

The influence of Jacksonian tradition toward Trump's trade war against China.



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อิทธิพลของแนวคิด Jacksonian ต่อสงครามทางการค้าระหว่างสหรัฐอเมริกาและจีนในยุคทรมัป



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This Individual Study examines how the Jacksonian tradition influences Trump's trade war against China between 2018 to 2020. The Jacksonian tradition emphasizes the importance of the government and its role as a protector of people, culture, and identity of the United States. This research argues that the US foreign policy and the US domestic affairs are intertwined and influenced by the Jacksonian tradition. The domestic source that is responsible for the upsurge of Jacksonian tradition and the Trade War can be linked to the resentment of the political elitists and their upper-class bubbles who Jacksonian supporters are suspicious of. Jacksonian argued that these groups are benefiting from controlling politicians and media, and their representatives are not acting in the interests of the people. Jacksonian, therefore, is responsible for the rise of Donald Trump to the US presidency as he accumulated his supporter base from these resentments. To maintain the supports from his base, Trump and his administration followed through with his campaign's promises, to protect American lives and properties through economic protectionism and renegotiations with its allies, and thereby, escalated the trade disputes into a trade war against China.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Statement of the problem

Trump's trade war against China began after a surprise announcement in April 2018 to impose tariffs on Chinese exported goods to the United States, an unimaginable action that immediately impacts the Sino-US trade relations and chartered the global economy into unpredictable territory. The announcement focused on imposing tariffs over 1,102 categories of Chinese imported goods, most of which outlined to diminish the Chinese's effort to dominate high-tech industries through the "Made in China 2025" plan.¹ China promptly imposed retaliation tariffs on the US imports,² an indication that China will not simply be capitulated to US demands but it also set the escalation pattern that both will continue to use.³ The early impact of the first round of escalations has a modest effect on nonreciprocal relations between China and the United States but the most affected is the World Trade Organization (WTO) and its increasingly negative reputations on WTO capability to peacefully resolve trade disputes and deescalate tensions before a trade war could begin. China and the United States occasionally demonstrated their commitment to negotiate, as seen at the G7 conference in August 2019 where President Trump and Xi met, through bilateral negotiation and not through the multilateral agreements and the WTO. By June 2018, both countries continued to escalate the trade war with China substantially increased their average tariffs from the average of 8.4 percent on US import to 20.7 percent and began to finalize the next retaliation which will cover over 25 percent of the US imported goods if the United States imposed other tariffs on \$300 billion of Chinese imported goods.⁴

The economic cost of the trade war is large and the effect is not limited to China and the US. A study by the Tax Foundation in 2018 concluded the long-term economic cost of the trade war will lower the US GDP by 0.67 percent, lower the long-term employment rate by 0.44 percent, and caused another 500,000 jobs to be lost.⁵ Besides, the report by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) on "the effects of United States tariffs on China" further confirmed the impact of the

¹ Ana Swanson, "U.S. and China Expand Trade War as Beijing Matches Trump's Tariffs," *The New York Times*, June 15, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/15/us/politics/us-china-tariffs-trade.html>.

² Swanson, "U.S. and China Expand Trade War as Beijing Matches Trump's Tariffs."

³ Swanson, "U.S. and China Expand Trade War as Beijing Matches Trump's Tariffs."

⁴ Chad P. Bown, "US-China Trade War: The Guns of August," *Peterson Institute for International Economics*, September 20, 2019, <https://www.piie.com/blogs/trade-and-investment-policy-watch/us-china-trade-war-guns-august>.

⁵ "Tracking the Economic Impact of U.S. Tariffs and Retaliatory Actions," Tax Foundation, 2020, <https://taxfoundation.org/tariffs-trump-trade-war/>.

trade war affected both China and the US. UNCTAD estimated that American consumers must pay 17 percent more to afford Chinese goods while Chinese manufacturers have to lower their prices by 8 percent to remain competitive in the US market.⁶ These reports on the cost of a trade war on economic growth and the economic prospect are unsettling pictures but have little to no effects on deterring Trump and Xi from threatening and retaliating.

By January 2020, the end of the period where this research paper will examine, both parties reached a trade agreement, one that Trump touted to be “The greatest trade deals ever made.”⁷ Observers speculated that the Trump administration desired a deal to manage the outsourcing of US jobs to China⁸, reduce the US-China trade deficit⁹, eliminate currency manipulation, prohibit unfair trade and investment practices, and reform China into a market-friendly economy.¹⁰ The trade agreement did follow some of Trump’s promises, especially on tackling the issue of protection of intellectual property. However, it barely matches the promises nor addressing the major concerns. The U.S.-China Business Council conducted a survey on the most pressing matter for foreign businesses in China.¹¹ The survey concluded businesses are concerned over the Chinese government’s unfair treatments that includes funding its domestic companies and delayed license approval for foreign businesses while Trump’s rhetoric focused on the 6th most pressing matters.¹² And despite the rhetoric against Chinese’s state-managed trade, Trump was still eager to pressure Beijing to purchase \$250 billion of

⁶ Alessandro Nicita, "Trade and trade diversion effects of United States tariffs on China," *UNCTAD Research Paper No. 37* (November 5th 2019). https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ser-rp-2019d9_en.pdf.

⁷ Keith Johnson, "5 Takeaways from Trump’s New China Trade pact," *Foreign Policy*, January 16 2020, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/01/16/trump-new-china-trade-pact-takeaways/>.

⁸ Swanson, "U.S. and China Expand Trade War as Beijing Matches Trump’s Tariffs."

⁹ Johnson, "5 Takeaways from Trump’s New China Trade pact."

