

Oscillating between the Great Powers and China's Quest for a New World Order

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Abstract: The paper examines the steady rise of China in the international system vis a vis the gradual retreat (looking inwards) of the United States of America as the global hegemon faced with enormous strategic uncertainty. Unequivocally, the international system is characterized by an endless and relentless struggle for power, hence, the possibility of a power switch between great powers in the system. Using library research method, aided by textual analysis of secondary data, the paper interrogates the normative changes in China's foreign policy, from the building of global institutions that can rival the post-war II institutions, to the building of burgeoning partnerships with its neighbours. It contends that China's one belt one road initiative is a significant structural strategy to advance a new global order, thus; it signals a more assertive China in its foreign policy, from risk aversion to risk embracing. The paper concludes that the 'one belt one road' initiative if actualized, has serious global geopolitical and geo-economics significances as well as a grand ploy to re-edit the global order and further Chinese spheres of influence and interest in the international system.

Keywords: Hegemony; International Order; One Belt One Road; Polarity; China; Great Powers

1. Introduction

A glance at the history of the modern international system suggests that there has continually existed a constant flux of power between and among leading powers and growing powers. This is inevitable because one of the essential characteristics

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of international politics over time is: The unending and relentless struggle for power and relevance among actors in the system. This claim has been substantiated by different realist scholars (Morgenthau, 1948; Mearsheimer, 2001; Waltz, 1979; Gilpin, 2001; Wohlforth, 2008) who contend that whatever the intentions of states in global politics; the goal essentially remains seeking and retaining power.

The position of a global (hegemonic) power has fluctuated among great powers over time in trajectories of history. History has seen the rise and fall of empires and great powers, from the Roman Empire to Britain, France, Prussia, and Austria-Hungary among others. Kennedy (1987) opines that several factors contribute to the emergence, demise, and exchange of great powers (hegemonic status) over time; from the management of military power to that of economic capabilities among others. The control of these fundamental sectors during the time of war or the pre-war era, largely determines whether or not a state remains a dominant force in international politics. More so, the socio-economic, strategic, technological and organizational breakthrough among rising powers, as well as the perfunctory mindset of the leading power also contributes to the rise and fall of great powers over time.

When examined against current realities, it is observed that the dominance of the U.S. led multilateral world order with its liberal doctrine is beset with enormous challenges and thus marching towards its apogee. More so, realities in the post-cold war era have encouraged multipolarity, as nations struggle to find their way out of inequality, poverty, and underdevelopment. Indeed, the current world order is characterised by multiple-centres of power with the emerging economies like Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Malaysia, and perhaps India exerting significant political and economic influences accordingly, creating a complex web of power interactions and engagement (Folarin, Ibietan & Chidozie, 2016). More recently, given the apparent unpredictability, strategic uncertainty, the retreat of America more to itself and lack of belief in international agreements by the new American President Donald Trump, the global trust in America's led World order is in a state of global flux, and has also stirred the appetite for alternative structure among nations of the world.

Amidst all this happening, the rising China State has continued to improve on her economic and technological breakthrough over the years. This increasing economic prowess has focused the beam light of researchers and pundits (like Beeson &

Zeng, 2018; Breslin, 2017; Andornino, 2017; Vangeli, 2017) on the place and impact of China in the global political-economic system. These economic capabilities have also transcended into other spheres shaping China's foreign policy in recent time; with its grand tact - the one belt and one road initiative, which may perhaps provide the alternative structures sought by many nations.

This Chinese led socio-political and economic initiative which envisage to connect China's ports to those of Asia, Europe, Middle East, Africa and the Eurasia regions covers areas that create around 55 percent of the world's Gross National Product (GNP), 70 percent of the global population and 75 percent of the world's energy reserves. With an expected financial commitment from China to total 1.4 trillion dollars in the coming years; Beijing has officially dedicated around 300 billion dollars for infrastructural loans and trade financing, a sum which incorporates a 40 billion dollars committed to the Silk Road Fund for infrastructural development and the 100 billion dollars preliminary capital allotted to the Chinese Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) (Casarini, 2016, p. 96).

The repercussion of this grand strategy if actualised is enormous, especially regarding the current liberal world order. In this light, the work becomes significant as it interrogates China's quest to fill the lacuna created by America's systemic retreat. Using the power transition framework, the work advances alternative theoretical perspective for comprehending the politics of China's foreign policy in recent time. Fundamentally it does so by interrogating China's Belt and Road initiative and its likely structural implication on current world order.

