subic and Clark, northwest of Manila. However, in 1999, it ratified an accord with the US allowing temporary visits by US forces. That paved the way for hundreds of US service members to hold counterterrorism combat exercises with Philippine troops dealing with insurgents in the countrys south.

The “Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement”, which allows US forces to “preposition” fighters and warships in the Philippines was signed on 28 April 2014 at the Philippine Department of Defense in Manila, shortly before the arrival of US President Barack Obama (Taipei Times 28 April 2014).

⁵⁰The bombing of North Korean facilities could release radioactive products which would then drift to the North Chinese provinces of Heilongjiang, Jinin and Liaoning as well as to South Korea. Even Beijing and Tianjing are only 500 km away from the western boundary of North Korea.

Chapter 6

Timeless features of cold wars: past, present, future

In an early version of this report this chapter was entitled “Testable predictions”. We changed the title into “Timeless features of cold wars” for three main reasons.

1 “Testable predictions” made readers believe that they would find specific predictions whose validity may be tested within a few months. Such predictions are not impossible but they will concern “small events” and will require a detailed analysis of past events and local conditions. For instance, it might be possible to predict an increase in confrontational events in Niger or Sudan but such investigations would clearly be too specialized for the present study.

2 In spite of the change in the title the purpose of the chapter remains basically the same for, in fact, once one agrees that little by little we are witnessing a shift toward a cold war situation, then all features which are usually associated with cold wars can be used as likely predictors. One needs only to adapt them to the present circumstances.

3 In the previous chapters we already described some Cold War features, for instance we explained how the very existence of vassal states allowed the implementation of containment policies against the USSR and the PRC. However, most of our discussion concerned the decades following the Second World War. In the chapter entitled “The Pacific as an American lake” we went back even further into the past by describing how the US encouraged the Russo-Japanese war of 1905. Here, in contrast, we wish to unveil cold war aspects which may play a role in coming decades. Naturally, even here the past will be our main guide; otherwise it would be pure speculation. However, in contrast to previous chapters it is the recent past that we will take as our guide.

To use the expression “cold war” in order to describe the competition between the US and the PRC is in itself a bold prediction. At the present moment (October 2017) it is still cooperation which is officially emphasized both by the US State Department as by the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Probably this situation will prevail for quite a few years. However, on each side, other government institutions may already work in a different framework. This is what we explain in the next section.

Cooperation, peaceful coexistence, competition, cold war

The four situations mentioned in the title describe degrees going from friendly to tense relations. It would be a mistake to think that these concepts are exclusive of one other. In fact they co-exist in the sense that there are different groups which believe in each of them.

Table 6.1: Attitudes of different groups and institutions with regard to USA–PRC relations (2017)

	Cooperation	Peaceful coexistence	Competition	Cold war
China	Businesses which export to or invest in the US. Academics	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	RMB vs. \$ AIIB vs. ADB	PLA, PLAN, PLAAF PLA Cyber Security
USA	Businesses which export to or invest in China	US State Department	\$ vs. RMB US Congress	DoD, NSA, CIA

Notes: RMB=renminbi, PLA=People's Liberation Army, PLAN=PLA Navy, PLAAF=PLA Air Force, AIIB=Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, ADB=Asian Development Bank (US-Japan), DoD=Department of Defense, NSA=National Security Agency, CIA=Central Intelligence Agency. The main purpose of this table is to emphasize that at a given moment one observes a broad range of attitudes both in China and in the US.

We examine successively the different cases summarized in Table 6.1.

Cooperation

This is the attitude of the people and organizations who believe in synergy and win-win relations. Presently, over 100 large Chinese companies are listed on the New York Stock Exchange and on the NASDAQ market (about 50 on each). They are called N-stocks (N refers to New York). In contrast there are very few (if any) US companies listed on Chinese stock markets⁵¹. Clearly, when taking the decision to become publicly traded in the US rather than in China, the leadership of these companies was assuming that cooperation would prevail for the coming decades. A cold war situation would represent a real risk. In this respect, one can remember that after 1979 Iranian assets in the US were frozen.

From a rational perspective cooperation should be the preferred form of relations for this would maximize mutual benefit. However, observation shows that other considerations may go against cooperation. In recent years, this was clearly illustrated by

⁵¹As of 2016 the total of US investments in China represented about \$100 billion. This is much less than the total capitalisation of the 100 Chinese companies quoted in New York. On 9 October 2017, Alibaba alone had a capitalisation of \$460 billion.

the cases of Japan and South Korea. These countries are close neighbors of China and their economies are complementary in several ways. Thus, all conditions are fulfilled for a fruitful cooperation.

Yet, the synergy between Japan and China was shattered by the Diaoyu Islands problem (entirely raised by Japan) and two years later the synergy between South Korea and China was also broken through the Thaad dispute. In other words, despite the fact that both Japan and South Korea knew in advance that raising these issues would hurt the cooperation with China, this consideration did not stop them. This conundrum was already mentioned in chapter 4 where it was suggested that it is through the status of South Korea and Japan as vassal states of the US that it can be understood. Because this point is of crucial importance for the future we come back to it at the end of the present chapter.

Peaceful coexistence

Peaceful coexistence was a theory applied by the Soviet Union during the Cold War. It implied that the Soviet bloc could coexist with the United States and NATO countries. It was correct in the sense that peace was indeed maintained but it did not prevent the dislocation of the USSR.

The principles of peaceful coexistence promoted by China rely on the following principles.

- (i) Mutual respect for territorial integrity.
- (ii) Mutual non-aggression and peaceful co-existence.
- (iii) Non-interference in each other's internal affairs.

It can safely be said that these principles may indeed be implemented by China in its relations with the United States, but the converse is not true even at an official level. This is for instance shown by the arm sales to Taiwan or the incursions of US warships into Chinese territorial waters (claimed to be international waters by the US). It is even less true when one takes into account the activities of many US organizations and think tanks that are called "independent" but are nevertheless funded by Congress.

Competition

In Table 6.1 we mentioned the financial competition between the renminbi and the dollar. This competition will develop over a time span of several decades. On the contrary, the move of the Chinese economy toward high-value products is likely to occur within one decade. As long as China was producing low-value products (clothes, toys and so on) or even high-value products but for foreign companies (cars, Airbus airplanes and so on) the Chinese and western economies were complementary. However, if China plans to develop its own high-value products as it

has already started to do with sizeable success, then it comes in competition with western economies.

Just as an illustration, in recent times there have been US attempts to block Chinese plans to develop a strong and innovative chip industry. Not only did the US bar the sale to a Chinese company of an US chip maker but it was also able to reverse the decision of the German government to allow the sale of a German chip maker.

It can safely be predicted that such industrial warfare will become more frequent in the coming years as China tries to enter industries in which western countries enjoy a leading position, e.g. drugs, luxury products, and so on. It is clear that resistance will come not only from the US but also from European companies, but the big difference is that the EU is a weak organization whereas the US has developed very effective fighting capabilities, e.g. the Departments of Justice or Transportation, which have already shown how they can bring down competitors (as illustrations, see the cases of the supersonic Concorde aircraft, Audi cars, Toyota cars, Bombardier aircraft).

Cold war

At present time the government institutions working on cold war assumptions are limited to military and intelligence organizations. This is quite understandable for in any country it is the mission of the military to prepare everything for a possible coming war. This timeless truth is illustrated by the well known Latin adage *Si vis pacem, para bellum* which can be translated as: “If you want peace, prepare for war”.

Economic growth of China and role of the RMB

In the chapter on “US-PRC competition for world leadership” we offered several predictions listed below. Obviously, from the first to the last the margin of uncertainty increases.

- 1 We recalled that the foreign trade of China surpassed US foreign trade in 2013.
- 2 A projection based on current (i.e. in 2017) growth rates suggested that the GDP of China will surpass the US GDP around 2020.
- 3 A projection based on the pound-dollar case suggested that the RMB will surpass the USD as a world reserve currency around 2050. This conjecture should be seen as giving a broad order of magnitude (similar to what is done in physics). In other words, it can be 2040 as well as 2060, but certainly not 2025.
- 4 In the same line of thought, as a further conjecture, we suggested that the RMB may reach a dominant position in central bank reserves around 2100. This projection is even more hazardous than the previous one. Why? Whereas the previous projection was a two-body problem in the sense that it involved only the USD and RMB, the present one is a many-body problem in the sense that other major reserve

currencies may emerge. One can think of the Indian rupee as a possible candidate.

5 The competition for the production of high-value products (e.g. drugs, aircraft, nuclear power plants) was already discussed above.

Indirect confrontations

History shows that direct confrontations between competitors are usually preceded (or replaced) by indirect confrontations. The Cold War of 1947–1990 provides plenty of examples of indirect confrontations between the USSR and the US. Below, just for the record, we list briefly a number of them. Apart Korea and Vietnam, China was not involved in any of them.

That is why in the two following subsections we describe in some detail two cases in which China was involved.

- The first one was a confrontation between the USSR and western powers which occurred in China during the Civil war of the 1920s and 1930s. It is of special interest because in accounts by western historians it is usually overlooked. Yet, it would be difficult to understand that the USSR and western powers could be both present in China without any confrontation taking place between them. In other words, this story fills a gap in our understanding.

- The second case is a confrontation between China and the US in Thailand that is still ongoing at present. However, the accounts of western media hardly present the situation in this light which makes the picture rather confusing. That is why, to get a better understanding of what is going on, we need to identify and unearth proper facts.

Indirect USA-USSR confrontations during and after the Cold War

The French Indochina War, the Korean War, the confrontation about Cuba, the Vietnam War, the civil wars in Angola, Nicaragua, Afghanistan and, more recently, in Ukraine and Syria. were cases which illustrate indirect confrontations between the United States and Russia. Actually, there were degrees in US involvement. Here are examples ranked from low to high involvement.

- In Ukraine in the years leading to the toppling of President Yanukovitch in 2014, US officials (e.g. US Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland or US Senator John McCain) visited and supported the leaders of the opposition and the anti-government demonstrators camping on Maidan square. The opposition may also have been funded by the State Department but this is more difficult to prove.

- In the Indochina War, French troops were armed by Washington and tactical plans were supervised by US officers. However, except for some American pilots, no US military took part in combat.

- In Syria US Special forces are currently (2017) present in small number acting mostly as advisers. In addition the Air Force has been waging a bombing campaign in support of the groups who oppose the government.
- The two only civil wars which saw a substantial number of US ground troops involved in persistent combats were Vietnam and Afghanistan.

In addition, as mentioned in the chapter about containment, several countries were occupied by US troops.

We now come to two cases in which China was involved. Of course, one should not forget the Korean War but this case is well known and does not require additional explanations.