"The People's Republic of China," Office of the United States Trade Representative, <https://ustr.gov/countries-regions/china-mongolia-taiwan/peoples-republic-china>. By 2018, The US-China trade deficit reached \$378.6 billion in goods and services.

¹⁰ Fareed Zakaria, "The New China Scare: Why America Shouldn't Panic About Its Latest Challenger," *Foreign Affairs*, December 6 2019, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2019-12-06/new-china-scare>.

¹¹ Johnson, "5 Takeaways from Trump’s New China Trade pact."

Also see "Member Survey," *US-China Business Council* (2019). https://www.uschina.org/sites/default/files/member_survey_2019_-_en_0.pdf. for further analysis on the top concerns of US businesses operate in China.

¹² Johnson, "5 Takeaways from Trump’s New China Trade pact."

American goods¹³ and most experts unanimously agreed the agreement is only a temporary truce.¹⁴

The trade war and the Sino-US trade relations is a complex matter that required deeper insight on domestic politics but it is not a new phenomenon in the realm of the international political economy, nor it is the first time where the US foreign policy and domestic affairs are intertwined.¹⁵ A trade war can originate from trade disputes; but unlike a trade dispute which is specific and justifiable under an agreed normative framework such as the World Trade Organization, a trade war can escalate beyond the normative framework to affect bilateral relations between actors.¹⁶ Hence, understanding the state actors, especially the rise of Donald Trump to the US presidency, is the foundation for explaining the United States' determination to declare and to continue to escalate the trade war against China. This paper argued Trump is influenced by the Jacksonian tradition, a unilateralist but not isolationist tradition that emphasizes the role of the government on the preservation of physical security, identity, and the economic prospect of the American people at home while limited US engagements beyond its border.¹⁷ With Trump first to formally announce and instigate a trade war, this paper aims to explain what sources and how it influenced Trump and his administration to seek a trade war against China despite the impact of the trade war on the Americans themselves.

Research Question

To what extent does Jacksonian Tradition influences Trump's decision to declare a trade war against China?

Argument

This research paper argues that the domestic and international sources of Trump's trade war are deeply intertwined with the Jacksonian Tradition. The domestic sources of the Trade War can be traced to the resentment of the governing

¹³ Shawn Donnan, Julie Johnsson, Joe Deaux, Will Wade, and Gabrielle Coppola, "China Pledged to Buy Billions of U.S. Goods, But The Math Isn't Adding Up," Bloomberg, January 17, 2020, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-01-17/a-50-billion-hole-adds-intrigue-to-china-s-u-s-export-binge>.

¹⁴ Minxin Pei, "China's Coming Upheaval," *Foreign Affairs*, April 3, 2020, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-04-03/chinas-coming-upheaval>.

¹⁵ Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 26.

¹⁶ Nany Hur, "Historical and Strategic Concern over the US-China Trade War: Will They Be within the WTO?," *Journal of East Asia & International Law* 11, no. 2 (November 30 2018), <https://doi.org/10.14330/jeail.2018.11.2.07>.

¹⁷ Zakaria, "The New China Scare: Why America Shouldn't Panic About Its Latest Challenger."

classes that are misguided and misrepresented the need of the American people. The influence of Jacksonian resonated into the US foreign policy using the rise of China, the unfulfilled promises of economic reforms, and unfair business practices as a reason to protect American lives and properties abroad. Trump and his administration aimed to protect their core supporters, who experienced economic and social hardships, to push for economic protectionism and renegotiations of existing trade agreements through Jacksonian values of honor and tradition obsession. Thereby, influenced Trump to follow through on his campaigns and escalated the trade disputes into trade war.

Conceptual Framework

The resurgence of Jacksonian tradition has directly contributed to the rise of Trump and Trump's foreign policy. Jacksonian tradition is not an ideology nor a political movement, instead, it is a representation of the social and cultural of a segment of the US demographic. A patriotic demographic wielded politically as an instrument of power.¹⁸ This demographic is driven by 5 main codes that serve as the root of Jacksonian tradition: emphasizing self-reliance, self-improvement, respect for family, equality of dignity and rights, and courage, and a risk-taker.¹⁹ Hence, Jacksonian wants a nation-state that promotes businesses at home, a nation-state that encourages strong physical security and economic well-being while interfering as little as possible with individual freedom.²⁰

The main features of Jacksonian foreign policy, through the obsession with honor and reputations, produces a multitude of skepticism, realist, and unilateralist approach to the US foreign policy. These Jacksonian codes reveal that they are skepticism, opposite to liberalism and institutionalism such as Wilsonian.²¹ But unlike Jeffersonian who also a realist-approach, Jeffersonian opposes interventionism,

¹⁸ David Martin and Nicholas Khoo Jones, "Donald Trump and The New Jacksonians.," *Policy* 33, no. 1 (2017): 42-49.

¹⁹ Jones, "Donald Trump and The New Jacksonians.," 43. Note that: Self-reliance is self-explanatory where Jacksonian expected themselves to not be relying on others. Self-improvement or self-fulfillment is regarded as individualism by other. The definite meaning of self-fulfillment is to choose their own beliefs or faith. Hence, it is common to religious groups branched off to form their own groups, or to see Jacksonian influenced other members of its own communities, families, and friends. Respect for family can be alternatively defines as patriotism where member of certain groups (i.e. nation) should be reinforcing each other. Furthermore, courage and a risk-taker are portrayed more closely related to businesses and entrepreneurs. See Melisa Deciancio, the Jacksonian Tradition and the US foreign policy, 889

²⁰ Walter Russell Mead, "The Jacksonian Revolt: American Populism and the Liberal Order," *Foreign Affairs*, January 20, 2017, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2017-01-20/jacksonian-revolt>.

