

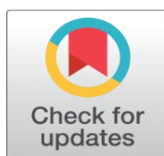
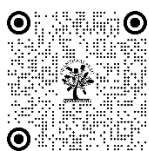
THE INDIA-US-CHINA TRIANGLE: CRAFTING THE BLUEPRINT FOR A NEW WORLD ORDER

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DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i5.2024.2042](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i5.2024.2042)

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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ABSTRACT

The strategic triangle established by China, the US, and India has sparked a renewed discussion in modern international relations study on the implications of their interactions for the formation of a new world order. The fundamental characteristics of the trilateral relationship of India, US and China inevitably lead to a mixture of conflict and collaboration, as well as feelings of anxiety, uncertainty, and reluctance. The border dispute between China and India, coupled with their recent economic and technological advancements, has concerned strategists and experts in foreign policy about the potential for the conflict to escalate and the threat it poses to the US so called peaceful post-cold war global order. The conversation about the narratives of the emerging world order has been reignited by the visit of US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan to India on June 13, 2023; Secretary of State Antony Blinken's visit to China on June 18, 2023; and Prime Minister Modi's State visit to the USA on June 21–24, 2023. Therefore, the study is an attempt to comprehend the emergence of a new international order with the relative ascendancy of China and India, the rise in the narratives about the declining influence of the United States, and the antagonistic relationship between China and India on the one hand coupled with confrontational attitude of China-US on the other hand.

Keywords: Strategic triangle, New-World Order, India-US-China, Conflict and Collaboration, Post-Cold War global order

1. CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The dynamic nature of diverse (triangular) interactions, including but not limited to geopolitical interests, alliances and partnerships, security concerns, and economic interdependence, renders international politics exceedingly intricate. Nonetheless, the contemporary international system is primarily focused on the continuing interactions between the three major actors; the United States, China, and India—as well as their strategic allies. Since a new competitive-conflictual environment has replaced the combative atmosphere of the Cold War between these three states, interested observers have examined the strategic relations between these countries in great detail for their role in forming or building a new framework for the global order. A significant development in the upcoming decades would be the intense engagement of these three actors, and there is a good likelihood that the interaction in the new strategic triangle will

result in the establishment of a new global order. Recall that the world order of the future will be far different from and more difficult than the one that existed in the past in western civilizations, especially the USA. Up to the unipolar system's demise, China, India, and the other players from other triangles would actively engage, which changed the current west-dominated world order. The new global order would be enabled within a multipolar world with the expected continuation of disruption in the US-China and India-China ties. The previous world order was centered on the west, notably the USA, in a unipolar international system. The new emergent world order will be shaped by China's continuous growth in strength, India's asymmetrical ascent to prominence on the international scene, and Washington's path as a comparatively decreasing power, or stagnant one if not of a unipolar hegemonic ascendancy.

India, with its rapidly expanding economy, has the will and capacity to be a game-changer, even if the Narendra Modi administration appears to be focused on enhancing India's standing as a significant participant in the world stage and a country prepared to support the establishment of a new international order. Washington supports this perception of India in order to further its security objectives. According to the reports attributed to the U.S Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, India not only represents one of the most significant countries by any measurement in the world today but will help shape a new world order emerging in this young century. (Gary 2014)