Confrontation between the USSR and allied powers in South China, 1920-1936

In the 1920s there was a confrontation between the Soviet Union and western powers in China. However, it was not a direct confrontation. There were no Soviet troops in China but at the request of Kuomintang president Sun Yat-sen, the Soviets sent arms and advisers to South China. The Whampoa military Academy near Shanghai was largely created thanks to their support.

Not surprisingly, after his pact with the Soviet Union, Sun was regarded with defiance by the British. However, they did not confront him directly. Instead they used the service of the warlord Chen Jiongming. This is described in Goikhman (2014):

“The Hong Kong government was clearly opposed to Sun Yat-sen whom the British suspected of turning Bolshevik and they saw Chen Jiongming as the better for western powers. The British governor of Hong Kong, Reginald Stubbs, appealed to the British government to give financial support to Chen.”

Following the advice of his sponsors General Chen Jiongming turned against Sun Yat-sen. On 16 June 1922 he attacked the residence of Sun Yat-sen in Guangzhou. Sun and his wife Soong Ching-ling narrowly evaded heavy machine gun fire and were rescued by gunboats under Chiang Kai-shek's direction. At that time Chiang was still seen as a leftist general but after Sun's death he would become the leader of the anti-Communist and anti-Russian forces in China.

The Soviet embassy in Beijing was invaded on 7 April 1927. In the following months several Soviet consulates (Harbin, Hankow, Guangzhou) were attacked. On 1 October 1927 after the KMT Hankow government was toppled in an anti-Communist coup the United States was the first country to recognize the Chiang Kai-shek government. On 17 December 1927 the Soviet vice-consul at Canton (Guangzhou) was executed by the KMT. On the following day, six women belonging to the consular staff of the Soviet Consulate in Canton were executed⁵².

⁵²More details and the references of the sources can be found in Roehner (2016c).

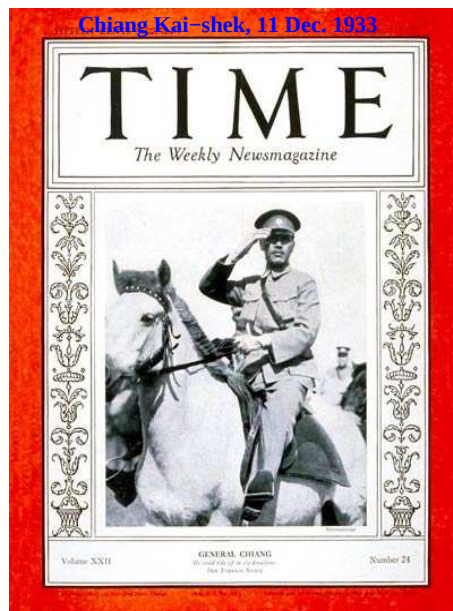


Fig. 6.1 General Chiang Kai-shek in the issue of 11 December 1933 of “Time”, an American magazine. In 1933 Chiang was heavily involved in his campaign against the Communists. In February 1933, as the Japanese were threatening the province of Hebei in northern China, Chiang launched 250,000 of his best troops in a fourth “Bandit Suppression” campaign. *Source: Wikipedia article entitled “Chiang Kai-shek, public domain.*

In short, in the 1920s South China was the theater of an indirect confrontation between the Soviet Union on the one hand and western powers on the other hand.

We developed this example because it is not well known. After World War II during the Cold War there were numerous well-known indirect confrontations between the USA and the USSR.

Indirect USA-China confrontations: the case of Thailand

The civil wars in Malaysia, the Philippines (the so-called Hukbalahap, or simply Huk, rebellion), Nepal, were conflicts between leftist/Communist insurgents and governments supported by western powers. However it is difficult to know the degree of involvement of the Beijing government.

Here we will discuss a more recent case, namely Thailand from 2000 to 2017.

In June 2011 the Reuters news agency published a long report (Szep et al. 2011) about the political situation in Thailand. This was 4 years after Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was overthrown by a military coup and shortly before the elections of July 2011 which brought to power his sister Yingluck Shinawatra. In 2014 she was also removed from power by the military. The Reuters report explains that Thaksin Shinawatra was a populist who was very popular in the countryside. However it does not tell us that he was fervently pro-US and anti-Beijing. How then does one know? There are several indications,

- On 26 December 2003 the US journal “Washington Post” published an editorial entitled “Thaksin Shinawatra, our man in Bangkok”. The fact that he was indeed a good friend of the US can be seen in that he provided Thai troops for the US occupation of Iraq and cooperated with the CIA “Rendition program” under which suspected terrorists were tortured in Thailand on account of the US. Moreover, it seems that the privatization of Thailand’s resources fulfilled the wishes of Wall Street⁵³.

- According to Chinese sources, under Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra the relations between the two countries were fairly cool and only warmed up after he was removed from power in September 2006. After the coup of 2014 China was the first major power to recognize Thailand’s ruling junta.

- By 2017 the relations between Beijing and the Thai military were still very good as revealed by the fact that in April 2017, Thailand bought three submarines from China for a total amount of 1 billion dollars. Such purchases are usually seen as being of political significance.

The low-intensity civil war which took place in Thailand between the “Red Shirts” and the “Yellow Shirts” was presented by western media as a confrontation between affluent cities and poor countryside. This may have been true. However it was also indirectly a confrontation between Beijing and Washington. This is shown by the US support given to the Red Shirts.

- In the 2010s, through the “National Endowment for Democracy” (NED), the US State Department gave annually over US\$30,000 to the Thai propaganda network “Prachatai”. Although the amount may seem small, for such an organization involved in giving information about government corruption it can cover the salaries of permanent employees. “Thai Lawyers for Human Rights”, “Thai Netizen”, “Democracy Cafe” are similar organizations frequently cited by the Western media and presented to the public as independent “human rights” advocates.

- The picture below suggests that the Red Shirt villages had close relations with the US. On “Voice TV”, the website of Thaksin Shinawatra, one reads:

Jessica Smith, currently attached to the US Embassy in Bangkok, traveled to the northeastern province and was warmly welcomed by dozens of Red Shirt villagers. Inside one village was a poster with a picture of former premier Thaksin Shinawatra viewed as spiritual leader of Red Shirt activists, and English inscriptions saying: “Long Live the Thai and American Peoples”.

- When in May 2014 Yingluck Shinawatra was finally ousted from office by a military coup, a nationwide sweep uncovered weapon caches staged by her support-

⁵³On 23 March 2006 Thailand’s Supreme Court nullified the government decrees authorizing the sale of the state-owned power producer “Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand” (EGAT), a big setback to the wide-ranging plans by Thaksin Shinawatra to sell state-owned assets.



Fig. 6.2 Red Shirt Villages in Thailand and the US embassy. The picture appeared in an article of August 2016 entitled “Does the US support terrorism and regime change in Thailand?”. Source: <http://www.globalresearch.ca/author/the-new-atlas>.

ers in preparation for Syrian type violence. Bombings which occurred in 2016 and 2017 may fulfill the objective of creating an atmosphere of fear. This recalls the bombings and political assassinations which occurred in Italy during the so-called “Years of Lead” of the 1970s⁵⁴.

In the coming years one would expect this low-key civil war to continue or may be even develop further. This means more bombings both in the north and also in the south where there is an Islamic separatist movement.

Derailing the “Silk Road” project

Opposition to infrastructure works

In previous chapters, particularly in the chapter entitled “Silk Road vs. containment” we have explained that the US State Department does not see with favor the expansion of Chinese influence which may come along with the Silk Road project. It was able to convince some of its closest allies not to take part and is probably willing to convince other nations that the risks surpass potential benefits. Many of the regions of central Asia through which the new Silk Road will run are fairly unstable. Thus, it appears fairly easy to raise instability and hostility against the infrastructure projects and the foreign presence that it implies. To slow or hinder this project, vassal states or vassal groups are instrumental. Here we discuss in some detail a specific example.

The case of Gwadar

As a case in point in this section we consider the port of Gwadar in South Pakistan.

⁵⁴For interested readers there is more information available in the Wikipedia article entitled “Années de plomb (Europe)” [i.e. Years of lead]. Unfortunately, this article is only available in French.

This port was developed by China and it should play an important role in connecting the province of Xinjiang to the Indian Ocean. Pakistan is a close ally of China and although it is also a US ally one would hardly expect any obstruction coming directly from the government. However, the hinterland of Gwadar is a mountainous region where there has been separatist movements for some time. In short, this can easily become a Syria-like situation where separatist fighters may be armed, funded and trained.

Gwadar is located 650 km west of Karachi which is also a major port. The rationale for Gwadar comes from the fact that the Karachi port is already congested. In fact the government is also developing a third port, Port Qasim located 30 km to the east of Karachi.

Gwadar is at a distance of only 70 km from the port of Chabahar in south east Iran which is developed jointly by Iran and India.



Fig. 6.3 Locations of the ports of Gwadar and Chabahar. The hinterland of both Gwadar and Chabahar is the mountain region of Balochistan. Gwadar is a sea port situated in the Balochistan province of Pakistan. The port is considered to be a crucial link between the land and maritime Silk Road projects. In late 2015, the port was officially leased to China for 43 years. Gwadar Port was inaugurated on 14 November 2016. *Sources: Internet maps.*

For both Chabahar and Gwadar the hinterland is the mountainous area of Balochistan: Iranian Balochistan for Chabahar and Pakistani Balochistan for Gwadar. In the Pakistani part of Balochistan separatist insurgencies have been fought in 1948, 1958–1959, 1962–1963 and 1973–1977. In the Iranian part of Balochistan separatist fighting has not gained as much ground as in Pakistan, but since 2012 there has been an amplification.

As examples of incidents that occurred in recent times one can mention the following.

- On 3 May 2004 three Chinese engineers were killed and 10 other people were hurt in a car bombing in the city of Gwadar.
- On 21 March 2011 unidentified militants on motorbikes opened fire on a camp for road construction workers near to the port town of Gwadar killing 11 workers.
- On 29 March 2016, Pakistan claimed that it had apprehended a serving Indian naval officer, Kulbhushan Yadav who was tasked by the Indian “Research and Analysis Wing” (RAW) to carry out terrorism in Balochistan, and bomb Chinese nationals in a hotel in Gwadar who were there to work on the deep sea port project.
- On 12 March 2017 a bomb explosion took place under a bridge on the main road in Gwadar. While there was no loss of life the bridge was partially damaged.

An attack directed against Chinese workers in Afghanistan which was similar to the one of 21 March 2011 described above, occurred on 10 June 2004 in the town of Konduz. Eleven construction workers were killed by unidentified gunmen who broke into their quarters and shot them as they were sleeping. Two Afghan police guarding the site were also killed. The Taliban immediately denied involvement in the attack. The identity of the gunmen as well as the purpose of the attack remain a mystery.