1.1. Method and Structure

The work draws from a large pool of secondary sources of data including relevant books, journals, periodicals, reviews, and internet materials. These data were analysed using textual method. The work is divided into 5 sections; the first introduces the paper, while the second section embodies the conceptual and theoretical framework for the study. Basically, the section revisits the contested idea of unipolarity, global governance, hegemony and approximates the power transition model to the study. The third examines the normative changes in China's foreign policy in a principally liberal world order. The fourth explores the significance and implications of the Belt and road initiative on the current world order, while the fifth concludes the study.

2. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

2.1. The Concept of Unipolarity

Unipolarity simply connotes a system in which a single nation controls a disproportionate percentage of the politically relevant resources of the system. Unipolarity suggests that the sole super-power faces no ideological contending opponent of equivalent status or impact, and even if ideological options do exist, they do not pose a danger to the unipolar power's position as a model for others (Gautam, 2014, p. 35). Ikenberry, Mastanduno & Wohlforth (2009) aver that the unipolarity threshold value is to be attained by powerful states that are viewed in the international system as a polar actor. Hence, unipolarity is assumed when there is no form of counter-hegemonic alliance that can off stage the polar actor.

In comprehending the term unipolarity it is germane to refer to the customary definition of the term 'pole'. A pole can be regarded as a state that contains capabilities and capacities that unequivocally distinct it when compared with all other nations in the international system. Furthermore, the 'polar actor' is a nation that enjoys appreciable level of resources or opportunities to accomplish its objectives; surpasses other nations in all components of state capacity characterized as, the demographic, territory, natural endowments, economic capabilities and military capacities, in addition to organizational-institutional competence (Waltz, 1979, p. 131). Consequently, Unipolarity is a construct which is too great to be counterbalanced by an alliance because of the pole's capabilities.

The concept of unipolarity has been enriched by the realist school in international relations, with the "poles" considered the most important player and actor in the international system. The "pole actor" is "one state or coalition of states, which is so important, that his leaving or entering into the system will change the architectural structure of the international system itself" (Tarifa, 2010, p. 48). He further argues that a power pole is determined in the international system by having technological, economic, military and political power. Thus, this leads the pole in providing public goods to the rest of the states in the international society in terms of security, technology and economic wise. The capabilities of the polar actor will lead to alliances of weaker states either to constrain it or to exploit it because the pole is endowed with all the components of power; land size, competence, demographic, military, economic, human endowment and capacities (Waltz, 1979).

Therefore, unipolarity is the ability of a dominant power, with global reach, capable of doing whatever it pleases to do either in support or against the international system anywhere in the world to advance its foreign policy goal.

2.2. The Concept of Global Governance

Before exploring the concept global governance, it is important to examine what the term governance means. As a concept, governance has been used to imply a set of complex process and structure in private and public spheres of life. Governance is regarded as the ‘range of formal and informal values, rules, norms, practices, and organizations that provide better order than if we relied purely upon formal regulations and structures’ (Weiss, 2013, p. 31). Viewed from a global perspective, Chidozie and Aje (2017, p. 48) suggests that governance ‘features a fine interplay between, the States, profit organizations, non-profit organizations, inter-governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and the individuals’ that are inextricable in the management of the ubiquitous challenges of humanity. Simply put, it is a comprehensive, dynamic, multifaceted process of interactive decision-making that is continuously evolving and responding to changing situations (Governance, Commission on Global, 1995, p. 4).

In Finkelstein (1995, p. 369) words, global governance as a reflection of doing what governments does at home in the international context. Essentially, global governance embraces a wider range and seemingly ever-growing actors (international institutions, States, individuals,) in every domain. This aligns with the Commission on Global Security, Justice and Governance conceptualization which posits Global governance as ‘comprising relationship of transnational actors with the domestic, local and sub-national actor. It involves a combination of treaty-based, informal multilateral and bilateral relations between nations progressively more influenced by non-state actors actions and desires’ (Commission on Global Security, Justice and Governance, 2015, pp. 8-9). For instance, the United Nations (UN) system has no central government (authority) and single commissioner. It constitutes a loose network of organizations

Additionally, a working and conceptual challenges of global governance are enormous. This informs Weiss (2010, p. 808) argument that “global governance should perhaps be seen as a heuristic device to capture and describe the confusing and seemingly ever-accelerating transformation of the international system” and a concept to reflex the reality that undoubtedly, there has never been a global government, and there will never be such. Furthermore, global governance pertains

to the interplay of ‘myriad shared or individual entities’ arising from several social and specialised orientations, “which form networks that engage to address issues that threaten local and global communities” (Jang, McSparren & Rashchupkina, 2015, p. 1). Global governance is concerned with issues in which a single state cannot address alone because of the complexity and dynamics of the problems in the international system. Thus, global governance involves various dimensions of interactions between different actors-formal and informal in the international system charting a clear path for humanity.