With its growing influence, the United States expects India to offer net security in the Indian Ocean region and beyond. It is now commonly acknowledged and extensively documented that the engagement program has failed spectacularly in its attempt to unite China under the banner of liberal democracy. The United States' engagement with China and its participation in the international system relied on portraying China as a benign actor, as the country's most recent National Security Strategy freely recognizes. In the last 10 years, this foolish belief has been proven false, if it was ever believed. At this point, the discussion of the US-China relationship gets more nuanced. Is competition purely intended to safeguard American national interests and preserve advantages that are thought to be disappearing? Or is the growing competition founded on a new global framework? The solution lies in the center. Following the conclusion of the Cold War, the United States established the putative, now-fading global order because no state dared to dispute its power to fundamentally defend both its own and its allies' interests. There have occasionally been beliefs among foreign politicians that the PRC might be completely restrained through a combination of containment and engagement strategies. Beijing deftly followed Xiaoping's advice to keep a low profile and refrain from expanding. What actually happened, though, was that China needed time to feed on the very international system it now wishes to replace, if not destroy, quickly, and grow into the (nuclear) Godzilla of the world. This time, the United States is attempting to ensnare India in a chain reaction. India should attempt to make friends with China despite its misgivings about its macho tactics and unfair regulations, as long as it doesn't sever connections with the country that created it and is now its (failed) hunter. Ignoring both seemed to be the wise political course of action. Once more, the more fascinating question is what the future global order will include, how and why it has become unstable, with China openly challenging the global system and the New Delhi administration taking a defensive or non-committal stance. A thorough understanding of the current international system's trajectory is necessary to comprehend the chances for the future global order. This paper explores the history of the former global order and the part the US played in forging and maintaining it. By analyzing the pushes and pulls of this new strategic triangle's interplay, it also analyzes the significant role China has played in the reorganization of the global order. In the same part, the difficulties that China presents to the US and India, and vice versa, are critically evaluated. The US and China's adversarial behavior against one another is examined using the logic of power politics. This is a fascinating and innovative endeavor to understand one of the biggest challenges the international system has faced after the end of cold war rivalry.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the rise of a new emerging world order with the relative ascendancy of China-India on the world stage on the one hand, and the declining trend of the US hegemony on the other.
2. To evaluate the impact of the India-China and US-China confrontation for the future world order.
3. To critically assess the various challenges China poses for both India and US and vice versa.

WHO'S IN CHARGE? THE ROOTS OF THE LIBERAL GLOBAL ORDER

Liberal rule-based world order (LRBWO), which is rightly associated with the United States, refers to a set of institutions, norms, and values that have shaped the global system since the end of World War II, during America's first unipolar moment. It is important to keep in mind that LRBWO was adopted by a broad coalition of nations with similar goals and ideals, not just the United States in and of itself, although in the years following World War II, the United States took the

lead in creating and sustaining this order primarily to preserve its hegemonic status. A system of this kind would have some obvious and shared traits, like as democratic government, international institutions, free trade, economic liberalization, security cooperation and alliances, human rights and humanitarian intervention, rule of law and international law, and so on. Instead of referring to a liberal domestic political system in this context, democracy is used to describe a multi-polar system of official and informal international checks and balances, in which no state may dominate any other state and key international issues are settled by agreement. Certain terms, including democratic international institutions, are commonly employed to characterize a multipolar global order wherein institutional and legal structures would constrain the United States, therefore diminishing its ability to enforce unilateral resolutions on the other major countries (Ambrosio 2005).

It is well-established and documented that the United States, the only superpower remaining after the end of the Cold War, used the same LRBWO to further its own interests and to wreak havoc on states that refused to submit to the dictates of the one and only hegemon state. Despite criticism, the United States was unable to close the gap between theory and practice, even for the majority of people. The slow but steady collapse of a once-global hegemon has led to disillusionment and a revolution against the seemingly benign order established and upheld by the United States in the current global power politics of the state system. Declinists like Paul Kennedy, David Calleo, Robert Gilpin, and Samuel P. Huntington, whose arguments are growing more compelling by the day, back this idea. The Declinists believed that the United States was experiencing a slow termite like decline caused by fundamental structural weaknesses in the American economy that were gradually nibbling at its foundations (Layne 2018). The Pax Americana's four pillars; military might, economic power, political institutions, and soft power were threatened by the United States' declining influence in the world. That these pillars will support the Pax Americana in the present and the future is seeming less and less plausible.

This line of argumentation has given ample scope to think of a "Post-American World Order" (Zakaria 2008). The term "post-American world order" often describes an imagined or anticipated shift in the world's power dynamics away from the United States as the dominant superpower and the subsequent reorganization of the international order. It foresees a day when the United States will no longer have the same level of influence and authority over events occurring around the world as it once had. It does not, however, imply that American management or leadership has entirely disappeared; just that it has decreased in comparison to previous eras. It suggests a multipolar system with a more expansive power distribution among several actors, including developing countries, regional blocs, and international institutions. The world's future will be influenced by various geopolitical, economic, and social factors, and the concept of a post-American international order is still purely theoretical. The precise features and implications of such a transition are not yet known, and it may take on several different forms contingent on future events.