²¹ Dean P. Chen, "Liberal Internationalism, Jacksonian Nationalism, and the US One China Policy," *Asian Survey* 57, no. 5 (2017): 889, <https://doi.org/10.1525/as.2017.57.5.885>.

demand to cut military spending, and supportive of expanding government policies, a position which Jacksonian disagreed.²² But Jacksonian is not an isolationist, instead, the Jacksonian who embrace that the world is destructive and anarchic saw the necessity to apply a unilateralist and unrestraint approach to threats. Hence, it requires the US to continue expanding patriotism, refusing and neglecting international cooperation and institutions, and expand both economy and military capabilities while acting unilaterally on military and economic issues to avoid decisions or influences of other powers.²³ Interestingly, Jacksonian lives by the code of courage, a code that helps Jacksonian identify and categorized its foes as honorable and dishonorable. An honorable foe is an enemy who fights fair and honors the code of conduct. The dishonorable foe is the exact opposite, an enemy who fights in unorthodox warfare and neglects the code of conduct.²⁴ In response, Jacksonian would label dishonorable foe as cowardice and would lift any restraints imposed by the code of conduct to pursue an unconditioned victory at all costs.²⁵

Literature Review

The Power Transition Theory: Dominant and Rising state

The Power Transition Theory assumes that national power derives from a population, economic productivity, and political capability which can be extracted and transformed into national power to serves the core interests of a state.²⁶ Graham Alison regards the impending conflict occurs when the great power is being challenged by the rising, Allison calls this phenomenon as the “Thucydides’ Trap”²⁷ and argues that the United States and China are trapped in a cycle of violence and only exceptional exercise of statesmanship can prevail a war.²⁸ Tammen argued that the state recognizes that “change is a permanent feature of world politics and that change is often driven by economic development or decline”; therefore, the dominant power is confined with only two strategies to implement. One, the dominant power must deter or prevent

²² Mead, "The Jacksonian Revolt: American Populism and the Liberal Order."

²³ Chen, "Liberal Internationalism, Jacksonian Nationalism, and the US One China Policy," 889-90.

²⁴ Walter Russell Mead, "The Tea Party and American Foreign Policy: What Populism Menas for Globalism," *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 2 (2011), <https://www.jsotr.org/stable/25800455>.

²⁵ Mead, "The Tea Party and American Foreign Policy: What Populism Menas for Globalism."

²⁶ David Lai, *The United States and China in Power Transition*, Strategic Studies Institute (US Army War College, 2011), 15, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep12113.7>.

²⁷ Xu Jian, "US Policy Adjustment toward China and its Implications for China-US Relations," *China International Studies* 73 (2018): 48.

²⁸ Graham Allison, "The Thucydides Trap," *Foreign Policy*, June 9, 2017, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/06/09/the-thucydides-trap/>.

challengers from reaching the top of the hierarchical order. Two, the dominant power must share its satisfaction as much as possible. A successful spread of satisfaction will likely benefit the dominant power as well as the weaker powers, avoiding competition in the future.²⁹ However, it is clear that Trump and his administration decided that the United States, as a dominant power, must prevent China from rising as a challenger. The 2017 National Security Strategy, the America First policy, and the announcement of trade war revealed that Trump and the mainstream view of the American society viewed the intergovernmental institutions and multilateral agreements as a limitation rather than freedom of action. Hence, the only viable option the United States could take is to deter or prevent China from reaching the dominant position in the hierarchical order.³⁰

However, other scholars such as John Ikenberry and Laura Sjoberg pointed out the limitation in the Power Transition theory. Ikenberry concluded that not all power transitions have generated security competition or war that overturned the old international order. The theory also cannot explain the cycle of rising and fall of the dominant state and the hierarchical order it built.³¹ He quickly recalled two cases; France and England during the interwar period, and Japan and the United States during the post-World War where both cases did not compete for hegemony.³² The outcome of a new international order is often influenced by the dominant state. The hegemonic transition in the early 20th century between Britain and America suggested that states do not have to launch a war to retain or gain hegemony, even more so, democratic countries are less likely to wage wars against each other. In the event of hegemonic transitions occurs between non-democratic challenger and democratic hegemon; for example, Britain and Germany before the Second World War, the declining hegemon tends to form a coalition to counter influence the rising state and attempted to gain influence in the new world order.³³ Furthermore, the rising states often have different dissatisfaction, the different desire to project power, and their perspectives on reorganizing the world order. Hence, Ikenberry concluded that the rising states do not follow the same pattern, but they differ in their character, rise differently, and confronted different types of international order.³⁴ Ikenberry agreed that the rising states may want to reorganize the international order but precisely what rising states want and what rising states can achieve depends on the rising states. The rising states

²⁹ Jian, "US Policy Adjustment toward China and its Implications for China-US Relations," 48.

³⁰ Jian, "US Policy Adjustment toward China and its Implications for China-US Relations," 48.

³¹ John G. Ikenberry, "A New Order of Things? China, America, and the Struggle over World Order," in *Will China's rise be Peaceful*, ed. Asle Toje (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 34.

³² Ikenberry, "A New Order of Things? China, America, and the Struggle over World Order," 38.

³³ Ikenberry, "A New Order of Things? China, America, and the Struggle over World Order," 39.