2.3. The Concept of Hegemony

Hegemony is a complex concept that lacks conventional definition and means different things to various people. Strange (1987) notes that ‘they are a bundle of concepts and explanations centring on the notion of the role of the hegemon or leader, the dominant state in the international system, and the connection between the hegemon and the stability of that system’ (cited in Mowle & Sacko, 2007, p.7). The term hegemony has been synonymous with the idea of the dominance of one group over another.

The concept was developed by Antoni Gramsci (1971) which has helped to deepen our knowledge on the dynamism of power relations and interactions between and among nations in the global society (system). The term hegemony is derived from the Greek expression “hegemonia”, which connotes leadership. It was used to describe an asymmetrical power relation. Gramsci (1971) posits that coercion or force does not drive power solely, but power also thrives on consent. He conceives hegemony as the leading position by a dominate state among others states and its unchallenged leadership role in the international system through the promotion and universalisation of its core national interests as the interest of each tendency. He further asserts that hegemony is the representation of the status of the most dominant nation in its engagement in the global system or the position of a powerful nation in a particular region. Nye (2002) argues that for a superpower to be regarded as a hegemonic power the country must be able to persuade other states to cooperate. Persuasion could be achieved by using soft and hard power in compelling other countries to believe in a mutual interest.

Similarly, Volgy, Kanthak, Fraizer & Ingersoll (2005, pp. 1-2) see hegemony as having the power, capability and position to amend the rules and norms of global systems centred on one’s own interest and activities. Hence, the power to influence

global happenings by any country in line with its blueprint and doing otherwise would be an illusion. Strange (1989, p. 165) avowed that hegemony essentially needs two kinds of strengths; relational and structural based. Relational power is the ability to force and persuade other plays and actors whereas structural power encapsulates the ability to achieve the desired rules and operations in the international system. She further proposes four features of structural power which she calls hegemony's global position;

- security element, consisting of the use of arms to deter or defend other countries security;
 - production element, consisting of the control of the production of goods and services globally;
 - financial element, consisting of the control of the finance and credit international capital market; and
 - Knowledge element, consisting of the capability to initial development, accumulation of wealth and capital and the transfer of technology.
- (Strange, 1987)

According to Keohane (1984), for a country to be regarded as a hegemonic power in the world political economy, the country must control large markets, capital, have access to important raw materials for production and must have a comparative advantage in goods with high value added. Hence, it must be stronger than any state holistically in all ramifications. Moreover, hegemony is a situation in which single-handedly one state dominates the rules and arrangement of the preponderance of power either regionally or internationally. Therefore, for hegemony to be created, power is required simultaneously in all facets such as economic, political, military, diplomatic, and even cultural sectors, hence this will stimulate the challenging power into making a normative and structural change in economic, political, military, diplomatic and cultural sectors.

2.4. Theoretical Framework

The choice of theory for this work is the power transition theory. We adopt the power transition theory because of its lasting applicability to the power transitional effect, changing power relations and “probabilistic tool by which to measure these changes and it allows forecasting of likely events in future rounds of change”

(Tammen, Kugler & Lemke, 2011, p. 1). The power transition approach is an offshoot of the realist theory in the field of international relations. The theory emerged from the writings of Organski (1958) and further advanced by Organski and Kugler (1980).

However, it has some variations from the basic assumptions of the realist political theory. The power transition theory contrasts with the realist theory with the argument that the international system is hierarchically arranged and not anarchical. It is hierarchically arranged with the dominant state at the top of the hierarchy in the international system, dictating the rules of engagement in the global system. States in the global system could either be satisfied or dissatisfied with the distribution of power. The satisfied states in the international system tend to support the dominant power in maintaining the status quo, while dissatisfied states perhaps a rising power alone or an alliance of rising powers challenge the dominant power.