The Pax Americana is experiencing strain for various domestic and external reasons. Internally, income inequality, stagnant real incomes, the outsourcing of manufacturing jobs, and slow productivity growth have hollowed out the middle class. Externally, the Pax Americana is imperiled by the shifting of the world's economic and geopolitical centers of gravity from the Euro-Atlantic world to Asia, which presages the end of the West's five centuries of global dominance (Layne 2018). This move as per Martin Wolf, the Financial Times senior economic analyst is true all about the rise of Asia, and most importantly China. The decline of the Pax Americana is due, not to Donald Trump's triumph (which was more of a symptom than the cause, to be precise), but to the big, impersonal forces of history; the relative loss of American supremacy and the rising China. In addition, America's policies such as the mishandling of its economy that led to the Great Recession of 2008 and the "forever wars" it has entered into in the Middle East and Afghanistan as well as the paralyzing effects of the country's political system have contributed significantly to the advancement of these massive, impersonal forces of history.

Then, according to E. H. Carr, when a growing power challenges the established hegemon, it is up to them to make a deliberate decision. It may either resist and fight to preserve the status quo and its privileged position within it, or it can capitulate to the demands of the emerging rival for changes. If it chooses the former path, it runs the possibility of going to battle with the disgruntled challenger. Should it choose for the latter, it will need to acknowledge that its hegemonic status is diminishing and coming to an end (Carr 2016). Although the current global scenario makes it difficult to pinpoint exactly what decision the incumbent hegemon can take in the future, we can infer from its behavioral patterns and policy framework that it does not have the space to grant other strong challenger states, such as China, Russia, or to some extent India, a privileged position. Thus, the study makes the case that the outcome of the Sino-American rivalry and the Indian state's open or biased support for one state over another would determine the Pax Americana's destiny as well as the characteristics of the new international order.

WHAT'S NEXT: CHINA'S PLANS FOR THE NEW WORLD ORDER

China's pursuit of modernization in all spheres of influence compels it to consider encircling other governments, both domestically and globally, as any other emerging superpower would do once it outperforms them relative to one another in terms of capabilities. Such a style of thinking, which assumes that China would act morally in a world of anarchic, self-serving nations without any overarching restrictions to hold them in check, is untenable and requires it to voluntarily give away its piece of cake to others. Wishful thinking, given that the logic of maximizing power can give the party in Beijing a foundational position in the community of states, suggests that it would act against its national interests. After all, those who are well-versed in the international history of nations are not surprised by what China is doing. Nations have historically ruled smaller nations while they were at the height of their strength. Examples of these nations are imperialist Japan, colonial Britain or the USA, Czarist Russia, etc., all of which maximized power at the scale of their colonies. When it had no rivals on the global scene, the USA, for example, went on the rampage and destroyed to the ground everyone who defied the orders of the all-powerful superpower. China, or any other state that abuses its power to challenge another state and behaves recklessly, should learn from the past actions of the current hegemon, the United States of America. This country has successfully used both military might and diplomacy to subdue and influence the states that are resisting it. This "carrot and stick" strategy has played a key role in upholding a system that unjustly defends the United States' *carte blanche* while also paving the way for the LRBWO to operate effectively.

But under the autocratic leadership of Xi Jinping, China has recently put the United States, its allies, and the LRBWO, a symbol of the unipolar power structure's dominance in jeopardy. China today poses a danger to the core institutions, beliefs, economics, and military of the Pax Americana. Christopher Layne asks a fundamental and pertinent question; If China surpasses, equals, or even approximates the United States in these dimensions of power, can the Pax Americana endure? And if it cannot, what will replace it? (Layne 2018). While the answer to the first question has been analyzed in the narrative of the 'post-American world order', and the available data indicate that China has been competing with the U.S. in key critical technologies, it is un-denying to say that it has already surpassed the U.S. in some important sectors. Beijing built the world's largest mine arsenal, the world's first anti-ship ballistic missile, and the world's largest submarine fleet; all to undermine U.S. military power (Doshi 2021).

