

The Rise and Fall and Rise (Again) of China: A Research Paper about its Dream and Superpower Ambitions

Tan Jia-An^{1,a,*}

Chiway Repton Xiamen School, Xiamen, 361000, China

a. joshuatan0116@outlook.com

**corresponding author*

Abstract: With China's name being mentioned more frequently in the media ever since the start of the 2000s, many may wonder: what has China been up to for the past few decades, and how has it risen to infamy? For the past 73 years to the present day, this country has been an enigma for most people in present-day society. Most of today's taught history has been more focused on the Western Hemisphere countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, and more. The elephant in the room is China, as their civilization and culture are rarely talked about and taught. This paper will analyze the economic actions China has taken to drastically increase and maintain its growth, what it has done in terms of being a Communist society of surveillance and heavy influence over its people, and the chess game of foreign policies and economic wars it has been playing with other significant superpowers.

Keywords: China, Xi Jinping, Deng Xiaoping, Mao Zedong, Chinese Communist Party, Chinese Dream, United States, Economy, Trade, Society

1. Introduction

***“Keep a low head and maintain a low profile. Never take the lead – but aim to do something big.”
– Deng Xiaoping***

In 1978, the chairman of the People's Republic of China Deng Xiaoping visited Singapore and witnessed the immense economic prosperity that its citizens were living in. The transformation from pastoralism to a rapidly growing city gave Deng the idea to experiment with something similar in his economically crumbling nation. 1979 marked a change in China's economy, as Deng made Shenzhen's rural agricultural city into a Special Economic Zone (SEZs), introducing a socialist country to capitalism. In 40 years, the city went from having a population of 30 thousand to 17 million people in 40 years and is currently one of the most prominent digital technology centers and one of the most prosperous cities in the world [1]. The overwhelmingly positive results of Shenzhen led to more of these SEZs in China, where it is currently a country worth 19 trillion dollars in GDP [2], as it went from a country suffering from an economic downturn to competing with Western nations to become the second largest economy in the world. Despite this, not many people know about China's past and how it got to where it is today. With an emphasis on the last 200 years, China's past is barely talked about in the west as the history they are taught is usually focused on the western hemisphere of the world [3]. Only recently, China has been in the talks of a lot of western media due to its politics and relationships with the world. The trade war between China and America, sovereignty issues regarding Taiwan, and its human rights activity are all only present-day issues. By not viewing history

from a Chinese perspective, the general public can be confused by current-day politics because they do not know the background knowledge of countries such as China and why these issues are currently being discussed. Therefore, this research paper will explore how only recently people have realized and felt the rise of China by identifying the reasons and factors. Economic reforms and restructuring under different Chinese leaders, the controlling of its society based on the government's political ideologies, along with its foreign policies to gaining international recognition and power are all factors that will help answer the question of how China went from a country shunned by the international community, to have such a giant sphere of influence in present-day society.

2. Review of Selected Literature on China

“Indeed, our world is an indivisible community with a shared future.” – Xi Jinping

Socioeconomic Restructuring: The Chinese economy was at its lowest point after the death of Mao Zedong in 1976 and his reforms, which crumbled the Chinese economy and culture. Despite this, China still had many resources that gave it the potential for continued growth. According to Sulmann Wasif Khan, he believes that Mao Zedong had kept the country unified together and, at the same time, resisted the foreign dominance of exploiting China before his death, making it the safest it has been for almost a century [4]. While many people may not see the bigger picture and might have only seen China as an economically weak and socially destructed nation after its leader's death, it was more secure than it ever had been for the past century. It had escaped foreign rule, became a “unified” country, and had a large labor pool that would be instrumental in leading its future economic growth.