³⁴ Ikenberry, "A New Order of Things? China, America, and the Struggle over World Order," 39.

may want to pursue all objectives, to reorder the global rules and institutions, control trade and influences, or achieve greater prestige or status in the international order, or it may pursue only some of these goals. Nevertheless, understanding the rising states and how it reacts to the constraints, incentives, and opportunities arise by the existing international order is vital to understand how it wants to reshape the international order.³⁵ However, in the scope of the US and China relations under the Trump administration, It is not China but the United States who is interested in the rearrangement of norms and order.³⁶ Unlike the previous administration, committed to the multilateral consultations and the liberal international order,³⁷ Trump seeks to transform the United States as a driving force against the wave of globalization and the liberal international order that is contributing to the dramatic rise of China in the 21st century. To maintain the position of dominant power, the United States looks to transform the norms and order, starting by withdrawing its support from the international institution and agreements it previously built and supported throughout the post-war period.

Laura Sjoberg criticized the Power Transition theory on the war in the current international order. She concluded that war is imminent in the international order with two comparable powers due to the patriarchy nature of the international order.³⁸ In the patriarchal international system and the context of the Power Transition theory, the strongest is expected to demonstrate the dominant position through the ideal-typical masculinities. Sjoberg revealed an example of the 1991 Persian Gulf War where the US's depiction of hegemonic masculinity was affirmed but Iraq's masculinity was questioned; thus, became Saddam Hussein became subordinate masculinity.³⁹ For this reason, Sjoberg support that the Power Transition theory on equilibrium leads to war under the context that the international order is a patriarchy order. However, feminist finds the Power Transition theory disputes on its logic. Power transition theory assumes that peace can occur through the preponderance of power, but Feminist explains that the reduction can only occur if "states' hegemonic understandings of masculinity involved tenderness, stoicism, restraint, or responsibility"⁴⁰ are the norm in the international order. Even there is a parity of power in the international order, war is not necessary if the hegemon prioritizes communication, community, and understanding of

³⁵ Ikenberry, "A New Order of Things? China, America, and the Struggle over World Order," 40.

³⁶ Jian, "US Policy Adjustment toward China and its Implications for China-US Relations," 55.

³⁷ Alexander and Daniel H. Nexon Cooley, "How Hegemony Ends," *Foreign Affairs*, June 9, 2020, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-06-09/how-hegemony-ends>

³⁸ Laura Sjoberg, "Gendering Power Transition Theory," in *Gender and International Security: Feminist Perspectives*, ed. Laura Sjoberg (New York: Routledge, 2009), 88.

³⁹ Sjoberg, "Gendering Power Transition Theory," 89.

⁴⁰ Sjoberg, "Gendering Power Transition Theory," 90.

the rising state.⁴¹ Though Sjoberg is criticized the behavior of the dominant power and the patriarchal system, Trump's behavior and his "American First" policy have repeatedly promoted the dominant position of the US manufacturing sector⁴² and depicting China as a subordinate of masculinity, an honorable country that forced technology transferred and deprived the ordinary American of their economic prospects, rather than enhancing the understanding of China's needs.

Scope and limitations of the Research

The scope of this study will be limited to Trade War between the US and China from early 2018 to early 2020 where both countries agreed to a trade deal. The scope shall use the Jacksonian tradition to explain the transformation in the domestic affairs and how it influenced the rise of Trump which this paper identified as the source of the trade war against China. The core of the study will focus on the Jacksonian tradition: code of honor, which focused on 5 main principles and the decline of social and economic prospects in the United States that directly contribute to the domestic shift toward trade war against China. The paper will further use a few elements of the Power Transition theory, including political capability and economic productivity, to compare the United States and China, and explain the perception of American toward China. While Jacksonian tradition can explain the driving force toward a trade war against China, it suffered to offer explanations on Trump's decision. For example, one of the principles of Jacksonian aimed to win the war, the trade agreement reached in early 2020 showed a contradicted picture as many expressed doubts over the feasibility of the agreements and other viewed the trade agreement as a temporary phenomenon.⁴³ Either way, Jacksonian tradition could not explain why Trump was willing to settle with an agreement. Furthermore, Jacksonian tradition emphasized the domestic problems over international affairs. And yet, under the Trump administration, the United States has forged a new economic coalition known as "America's Indo-Pacific Economic Vision", aiming to compete with China's Belt and Road Initiative.⁴⁴

This study is qualitative research. The primary source for this research will include but not limited to the official documents on trade facts obtained from the office of US Trade Representatives (USTR), official documents on income obtained from the

⁴¹ Sjoberg, "Gendering Power Transition Theory," 94.

⁴² Liugang Shen, Hongyan Zhao and Jing Zhao, "Wy will Trump lose the trade war?," *China Economic Journal* 12, no. 2 (2019): 144, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17538963.2019.1603634>.

⁴³ Mark and Robert Delaney Magnier, "Do the numbers in Donald Trump's 'phase one' trade deal work? US critics worry they don't," *South China Morning Post*, December 14, 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3042084/do-numbers-donald-trumps-phase-one-trade-deal-work-us-critics>.

⁴⁴ Dan Steinbock, "U.S.-China Trade War and Its Global Impacts," *China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies* 4, no. 4 (2018): 517, <https://doi.org/10.1142/S2377740018500318>.

US Census Bureau, and other official documents that can be found from the legislative bills from the Library of Congress. Secondary sources for this research will include the academic reports, books, news articles, textbooks, and papers related to the Sino-US relations that are publicly available.

Outline

This study will be divided into 5 main parts. The Second Chapter will explore the historical context of Sino-US trade relations from the beginning of the trade relations to the present-day trade relations. The first part of the second chapter will demonstrate US policy toward China in the 19th and 20th century where US policy shifted from a passive involvement in China to actively involvement. This period also demonstrated how the US domestic affairs can influence US foreign policy. The second part will discuss the current trade war relations and tensions that had been brewing for decades. Starting from the economics theory on comparative advantages, the paper explains how cheap labor in China incentivizes foreign companies to invest their production facilities to exploit the comparative advantages in the labor-intensive industry. Next are the unfair economic policies and business practices that gave Chinese domestic firms, including State-owned Enterprises, tremendous advantages over their foreign competitors. At the end of the second chapter, the paper discusses the foreign investment in China and how China coerced foreign firms to transfer their technologies to domestic firms. These are often the core arguments of Trump's trade war against China, and while there are no definitive answers to every case, there are sufficient evidence to point to unfair treatment of the foreign companies.