It agrees with the realist assumption that power is a very important variable in moulding how the global order works. The power transition theory posits that power is reflected in the convergence between economics and politics. Economic wealth reflects the potentiality for power, which can be allotted to security and other crucial sectors. Power includes demographic strength and productivity (Tammen, Kugler & Lemke, 2011). Power transition theorists assume that international competition is motivated by what a country gets either from cooperation or conflict. The goal of every state in the international system is to utilise the net gains of power, as countries analyse what they stand to gain from cooperation or conflict. Conflict emerges if the gains from cooperating are less.

Consequently, the rules guiding international and domestic politics are akin together with the fact that there is no central law guiding the international system, thus, the internal growth [economic, military, and technological] of a state determines its power in the international system. In effect, nations in the international system are in competition of the scarce resources, and if the gap between the dominant state and the next is smaller, the more chances a conflict will arise (Organski & Kugler, 1980). Therefore, every action that a state takes in the global system is either to maintain, support or challenge the power distribution status quo.

Thus, China's structural arrangement and initiative can be theoretically understood

using the power transition approach to international politics. Hence, as a framework, it seeks to provide insight into the unfolding trajectories in the international system.

3. China's Normative Changes in a Liberal World Order

Since the outcome of World War II, the arrangement put in place through the Bretton Woods conference of 1944, the San-Francisco conference of 1945, and the ever-evolving rafter of institutions constitute the foundations of the international rules-based system. With the underlying assumptions that America emerged in the post-war as the superpower unchallenged, then challenged by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR). The collapse of USSR and the Berlin wall signalled the end of the cold war and ushered the world into an era of unipolarity and the global hegemony of the United States of America, which Fukuyama tags ‘the end of history’. However, with the development of several emerging economies and multipolarity, the world has witnessed China’s steady rise and challenge to the current international order marshalled by America and her allies. China’s continuous strives to outperform the United States reigning hegemon, particularly in the economic sector, continues to resonate in international debates. This was the submission of a scholar:

China’s rise affects the United States because of what IR scholars call the “power transition” effect. Throughout the history of the modern international states system, ascending powers have always challenged the position of the dominant (hegemonic) power in the international system—and these challenges have usually culminated in war (Layne, 2008, p. 16)

In the same vein, an ascending China is likely to prove no exception. It has increased its economic diplomacy in the international system with its neighbours. Before the year 2000, United States of America had occupied the biggest trading pattern of virtually every state in Southeast and Eastern Asia, a role currently occupied by China. This strategy is seen as a way of balancing America’s dominance in the region. Since a superior nation like China cannot be left out from the most important regional trading blocs in her region, America’s overall trade and growth rates may decline in the course of time as regional trading blocs which increase trade, economic growth and development for associates while guiding trade away from non-associates is emphasised in the region (Pape, 2005). China

has been encouraging free trade pacts with its neighbouring states of Southeast Asian and others states in the international system. This is reflected in China's determination in building up a Free Trade Area with the regional bloc Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Within the FTA framework, Beijing presents an alternative market to Europe and North America, in addition to other platforms for members to grow, thus "the FTA arrangement with ASEAN helps Beijing support its long-term interests in mitigating, if not countering, US influence in Asia" (Ba, 2003, p. 641).

Likewise, China has also improved the relationships with African countries and providing economic assistance with no conditionality in contrast with western countries and multilateral institutions that attaches heavy terms to Aids.

Furthermore, the China that acts outside what the west considers as the noble way of doing politics, constitute a real threat to the global order with its assertiveness in its foreign policy. China is constructively modernising its army and military capabilities. The acquisition of sophisticated naval, air force and missile capabilities by the Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) is geared towards protecting China's interest in Taiwan and the Southern China Sea. Wang (2010) averred that 'Beijing has intensified efforts to procure the military capabilities to deter Taiwan from declaring de jure independence and to counter US efforts to assist Taiwan should conflict erupt' (Wang, 2010, p. 559). The naval forces in China are increasing hard power capabilities to protect the ever-increasing China's global interest around the world, but the PLA's revolution and transformation will possibly take quite a while. But in managing America's military power in the immediate time and to cope with Beijing's technological inadequacies, Chinese armed forces have resulted in unsymmetrical warfare (Lee, 2008). This includes warfare in cyber and counter space systems against civilian and military networks, as well as asymmetric warfare on information operations, financial infrastructure, psychological, legal and media (Wang, 2010). Also, more recently, China has contributed more in terms of funding to the United Nations and peacekeeping mission than any other member of the United Nations Security Council, including the permanent five (P5) members, with the military, medical, police and engineering troops serving in various missions. Indeed, this demonstrates China's readiness and enthusiasm in taking up the responsibility of providing governance in the area of global security and in providing public goods (Zhang, 2016).