Regarding Deng Xiaoping, Khan believes he is credited for China's current-day economic success, as he built the base for it. He took ideas from other nations and saw their potential inside his nation. “...whether with agriculture or with trade, was to see what was working and then create conditions to allow it to work better...above all, perhaps, there were his observations of China...the self-tilled land that had proved productive.” [4]. The ideas and structures of these countries economies have led China to become the economic powerhouse as China moved on from Mao's communist manifesto, which yielded the failures it did, to a more western style, a socialist-capitalistic economy that eventually worked. With his book published by Harvard University, Khan has established *it* as a reliable source of information on China's History and its leaders from past to present, as it gives a historically accurate story with verification from a well-established publisher. Additionally, multiple other sources support this view, such as Stein Ringen, a sociologist who wrote in his book, “It is thought that Deng Xiaoping and his allies regeared the system into one single-mindedly dedicated to economic growth and that China was being edged on to a path of becoming an ordinary country” [5].

2.1. Politics and its Current Day Society

Since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in October 1949, its society and ideology have always been under Communism, and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is the single-party state that has been managing this nation for the last seven decades or so. Stein Ringen is a Norwegian Sociologist and Professor at the University of Oxford. His book has authentic information regarding Chinese society and how each leader under the Chinese Communist Party has reformed the country. “In the party-state, the party leads. It sets the direction and principles of government policy and monitors the rest of society to get both public and private actors to follow the party line” [5]. This gives a picture of what China wants to see in its society: to follow the state's orders and maintain a functional society; therefore, the people would prosper. The CCP has layers, which can be found everywhere in Chinese society, from central and local government agencies to businesses and schools. “The party controls what is done in public and private organizations through its power of consent and

veto. Everyone knows that wherever the party is present, it is the ultimate decider” [5]. It does this by having party officials everywhere in the country, which leads to its society’s actions, both physically and vocally, being controlled by the party state. However, it is not to say that China’s party system is efficient in its own right, as it is also rampant with corruption, as many politicians and officials bribe or pay their way through the ranks [5]. However, China has also used this to its advantage by weaponizing it to gain political power in foreign affairs, which shows the power of the CCP globally. Overall, Ringen has proved in his book that although the CCP is robust in terms of running its society in order to make an economically and socially efficient nation, its totalitarian nature and the corruption that comes along with it is what makes it usually polarizing to other globally democratic nations that give its people more equality, liberty, and freedom. This is significant as it shows why China’s social ideology blends so well with its economic composition, which leads to its success.

2.2. Foreign Policy, Foreign Affairs, and Foreign Influence

Ever since China’s miraculous economic reform program worked back in the 1980s, China has ever since gained much foreign influence from the west. Skipping to the present day, China has been building its relationship with the EU while simultaneously being in an “economic war” with the Americans. Kerry Brown’s “What does China Want?” and “China’s New Foreign Policy” by Tilman Pradt are books chosen for this section of the paper. China’s modernization of its military, the analysis of its response to disputes such as the South China Sea or the United Nations, and its relationship with countries surrounding its geographical location, such as Taiwan and Japan. The literature selected to analyze this theme of foreign affairs is helpful due to the perspectives and use of statistics as evidence that will be used later in the paper. For example, “...three Taiwanese ports are of particular interest...(they) handle some 90 % of all shipping entering and exiting Taiwan and would therefore be the most likely targets of a Chinese sea blockade.” [6] can be used to prove the diplomatic and economic strategies China is using to isolate Taiwan’s economy and leave it no choice but to reunite with Mainland China.