In the third chapter, the core argument is the Jacksonian tradition and how it influenced and reflected the Trump foreign policy. In the beginning of the chapter, the paper will discuss Trump's rise to the US presidency and his supporters. The paper argues that Trump's voters voted in the 2016 election to show their defiance against political elites and globalization. Trump was happily encouraged his supporters and despite encountering coalitions of political elitists and intellectuals, Trump won the 2016 election. The influence of his supporters resonated in Trump's policies toward China. Explaining through Jacksonian tradition, Trump and his "America First" rhetoric demonstrated the skepticism over the liberal international order America had preserved for almost a century. He is willing to attack his major allies and renegotiated previous trade agreements, actions that aimed to please his own supporter base. The next section discussed the Honor and Reputations where Trump and his administration consistently used the unfulfilled promises that China made prior to accession to the World Trade Organization and how China is different from the American value and consistently accused China of stealing technologies from the American.

In the fourth chapter, the paper discussed the trade truce and how it benefited the Trump administration and how it reflected the Jacksonian tradition. The trade truce is a temporary solution that can be easily used as a display of dishonesty by the Chinese government, giving an opportunity to Trump to accuse of China of untrustworthy. The paper will also briefly look at the economic cost of the war and the future global trends that will emerge from the trade war. This paper argues that the future trend will be consisting of the rise of unilateralism, which destabilize the international institutions, and the rise of populism, occurred from the scientific and technological revolution that directly impact the social structure of the nation.



Chapter 2: Historical context of Sino-US trade relations

Background on the Sino-US trade relations

The Sino-US trade relations were established as early as 1784, trading based on each other's comparative advantage products. However, trade relations were problematic for the United States and other China's trading partners. In the 19th century, trading with China caused trade imbalances with its trading partners due to the low purchases of European commodities and the highly lucrative goods exported from China.⁴⁵ To resolve these imbalances, The United States and other trading partners, following the example set by Britain, smuggled opium into the Chinese market. The dreadful effects of the imported opium pressured the Chinese government to prohibit and destroyed the opium trade, and thereby, created trade tensions and discontent leading to the First Opium War in 1839.⁴⁶ Following the string of defeats in the First and the Second Opium War, China was forced to accept a series of unequal treaties that granted its trading partners special rights and status, including the United States.⁴⁷ The treaties benefited the United States in two ways; the first benefit was massive market access in China.⁴⁸ The second one was that the treaties and the ensuring internal instabilities in China created a favorable condition for the United States politicians to gain popularity by ensuring the safety of American lives and properties aboard. Subsequently, it led to the deployment of the United States Marines in Guangzhou and the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion in 1900.⁴⁹ China perceived both the Opium Wars as a symbol of the Western exploitation in East Asia, a mark that is still visible in the present day.⁵⁰ But unlike any other European powers who desire to partition and



⁴⁵ "Qing Money Period," An Encyclopedia on Chinese History, Literature, and Art, <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Terms/cash-qing.html>

⁴⁶ Hur, "Historical and Strategic Concern over the US-China Trade War: Will They Be within the WTO?," 396.

⁴⁷ Xin Zhang, "Is the Opium War a Defining Moment in Chinese History? A View from Trade Routes, Interregional Trade, and the Lower Yangzi.," *Modern China Studies* 17, no. 2 (2010). After Britain was granted 5 major trading ports, the status of the most favored-nation, and the special rights for British citizens to live and purchase property in the treaty ports, France and the United States demanded similar treatments that led to the Treaty of Wangxia in 1844.

⁴⁸ Xin Zhang noted in his *Is the opium war a defining moment in Chinese History* (103) that the First and the Second Opium War, and the subsequent treaties did not resolve the issue of the trade imbalance between China and US. This is due to the unaffordability of the US luxury goods, such as piano and textiles, for the Chinese consumers.

⁴⁹ Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 25.

⁵⁰ Hur, "Historical and Strategic Concern over the US-China Trade War: Will They Be within the WTO?," 397.

colonize China, the United States favored a balance-of-power policy in Asia and the preserved the open-door policy.⁵¹

The United States policy toward China in the 20th century was constantly fluctuated by its perception of threats in the region and marked the dramatic shift in the US policy from passive to active involvement in China's political transition. Before the Second World War, the United States was actively supporting the Chinese Nationalist government led by Chiang Kai Shek. From the United States perspective, gaining alliances with China is necessary for two reasons; first, establishing a strong alliance with China will benefit the United States companies from gaining further market access. Additionally, abundant resources along with cheap labor can provide the United States companies with comparative advantages in any unskilled manufacturing.⁵² Second, a strong tie with the Nationalist government can assist the United States with the Japanese growing influence in the region. Until 1945, Japan was the biggest threat to the United States that posed a long-term security threat toward the United States sovereignty in the Pacific.⁵³ The end of the Second World War once again has altered the threat perception of the United States to China after Mao Zedong won the civil war. Combined with igniting fears of communism in the United States⁵⁴ and the Korean War in 1950,⁵⁵ The United States began to cease any trade relations with China and promptly excluded China from the global economy under the United States containment policy. In retaliation, China took over the United States enterprises within its territory and adopted both heavy industry-oriented and import substitution strategies.⁵⁶ Unlike the Trump trade war against China, this decoupling occurred through the ideological tensions over the economic tensions.⁵⁷ Until President Nixon visited China and dominated the

⁵¹ Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 114.