The second question has recently generated a lot of discussion among academics, think tanks, policy pundits, and foreign policy specialists worldwide due to China's growing influence and aggressive approach to managing its relationships with other countries, primarily those of strategic partners and allies of the United States. Scholars generally agree that the United States has deep fractures within the body politic that will eventually pay the way for its decline and the replacement of its nurtured order by something fundamentally different, even though the main difference is what Beijing has in store for the world. Still, the "Primacists" maintain their optimism, arguing that much has been exaggerated in regards to China's rise and, consequently, America's decline. Primacists maintain that the United States' power will maintain the unipolar nature of the international system for some time to come. This group includes academics like Walter Russell Mead, Niall Ferguson, Charles A. Kupchan, and Robert Kagan.

The current international order, which is a fossilized version of the post-1945 international order, urgently needs to be reformed in order to reflect the changes in the global environment and take into account the legitimate concerns of various rising powers as well as the underdeveloped and still marginalized states. However, this reform is not required because China, India, or Russia insist on it; rather, it is a necessity in order to maintain the integrity of the state system as a whole. In order to maintain its privileges, the U.S. has been adamantly opposed to any reformation in the LRBWO. It grants it a colossal portion of the power to decide on important international organizations and events. But any changes would result in a change in the global order, which would be bad for the dominance of the West, especially the United States. Whether institutional reform occurs or not, the international order will surely experience major changes in the next decades, regardless of US preferences. Due to these forces and pressures, the United States is hesitant to accept any changes to the current global order. It also fears that China or a coalition of countries led by Russia, China, or India would formally replace it as the dominating power. China's military capability in East Asia is beginning to match that of the United States, despite the fact that it can no longer confront the United States globally. The RAND Corporation reference to this in a recent report on the Sino-American military balance shows the receding frontier of U.S. military dominance in East Asia. (Heginbotham et al. 2015)

With the election of Donald Trump to the presidency and Narendra Modi to the Indian parliament, China has become more eager to take on both the United States and India. Henry Kissinger contended that the COVID-19 threatens to "set the world on fire" and may ultimately topple the current international order (Kissinger 2020). These disruptions have

intensified the new cold war between the United States and China and China and India (Shea 2019). The tension between the Western and non-Western world was the beginning of the endgame of the previous global order (Bradford 2022). The apparent inconsistencies and conflicts between the two opposing force fields, or dichotomous sides, define the new global order and have an impact on several international organizations, multilateral platforms, problems, and difficulties. As Rush Doshi contends that China has attempted to oust the United States from regional and global order through three successive "strategies of displacement" undertaken at the military, political, and economic levels (Rush Doshi 2021). The first of these three strategies aimed to reduce US influence in the region; the second attempted to increase Chinese dominance in the region; and the third, which is an expansion plan, is now attempting to do both locally and internationally. In light of Brexit (2016), Trump's election (2017), the protests on Capitol Hill in 2021, the United States' inadequate response to the Covid pandemic in 2020, and other events, the Communist Party of China concluded that the United States was losing ground internationally and acknowledged China's bilateral threat. As expressed by Xi, Beijing was confident that by 2049, "great changes unseen in a century" and "time and momentum are on our side" would allow it to overtake the United States as the most powerful country in the world. The following ten years were especially crucial for accomplishing this objective and creating movements to unseat the US as the world's dominant power. Thus, China is preparing to shape the twenty-first century, much as the U.S. shaped the twentieth (Osnos 2020). This competition extends beyond the regional order to include Beijing's complete reshaping of the global order.

Although it is certain that China will pose serious challenges to the United States in the near future, our understanding of the new global order that the Challenger state will usher in is hazy. Furthermore, making future predictions is usually a noble undertaking. Through the interplay of the strategic triangle, we may interpret the wide practical possibilities accessible for reordering the present global order, despite the fact that the structure of the international and domestic governing systems of the three nations remains same. Beijing now accounts for more than half of all military spending in Asia and more than half of the GDP of the continent, shifting the balance of power on the continent in favor of China. R. Doshi argues "A fully realized Chinese order might eventually involve the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Japan and Korea, the end of American regional alliances, the effective removal of the U.S. Navy from the Western Pacific, deference from China's regional neighbors, unification with Taiwan, and the resolution of territorial disputes in the East and South China Seas".