3. The Rise of the Mandate of Heaven

"Food is the priority of the people." – Chinese Proverb

To focus on Ancient China, the first thing that needs to be mentioned is the geography under which the Chinese civilization was formed. Regarding land area, China is the third largest country in the world, measuring more than 5,200 kilometers from east to west and more than 5,500 kilometers from north to south [7]. Alongside other civilizations at the time, Ancient China was also developed along rivers famously known as the Yangtze River and the Yellow River, which are crucial resources for starting a civilization. The use of a river can provide water for farming, leading to crops and food being produced, leading to a growing population of people and a society being built. China’s geography also helped to protect it against invaders. South-west of China are the Himalayas, mountains that prevent invasions due to their extreme climate and are difficult to move an army through. In the North, China had the Gobi Desert, which provided a similar barrier to the Himalayas, while to its East was the Pacific Ocean. This made it safe from invasion and external conflicts, allowing it to build its society and economy without worrying about anyone intervening. “The heartland was a large, fertile plain with two main rivers and a climate that allowed rice and soybeans to be harvested twice a season, encouraging rapid population growth. By 1500 BCE, the earliest version of a Chinese state emerged out of hundreds of mini city-states, many warring with each other.” [8] Overall, China’s different dynasties (most notably the Hans) took advantage of its geography and built a civilization that had prosperity and trade with other civilizations, leading to it dominating the

ancient times. In terms of economy and trade, China had leverage in that it had resources everyone wanted and tried to trade for them. Silk, tea, salt, and spices were all part of China's main export, and the only payment they accepted was silver. To produce all of these resources, China would have needed two things: efficiency, and a large labor pool, which it had both. Back then, trade routes to China were profitable to a point where other empires, such as the British or the Ottomans, fought wars over them to gain a more favorable advantage for their economies. "Han China gained control of valuable trade routes across Central Asia. Zhang Qian discovered that Chinese goods, including silk acquired by the Xiongnu, had made their way to the distant lands he visited, passing along the Silk Road, established in Han times, through Sogdian, Parthian, Indian and other merchants" [7]. Overall, the world order during this period was found in the Eurasian Hemisphere, where China came out economically. The Silk Road and other trade routes to India and the Middle East made it reliable to the rest of the world. This would not be the case forever. A new world order was founded, in which the sphere of influence that China once had would shift toward the western hemisphere. This is where history starts for most people: an age of the Americas and Europe, an age of advancements in technology and industrialization, and an age of western dominance.

4. Fall from Grace, Isolationism, and a Century of Humiliation

"We are the poorest and weakest state in the world, occupying the lowest position in international affairs; the rest of mankind is the carving knife and the serving dish, while we are the fish and the meat." – Sun Yat-sen

The discovery of the new world, which people now know today as the American continent, was an accident made by the Spanish. They had tried to sail west of the world to find quicker and more efficient ways to reach the lucrative empire of China. Instead, they discovered an entirely new civilization unknown to Europe. This civilization also coincidentally had fertile land suitable for settlements and colonization. These fertile lands would lead to a developed society like China and the discovery of raw materials such as gold and copper. The Spanish would also find silver in the new world that they used to trade with China, but after the discovery of America, its relevancy in the global order was beginning to show cracks. This was because of advancements such as Europeans discovering how to make their porcelain, the idea of colonialism, and the increase in the population of the Western Hemisphere due to the discovery of America. An increase in population meant that people in the west could just make their products rather than trading something for it with China, and colonizing a country meant that empires such as Britain and France could exploit a country's raw materials and resources by occupying it. By heavily relying on trade, the reliance on China decreased along with the value of its trade routes. However, China did not see it this way, as it had made a significant profit from all the trading, it did with Europeans before the discovery of the new world and was satisfied with what it had [9]. This resulted in China's isolationism period after the 16th century, within which the west would start industrializing, developing new technologies that helped increase efficiency and weapons that gave nations power over the other. As authority grew in Europe as it started to colonize more of the world and spread its influence in Africa and South America, China began to see the writing on the wall for itself. In 1839, the British had the idea that if China refused to trade with foreign nations, it was going to force it to, thereby leading to the Opium Wars and China being controlled by European nations due to its advanced military and weapons that it was humiliated by, leading to the enigma of places such as Hong Kong. This was when China's "Century of Humiliation" started, described as "a period of intervention and subjugation of the Qing dynasty and the Republic of China by Western powers and Japan from 1839 to 1949." [10] This period would also see the fall of the dynastic rule under the Qing and the "Mandate of Heaven" in China, with lost wars fought with European powers weakening it and internal rebellions due to poor population management. Eventually, a Nationalistic government fought with Mao Zedong and his communist

army over the control of China in a civil war that would eventually lead to a Communist victory and the fleeing of the Nationalists to an island now known as Taiwan. Altogether, China's decision to isolate itself and refuse foreign ideas and technology led to its dynastic downfall and a shift of its government towards more modern ideologies.