⁵² Hur, "Historical and Strategic Concern over the US-China Trade War: Will They Be within the WTO?," 397.

⁵³ Hur, "Historical and Strategic Concern over the US-China Trade War: Will They Be within the WTO?," 397. Hur stated the Japanese can pose threat to the security of Hawaii and the American West Coast.

⁵⁴ Mead, "The Tea Party and American Foreign Policy: What Populism Means for Globalism," 36.

⁵⁵ Chad P. Bown, "The 2018 US-China trade conflict after forty years of special protection," *China Economic Journal* 12, no. 2 (2019): 111, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17538963.2019.1608047>. Bown further noted the decision to isolate China from the world economy in the post-world war era was also supported by Mao Zedong and his leadership since China retracted their position as the founding contracting party of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

⁵⁶ Miaojie Yu, *China-US Trade War and Trade Talk* (Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore, 2020), 184. Miaojie Yu noted the China's economic policy shifted toward heavy industry and import substitutions resulted in a surplus of agricultural labor force, a low urbanization rate, and low residential income.

⁵⁷ Hur, "Historical and Strategic Concern over the US-China Trade War: Will They Be within the WTO?," 398.

Jeffersonian tradition in the American public⁵⁸ which shifted the US policy toward China.

The rapprochement to China initiated by President Nixon-normalized the trade relations between China and the United States. As China began implementing its open-door policy and set its vision to transform itself into a market economy,⁵⁹ tariffs reduction became a common tool to promote trade agreements, a show of good faiths, and other mutual benefits, a tradition that continued to be practiced even to this day. Between 1980 and 2015, both China and the United States had substantially lowered their tariffs, with China reducing over 50 percent of its import tariffs to an average of 17 percent.⁶⁰ Learning from the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Chinese leadership has been recognized that it cannot rely on the internal economic reform alone,⁶¹ China needs the WTO accession as it protects China's international trade, increased national and international prestige, and enhance the effectiveness of the Chinese's export-orientated growth model.⁶² But most importantly, joining with the WTO will integrate China into the rule-based system of the global economy and provide with desperately needed technological progress and knowledge.⁶³ However, China's path to accession was mired with difficulty, starting from trade unionists, human rights activists, conservatism, and a realist who opposed China from accession to the WTO.⁶⁴ The agreement on China's WTO accession was designed with specific commitments that

⁵⁸ Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 212.

⁵⁹ Yu, *China-US Trade War and Trade Talk*, 112. Yu noted that prior to the 14th Congress of the CCP that set the vision for China to become the market economy. China implemented three major reforms as part of the opening-up strategy including; tariffs reductions, establishments of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and industrial parks, and incentives for processing trade.

⁶⁰ Yu, *China-US Trade War and Trade Talk*, 4. Yu also noted that US did imposed special protection tariffs to protect its domestic industries from Chinese imported goods, including textiles and clothing, under the 1984 Multi-Fiber arrangement (MFA). However, the MFA only lasted from 1974 to 1994, and the agreement was phased out in 1995 following the WTO's Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC).

⁶¹ Stewart Paterson, *China, Trade and Power: Why the West's Economic Engagement Has Failed*, London, (London Publishing Partnership, 2018), 12-14. Paterson stated that reform in China, especially after the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, faced major obstacles from political, economic, and social aspects. He further explained the difficulty of the economic reform stemmed from the poor understanding of the business, unrealistic wages, and poorly use of its resources.

⁶² Paterson, *China, Trade and Power: Why the West's Economic Engagement Has Failed*, 38.

⁶³ Paterson, *China, Trade and Power: Why the West's Economic Engagement Has Failed*, 12.

⁶⁴ Paterson, *China, Trade and Power: Why the West's Economic Engagement Has Failed*, 28. Paterson further explained the opposition of the trade unionists stemmed from concerns over the influence of the corporate lobbyists. Human activists were concerned over the crackdown of peaceful protesters at Tiananmen Square, conservatists were concerned over the lack of laws and credible judicial system in China, and the realists saw the possibility that China could become the main rivalry against regional and global hegemony.

forced China to engage in massive internal reforms within a given time frame.⁶⁵ In the end, the Chinese accession to the WTO prevailed, partly due to the United States effort that brought China to the negotiation but China used the combination of economic sanctions and favoritism, threats and persuasions to acquire the WTO membership and prevented members of the WTO to agree upon the harsher requirements.⁶⁶

The United States played a vital role in China's accession to the WTO as it believes that the benefits from integrating China into the global economy outweigh the disadvantages, and the United States also believed it has legal safeguards which could be used to pressure China into the submission. The United States Trade Representatives (USTR) is convinced that China's integration into the global economy will also strengthen the WTO as a provider of a rule-based platform encouraging other non-WTO members to support the system of open and transparent markets.⁶⁷ Additionally, the WTO disciplines were seen as an incremental step for China to reduce these trade barriers and remove government-funded subsidies for its state-owned enterprises.⁶⁸ This perception is widely popular in the United States leadership and consequently passed the Bill without the United States ability to unilaterally and legally imposing economic sanctions and limits the trading relationship with China.⁶⁹ Additionally, the United States was willing to accept an authoritative regime into the WTO body that oversees the regulatory framework for global trade.⁷⁰ The confidence shown by the US government was backed by other laws that could be used for limitation for import goods from China; for example, a safeguard on textiles and apparels administered by the Department of Commerce was used 14 times before its expiration in 2008.⁷¹ The other safeguard is Section 421 of the Trade Act of 1974 giving the authority to the United States International Trade Commission to impose quotas on the Chinese tires after pieces of evidence suggested that the imported tires were hurting the United States International import-competing industry.⁷²

Regardless, the accession to the WTO has greatly benefited China and dramatically accelerated its economic growth that went beyond the Chinese's expectations. Within the first six-year of joining with the WTO, China's export grew nearly 30 percent annually, and China's share of world manufacturing increased by

⁶⁵ Hur, "Historical and Strategic Concern over the US-China Trade War: Will They Be within the WTO?," 402.