It is expected that the Chinese system would be more oppressive than the existing one, cooperative in ways that primarily benefit connected powerful individuals even at the expense of the wider public, and viewed as legitimate primarily by those few who it directly helps. Since authoritarian forces are becoming more dominant in the area, China would carry out this command in a way that goes against liberal principles. The upholding of order within a country often mirrors the construction of order beyond its boundaries, and China's implementation of order would be far more oppressive than the established order within the United States. The Chinese order would be anchored in China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its Community of Common Destiny, with the former in particular creating networks of coercive capability, consensual inducement, and legitimacy (Peng 2020). China successfully worked to revamp the regional order by demonstrating to the world that it can actively participate in creating a global order. To this end, it established the Asian Infrastructure Bank (AIIB) and mainstreamed the once obscure and unknown Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA). China's AIIB plan is significant as it represents a double-barreled challenge simultaneously to U.S. leadership of the global economy and the Pax Americana's institutional (and ideational) foundations (Layne 2018). The Eurasian Economic Union, Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), and the Collective Security Treaty Organization are additional organizations that could be important in bringing attention to the Chinese-led international order. As per Christopher Layne, "The staying power and impact of these institutions are uncertain, but at the very least, they are important symbolically" (Layne 2018). They draw attention to the fall of the post-World War II world order that the United States created, the rise in prominence of newly emerging powers like Beijing and New Delhi, and the resurgence of established ones like Moscow, all of which demand recognition for their stature and reputation and a larger say in the international system's decision-making process.

Xi recently proposed a possible peace proposal to settle the conflict in Ukraine while also giving its bilateral relationship with Russia enormous importance, behaving like a world statesman in the process. A peace agreement between Saudi Arabia and Iran, two enduring enemies, was also mediated by Xi. He also had a meeting in China alone with French President Emmanuel Macron in March 2023, and according to Mankikar and Shekhawat (2023), "Macron's criticism against the extra-territoriality of the U.S. dollar has also helped China stir up the debate on American economic hegemony." These carefully considered tactics "are part of China's efforts to attack U.S. hegemony, both politically and financially, and position itself as a more qualified leader of an alternative international order" (Mankikar & Shekhawat

2023). Beijing also expressed doubts about US military leaving Afghanistan. It held it accountable for putting the already devastated state under severe sanctions. It views SWIFT as a substitute framework for Russia's payment system, which has the potential to de-dollarize the global economy and give the Yuan a bigger role in international trade settlement and currency reserves

According to Harsh Pant "This Chinese attempt at global repositioning is rooted in its desire to present itself as a credible alternative to the United States of America. Whereas the Covid years saw China preoccupied with its domestic concerns, the post-Covid phase would necessarily demand that Beijing redress the situation by turning outwards" (Pant 2023). For Pant, all of this is taking place during a critical historical juncture when there is a lack of global leadership and order. It also realizes that if it doesn't move fast, nations like India and leaders like Narendra Modi are also emerging as rallying points. India's outreach to the developing world during Covid and its attempts to keep the 'Global South' at the core of its G20 presidency has challenged China's self-perceived image as the leader of developing nations (Pant 2023).

True to certain levels, rather than advance a positive program of its own, Beijing has been content to offer a critique of Western-style capitalism, liberal democracy, and so-called universal values while presenting itself as a pragmatic, non-judgmental partner interested only in win-win cooperation (Friedberg 2018). For the sake of both itself and the developing world, China will continue to press for a larger voice in institutions like the IMF and World Bank (until other institutions that are "made in China" replace them). Beijing, which is perfectly well-qualified for the role, will portray its activities as the developing world's representation. Similar to other developing nations, the PRC has been subjected to Western Great Power tactics of colonialism and imperialism. Beijing therefore has a legitimate claim to lead the process of constructing a new global framework that speaks to the needs of the developing world rather than the interests of the developed world (Jacques 2009).

However, India and China disagree greatly on the border issue; as a result, the current relationship is irreconcilable due to their differing views on international law, the sanctity of treaties, whether they were signed during or after colonialism, and their respective interpretations of it. Restricting its commercial interactions with Beijing following the 2020 stalemate and border agreement violations is a bold move by New Delhi. In addition to this domestic issue, India was forced to respond to Beijing's economic statecraft with "a host of offensive measures" as a result of the United States severing ties with China (Mishra 2020).