5. Deconstruction and Reconstruction of its Society

'If you are planning for a year, sow rice; if you are planning for a decade, plant trees; if you are planning for a lifetime, educate people. – Chinese Proverb

What China ended up with in the end after its dynastic rule was another "Mandate of Heaven" that was written by Karl Marx to try and establish a heaven-like society on Earth, known as "The Communist Manifesto." The idea of Communism for Marx was that all people would be equal in terms of their social status and economic gains; however, what China ended up having with Mao was eerily similar to what had happened during its dynastic rule. China became more self-isolationist, despising western powers and showing general hostility towards them. Furthermore, Mao's reforms for China were also considered failures that weakened China even further. Mao Zedong started ruling China with his two infamous reforms: the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. He hoped that his reforms could help transition into a more industrial-sized economy, but in turn, as more and more farmers became industrial workers, there was no food, leading to massive famines. At the same time, the Cultural Revolution killed most of its scholars and almost destroyed its history [11]. After Mao's death, Deng Xiaoping took over as chairman of the CCP. At this stage, China had lost many key factors that had once made it a great empire: its global influence, regional hegemony, dignity, and brains. However, China still had one thing going for it that had lasted the test of time, and that is the world's largest labor pool. Deng realized that continuing with Mao's idea of Communism (Maoism) was only worsening the country, so he opened up to foreign ideas and advice. He visited many countries in Asia, such as Singapore, where he saw a booming capitalistic economy contributed by Chinese settlers living there [4]. With this, Deng began to shift China away from communism towards a more "market socialist" economy, being defined as socialism and capitalism with Chinese characteristics [11]. He implemented economic policies that have been shown as applicable, such as opening up the Chinese market to foreign investments and engaging in free trade, instead of blindly following thinkers' ideologies and sayings.

The "Four Modernizations" also introduced by Deng to the party, which included what was to be done with agriculture, industry, science and technology, and the military. This ensured that farmers got their land back to generate a reliable food supply and that international industries would start producing products in China. During the 1980s, price controls were abolished so consumers and suppliers could determine the prices based on market forces, and more private enterprises were allowed to be set up (Kraut, 2019). Indeed, there was a significant opportunity to set up private business ventures in China after Deng's policies; however, it would be under specific laws and government intervention, but it was incentivized overall. [4]. This was seen as a move away from a communist economy towards a modified system that had been working well for other countries, as observed by Deng. In terms of its society, it shifted from practicing Maoism and shunning those who did not go to a more modern society of more educated and the cult following that Mao Zedong once had been starting to disappear. As society became more educated, so did production and employment, which is also what contributed to its sizeable economic success as Chinese society started shifting away from starving peasants reciting Mao's red book to a more well-off society similar to that of the American dream, where people finally had money to spend on their own needs and wants [12]. In terms of its government and policies, the idea of a communist state and party remained, with a Chinese Communist constitution still being revised to this date. However, the public brutally suppressed and censored demonstrations and protests for more political liberalization and democracy, similar to the

west. The government shunned ideas of freedom of speech and the press, which led to the suppression of people who demanded it. "The constitution includes many civil rights: free speech, press, worship, the right to trial, and the right to own private property. However, this constitution has widely not been followed" [11]. Substantially, This period from 1949 to 1990 can be seen as a time when China was at its lowest point, in which leaders wanted a change in the system it had operated for centuries. Therefore, critical figures like Deng Xiaoping helped the country reform its economic policies, shifting its society's behavior and ethics while preserving some structures used to build a country, such as its communist political ideologies.