Synergy vs. disruption

In conclusion, one can say that while the “Silk Road project” tries to build up integration, the US State Department tries to spread suspicion and disruption. Currently (in 2017) there is a real wariness among Chinese people that did not exist 5 or 6 years ago. At that time, both in the population and in the media, the United States was seen as a good friend and an ally. As a proof one can mention the fact that although there are many TV series about the confrontations between the KMT and the Communists, to our best knowledge there is not a single one about the role that Chinese Volunteers played in the Korean war. As an illustration of this new awareness one can mention the title of an article published in “People’s Daily” (the official newspaper of the Communist Party) of 11 May 2017:

“As US seeks dominance, China gathers friends and seeks integration”, by Curtis Stone.

Which forces will win eventually? It is difficult to say. To give an answer one would need precedents. There are none because this is the first initiative of this kind and scale. However, in a general way, one can observe that there have been numerous historical cases in which disruption forces have prevailed over integration. It is easier to wreck than to build.

Similar security problems elsewhere

Balochistan is certainly not the only place in Central Asia where there is currently unrest and where in the future there may be even more serious disturbances. In order to propose specific predictions one needs to collect information about former insurgencies. This may be the purpose of a forthcoming study.

Now we turn to a confrontation that is less spectacular but certainly of crucial importance, namely the information war. Several sections will be devoted to this topic. First, we will show that it already exists. No doubt that it will continue in coming years, likely with increasing intensity.

Information war 1. Illustration by a few cases

In peacetime the information war is of key-importance. This is especially true nowadays because of the multiplication of the means of information. TV and Internet are now everywhere and have largely replaced newspapers. At the same time, western information has become much more monolithic (one could even say more totalitarian) than it was in the past. Needless to say, not everybody would necessarily agree with such statements. Some would say that in the west information is free and that there is no information war whatsoever.

Thus, if we wish our readers to be convinced by our “model” (and the predictions which come with it) we must first of all establish two key-points:

- 1 There is indeed an ongoing information war. This is the purpose of the present section.

- 2 Far from being free and diversified, western medias have become more and more ideologically biased. The reasons of this evolution will be explained in the next section.

The “Epoch Times”

Let us start with a little calculation.

The “Epoch Times” is a free, weekly, anti-Chinese newspaper which is published in about 15 languages and 30 countries. In 2016 it claimed a paper distribution of 1.5 million. If it were sold instead of being free, it would cost of the order of 2 euros (i.e. about \$2). Thus, for one year the total cost would be: $52 \times 1,500,000 \times 2 = 156$ million dollars, approximately the cost of one advanced fighter aircraft. In other words, such a newspaper can be created at a fairly low cost.

We said that it is an anti-Chinese publication but a more precise qualification would be to observe that it is a mouth piece of Chinese dissidents living in exile. It is said that the journal is funded by the “Friends of the Falun Gong” but in such matters it

is usually impossible to know who are the *real* sponsors. In fact, the only important point about this journal is its very existence.

The role of China during the Vietnam War

The fact that there is a competition between different media is something which is normal and understandable. What we call “information war” is something else. It consists in using spin (including false news) and other public relations techniques to smear, blacken and denigrate opponents and competitors.

Let us illustrate this by an example taken from an American newspaper, namely the electronic edition of the “Deseret News” (Utah) of 16 May 1989. Here are a few excerpts and our comments in italic.

- “China has admitted for the first time that it sent more than 300,000 combat troops to Vietnam to fight against US forces and their South Vietnamese allies.”

In fact, China never made any mystery about that. The information was available for whoever could read Chinese. As a matter of fact, it was published as soon as 1975 (Whiting 1975) that is to say immediately after the end of the war.

- “During the war China repeatedly denied US allegations that its soldiers were operating in Vietnam.”

China sent only engineer units and anti-aircraft battalions. They built roads and bridges in North Vietnam and rebuilt infrastructure destroyed by US bombing. In the previous sentence, “Vietnam” certainly stands for “South Vietnam” as shown by the statement below. In this sense it is indeed true that there were no Chinese soldiers in (South) Vietnam.

- “US intelligence reports at the time spoke of US combat units finding soldiers dressed in Chinese combat gear and wearing Chinese insignia.”

On account of what has just been said, this is certainly a lie. As a matter of fact, if Chinese soldiers had been made prisoners in the South there would certainly have been a public relations campaign by the US Army information department. There is no trace of anything like that on the Internet.

The Russian intervention in South Osetia in August 2008

One may remember that on 8 August 2008, the day of the opening of the Beijing Olympic games, a small-scale war started between Georgia, a former Soviet Republic and Russia. One of the authors (BR) who was in Paris at that time remembers that it was announced in the news in the following terms: “It is a tragedy, hundreds have been killed”. However, it was impossible to learn who were these “hundreds” and who killed them. In the following days no more information was to be given but in article titles and on television there was a consensus on the fact that it was a Russian aggression.

Subsequently, the European Union funded a commission to find out what really happened. Headed by Swiss diplomat Heidi Tagliavini, the commission came to the conclusion that the Russian account was correct and that it was in fact a Georgian aggression. Here is an excerpt of the 1,150-page long report published on 30 September 2009.

“The use of force by Georgia in South Ossetia, beginning with the shelling of Tskhinvali during the night of 7-8 August, was not justifiable under international law. Georgia’s use of multiple rocket launchers and heavy artillery in the Tskhinvali assault was neither necessary nor proportionate to repel alleged attacks by South Ossetian separatists.”

The report answers our previous question. The “hundreds killed” were residents of Tskhinvali and they were killed by Georgian troops. It is only after this episode that Russian troops crossed the border to stop the massacre and rescue the residents of South Ossetia.

In fact this province of Georgia had officially a special status which resulted from an agreement between Russia and Georgia. The plan of the Georgian army (which at that time had a large team of US advisers) was to take advantage of the presence of the Russian president in Beijing to occupy Tskhinvali, the capital of South Ossetia, remove the leaders and nullify this special status. However, the occupation was opposed fiercely by a militia and this is why the Georgian troops retreated from the city and shelled it.

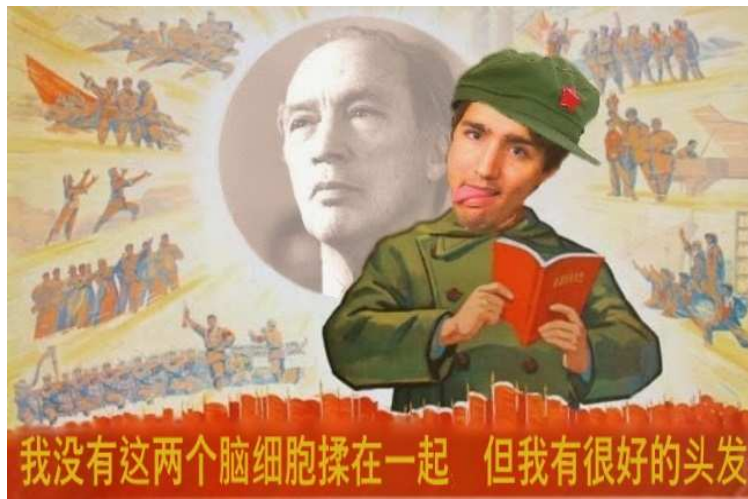
The question that we wish to ask is: why did all French and European media misrepresent this event? It is not that the information was not available for, what turned out to be the correct account was published by several Russian media both in Russian and in English. In addition French journalists had the possibility to call the Russian embassy. Instead, they presented a confused and embarrassed version of the facts according to which Russia was the aggressor.

Chinese purchases of western firms presented as a threat

At the end of the 1980s Tokyo stock market prices and Japanese real estate prices were both at their highest level. That gave Japanese companies much cash flow that they invested in buying foreign companies and particularly US companies. As a result there was an outcry in the news, in novels and films about the Japanese wanting to buy up the whole world. In reality the total Japanese foreign investments were negligible compared to US foreign investments in Europe.

The same scenario is currently replaying with Japan replaced by China. This is illustrated in Fig. 6.4

Just to give the tone and flavor of the media campaigns run in such cases here are



The English caption of the picture says: “Justin Trudeau, useful idiot”

Fig. 6.4 Cartoon disparaging Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada (downloaded on 15 June 2017).

The person holding the red booklet represents Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. The person in the background is his father, Pierre Trudeau, who had been a charismatic Canadian Prime Minister from 1980 to 1984. Most of what is shown about China dates from the Cultural Revolution. The Chinese caption says “I don’t have much brain cells, but I have good hair”. The website which posted the picture is openly anti-Trudeau and pro-US but it reflects widespread western feelings. *Source: <https://www.blazingcatfur.ca>*

some of the sentences that could be read on the Internet⁵⁵ when Hytera, a Shenzhen company tried to buy the Canadian company “Norsat”.

- “BETRAYAL: Trudeau lets China take over sensitive Canadian company WITHOUT security review.”

[This was in fact a lie: Trudeau made clear that there had been a security review and that the US side was consulted.]

- “Trudeau is letting China buy up our country piece by piece.”
- “Over and over again, Justin Trudeau has shown a disturbing willingness to do the bidding of China, even when the national security of Canada and our allies could be at risk.”
- We should never let China, an undemocratic authoritarian state, buy a company that has worked so closely with both our government, and our close allies.”
- “Hytera has been accused by Motorola of a massive theft of Motorola’s intellectual property, and is now facing a court case over the matter.”
- As shown by the following sentence, this sort of arguments are used even for companies which are not high tech companies.
“Trudeau also let a shady Chinese company (with links to the Chinese Communist Party elite) buy the largest assisted living company in British Columbia, which gave China the chance to enter our healthcare system.”
- Next come outright allegations of corruption and treason.

⁵⁵The source is: <https://www.spencerfernando.com/2017/06/08/betrayal-trudeau-lets-china-take-sensitive-canadian-company-without-security-review> (8 June 2017)

“Who can forget the Cash-For-Access fundraisers with Chinese billionaires. Does anyone believe it’s just a coincidence that Trudeau raised all that money and then approved China’s takeover attempts? It raises the serious question of whether our government is now serving as a proxy for foreign interests. There is something very disturbing about that.”

Overestimating the strength of the PLA

In the months preceeding the first Gulf War in 1990-1991 the Iraqi army was termed by western media as being one of the most capable in the world. During the Cold War, Russian forces were regularly overestimated by US media. This behavior was seen favorably by the Department of Defense because it permitted to get more funding by Congress. At the same time it made the US population more fearful of Russia.

It is therefore an easy prediction to say that US media will have the same attitude with respect to the PLA. In fact, this has already started. For instance, the new PLA Navy destroyers are presented as far superior to US destroyers. This may be true for the simple reason that they are new, but the article omitted to say that the US Navy has about 5 times more destroyers than the PLA Navy.

Information war 2. “Pensée unique” in western media

Many decades ago there was a time when western media presented a broad spectrum of opinions and interpretations.