The Indian state has overcome what one observer referred to as "the hesitations of history" by discarding the outdated concepts that guided its foreign policy imperatives and, as a result, is "embracing" the United States in order to lessen the pressure from China. New Delhi's antiquated non-alignment position has been superseded by its modernized form of strategic autonomy, which has been superseded by the practical policies of "multi-alignment" and "issue-based alignment." Indian foreign policy is now known for its flexibility.

Since 2015, India has aggressively backed the United States in its efforts to establish the South China Sea as a free zone in accordance with maritime law and freedom of navigation. The three major agreements that "enable greater access to U.S. logistical facilities, high-tech communications infrastructure, and geospatial data" that India and the U.S. finalized are the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) in 2016, the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) in 2018, and the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) in 2020 (Mukherjee 2020). Furthermore, India has demonstrated its alignment with US strategy by endorsing the Quad's resuscitation in 2017 and Joe Biden's efforts to enhance the group's regional collaboration in an effort to "reconfigure the Indo-Pacific balance of power" (Mohan 2021).

While the joint working mechanism of the two countries has effectively served national interests and restrained aggressive Chinese policies, the China factor by itself is insufficient to maintain the two countries on a cooperative footing because of some serious issues that impede the smooth and progressive operation of their relationship. BRICS and the SCO are two examples of the formal organizations that India is creating and formalizing. They bring together New Delhi and other developing nations on the lack of representation and voice in the embedded power structures within the Western hemisphere (Schmidt 2014). India thinks that there should be several world powers and that developing nations' perspectives should be heard on all international fora. It expressly opposes monopolies and the misuse of power in all of its manifestations. The nation opposes unilateralism by all parties operating in space and time. These practices go counter to the American mindset and perception as a kind, all-pervasive global hegemon. New Delhi likewise approached the Ukrainian war in a rather paradoxical manner. It refrained from voting in favor of UNSC resolutions designating Russia as an aggressor and did not collaborate with Washington in designating Russia as an aggressor or severing ties with Moscow. Rather, since the assault began in February 2022, India has been purchasing cheap oil made possible by Russia and has consistently given New Delhi military hardware, all against the desires of the United States. As a result, the first state cannot act in opposition to the second state while utterly disregarding the third state's

influence—whether favorable or unfavorable—on the trio's relationship. Thus, it remains to be seen what impact it will have on the evolving world order as long as India-China-America is constrained by the strategic triangular relationship (Kupchan 2012).

3. THE PERILS OF GREAT POWER RIVALRY AND THE WORLD ORDER

It is widely accepted in Western study on international relations that the People's Republic of China (PRC) is an authoritarian revisionist state that is determined to topple the current liberal international order based on rules. While China is undoubtedly responsible for the current condition of international instability, other nations—especially the USA—cannot be excused for their sinister global plans or for inciting China at a time when the country may confront the United States at every turn. While Beijing and Delhi are supposed to adhere to the democratic liberal system that was established following the conclusion of the Cold War, Washington has abandoned or suspended some of the same rules that it used to advocate, such as those of the Paris agreement on climate change and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (Jisi et al. 2018). Chinese decision-makers in foreign policy are finding it more and more difficult to comprehend the principles that Americans seek to maintain for themselves and others, the kind of international order that they hope to maintain, and the U.S. position on major international issues. China's entry into the post-1945 and subsequently the post-1991 order not as a client or junior partner but as an independent state is the primary problem (Singh 2020). The American elite will not recognize this basic truth. The liberal order accelerated China's rise and helped make the system shift from unipolar to multipolar. The liberal international system is about to crumble, a fact that appalls the Western elites who built it and reaped immense benefits from it. Losing control over global leadership, position, wealth, and power is more important than the United States upholding morality in international affairs and maintaining the global order.