6. Present Day, Xi Jinping, and the Chinese Dream

"The Chinese culture belongs not only to the Chinese but also to the whole world." – Hu Jintao

However, the complete liberalization of the Chinese economy did not start until the 2000s, when private military businesses (PMC) were shut down on the demand of the government, Mao's large welfare state was cut down, and when large-scale privatization occurred, which made 50 percent of China's economy private [13]. 2005 is the year in which the world began noticing the spotlight that was China again, as, from 1980-2005, its GDP grew from 306 billion USD to 2,286 billion USD [14]. Many western countries were perplexed and stumped by China's massive economic growth after seeing it be in an unescapable economic recession and poor living standards. Authoritarian capitalism is what the west deemed China to be due to how its government and economy functioned. However, it would be objectively incorrect to see China this way, as it still had a lot of Communist traits that Hu Jintao implemented as the former and current chairpersons of the CCP, respectively. After implementing more western style economies in China, Hu wanted to reform the income distribution system, proposed to eliminate absolute poverty and establish a welfare system that would apply to every citizen in China [15]. Apart from fighting the drawbacks that capitalism gives, he increased the control of the state via a single-party system and dissuaded privatization by giving bonuses to people who ran state-owned enterprises and competed with the private ones. Present-day China would not be a complete story if Xi Jinping were not mentioned, as he is the one that is always mentioned in the news or media whenever China is talked about. Xi has many ambitions and missions for China economically, socially, and politically. Ever since he came into power, statues of Communist icons in urban areas were taken down [16] to be replaced with more Chinese traditionalists, such as Confucius and Sun Tzu [17]. This can be seen as Xi trying to move away from more of the radical revolutionary ideologies that China had since the establishment of the People's Republic of China to more traditional values the ancient times provided by thinkers and philosophers such as Confucius and Sun Tzu. Xi wanted to create a Chinese state where people lived in social harmony through obedience, authority, and self-worth [5]. Xi's vision of China is one of a society in order and prosperity, and by being complacent towards its party-state, the people get wealth and succeed in China. This nation has seen the effect of communism in other countries and has watched its downfall, so it learns from its mistake. They did not want to be a severely isolated North Korea, so they engaged in international affairs and maintained relations with other countries to gain economic and diplomatic reliability. It did not want to become like the Soviet Union which refused to receive foreign economic aid and investment, so China partially freed its market to private enterprises in order to have foreign companies produce in the country to incentivize trade and globalization. Xi's main mission, however, is to legitimize the regime of present-day China by connecting back to its history. While Mao tried to erase past Chinese history and culture, Xi embraced it. He wanted to show the world that China could return to its past empire to the point where it had complete geopolitical domination over the world, quoted by many sociologists as the Chinese Dream [15]. Xi and the CCP have done much in economics to further advance China's economy by taking off where Deng had left off. The Belt and Road Initiative is a project worth billions of dollars that stretches across the Eurasian hemisphere.

Based on the ancient Silk Road developed during the Han Dynasty, China plans to use this route to increase investments in foreign countries and promote free trade in more underdeveloped countries [18]. This is also referred to as “The String of Pearls” strategy, in which China establishes ports in countries that are part of this initiative. China does not tell people that it is also using the Belt and Road Initiative to try and cut off its competitors, such as India and Singapore, through these “strings.” By building this new Silk Road along these countries’ coasts, they gained more geopolitical influence and made trade more costly for their rivals. With this, China has been slowly but surely regaining its sphere of the dominance of the Eurasian continent through the likes of trade and economics. Moreover, China also saw the potential of investing in more underdeveloped countries by helping with infrastructure construction. These countries are also all part of the Belt and Road Initiative and seek to gain more economic benefits through China’s investment and alliance [6]. However, these ports can also be seen as China exploiting these underdeveloped countries, as before they went and did business in these countries, they were all in financial debt and needed a way out of it. Western nations did not see the benefit of helping an underdeveloped country like Sri Lanka, which also had questionable human rights violations of ethnic cleansing of minorities [18]. However, China saw this as an opportunity to gain geopolitical and economic power, as Sri Lanka just happened to be located in the middle of the Eurasian continent, making it easier to travel throughout Asia and towards Europe for trade. Similar to what the British did in Hong Kong, Sri Lanka was forced to lend the ports built by China back to them to repay their loan for 99 years [13]. This same “build and lend” policy was also implemented in other unstable nations such as Pakistan, Kenya, and many more, leading to China regaining significant influence in that area while preventing its competitors from doing so.