It can be recalled that between August 1852 and February 1862, as European correspondents for the “New York Daily Tribune”, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote about 400 articles (i.e. about 3 per month) for this newspaper. It was one of the main American newspapers⁵⁶. This newspaper was a good tribune for Marx because it was cheap enough to be read by many working class people. In other words, at that time a broad range of political opinions could find an expression in American newspapers.

However, this situation was to change in the decades following the Russian Revolution of 1917 and even more drastically in the Cold War decades after 1945.

How anti-Communism shaped American media

During the anti-Communist drive (see Fig. 6.5) the term “Communist” had a fairly broad meaning. It was used to refer to all leftist people no matter whether or not they were members of the Communist party.

As early as January 1920 the so-called “Red Scare” and the “Palmer’s raids” directed

⁵⁶In 1924 it merged with the “New York Herald” to form the “New York Herald Tribune” which remained in existence until 1962.

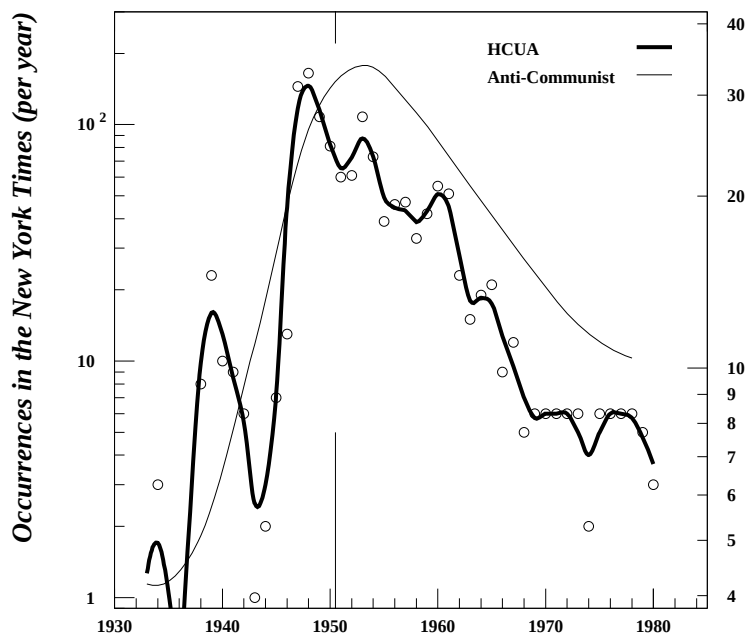


Fig. 6.5 Anti-leftist campaigns in the United States. Thick solid line: number of “New York Times” articles per year containing the two expressions “Communists” and “Committee on Un-American Activities”. The big dip following 1941 was a consequence of the military alliance between the United States and the Soviet Union in the war against Germany. Thin solid line: number of “New York Times” articles (in five-year intervals) containing the word “anti-Communist” (right-hand side scale). The vertical lines signal the beginning of the Korea War. The House Committee on Un-American Activities (HCUA) was set up in 1933; its mandate was to get information on how foreign subversive propaganda enters the United States and about the organizations that are spreading it. *Source: Electronic index of the “New York Times”.*

against leftists, anarchists and Russian immigrants showed the determination of the US government to prevent any revolutionary influence from entering the country. In this respect, it is often the time of “McCarthyism” that is mentioned. This anti-leftist witch hunt was started with President Truman’s Executive Order 9835 of March 21, 1947, which required that all federal civil service employees be screened for “loyalty”. The personal action of Senator Joseph McCarthy came to an end in June 1954 but in fact McCarthyism was only one episode in a much longer period of anti-leftist activity as is documented in the graph about the “House Committee on Un-American Activities”. Apart from government employee this witch hunt targeted all professions who had an influence on public opinion, e.g. journalists, writers, teachers, professors, film directors. As a result a situation of diversity of opinion was replaced by one of monolithic consensus. For instance, in the teaching of economics there remains only one creed, namely the neoliberal conception.

Western media were not only shaped by the elimination of leftist journalists but also, very officially, by government bodies which control them. This is explained in the

next subsection.

Media regulation by governments in western countries

Most western countries would claim that they have “free” media. How should this be understood?

It is true that western media work mostly on the basis of self-censorship (we come back to this point below) but it would be a mistake to think that there are no government bodies in charge of regulating the media.

Here are three examples.

- In Britain Ofcom (Office of Communications) is the government’s regulatory body which sets rules for UK broadcasters. The fact that Ofcom has the power to revoke the broadcasting license of any radio or TV station shows that it must be taken very seriously by the media. This is not purely theoretical. In November 2011 Ofcom fined “Press TV”, an Anglo-Iranian network, to the amount of 100,000 pounds because of a program about the elections of June 2009 in Iran which was found “inappropriate” by Ofcom. Then, in January 2012, Ofcom revoked the licence of “Press TV”. Following this decision “Press TV” became unavailable on UK airwaves. The point here is not whether the program was inappropriate or not (a fairly subjective judgment anyway) but the fact that this episode shows that some form of regulation does exist.

- In France, the “Conseil supérieur de l’audiovisuel” [High Council for the media] abbreviated CSA, is an institution which regulates the various media such as radio and television. On 14 December 2004 the CSA ordered France-based satellite company Eutelsat to stop transmitting Lebanese station “Al Manar” within 48 hours because of charges of hate speech. (BBC News 14 December 2004). “Al Manar” was a Lebanese satellite television station affiliated with Iranian-sponsored movement Hezbollah. Here too, the question is not whether the charges were justified or not but rather the interdiction itself. It is interesting to note that “Al Manar” was banned by the United States on 17 December 2004 and was later also banned by Spain and Germany.

- In the US one of the main actors in the information war is the “Broadcasting Board of Governors” (BBG). According to Wikipedia, it is an agency of the US government which supervises “Voice of America” (VOA), “Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty”, “Radio Free Asia”, “Radio y Television Marti”. The board consists of 9 members, 8 of whom are appointed by the President and the 9th being the Secretary of State. In fiscal year 2016, the BBG had a budget of \$750 million.

Another important factor in the information war is American dominance of the Internet. Since Edward Snowden’s revelations it is known that all major US software companies such as Google, Twitter or Facebook have working agreements with US

security agencies.

One should also mention the international network of newspapers organized and sponsored by US billionaire Georges Soros. Officially the purpose is only to share information in a supposedly impartial way. This is the same fiction as when physicians claim that the perks they receive from pharmaceutical companies do not influence them when they prescribe drugs to their patients.

Information war 3. How the US uses its predominance

In any war, it is the party which is able to concentrate the largest number of well-disciplined forces against the enemy that is victorious.

The same rule is certainly also valid for the media. The United States has a huge array of news agencies (Associated Press, United Press International), TV networks (e.g. ABC, CBS, CNN), Hollywood movie companies, Internet news corporations (e.g. Google, Yahoo). Moreover, as explained above, all these organizations are well-disciplined and highly effective in spreading the views of the State Department and in defending the interests of big US corporations.

Now that we know that the US has big battalions using the clever techniques developed by the public relations industry, let us see how these means are used for political purposes. Needless to say, what will be described also results in predictions for in the future one expects of course the same techniques to be used again and again.

Who is winning the information war?

There is an easy answer. One needs only to watch how for each and every event the European media report the US version without trying to check the information in any way. This is true for small events as well as for big events. We have already mentioned the example of the misrepresentation of the war in Georgia or of the Cuban missile crisis (see Schwarz 2013). Many other misrepresentations of major events could be mentioned, for instance the so-called “Berlin blockade”⁵⁷ or the so-called “Tiananmen Square massacre”⁵⁸. In 2012-2014 the confrontation in Syria was consistently misrepresented. Week after week, month after month, the European media reported faithfully the dispatches of the “Syrian Observatory for Human Rights”, a UK-based anti-government organization, without ever saying that it was a mouthpiece of the opposition and without ever trying to interview the Syrian ambassador

⁵⁷In fact, circulation was still possible between West and East Berlin and between East Berlin and East Germany. Substantial trade took place through these channels.

⁵⁸In fact all well informed persons in US media know that zero person died on Tiananmen Square; it was evacuated peacefully after a discussion between the leaders of the students and the military. There were fatalities elsewhere in Beijing and also in other Chinese cities but not on Tiananmen Square. More details can be found in Roehner (2016d) and a more complete discussion is given below.

in order to get an alternative version.

Incidentally, the influence of the United States on European media is not limited to the news, more broadly it is also significant in the cultural sphere. Here is an illustration. On “Radio Television Luxembourg” (RTL) which is the most popular radio station in France, songs in English represent about 60% of the songs which are broadcast, the remaining 40% being French songs⁵⁹. This means that the share of German, Italian or Spanish songs (just to mention the closest EU neighbors) is about 0%. The same observation holds for novels or movies.

Why do European media just repeat US reports?

The reason why European media follow so sheepishly US media remains a mystery. However, even if one cannot give a detailed answer it is possible to give the following indication.

On 26 December 1977 a long article (Crewdson and Treaster 1977) was published in the “New York Times” which revealed that the US government⁶⁰ owned or controlled many European and Asian newspapers and book publishers. Their names are given in the article but (not surprisingly!) the article says that this was the situation a decade ago but that in the meanwhile this control came to an end. Who will believe that once an organization like the State Department has in its hands a network of medias which gives it a worldwide influence capacity, it will voluntarily drop it?

This network was called the “Mighty Wurlitzer” (a Wurlitzer is an electronic piano produced by the Rudolph Wurlitzer Company) because it could set the tone for all media worldwide. In the next subsection we will see how it can be used⁶¹.

A case-study in information war: “Tiananmen 1989”

The expression “Tiananmen Square massacre” is commonly used in western media. A Google search (performed on 25 November 2017) found 198,000 websites containing this expression; the same expression but without quotes leads to 466,000 results. In addition, the expression “Tank Man” is used in 389,000 websites. We have already mentioned, albeit briefly, that in fact no massacre took place on Tiananmen square. As this statement may come as a surprise to many readers we give in this section a more detailed answer.

⁵⁹These estimates are based on the personal experience of one of the authors (BR).

⁶⁰The article is about the “Central Intelligence Agency” (CIA) but the CIA is of course an organization which carries out decisions taken by the State Department and the White House. It is funded by Congress and cannot initiate any action that is not approved by the US government.

⁶¹Wikipedia has an article about the “Mighty Wurlitzer” that is entitled “Operation Mockingbird”. In line with the New York Times, the article says that this operation had only been in existence in the 1950s and 1960s. Is this not a good example of what can be called self-censorship?

We will give this answer in two forms: first a short answer, then a longer explanation. What makes the second answer longer is the fact that it involves a comparative analysis of a family of similar events. As always in such cases, some background information must be given in order to make these events understandable.