⁶⁶ Paterson, *China, Trade and Power: Why the West's Economic Engagement Has Failed*, 35.

⁶⁷ Larry D. and Xing Wei Qui, "China-US trade: implications on conflicts," *China Economic Journal* 12, no. 2 (2019): 186, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17538963.2019.1598014>.

⁶⁸ Paterson, *China, Trade and Power: Why the West's Economic Engagement Has Failed*, 30.

⁶⁹ Paterson, *China, Trade and Power: Why the West's Economic Engagement Has Failed*, 30.

⁷⁰ Paterson, *China, Trade and Power: Why the West's Economic Engagement Has Failed*, 30.

⁷¹ Bown, "The 2018 US-China trade conflict after forty years of special protection," 116.

⁷² Bown, "The 2018 US-China trade conflict after forty years of special protection," 121.

fourfold and earning the title of “the world factory.”⁷³ Within the first decades alone, the foreign direct investment in China (FDI) tripled. By 2007, China overtook the United States as the largest exporting nation with an astonishing growth rate of 30 percent between 2001 and 2007.⁷⁴ In just a decade and a half, China transformed itself from a low-income emerging economy into a global economic superpower,⁷⁵ symbolizing an “implicit lifts in its international status,” as it presented as a historic moment against self-isolation and low growth rate after the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre.⁷⁶ The success of China’s export model, which also fueled the employment growth, urbanization, infrastructure investment, overall GDP growth, and confidence to multinational companies,⁷⁷ has pressured other countries resulted in imitating its model.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, the increase in trade imbalance and unfulfilled promises which China made for the accession to the WTO did not go unnoticed.

The current trade relations and tensions

The trade tensions had been brewing for years over the trade imbalance and the unfair business practices but neither sides were eager to address the issues. President Trump had made the first move by following the USTR’s 2017 report on China’s WTO Compliance, which expressed the deep concern over China’s reform. The report accused the Chinese government’s interventionist policy against foreign businesses through increasing trade barriers and barring imported goods and services. The Chinese government is also responsible for enacting industrial policies that forcibly pressured foreign companies to transfer advanced technologies to China. Furthermore, it detailed the flaws, limitations on the enforcement of the law, and sluggish progress on civil justice reforms throughout 2016 and 2017.⁷⁹ In summary, the report suggested Chinese behaviors violated the WTO member’s obligations and forcing other WTO members into disadvantageous situations.⁸⁰ These allegations propelled Trump to act against China but the disagreement in the Trump administration had prolonged the announcement of the trade war.⁸¹ Eventually, these disagreements were solved by

⁷³ Yu, *China-US Trade War and Trade Talk*, 185.

⁷⁴ Paterson, *China, Trade and Power: Why the Wests Economic Engagement Has Failed*, 35.

⁷⁵ Paterson, *China, Trade and Power: Why the Wests Economic Engagement Has Failed*, 44.

⁷⁶ Hur, "Historical and Strategic Concern over the US-China Trade War: Will They Be within the WTO?," 402.

⁷⁷ Paterson, *China, Trade and Power: Why the Wests Economic Engagement Has Failed*, 41.

⁷⁸ Paterson, *China, Trade and Power: Why the Wests Economic Engagement Has Failed*, 44.

⁷⁹ *2017 Special 301 Report*, Office of the United States Trade Representative (2017), 28-29, <https://ustr.gov/sites/default/files/301/2017%20Special%20301%20Report%20FINAL.PDF>.

⁸⁰ Qui, "China-US trade: implications on conflicts," 186.

⁸¹ Philip Elliot, "Why President Trump Fired Rex Tillerson," *TIME*, March 13, 2018, <https://time.com/5198200/donald-trump-fired-rex-tillerson-analysis/>

dismissing or forced resignation of high ranking officials who supported free-trade from the Trump administration. These figures include the United States Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, and the former director of the National Economic Council and chief economic advisor, Gary Cohn.⁸²

While the United States was gearing for a trade war, there was a complacency in China's leadership over the United States threat of imposing tariffs on Chinese goods. Beijing seriously misread Trump's intentions as it desperately seeks an alternative to Hillary Clinton and her predecessor's Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) that aimed toward counteracting the Chinese's regional influence.⁸³ Beijing saw Trump's campaign directed against TPP, the liberal order, and its major allies as an opportunity to strengthen its leadership and its influence in the region. Beijing ignored Trump's fierce attitude toward China because they were convinced that the current governing and institutional constraints in the United States is sufficient to limit Trump from backing up his campaign's promises,⁸⁴ and wrongly defined Trump as a successful businessman who can be flexible, honorable, and credible. These confidences caused Beijing to inadvertently normalize Trump as a regular politician and overlooked crucial details that Trump's rhetoric is disruptive and capable of following through with his promises⁸⁵ as seen with the withdrawal of the TPP and the renegotiation on the North American Free Trade Agreement ("NAFTA") and the Korea-United States Free Trade Agreement ("KORUS FTA").⁸⁶

Beijing also believed in the strong Sino-US trade relations as it had generated reassurances and leverages which will continue the economic cooperation, even if Trump wishes not to cooperate. This is the prominent view in China that "the Sino-US relations can turn neither very good nor very bad." And therefore, the bilateral relationships will remain competitive without breaking ties.⁸⁷ This is reinforced by China's commitment to continuously fund the United States national debt binge, and to support the United States businesses that benefit from the good US-China economic tie; hence Beijing expected both the government and the elitists in Wall Street will help to defend their economic relationship.⁸⁸ Chinese was also a firm believer in the self-

⁸² Steinbock, "U.S.-China Trade War and Its Global Impacts," 524.