7. The Past Five Years, Europe and Donald Trump

“If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles.” – Sun Tzu

Apart from Asia, China also started moving with European countries and their respective leaders in 2005 by buying into major industries each country specialized in [19]. They began investing in European sectors, such as the German car industries and Swiss banks, which built a healthy relationship between the EU and China [20]. What the Europeans did not realize until it was too late, however, was that China was using soft power to slowly but surely build up its economic and geopolitical influence in Europe so that they had to rely on China for more economic benefits. The investment the Chinese made in Europe blinded many of its leaders as they also needed economic incentives to continue growth. By the time the Europeans had realized this, China had already bought and owned significant infrastructure and ports, such as Piraeus in Greece, which was majorly suffering during the Financial Crisis of 2008. Chinese investment was what saved them for the short term. By buying Piraeus, China has now repeated what they did in Asia, albeit in Europe, as Piraeus leads out into the Mediterranean Sea and the heartland that is Europe, allowing China to connect its ports again and add another string of pearls in an already developed continent. It was not just economically, however, that China has attempted to spread its control globally, as it has also done it militarily. In 2016, after the election of Donald J. Trump as the president of the United States. After the 2016 United States Presidency Election controversy, China took advantage of the chaos and started building harbors and stationing its military in the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. To some, this does not make sense economically, but what China did gain them significant strategic value, as it would guard the Asian Pacific against the United States’ western hemisphere, making it harder for foreign aid to intervene in Asia [21]. Meanwhile, as Russia was also having disputes and conflicts with the west in the US and EU, China had also gradually taken control and influence over Central Asia; most notably, Chinese troops were stationed in Tajikistan. This led to China gaining more of its military and geopolitical influence inland into Central Asia and slowly regaining what it

once had in its ancient times [22]. Military strategies and decisions were not the only actions China took that outsmarted the west, as, during Trump's presidency, he had put many trade restrictions and tariffs on China so that it was more expensive to export products into the United States, which totals up to 17 percent of its exports [23]. Trump believed this would have slowed China's economic growth, but what they did next was extremely simple-minded: they sold more to other countries. After opening up more markets after expanding its spheres of influence elsewhere with its large economy, China opened up many markets elsewhere in Africa, Europe, and Asia, to which it can export the surplus of American exports that had been derived due to the tariffs placed on them, further increasing their revenue. Most humorously, China had still been selling many of its products to the United States via an old tariff bypass that had been used for thousands of years, even by the Americans. After Trump had put tariffs and trade taxes on the Chinese, they immediately started the construction of factories in Malaysia and Vietnam to complete the assembly of products there. The Chinese would, for example, assemble products to near completion, ship them off to the factories they had built in other countries in which they were close, finish the production there, and therefore ship the finished product to the United States without having to pay any tariffs due to it technically not being "Made in China," but "Made in Malaysia" or "Made in Vietnam." The Americans had done this with cars in Mexico, and in the 1700s, the Dutch had done a similar thing with its resources to avoid Danish tariffs. The idea is surprisingly simple, and it is baffling to see how the United States and the Trump presidency did not notice it and thought that tariffs would have completely derailed the Chinese economy [24]. However, it is not as if every country has turned a blind eye to China's drastic rise to fame, as China still has many border disputes and sovereignty issues. The South China Sea has been in dispute between Southeast Asian countries and China due to the mass amounts of resources such as oil that it provides. "The South China Sea is the focal point in China's grand strategy to become a superpower" [18]. The most important news of the past three years has been the issue regarding Taiwan, a sensitive political topic in the present day. China has had a huge military presence in Taiwan, often flying over its ADIZ (Air Defense Identification Zone) as a signal of strength and military shows, increasing tensions in the area [25]. The fact of the matter is that what China is doing here is attempting to regain the geopolitical and economic sphere of influence it once had over the world with its military and economy, mirroring its ancient dynastic rules as more countries are starting to rely on China for welfare and economic benefits, making it successful so far in the progress of achieving the Chinese Dream.