Short answer

What happened on 4-5 June 1989 in China and particularly in Beijing is explained in a chapter (namely ch. 7) entitled “Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang and Tiananmen” of a book entitled “How China almost became an American backyard”. The whole book is available at the following address:

<http://www.lpthe.jussieu.fr/~roehner/oce.pdf>

What makes this account trustable is the fact that it is largely based on US sources and particularly on messages sent by the US embassy in Beijing to the State Department. As these confidential messages were not destined to the public and became known only through Wikileaks, they are certainly more reliable than stories written by US journalists for US media.

The overall picture given by these sources reveals that although nobody was killed on Tiananmen Square there was nevertheless an uprising in other parts of Beijing and also in other Chinese cities.

Actually, other persons who took the time to investigate these events arrived to the same overall conclusion. As an example one can mention the account given by the Canadian researcher Brian Robinson (2011).

Long answer, part 1: successive steps toward a better understanding

Before giving a comparative view it may be useful to say briefly how we were led to our present understanding.

In the two decades following 1989, as everybody else, I came recurrently across the expression “Tiananmen Square massacre” because it was widely used in western media. It made me uneasy for two reasons. (i) First, in my mind there was of course the terrible image of tanks crushing people (ii) The second reason was more personal. In 1993 I wrote the first draft of “Les logiques de l’histoire” (Basic mechanisms of history) which makes the point that one should not study historical events in isolation but rather in the form of *families* of similar events. For the event of 4-6-1989 I had only one case which was highly unsatisfactory. However, around 2010, thanks to the Internet, I came across a number of similar cases, that is to say the repression of anti-governmental demonstrations mostly led by students (see Table 6.2). These examples suggested that when confronted to determined and violent protests governments had little choice than to allow the police and troops to use their weapons. Although not mentioned in the subsequent table (because they are of a somewhat

different kind), this is also what happened in the US during the race riots of the 1960s.

However the previous observation did not solve the question of whether or not there had been a massacre on Tiananmen Square. In September 2015 I discovered the testimony of a student leader, Hou Dejian, given in the following Wikipedia article: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hou_Dejian

Born in 1956 in Taiwan, Hou Dejian is a song writer who left Taiwan for mainland China in 1983, despite the ban on visits to the PRC. On June 2, 1989 he started a hunger strike together with Liu Xiaobo (a dissident who became a Nobel Peace Prize laureate in 2010), Zhou Duo and Gao Xin.

In the early morning of June 4 the four leaders decided that they had to take responsibility for the students in the square. Although Zhou Duo had volunteered to go out to seek the cooperation of the soldiers, he realized that Hou Dejian was the only person that the soldiers might know of. Thus, Hou and the others met with a political commissar and said: “We volunteer to take all the students out of the square and ask the PLA not to open fire. Please give us enough time to organize an evacuation”. The students were initially reluctant to leave the square. However, Hou and the other leaders were able to usher them away.

After June 4, Hou spent 72 days under the protection of the Australian embassy. Following his emergence out of hiding, Hou gave an interview in China about his role in the evacuation of the square. The interview exposed him to the criticism of other dissidents to which he responded by saying that the truth should prevail over any other considerations.

Hou’s account of the evacuation is confirmed by the testimony of a Chilean diplomat which is reported in a message of the US Embassy dated from 12 July 1989 (more details can be found in Roehner 2016d). The report’s summary reads as follows:

“During a recent meeting, a Latin American diplomat, Carlos Gallo, provided Poloff [political officer, that is to say usually a CIA case officer] an eyewitness account. Although *the account generally follows those previously reported*, it provides additional insight and corroboration of events in the Square. Remaining with students by the monument to the Heroes until the final withdrawal, the diplomat said there were no mass shootings of students in the Square. When Poloff mentioned some reportedly eyewitness accounts of massacres at the monument with automatic weapons, Gallo said there was no such slaughter.”

In this statement the most important part is certainly the mention that this testimony “follows those previously reported”. One can be sure that between 4 June and 12 July the US Embassy has collected as many testimonies as possible for it is the duty

of embassy personnel to give their government reliable accounts.

These reports settled the question of what had happened on Tiananmen Square but it left open the question of what happened elsewhere in Beijing, and beyond Beijing, elsewhere in China.

An answer to the first question is given by a series of 25 photographs published in the mainland magazine “China Today” in 1989. They can be found on the following webpage (available as of November 2017)

http://www.chinatoday.com/history/tiananmen_1989/tiananmen_1989_14.htm

The caption of the homepage picture says: “During the rebellion, more than 3,000 civilians were wounded and over 200 died, including 36 college students⁶² There was, however, not a single corpse found while cleaning up Tiananmen Square”. The pictures show burned civilian and military vehicles. With 120 buses and 60 armored carriers burned by insurgents, the event of June 4 can hardly be considered as a peaceful protest; it was an uprising.

In the following months, years and decades, western media kept alive the myth that there was a great massacre on Tiananmen Square itself. In a sense, this is understandable because one of the first rules of public relations campaigns is that the message should be simple, possibly a black and white picture. If one accepts that civilians were killed in the streets of Beijing, one is inevitably led to mention their attacks on army vehicles. With respect to the myth this is an embarrassing truth because it suggests that the people of Beijing who were killed were not all peaceful civilians. Incidentally, there was a similar misrepresentation of the demonstrations against President Assad in Syria in the sense that they were presented as peaceful whereas in fact the police and military were already under attack by armed rebel groups.

Long answer, part 2: the uprising of 1989 in comparative perspective

In the previous subsection we learned that the event of June 4 was in fact an uprising, but what sort of uprising was it? Table 6.2 lists a number of similar cases.

The rebellions in Thailand and South Korea were popular uprisings against military rulers. However, as both in Thailand (before 2010) and in South Korea, those military leaders had close relations with the Pentagon, these repressions received only scant attention in US media and more generally in western media. The same holds for the so-called “Russian Constitutional crisis”, a label which deftly covers the shelling of the Russian parliament by tanks ordered by Boris Yeltsin. An Internet search reveals

⁶²In spite of such a clear statement given in English, the American authors of a book published in 1996 write “One of us was in Beijing during the 1989 Tiananmen student uprising and watched as Chinese soldiers put wreaths on street corners to honor the soldiers killed in the operation. The dead students were never mentioned in the government government-controlled media” (Bernstein et al. 1998, p. 14) Not only is the last sentence a lie, but it seems that this author was not interested in understanding by whom and how the soldiers were killed.

Table 6.2: Repressions of failed uprisings

Date	Name	Reason of protest	Fatalities (official)	Fatalities (high end)
France				
1791, Jul 17	Champ de Mars massacre	Against the King	12	400
1848, Jun 23-26	June Days uprising	Worker uprising	5,000	7,000
1871, May 21-28	Bloody week	Insurrection of Paris	2,000	30,000
Mexico				
1968, Oct 2	Tlatelolco massacre	Student protest	300	
Thailand				
1976, Oct 6	Thammasat University massacre	Student protest	46	150
1992, May 17-20	Bloody May	Popular protest	52	
2010, May 13-19	Cruel May	Popular protest	85	
South Korea				
1980, May 18-27	Gwangju uprising	Popular uprising	600	
Russia				
1993, Oct 4	Constitutional crisis	Army stormed Parliament	187	2,000

Notes: “Tlatelolco” is the name of the district of Mexico City where the “Plaza de las Tres Culturas” is located where the army opened fire on demonstrators.

Sources: The table is mostly based on the corresponding Wikipedia articles either in English or French. For Mexico, Thailand and South Korea no high end estimates are given by Wikipedia except for 1976 in which case it is a fairly moderate one. This can perhaps be explained by the fact that these countries were US allies at the time when the articles were written. For the 1989 uprising in Beijing the data given in the Wikipedia article for the civilian fatalities range from 218 (official figure) to a high end estimate of “several thousands”. In addition, according to official data, 120 buses and 60 armored carriers were burned.

that this expression together with the word “tank” is used in only 19,000 websites, that is to say much less than the Tiananmen Square event.

A comparison of “Tiananmen 1989” with the cases listed in Table 6.2 suggests that there have been two different movements:

i A student movement in favor of political liberalization (whatever that may mean).

ii A protest by workers against economic liberalization commonly called neoliberalism. In 1989, economic reforms had already taken away some rights such as life-long employment or free health care, without however providing appropriate compensations in terms of wage increases especially for workers with low qualification.

This belief relies on the fact that, as a rule, workers movements are more likely to use violence than student movements. That is easily understandable because for workers the issue is not merely about ideas but about wages, working conditions and the well-being of their families. As a matter of fact, most of the persons who were arrested and sentenced for attacking soldiers were not students but workers (see

Roehner 2016d).

Actually, a third component can be mentioned which consisted in persons, including members of the Communist Party, who were sponsored by US organizations. Indeed, in Roehner (2016d) it is shown that the rebels were frantically supported not only by the US State Department but also by Chinese-American organizations and media. A recurrent scenario of that kind was played out in Russia with the staunch US support given to Boris Yeltsin even when he blatantly violated the Russian constitution during the so-called “Constitutional Crisis”. Needless to say, all governments which let the army fire on demonstrators claim that the uprising was supported by a foreign country and that the first shots were fired, not by the troops, but by the demonstrators. However, in the case of China and Russia there may be some truth to this thesis.

Self-censorship

Clearly the view according to which there was a “Tiananmen Square Massacre” is disastrous for China in terms of image. This is true for the public outside of China but also for the Chinese population itself because this view has been imported into mainland China through various channels among which one can mention the following.

- (i) Hong Kong media,
- (ii) “Radio Free Asia”
- (iii) Chinese students who attend US or European universities.

The reaction of Chinese citizens who go abroad is certainly that a thesis that is so widely accepted in the west cannot be wrong.

Why then does the Chinese government not try to change this image?

One should realize that there there is a paradox here. The massacres in Mexico, Thailand and South Korea were kept hidden and came in the open only after several decades. Thus, in South Korea the case of the 1980 Gwangju massacre remained closed until the election of President Kim Dae Jung in 1998. Then, after the election of President Lee Myung-bak in 2008 it was closed again until President Moon Jae-in reopened it again in May 2017.

In the case of China the situation is completely different in the sense that the view imposed by western media of a cold-blooded massacre of innocent citizens is the worst possible image. Thus, in terms of image the lack of discussion is just a disaster.

By allowing free access to the website of “China Today” as well as to the testimony of Hou Dejian the Chinese government has basically allowed Chinese people to know the truth. However, our experience is that very few have taken advantage of this possibility.

This attitude suggests that there is a general disinterest tantamount to a kind of self-

ensorship. The main characteristic of self-censorship is the fact that it knows no limit. This can for instance be seen in the case of France. About two decades ago a law was passed in Parliament which prohibits the expression of so-called “negationist opinions” that is to say negating or even questioning the existence of the Shoa, i.e. the mass murder of Jews under the German Nazi regime. As it is impossible to know the exact limit between discussing and commenting (which is allowed supposedly) on the one hand and questioning (which is not allowed) on the other hand, the simplest solution is clearly to avoid this topic altogether. In other words, such a ban leads to a situation in which opinions are completely frozen. This is probably what happened with “Tiananmen 1989” in China.