As Mearsheimer in *'China's Un-peaceful Rise'* makes a nuanced analysis of the behavior of rising China and its emerging rivalry with the USA, he argues that China is likely to try to dominate Asia the way the U.S. dominates the western hemisphere (Mearsheimer 2006). PRC will strive to widen the power disparity with its competitors, particularly Russia, Japan, and India. No nation will be able to threaten it because China will make sure it is extremely powerful. Although there is always a possibility, it is improbable that China will strive for military dominance to launch an offensive and overthrow other Asian countries. China is more likely to try to force its standards of conduct on its neighbors, much like the United States does to other countries to let them know who is in charge. The only way China can regain Taiwan is if it becomes the dominant power in the area. A more powerful China will not allow US military forces to operate within its zone of influence. American policymakers, after all, become apoplectic when other great powers send military forces into the western hemisphere (Mearsheimer 2006). Ultimately, foreign soldiers are always seen as a potential threat to US security. China manages its ties with the United States and its surrounding states using the same logic. With troops surrounding it on all sides, it cannot feel safe, no state does. Naturally, survival and power are concerns for a hyper-nationalist China as well, which is why it is likely to copy the United States and want to control the area. One may expect that the United States will exert significant pressure on China to the point where it is unable to rule the rest of Asia, as it does not accept or like having rivals. It is essentially assumed that America would handle China in the same manner as it did the USSR during the Cold War. It is evident from the logical progression of events that the PRC would only stop when the American forces were driven from Asia. We must avoid making the mistake of assuming that Chinese people would act differently from Americans. The entire order is plunged into conflict and turmoil as a result of this tragedy of great power politics.

4. CONCLUSION

In the ensuing decades, the US, China, and India triangle's strained relations and changing power dynamics will determine the nature of the future global order. The international order is likely to fall into the Thucydides trap because none of the states in the triangle are willing to make concessions to the other side. As a result, they are locked in a low-level stability trap and obstinately adhere to the dialectical vocabulary of zero-sum games. Although the framework for a new international order is clear, we do not know yet the result or whether it will turn out as world disorder (Schmidt 2014). This kind of strategic triangle partnership is dynamic and has a lot in store for the shifting global order.

The above discussion established the trilateral working relationship between China, the United States, and India as well as the concurrent character of the present and future international orders. China sees itself as the leader of Asia and the forerunner of a new global order, and it aspires to rule the Indo-Pacific area. Beijing undoubtedly has the means and aptitude to rule the area. Yet it can't ignore the geopolitical aspirations and power politics of other nations, especially

the United States and India, even though scholars already point to Beijing's power to establish a new international system, or as some analysts contend, a parallel order or bending the current order to suit its needs. So external actors constrain its recalcitrant behavior and limits what it wants to achieve. The logical takeaway would be that China would not topple the world order soon but could put the system under stress and try to make as much room as possible for its authoritarian world order.

The United States has often been avaricious and indifferent to the interests of other states, but this time the rules are changed. The nations that are challenging its hegemony are not the impoverished African countries or the Middle Eastern ones engulfed in crises; rather, they are the fastest-growing economy and significantly outperform it in several areas and metrics. They can also contest any circumstance that results from the United States' hostile stance. These facts are generally known to all three states. Nevertheless, the United States has made a conscious effort to forget what it ought to have done to remind the other states of the system. As a result, as Kuppan (2012) argues "it will be neither China's world nor America's; international leadership will be contested" (Kupchan 2012). Furthermore, the outcome of the Sino-American rivalry will determine the fate of Pax Americana and that of the international order, wherein both parties want New Delhi to take a side (Jacques 2009). And whether Washington likes it or not, whatever its decision, the international system is going to see tectonic shifts of a kind and magnitude that are unthinkable for it and the other strategic triangle powers.

The right amount of room given to developed nations, especially China and India, on the international scene and in international institutions is another factor that can improve the global order and support their demands. For an extended period, the United States, as the sole hegemonic state and so the architect and enabler of the global order, sustained the LRBWO in the face of numerous obstacles and pressures from both the inside and the outside. The American-led order has been concerned about the deterioration of democratic credentials both inside and globally due to the emergence of authoritarian or illiberal nations. China, Russia, North Korea, Iran, and other like-minded states have the potential to be the final nail in the coffin of the LRBWO and the peaceful strategic dialogues between the strategic triangle if they are able to reject the very liberal principles and succeed in creating an international environment that is more favorable for the non-democratic states. As a result, the United States should seize the chance to maintain its strong relationship with the developing nation of India and make every effort to solidify its strategic alliance with it. It should give India all the support and assistance it needs to become a powerful democratic state that can tame the dragon. This would ultimately usher in a new era in which the United States and India can collaborate to establish the true liberal world order, one that is based on mutual respect for each state's sovereign rights and the harsh punishment of those who violate international law.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None

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