8. Conclusion

"To secure ourselves against defeat lies in our own hands, but the enemy himself provides the opportunity of defeating the enemy." – Sun Tzu

The content of this paper reaches the end of 2019, and a lot has changed since then. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a global economic downturn, with unemployment in many countries halting their economy. A change in presidency in the United States has also led to questions and concerns regarding what Joe Biden's policies are with China and how he would help his country recover from the COVID situation in the United States, which has had 95.7 million cases and almost 1.06 million deaths because of the pandemic since September of 2022, making up over 16 percent of the global cases and deaths respectively. Overall, COVID has been a global impact, and it does not seem like it will stop Xi Jinping and his party-state from achieving the Chinese Dream. Ever since the beginning of Civilization, China had a great starting point, with the location of it being in a fertile valley with rivers that helped it to build a society and, in the end, an empire. The reliance of other civilizations on their goods and products to the point where these nations fought over trade routes that were easier and more efficient to travel through proves how significant Ancient China was to the rest of the world. However, after the world started to discover new types of technology and scientific advances, China

refused to modernize due to a large amount of success they believed they had, which led to the isolation of the Chinese dynasty. The decision not to industrialize led to China's "Century of Humiliation," which led to a century of social unrest and economic downfall, removing all the power and culture that China once had. However, after an economic reform under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping of capitalism with socialist/Chinese characteristics, it helped the country recover from the slump it once was in. As the country developed economically, the different party leaders that once had control over the country implemented the idea of a communist society into the country, controlling its people in return for their prosperity. The unique nature of China's capitalist authoritarianism has led to the country becoming one of the biggest influences in the 21st century, with its foreign affairs and spheres of influence increasing to the point in which countries have started to rely on alliances with China again, as the Chinese Dream of regaining what it used to have in the past is slowly but surely one step closer to being realized by the whole world.