A personal testimony about self-censorship

Currently, in China what happened on Tiananmen Square in 1989 is considered a sensitive topic. Is this due to censorship by the Chinese government? In fact, as already observed above, one has rather the impression that it is due to a kind of self-censorship. Why?

Before opening this discussion it should be observed that my contacts were limited to English-speaking persons, basically professors and researchers. It is also possible that a broader range of websites can be accessed through computers located on university campuses than on those available to the general public.

- I have often been told by Chinese colleagues that in China one cannot get any information about “Tiananmen 1989”. This is not true. One can get access to the websites of several US newspapers and to their archive articles. In other words, one can read the articles about Tiananmen published in the “Washington Post” in the days following June 4, 1989. Naturally, through the same source one can also get the western views on many other events.

It is true that the “New York Times” is not available online in China but this is for a very specific reason. In June 2012 the NYT launched a Chinese online version, but then on 25 October 2012 the publication of an article entitled “Billions in hidden riches for family of Chinese leader” which was directed against Prime Minister Wen led to the indefinite suspension of both the English and Chinese versions inside the PRC⁶³. Similarly, in June 2012 after “Bloomberg News” had reported that the extended family of Vice-President Xi Jinping (at that time it was already known that he would become China’s next president) had amassed hundreds of millions of dollars

⁶³One must recognize that the article is replete with statements made by *anonymous* bankers and businessmen. More importantly, however, such a question should be discussed in a comparative perspective. When one knows that former PM Tony Blair or former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton are paid some \$250,000 for a one-hour conference, one can expect them to be fairly wealthy. In other words, it makes little sense to focus on just one case. In addition, the fact that this theme appears recurrently in US-sponsored anti-PRC publications (such as Falung Gong’s “Epoch Times”) raises doubts about the real motive of such articles.

in assets, the Chinese government blocked access to the website of Bloomberg.

- I have been told repeatedly that the Chinese government prohibits discussion of “Tiananmen 1989” but this claim does not square with the fact that the photographs of “China Today” are freely available in mainland China without any VPN or similar software.

Debasement campaigns

As observed earlier in this chapter, “Tiananmen 1989” is only one of the issues involved in the current information war. Also at stake is the image of former Chinese leaders, particularly Chairman Mao and Prime minister Zhou Enlai. Books tarnishing their reputation have already been published (in both cases by Chinese persons after they immigrated to the US). By so doing the objective is of course to blacken the whole history of China since 1949.

So far, the Chinese government has shown little awareness of an ongoing information war. The means that he started to implement have been purely cultural, e.g. the “Confucius Institutes” or the “China Global Television Network” (CGTN, formerly CCTV International); one can hardly expect that they will be able to change the attitude of western people whose opinions have been shaped by decades of China bashing. Moreover, these means of information will have no effect in China itself which is of course where the main battle will take place.

Relentless long-term debasement campaigns

In an earlier chapter we have already observed that in order to sound convincing unfavorable comments made about a country must come from one of its citizens. This condition helps to understand why such operations require long-term planning. A few examples are described in Table 6.3.

It took the United States decades to build up credible stories and “theories” able to disparage Russian or Chinese leaders. Most of these stories were written by domestic writers.

- Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn was a good contributor for the Gulag story. He emigrated to the United States in 1974 shortly after the publication of the “Gulag Archipelago” in Paris.

- Li Zhisui, chairman Mao’s personal physician, was a good contributor for portraying him in a disparaging way in his book entitled “The Private Life of Chairman Mao”. Li emigrated to the United States after the death of Chairman Mao and wrote his book while in the US. After the book’s publication, Mao’s nurse and his personal secretary wrote a book in Chinese in which they rebutted several of Li’s assertions.

- Gao Wenqian, who had been a researcher at the “CPC Central Party Literature

Table 6.3: Examples of campaigns of disparagement

	Year	Author	Title of book	Target
1	1944	Hayek	The road to serfdom	Economic planning
2	1947	Kravchenko	I chose freedom	USSR
3	1973	Solzhenitsyn	The Gulag Archipelago, 1918-1958	USSR
4	1981	Furet	Interpreting the French Revolution	French Revolution
5	1994	Li, Zhisui	The Private Life of Chairman Mao	PRC
6	1995	Hicks	The comfort women. Japan's brutal regime	Japan
7	1997	Chang, Iris	The rape of Nanking	Japan
8	2007	Leonsis	Nanking (film)	Japan
9	2007	US House of Rep.	Resolution 121 (on comfort women)	Japan
10	2007	Gao Wenqian	Zhou Enlai	PRC

Notes: Calling these operations “disparagement campaigns” does not mean that they were not based on some elements of truth but rather that they were well planned campaigns characterized by the following distinctive features: (i) Most of the authors are citizens of the country targeted in their books (ii) Most of the books were written, translated, edited and published in the US. (iii) Translations into many languages were published soon after the publication of the English version. This table gives only a few examples. Since 1945 this procedure was used many, many times and it is still in use today. A more detailed description of case (1) can be found in Roehner (2007, p.117-119). It should be noted that such planned campaigns were also waged against non-Communist countries. In France one of the targets was (and still is) the Vendée civil war. Called a genocide (which, if this word has any meaning, it certainly was not), it is used to debase the Revolution itself. Note that apart from the Nanking film cited in the table there had been 5 other films on the same topic: (i) Black Sun: The Nanking Massacre (Hong Kong 1994) (ii) Don't Cry, Nanking (Hong Kong 1995) (iii) City of Life and Death (Hong Kong 2009) (iv) John Rabe (Germany 2009) (v) The Flowers of War (Hong Kong 2011). Incidentally, Resolution 121 was based on a book by Yoshida Seiji which was in fact complete fiction.

Research Center”, emigrated to the United States in 1993. While sheltered and paid by the university of Harvard, he wrote a disparaging biography of Prime Minister Zhou Enlai in which the latter is presented as a sort of slave of Chairman Mao.

One could mention many other Russian or Chinese people which were employed by the United States in similar ways. All such cases required long-term planning over periods of times of several decades. First the collaborators had to be identified, then “recruited”, then brought to the United States. After that, the writing (and editing) of their book may have taken several years. Finally, after the book's completion it had to be translated in as many languages as possible.

Incidentally such a procedure had already been used for Friedrich Hayek's book entitled “The road to serfdom”. It was published in 1943 and was soon followed by many translations (more details can be found in Roehner 2007, p. 117-119).

How can one fight debasement campaigns?

Ineffective ways

In an information war between two nations *A* and *B* the nation (let's say *A*) without an appropriate defense system will be powerless for while its leaders (as well as its entire history) will be tarnished and misrepresented it will be unable to defend itself. Thus, the process will continue until at last the people of *A* renounce to their own history that is to say to their very identity and become ideological vassals of *B*.

As already observed, the creation of Chinese cultural centers will not be an adequate response for it can only convince people who are already in sympathy with China.

Another ineffective method is to contest the facts used in the debasement campaigns. This was shown very clearly in the Kravchenko case. In 1950 the French Communist Party tried to oppose Kravchenko's statements in court by offering numerous testimonies to the contrary. The fact that this is not a good method can be seen in two ways. (i) The court sided with Kravchenko (ii) It is a well known principle of public relations technique that one should never try to counter the arguments of side *B*. Doing so, would mean waging a defensive battle which in fact will popularize the arguments of *B*. Instead, one should make the point that these arguments are too simplistic, that the real situation is much more complicated. This will spread confusion in the minds of the public and it will give *A* the role of a neutral arbiter.

In the Kravchenko case, instead of trying to negate his testimony through opposite testimonies, it may be more convincing to expose the circumstances in which his book was written⁶⁴.

He defected to the US in 1944 while being in an official position in Washington and after having had contacts with FBI officers. In other words, US protection was provided as part of a deal whose conditions remained of course confidential. Kravchenko wrote his book in collaboration with Eugene Lyons, at that time an anti-communist journalist involved in "Radio Free Europe" and who was also a supporter of the "House Committee on Un-American Activities" mentioned earlier in this chapter. Although this person received 40% of the royalties, his name does not appear as an author.

Need of a deterrence force

Once it has been agreed that the previous methods do not work what else can be tried? A little reflection suggests that one possible method is to develop and set up a "deterrence force".

What do we mean by "deterrence force"? According to the Free online Dictionary deterrence refers to measures taken by a state *A* to prevent hostile action by a state *B*. How can it be done in the framework of public relations campaigns?

The history of all nations contains uncomfortable truths. Usually, such episodes are

⁶⁴<http://spartacus-educational.com/USALyonsE.htm>

either completely ignored or kept at the periphery of the collective historical memory. In this way, it becomes possible for a nation to build up a fairly decent representation of itself.

On the contrary, if, through foreign (or, even better, domestic) interventions such uncomfortable episodes are continuously replaced at the center of the stage, it will make *A* insecure, and this feeling will in turn disrupt its assertiveness.

A deterrence force developed by *A* will consist in a set of stories about *B* which question the representation that *B* is forming of itself. Naturally, such stories not only must be true but they must also be presented in a way which can attract public interest. This supposes good story-telling skills and also the technical means for spreading the stories worldwide. Naturally, in order to sound convincing such an operation can only be done by *B* citizens.

Let us give an illustration.

As any government, the US federal government is supposed to protect its citizens, not to harm them. Yet, in the early years of the Cold War, thousands of US soldiers were exposed to nuclear radiations without protection for the purpose of testing the reactions of armed forces in a nuclear theater of war. This is a well known fact for even today surviving veterans get financial compensations⁶⁵. However, this fact (as well as similar ones which concerned US Navy personnel or civilians) is rarely mentioned. In order to use such events as a deterrence would require the following steps.

- 1 To convince one or several US officers who took part in such exercises to conduct research in US archives.

- 2 To convince them to write a book, possibly in cooperation with a writer skilled in public relations techniques.

- 3 The next step is to have this book published in a foreign country (e.g. France) for it would be very difficult if not altogether impossible to publish it in the US. Once published, it should be translated into many languages and widely sold in many countries (this means a cheap sale price). In this respect, it can be remembered that after being translated into French (under the title “J’ai choisi la liberté”) 500,000 copies of Kravchenko’s book were sold in France.

One may wonder why Japan, an even closer US ally than France, was targeted. As an illustration, one can consider Resolution 121 passed on 30 July 2007 by the US House of Representatives about the so-called “Comfort Women” issue in Japan. Why was it passed at that moment? Here is a conjecture.