Consequently, the future of US-China relations will witness a progressively rising influential China, and a strategic uncertain United States, engaged in a grand conflict over the rules, principles and headship of the global system (Ikenberry, 2008).

Prior to the mid-1990s, China perceived doubt in multilateral organisations because it expected that other nations could utilize them to join forces against China. China had perceived nearly all global institution, for example, as advancing America's interests. With Beijing favouring bilateral agreements, believing that China's geographical and demographical size would give it more advantage. Nonetheless, by 1996, rising China understood that multilateral engagements could help enhance the growing concerns over its power. Participating in the global institutions would empower Beijing to restructure their guiding doctrines to better propel its interests. As China became progressively surer of its hard and soft power, it viewed the gains of global institutions and structure as mechanisms of statecraft. Such a perception of international organisations is essentially diverse from accepted laid down principle and norms (Goldstein, 2005).

China's utilization of multilateral institution aligns with the view that 'international institutions serve primarily national rather than international interests' (Waltz, 2000, p. 21). But with its participation in these institutions, China thought it will have a more significant voice. Unfortunately, this was not actualised, thus prompting China to design its own multilateral agencies. The creation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) was viewed a counter move in giving China's voice in supranational organisations which was lacking in the present multilateral organisation structures, and fill the gap not filled by the current multilateral organisations (Enright, Scott & Associates, 2016). The AIIB was launched in 2016 with 57 country members with an initial capitalisation of 100 billion dollars with a commitment of 50 billion dollars from China. In a similar fashion, the BRICS Development Bank was transformed into the New Development Bank which has Brazil, Russia, India, China and later joined by South Africa (BRICS) as the founders. These countries account for about 25 percent of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and over 40 percent of the world's population.

Apart from the multilateral institutions, Beijing is promoting new bilateral relations while also maintaining the ones it had earlier. Through effective partnership arrangements, China looks to expand its spheres of influence by connecting

financial and economic gains with bilateral relations, two-sided relations. The idea of partnership is available to potential allies, and it is within the framework of these partnerships that China seeks to guide and balance US power, without directly confronting the United States of America. China has built partnerships and cooperation like: China–Africa Cooperation, Central, East and Southeast Europe (CESEE), Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and more recently, China's structural strategy, the One Belt One Road initiative, which highlights China's new global role of linking its domestic development into its global orientation: a strong practical and normative link (Huang, 2016).

4. One Belt One Road as a Structural Change to the Liberal World Order

There is no doubt that China is in a phase of greater domestic transition that will definitely reflect in its external relations; with the quintessential example of the entrenchment of Xi's ideology into the communist party constitution at its 19th Session, the removal of political term limits for the office of the President amongst other. However, President Xi Jinping has utilized almost all fora over the past five years to publicise China's new structural initiative: The One Belt One Road initiative, in which the continuous transformation of China (Chinese dream) is the focal point of his political program. The initiative consists of two pillar posts, the belt, and the road. The former seeks to connect China with Europe, Russia, South and Central Asia, while the latter is a proposed maritime route, connecting the ports of China with that of Africa, Middle East, Europe, South East Asia and South Asia. It is projected to cover 55 percent of the world's Gross National Product (GNP), 70 percent of the global population, and 75 percent of the world's energy reserves with an expected financial commitment from China to total 1.4 trillion dollars in the coming years. Beijing has officially dedicated around 300 billion dollars for infrastructural loans and trade financing, a sum which incorporates a 40 billion dollars committed to the Silk Road Fund for infrastructural development and the 100 billion dollars preliminary capital allotted to the AIIB (Casarini, 2016).

Therefore, the OBOR is a shift from former President Deng Xiaoping's renowned instruction of China bidding time, laying low and never taking the lead. Thus, the

initiative is regarded by scholars as the Chinese Marshall plan in the twenty-first century. This is anchored firstly on, strengthening and building up new collaboration between the nations on the belt and road, with the objective of making systems of cooperation in numerous areas and on wide range of political levels, ‘often described as a “community of common destiny” or “community of shared interests” in which economic development and cooperative security reinforce each other (Jinping, 2013). Secondly, the initiative seeks to be flexible, inclusive and open to any member who seeks to participate, as the OBOR is progressively perceived to be beneficial for countries and people around the globe, but the geographic coverage is not determined and remains vague. Thirdly, it centres on building up a holistic political and economic network of connectivity between countries along the belt and road. Furthermore, President Xi Jinping has talked about ‘five aspects of connectivity’, namely: policy, trade, road, intellectual, and monetary connectivity (Fu & Lou, 2015) with infrastructural development, highways, railways, ports, as its core and partnerships with neighbouring countries through six proposed economic corridors which include:

- New Eurasia land bridge, stretching from Western China province to western Russia;
- China-Mongolia-Russia corridor, stretching from Northern China province to Eastern Russia;
- China-Central Asia-West Asia Corridor, stretching from Western China province to Turkey;
- China-Myanmar-Bangladesh-India corridor, stretching from Southern China province to Myanmar;
- China-Indochina peninsula corridor, stretching from Southern China province to Singapore;
- China-Pakistan corridor, stretching from south-Western China province to Pakistan.

Geo-economically, the initiative will facilitate the internationalising of China's currency, as nations along the belt and road will conduct trade with the Yuan, and these countries may use China's currency as reserves in their respective central banks. Hence, in essence, cross-border trade settlement is likely to grow in the
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Yuan, with flows of Chinese investment most likely to be in US dollars (Summers, 2016). Also, it will facilitate alternative investment markets, free markets for the Chinese goods and services, as well as developing the western hinterlands of China which is more underdeveloped when compared with the eastern parts which have greater access to the ports, thus creating a more integrated region. Moreover, China currently is associated with globalization. China has defended the global project, thus becoming indispensable on an expanding array of international issues, from economic governance to climate change with alternatives source of energy, low carbon emission and promotion of a green environment. For instance, the Paris accord on climate change.

Geopolitically, the withdrawal of America from the Trans-pacific partnership agreement signals a vacuum. In this context, the Belt and Road project is strategic because it affords China the opportunity to control their immediate region (Asia) and also avails them the opportunity to move to West, North Africa. This will possibly improve China's relations with Europe. The OBOR depends as much on its capacity to empower a plurality of political communities across Eurasia and its African neighbourhood through open-ended, mutually beneficial arrangements, as it does on its being perceived as part of a global effort toward what has so far proved an elusive quest for a new ethical, institutional and social order. Similarly, China is projecting the OBOR as a catalyst for a new 'vision of global governance' and national strategy. The initiative is anticipated to be an important driver for China's short and long-term objectives, desires, initiatives, and a crucial pillar of its "going global" strategy. Russia has also signalled a cautious acceptance of the initiative. Thus, the initiative will expand China's spheres of influence to traditional Russia spheres of influence and further westward into Turkey and Europe. Russia acceptance is borne out of its western sanctions and economic crisis which has left it with very few power partners. Clarke, et al., (2017, p. 69) asserts that:

By linking BRI to its own regional initiative—the Eurasian Economic Union—Moscow hopes to stake a claim to partial ownership of the idea and largely preserve its regional influence while avoiding conflict with Beijing and direct responsibility for the practicalities of implementing BRI in Central Asia.

However, this initiative has a lot of security concerns with China's regional neighbours as well as politically unstable countries as partners—Pakistan, Afghanistan and other nations in the Middle East. Yet, others have presented China

as an alternative leader to the global leadership of the United States of America due to China's desire to transform its growing economic and strategic supremacy into the OBOR (Fukuyama, 2016). China will benefit from OBOR as it will guide global economic development and contribute to the principles of economic governance, in a manner that affects the process of globalization by presenting concepts that diverge from hegemonic market neoliberalism. Thus, this strategic initiative is a clarion call by China on the international community to work jointly towards a "harmonious and inclusive" world, an idea proposed in 2005 by former President Hu Jintao.

5. Conclusion

Undeniably, there is a significant difference between United States of America and China on what the rule-based order of the international system should be. The two states vary on certain fundamental issues, such as non-interference in the internal affairs of states, sovereignty, economic integration, and the environment. Although, China has embedded itself into the America liberal international order to fast track its economic development and growth. It is transforming economic wealth into soft and hard power that dares America's geopolitical dominance, and most importantly working within the post-1945 international order system to transform itself and the global order. Thus, it is building some new structural foundations of an international order through its brainchild organisations like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS, and more recently through the one belt one road initiative as a paragon in constructing an alternative to the international order.

China is using the simple maxim in international relations that posits that once a country has economic power in the international system, it can, in turn, translate into political power, which then engenders security power through acquiring military capabilities which generates foreign policy power and finally generates strategic power. Thus, a progressively rising China will challenge the US within and outside the global order, while making a lot of structural changes to usurp the existing order and building a China-driven global order.

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