References

- [1] Shenzhen Government. (2022, April 24). *Shenzhen Basics*. Shenzhen basics_profile-shenzhen government online. Retrieved August 28, 2022, from http://www.sz.gov.cn/en_szgov/aboutsz/profile/content/post_1357629.html
- [2] IMF. (2022, April). *Report for selected countries and subjects*. International Monetary Fund. Retrieved August 28, 2022, from <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/weo-database/2022/April/weo-report?c=924%2C&s=NGDPD%2CPPPGDP%2CNGDPDPC%2CPPPPC%2C&sy=2022&ey=2022&ssm=0&scsm=1&scs=0&ssd=1&ssc=0&sic=0&sort=country&ds=.&br=1>
- [3] Dong Gu, M. (2013). *Sinologism, the Western World View, and the Chinese Perspective*. CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture. Retrieved August 28, 2022, from <https://doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.221>
- [4] Khan, S. W. (2018). *Haunted by chaos: China's grand strategy from Mao Zedong to Xi Jinping*. Harvard University Press.
- [5] Ringen, S. (2016). *Perfect dictatorship: China in the 21st Century*. Hong Kong University Press.
- [6] Pradt, T. (2018). *China's new foreign policy: Military modernisation, multilateralism and the 'china threat'*. PALGRAVE MACMILLAN.
- [7] Kerr, G. (2013). *Short history of china: From ancient dynasties to economic powerhouse*. OLDCASTLE BOOKS LTD.
- [8] Marshall, T., & Scarlett, J. (2019). *Prisoners of geography: Ten maps that tell you everything you need to know about global politics*. Elliott and Thompson Limited.
- [9] Morris, I. (2011). *Why the west rules - for now: The patterns of history, and what they reveal about the future*. Picador.
- [10] Exeter University. (2019, July 10). *How the century of humiliation influences China's ambitions today*. Imperial & Global Forum. Retrieved September 20, 2022, from <https://imperialglobalexeter.com/2019/07/11/how-the-century-of-humiliation-influences-chinas-ambitions-today/>
- [11] Stanford University. (2007) *Communism: In China*, Retrieved September 20, 2022, from <https://cs.stanford.edu/people/eroberts/cs201/projects/2007-08/communism-computing-china/china.html>
- [12] Madsen, R. (1995). *China and the American Dream: A Moral Inquiry*. University of California Press.
- [13] Kraut. (2019, October 16). *Trump's biggest failure*. YouTube. Retrieved September 20, 2022, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhMA3BluAU>
- [14] Wikimedia Foundation. (2022, December 19). *Economy of china*. Wikipedia. Retrieved December 23, 2022, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_China
- [15] Mingfu, L., & Yazhou, L. (2015). *China dream: Great power thinking and strategic posture in the post-american era*. Beijing Mediatime Books Co., Ltd.
- [16] BBC. (2016, January 8). *Giant Mao statue 'removed' from Henan Village*. BBC News. Retrieved December 23, 2022, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-35262798>
- [17] McCarthy, S. (2018, September 21). *World's largest confucius statue to open in Sage's East China Home*. South China Morning Post. Retrieved September 22, 2022, from <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/2165226/worlds-largest-confucius-statue-gets-final-polish-east-china>
- [18] Miller, T. (2019). *China's Asian dream: Empire building along the New Silk Road*. Zed Books.
- [19] Brown, K. (2017). *China's world: What does China want?* I. B. Tauris.

- [20] Kidera, M. (2021, December 9). 'sold to China': Greece's Piraeus port town cools on Belt and Road. *Nikkei Asia*. Retrieved September 22, 2022, from <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Belt-and-Road/Sold-to-China-Greece-s-Piraeus-port-town-cools-on-Belt-and-Road>
- [21] Lyons, K. (2022, April 20). *The deal that shocked the world: Inside the china-solomons security pact*. *The Guardian*. Retrieved September 22, 2022, from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/apr/20/the-deal-that-shocked-the-world-inside-the-china-solomons-security-pact>
- [22] Scott, B. (2021, October 28). *China to build police base in Tajikistan to secure Afghan border*. *Bloomberg.com*. Retrieved September 22, 2022, from <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-10-28/china-to-build-tajik-police-base-to-secure-porous-afghan-border>
- [23] WITS. (n.d.). *China trade summary*. Retrieved December 23, 2022, from <https://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/CHN/Year/LTST/Summarytext>
- [24] Zhou, C. (2019, December 17). *Have trade war tariff-dodging companies missed the boat on Vietnam?* *South China Morning Post*. Retrieved September 22, 2022, from <https://www.scmp.com/economy/china-economy/article/3009245/trade-war-pushing-companies-china-vietnam-experts-warn-they>
- [25] Buchholz, K., & Richter, F. (2022, August 5). *Infographic: Chinese air incursions into Taiwanese buffer zone spike*. *Statista Infographics*. Retrieved September 22, 2022, from <https://www.statista.com/chart/24620/chinese-military-aircraft-entering-taiwans-adiz/>