Mr. Shinzo Abe became Prime Minister on 26 September 2006 and only a few days later (on 7 October 2006) he devoted his first overseas trip to visiting Beijing and to

⁶⁵Of course, as in all similar cases, the number of harmed servicemen is not well known.

mending ties with China with which relations had declined sharply in recent times particularly because of Mr. Koizumi's visits to the Yasukuni Shrine. Mr. Abe told reporters that he considered his visit to China a turning point that "will lead Japan-China relations to a higher level". Such a statement was certainly welcomed by the Japanese business community but perhaps not by Washington. Mr. Abe's visit broke a tradition among Japanese prime ministers of visiting Washington on their first overseas trip. One week later Mr. Abe's second visit abroad would be to South Korea. In short, with respect to relations with China, Mr. Abe's attitude in 2006 was very different from the position he took in 2012 when he became Prime Minister for a second time. One year later, on 12 September 2007 after a string of scandals had eroded his support, he announced his resignation. Resolution 121 may not have been an important element in Mr. Abe's troubles, but it was certainly a negative element because it signaled that the relations with Japan's closest ally were not good.

As a last word on this topic, is it not a pity that one has to design and set up deterrence campaigns? If the study of history would be conducted in the spirit of comparative analysis that we propose, there would be no need for such means. However, when one sees the history of France being re-written by US historians with a well-defined agenda it is difficult to remain unconcerned. In the long term this would lead not only to the undoing of history as a field of knowledge but also to the destruction of the sense of self-confidence in France as well as in other countries.

Assessment of public relations performance

The introduction of the book about Zhou Enlai mentioned in Table 6.3 begins with the following sentence: "Of all the myths of the Chinese leaders, that of Zhou Enlai was the hardest to crack" which clearly suggests that the outstanding goal is to tarnish and blacken the reputation of all Chinese leaders. The terms used in reference to Chairman Mao⁶⁶ are shocking even for non-Chinese readers for such terms would never be used in a scholarly book about any US statesman. Yet, it can safely be said that all great statesmen⁶⁷ can be held responsible for brutal policies which resulted in thousands of civilian deaths. Yet, by explaining in detail what led them to such painful decisions, US media are able to exonerate them. On the contrary, by avoiding any real explanation of the actions of Russian and Chinese leaders, they are presented as monsters and pathological characters. As emphasized in Table 6.4 it is the predominance of US media which allows such disparaging views to be spread worldwide.

Regarding the ability to be trusted by its own citizens, one can cite the attitude of Chinese students with respect to government statistics. Very often I had to convince

⁶⁶E.g. "personal cruelties", "Mao's mercurial moods", "Mao's sadism".

⁶⁷E.g. Andrew Jackson, Martin Van Buren Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, Harry Truman, Lyndon Johnson

Table 6.4: Comparison of the public relations performance of different states

Class	Countries	1. Ability to convince its citizens that it is thrustworthy	2. Ability to fight off debasement campaigns	3. Ability to reshape the history of other countries
First	United States	Yes	Yes	Yes
Second	Western countries, Japan	Yes	Very limited	No
Third	Eastern Europe, USSR, PRC	No	No	No

Notes: The table assesses the ability to conduct successful public relations campaigns either domestically or worldwide. In this respect one should remember that, in contrast to advertisement campaigns which are done openly, public relations campaigns must leave the public unaware of their very existence. In this sense it can be said that all political campaigns conducted in China

(see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_campaigns_of_the_Communist_Party_of_China) were advertisement (in other words propaganda) campaigns, not public relations campaigns. As an example, one can mention the “Learn from Lei Feng” campaigns which started in 1963. As a matter of fact, at present time (2017) it can be said that there is no public relations industry in China. Whereas in many technical fields China was able to catch up with the west with remarkable success, in the public relations sphere it has remained powerless. With the advice of US professionals and for the cost of a few J-20 fighter aircraft, it would probably be possible to develop a fairly effective public relations industry. However, complete success would also require a worldwide media industry. Incidentally, Table 6.3 shows that, despite its extensive contacts with the US, Japan is in the same vulnerable situation as China with respect to debasement campaigns. By the way, the Wikipedia article cited above can be seen as an element in such a campaign in particular by its use of “estimated” [how and by whom?] death numbers. The term “Eastern Europe” refers to the formerly Communist European states outside the Soviet Union.

them that official data were in fact quite reliable. For instance, in the 2000s the growth rate data published in China were questioned not only by Chinese students but also by many western economists. Apparently, however, they did not care to analyze the data of imports from China published by the US Department of Commerce. Had they done so, they would have found that the GDP growth figures were in fact quite plausible.

Destabilization and removal of foreign leaders

For the State Department the ability to remove unfriendly foreign leaders through public relations campaigns gives the guarantee that vassal states will remain faithful vassals. Actually, it even happens that leaders who are friendly to the US are removed in the same way, for instance because they had been in power for too long. A spectacular illustration was the removal of Egyptian President Mubarak.

President Mubarak

For about 30 years Mubarak had been a close and faithful ally of the US but suddenly, in 2011, US media labelled him a dictator and President Obama decreed that he should leave. It is remarkable that the Wikipedia article entitled “Hosni Mubarak”

does not say a single word about the public interventions of President Obama who literally asked him to resign⁶⁸.

This was an impressive case of foreign interference but also an unusual one for most often such interference is channeled discreetly through (controlled) domestic media. A case in point was the removal of Prime minister Hatoyama in Japan.

The Hatoyama-Ozawa case



Fig. 6.6 10 December 2009 in Beijing. Chinese President Hu Jintao shaking hands with members of a Japanese delegation led by Ichiro Ozawa which comprised 140 lawmakers. On the visit each of them was accorded a personal photo opportunity with Chinese President Hu Jintao. In 2010 Ozawa was indicted for falsification of political funding reports of campaign donations before being acquitted in 2011. Source: <http://www.china.org.cn>

In December 2009, while Yukio Hatoyama was Prime Minister, the Secretary General of the “Democratic Party of Japan” (DPJ), Ichiro Ozawa, led a delegation of 600 Japanese, including 146 DPJ lawmakers from the upper and lower houses of the Japanese Diet, for a four-day visit in Beijing. President Hu Jintao called Ozawa “an old friend of the Chinese people”. During the visit President Hu said he and Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama improved their strategic relationship and opened a new era.

However, this ray of sunshine did not last. The reason is easy to understand. Japan is by far the most important US ally in East Asia. Therefore a close strategic relationship between China and Japan is seen as a disaster by the US State Department and simply cannot be tolerated. The easiest way to get rid of unwanted leaders is through financial scandals, real or fabricated.

In 2009 Ozawa was accused of falsification of political funding reports.

In January 2010 two of Ozawa’s aides were arrested.

In April 2010 a prosecution inquest panel concluded that “it is highly likely that

⁶⁸Sometimes the French version of a Wikipedia article gives a more objective view but in the present case it is just a translation of the English article.

Ozawa is an accomplice”.

In June 2010 Ozawa announced his resignation as secretary general of the DPJ.

Yet, in April 2011 he was acquitted by the Tokyo District Court.

In December 2009, it was revealed that Hatoyama received \$4 million in donations from his mother that were improperly reported. As President of the DPJ, he was also affected by the investigation concerning Ozawa.

Then, on 2 June 2010, after several months of harassment by the media, he announced his resignation as Prime Minister. He had been in power for less than 9 months. He was replaced as Prime Minister by someone of the same party but who was much less friendly to China. He was never indicted with respect to the \$4 million donation.

Obviously, both for Ozawa and Hatoyama the allegations rested on little hard evidence, but this was in fact unimportant. What counted was their amplification by the media. It is at this point that the role of the “Mighty Wurlitzer” is essential.

In such affairs the scenario is always the same: misbehavior allegations followed by harassment by the media until eventually the target is compelled to resign. Although in each individual affair it is almost impossible to know who really pulled the strings, the comparative analysis of their repetitions is usually more revealing. An example of such an analysis was given in Roehner (2007, p. 147-148).

In April 2012, less than two years after Hatoyama’s resignation, the right-wing governor of Tokyo opened the Diaoyu-Senkaku affair. However, the dispute with China really started only in September 2012 when the DPJ government (that is to say of the same party as Hatoyama) nationalized three of the islands.

Then, in the general election of December 2012 the “Liberal Democratic Party” (LDP) came back to power through a landslide victory. This is the party who had been in power almost without interruption since 1946. Thus, for the US State Department the situation was back to “normal”. In fact, the situation was even “better” than before the Hatoyama episode because the Diaoyu-Senkaku dispute guaranteed a lasting rift.

Conclusion

The hallmark of analytical history is to lead to testable predictions. But what kind of predictions can we expect? It is important to realize that there is a difference between what we may wish and what scientific exploration can provide.

Analytical history is not astrology

For centuries it has been the wish of people to know what will happen in the future.

The fact that elaborate astrological “models” were developed in all major civilizations shows that the wish to know the future existed in all times and on all continents. In other words, it is quite natural that many of our readers would like to know what the future will be. They are not really interested in some narrow facets of the future that may possibly be predicted; instead they wish to know the global picture. Will the future be good or bad? Will there be disasters or not, and so on? This is the kind of information that astrology claims to be able to provide.

Those of our readers who have understood the way analytical history works know that it can provide reliable predictions only for events which happened repeatedly in the past. The larger the number recurrences and the more similar they are, the more accurate the prediction will be. As, clearly, the global story has never occurred in same form in the past it is outside the scope of analytical history.

Unless it is planned, the future is stochastic

Actually, there is good reason to think that there will never be a method permitting to predict the future in the global sense that astrology promises. The reason is simple. By definition the “future” consists in a succession of events. Even if at each step we can make a prediction with a high reliability $p \simeq 1$, for the whole story the reliability will be poor. The more steps there are, the poorer the prediction will become. For instance, if $p = 0.95$ after 30 steps, the end reliability will be $p^{30} = 0.21$ and after 50 steps it will be $p^{50} = 0.077$.

Probably the only way to “predict” the future with some certainty is to plan it. This is what the psychohistorians of Isaac Asimov’s “Foundation” trilogy (Asimov 1951, 1952, 1953) were doing. They were manipulating the population and the leaders of the Galaxy according to their own plans and through channels which did not allow the persons to realize that they were manipulated. In such a way a stochastic system becomes deterministic which means that p becomes equal to 1.

You can apply the same distinction to your own life. You may not be able to say with certainty where you will be on the next day at noon because many unexpected things may happen: a friend may call you or you may have lunch in your office because you are too busy. On the contrary, if you are *planning* to take a flight from Beijing to Paris you can say with quasi-certainty (unless the flight is canceled or there is some other problem) that on the next day at noon you will be in Paris.

What did we learn which translates into predictions?

What did we learn in this chapter which can be formulated in terms of predictions? It was shown that all well known features of cold war situations are already present and will of course *continue in the future*.

- 1 The renminbi-dollar competition in trade and especially in oil trade.

- 2 The competition for high-value product markets.
- 3 The influence struggle in key countries as in Thailand.
- 4 Implementation of a containment policy through encirclement by vassal states (see also the chapter on containment).
- 5 The instrumentation of separatist groups in vital areas for the Silk Road project.
- 6 It was shown that the information war is already under way and is likely to intensify in coming years.
- 7 It was shown how the US dominance in the media industry can be used to shape public opinion worldwide. For instance Chinese economic objectives may be presented as a threat or the strength of Chinese armed forces may be overstated.
- 8 Another feature of cold wars is the multiplication of espionage cases on each side. Although we did not study this point in the chapter it can be observed that this has already started. In recent times several Chinese persons have been arrested in the US. For instance, Lieutenant Commander Edward Lin, a US Navy officer born in Taiwan, was charged in 2016 of passing military secrets to China and (more surprisingly) to Taiwan. Symmetrically, there have also been arrests of US citizens in China. Li Kai, a US citizen was arrested in the fall of 2016 for spying for the FBI. Another US citizen, Sandy Phan-Gillis, had been arrested in March 2015 and sentenced to three and a half years in prison.

As already said, in order to transform these general predictions into more specific statements one should analyze each case in detail. Thus, for the Gwadar case one would need to find information about previous separatist actions; one needs to know which form they took: bombing, shooting, stabbing, taking hostages and so on. Clearly such an analysis would go beyond the framework of the present book.

However, such a study would be quite useful for the Chinese companies which plan to do work in this area. That is why it might be a good idea to spend some time and efforts on such investigations. Such a study would tell the companies how to avoid serious incidents, including incidents which may result in the death of workers.

Chapter 10

What is to be done?

What made physics and astrophysics so successful?

In our opinion two factors played a great role in the fantastic success of physics and astrophysics (i) The simplicity requirement (before studying the carbon atom we must understand the hydrogen atom) (ii) The fact that the development of physics and astrophysics was a collective and cumulative process.

These two points are revealed by the following outline of the development of astrophysics.

Development of astronomy and astrophysics

Physics and astronomy made great progress in Greece over several centuries basically from -300 to 300. Then, at least in Europe, for over one thousand years there was not only a stagnation but actually a regression. On the contrary, in the Middle-East and in China progress continued. The Song dynasty around 1050 was a golden age in this respect.

One of the oldest existent star maps was printed in China in 1092 AD. It is often said that the Mongol invasion which started some 40 years later was a disaster for China. Although this is certainly true in many respects, it does not seem to be true for the development of astronomy for we are told that the Mongol Emperor Khubilai Khan who reigned from 1260 to 1294 required the help of Iranian astronomers to build a new observatory in Beijing (that can still be visited) along with an institute for astronomical studies. About one century later, in 1368, Emperor Taizu of the Ming dynasty established a new national observatory in Nanjing.

In short it can safely be said that by 1400, Iran and China were much more advanced in this field than the European countries. Why, then, did the breakthrough occur in Europe and not in China or Iran? This is certainly a question for which many answers can be proposed. One important aspect was certainly the transition of astrology to astronomy. So far in our outline, for the sake of simplicity, we have used the word “astronomy”, but in the Preface it was already mentioned that for many centuries the

observations of the sky were rather made for the purpose of developing astrology.

Directly connected to the transition from astrology to astronomy one should also mention the will to start with the study of the simplest systems.

The simplicity guideline

What made Galileo, Kepler and Newton successful is that they started with a *simple* question. The study of free fall by Galileo and of planetary orbits by Kepler and Newton were two forms of the two-body problem. In a general way the two-body problem refers to the movements of two masses which interact through gravitational forces, but for the fall of an object on Earth or for the orbits of Mars or Venus one of the bodies is much heavier than the other and can therefore be considered as being steady. That is why we called them simple forms of the two-body problem. Actually, when one of the bodies is completely steady, the movement of the other is a one-body problem in a central gravitational field. In terms of complexity, this case comes immediately after the even simpler (albeit trivial) case of a uniform straight line movement.

The fact of following this simplicity guideline revealed the will, not only to describe, but also to *understand*.

This was clearly a crucial step, but this study included another step of cardinal importance, namely the idea that the forces between celestial bodies are not different from those we can see on Earth. Was this fundamental idea of an identity between terrestrial and celestial phenomena present in China at that time? It would be interesting to know.

Collective aspect of future progress

The solution of the two-body problem opened the door to an understanding of the whole solar system: planets, asteroids, satellites, comets.

The next steps followed basically the same pattern in the sense that a physical law discovered on Earth was used to explore the stars. This can be illustrated by two examples.

- Combined with spectroscopy analysis (that is to say the decomposition of light into its color components) the Doppler effect for electromagnetic waves permitted to measure the velocity of stars with respect to the Earth.
- The knowledge of nuclear reactions permitted to understand how the stars produce their energy and the atoms of elements which are heavier than hydrogen and helium.

These examples show an important aspect of the natural sciences that we often forget because we are too used to it. This fundamental feature is the fact that the develop-

ment of astrophysics was a *collective and cumulative process*.

Make social science research into a cumulative process

So far in the social sciences the creation of new knowledge was mostly individual and non-cumulative. As an illustration one can recall the fact already mentioned in the Preface that the landmark achievements of sociologists such as Alfred Espinas (1878), Emile Durkheim (1894), Vilfredo Pareto (1917) or Charles Tilly (1994) have been largely forgotten.

This claim is easy to prove. At the same time our explanation will highlight what needs to be done.

Consider Tilly's study of 1994 that we have just mentioned. Entitled "Popular contention in Great Britain, 1758–1834" it lists and describes hundreds of demonstrations, incidents and outbreaks of violence that occurred in Britain over a period of 77 years. This will be quite an important tool for other researchers in the same way as catalogues of stars are crucial tools for astrophysicists. However, there is clearly no reason to restrict such a catalogue of incidents to Britain and to a specific time interval. In our parallel with astrology this would mean a star catalogue that would cover only a small part of the sky. Such a limitation would much reduce its usefulness.

In other words, Tilly's study should be complemented by similar studies first about Great Britain but for all remaining time intervals for which sources are available. and then it should also be extended to other countries. The fact that this was not done means that Tilly's study has been an individual work which remained isolated. Actually, it is not completely true that there were no similar studies in other countries. For instance the French historian Jean Nicolas has published a catalogue of rebellious incidents in France from 1661 to 1789. Once again, however, this was an individual work which remained isolated.

A successful example of a collective, integrated and cumulative database is IPUMS (illustrated in Fig. 10.1). Developed by the University of Minnesota, this database offers extensive data for the United States but also for the censuses done in many other countries including China.

Clearly if this kind of databases would be developed in China as cleverly and vigorously as was done for the development of mobile phone networks it would be a game changer in the social science research not only in China but worldwide.

Sadly, we must say that, to our best knowledge, the few attempts made in Europe in this direction were not very successful. For instance in France there is the "Quetelet network" but it is not user friendly and its scope is rather limited. This probably reflects in a more general way the poor development of information science and



Fig. 10.1 IPUMS is a social science project built on the model of the natural sciences, namely it is collective and cumulative. The IPUMS acronym stands for “Integrated Public Use Microdata Series”. “Microdata” means that the data (e.g. census data) are given for *individual* persons. “Integrated” means that all series of a given kind (e.g. censuses from various countries) are presented in a uniform way so as to make them comparable. “Public” means that the database is freely open to every researcher who wants to use it. *Source: Adapted from the website of IPUMS.*

service-oriented programming in Europe.

Regarding more specifically the question of historical events, a proposal was made in “Pattern and repertoire in history” (Roehner and Syme 2002) which consisted in a “Very Large Chronicle” (VLC). It would list all events worldwide. It would consist in a database comprising three layers. Layer 1: short and standardized description. Layer 2: Discussion of main secondary sources. Layer 3: Primary sources along

with their English translation. Wikipedia provides a partial realization of the first and second layer. The most demanding task is of course the third layer but it is also the most essential.

So far we focused on databases because these are tools without which nothing can be done. Clearly however they are a necessary but not sufficient condition. The research itself needs to be done by teams rather than by individual researchers and it needs to start by focusing on “simple” questions. Although it is difficult to define in a general way what is “simple”, nevertheless one can give the two following guidelines.

- In a general way the more a system comprises interactions the more complex it is. For instance, a country with 5 home-land minorities is certainly more complex than a country with only one. This is particularly true if the minorities interact not only with the majority but also with each other, as is indeed most often the case.
- Some phenomena can be found not only in humans but also in animals. As an example, one can mention the mortality spike which occurs immediately after birth. It occurs in all species for which data are available: monkeys, farm animals, fish (Berrut et al. 2016). It is true that according to current classification this effect would be seen as belonging to biodemography rather than sociology. Examples of more specifically social parallels in humans and animals can be found in Espinas (1878). The obvious advantage of studying an effect which exists in humans and animals is the fact that one can make experiments. In astrophysics an effect like the Doppler effect was first discovered on Earth and then in stars. Applying the same approach to social systems would imply two steps (i) First one identifies an effect in animals, (ii) then one explores it in humans. Needless to say, for such an approach team work is essential.

Acronyms

C-in-C: Commander in Chief

CNUCED: UN Conference on Trade and Development

DPJ: Democratic Party of Japan.

EU: European Union

FDI: Foreign Direct Investment

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

ICBM: InterContinental Ballistic Missile (a guided missile with a minimum range of 5,500 kilometres)

KMT: Kuomintang. Founded by Sun Yat-sen as a leftist organization, it became fiercely anti-Communist and anti-Soviet after 1926.

LDP: Liberal Democratic Party. The party which remained in power in Japan almost without interruption since 1946.

NYT: New York Times

PLA: People's Liberation Army. (this name replaced "Red Army" after 1945)

PRC: People's Republic of China.

RMB: Renminbi, the currency of China (literally the people's currency)

ROC: Republic of China (Taiwan)

THAAD: Terminal High Altitude Area Defense

UN: United Nations organization.

USA: United States of America

USD: US dollar

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[The mention of the CIA should not lead us to think that the CIA can do anything by itself. As an agency of the US government, all its actions must first get the approval of the White House and State Department. To those inside the CIA, the propaganda network is known as the "Mighty Wurlitzer" (a Wurlitzer is an electric piano) because (in the words of the article) at the push of a button it will play in almost any language and anywhere in the world whatever tune the US government wants to hear.]

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“In our time making history into a science becomes more and more a necessity. That would enable us to use with profit the overwhelming amount of recorded facts which otherwise remain almost useless; once organized and linked to one another the weight of all these facts will become more bearable.” (p. XI)

“Physics should always remain present to our mind”. (p. IX)

However, if the purpose was the same the method used by the author was very different. Instead of following Durkheim’s advice to study social phenomena like “things”, he uses an anthropomorphic approach based on the psychology of the individual man. This leads nowhere because the human mind is a system of much greater complexity than our human societies.]

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