⁸³ Xiangfeng Yang, "The great Chinese surprise: the rupture with the United States is real and is happening," *International Affairs* 96, no. 2 (2020): 422, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiz251>.

⁸⁴ Yang, "The great Chinese surprise: the rupture with the United States is real and is happening," 423.

⁸⁵ Yang, "The great Chinese surprise: the rupture with the United States is real and is happening," 426.

⁸⁶ Hur, "Historical and Strategic Concern over the US-China Trade War: Will They Be within the WTO?," 406.

⁸⁷ Jian, "US Policy Adjustment toward China and its Implications for China-US Relations," 47.

⁸⁸ Yang, "The great Chinese surprise: the rupture with the United States is real and is happening," 430.

correction mechanism. This is the core understanding of the US-China trade relations assuming that the decline in US-China relations is temporary and will eventually return to normal. By relying on this principle, the suggestion of 'divorce' or 'decouple' was infallible to the Chinese official. However, they did not realize the willingness of Trump to dismantle the delicate US-China relations.⁸⁹ Plus, the reassurances and leverages only created a complacency environment among the Chinese elites, which was demonstrated by Li Ruogu, the former chief of the China Exim Bank, who dismissed warnings and concerns raised by others.⁹⁰ But arguably, China was accustomed to the threats over trade tensions since the United States and other WTO members accused China of currency manipulations, illegal subsidies, and the violation of Intellectual Property Rights⁹¹, these allegations became more common during the second Obama administration.⁹² The complacency environment was strengthened after President Trump and Xi's first summit at Mar-a-Lago in April 2017, where they agreed to improve the overall trade relations and increase high-level dialogues. This verbal agreement abruptly flopped after Trump signed trade incremental measures that later become the foundation for a trade war.⁹³

Even more pessimistic scholars from China misread Trump. Chinese analysts chose to embark on the unpredictable nature, citing Trump's manipulateness and norm-breaking behavior, but the crude definition of unpredictability was not popular among the Chinese scholars. Few accepted the idea of unpredictability but fixated over the potential opportunities Beijing could exploit.⁹⁴ Other conservative analysts argued cautions over-emphasizing Trump's characteristics but wrongly predicted that Trump purposefully manufactured unpredictability as a tool to confuse its adversary and maximize his leverages. The disagreement over Trump had caused the Chinese to carefully observe, but it soon daunted on them that they had to catch up with Trump.⁹⁵ The Trump administration officially started a trade war against China on April 2018 by threatening to impose tariffs on \$50 billion worth of Chinese goods,⁹⁶ the tariffs targeted at 1,102 categories of Chinese goods, most categories are part of China's

⁸⁹ Yang, "The great Chinese surprise: the rupture with the United States is real and is happening," 429..

⁹⁰ Yang, "The great Chinese surprise: the rupture with the United States is real and is happening," 431-32.

⁹¹ Hur, "Historical and Strategic Concern over the US-China Trade War: Will They Be within the WTO?," 406.

⁹² Yang, "The great Chinese surprise: the rupture with the United States is real and is happening," 432.

⁹³ Steinbock, "U.S.-China Trade War and Its Global Impacts," 524.

⁹⁴ Yang, "The great Chinese surprise: the rupture with the United States is real and is happening," 427.

⁹⁵ Yang, "The great Chinese surprise: the rupture with the United States is real and is happening," 427.

⁹⁶ Swanson, "U.S. and China Expand Trade War as Beijing Matches Trump's Tariffs."

“Made In China 2020” plan for dominating High-Tec industries.⁹⁷ Unlike what China’s leadership believed, the announcement of imposing tariffs has been thoroughly prepared and was ready to unleash days before President Trump and the Xi summit.

Trump cited his administration’s ambition to resolve three issues related to US-China trade relations. The first issue is addressing the trade imbalance between China and the United States, which was totaling \$200 billion by 2017. The second issue is forcing China to continue its economic reform. Following in the year 2017 U.S. Trade Representative report, the Trump administration demands China reform its economy and removes any unfair practices caused by its industrial policies. These policies include providing subsidies for preferred Chinese industries and forcing foreign firms to transfer technology in exchange for access to the Chinese market. Some of these trade frictions were already used by the United States to attack China for violating WTO rules.⁹⁸ And the third issue was to renegotiate ‘disastrous’ trade deals.⁹⁹ Of the 1,333 on the proposed retaliation list, the top sectors hit by Trump’s tariffs were machinery, mechanical appliances, and electrical equipment at \$34.2 billion. Other sectors include Miscellaneous, Transportation, Base metals, and articles of base metal, Chemical was also affected by tariffs at \$6.8 billion, \$2.7 billion, and \$1.7 billion respectively.¹⁰⁰ In response, China applied the principle of “Equal Size and Equal proportion”, consequently applying tariffs on \$50 billion worth of American goods, and sending a clear signal that China will not simply capitulate to US demands.¹⁰¹ Weeks after the Trump’s first tariffs on \$50 billion worth of Chinese goods were implemented, China implemented their tariffs on American goods, which include transportation, vegetable products, plastics and rubbers, and chemical at \$27.6 billion, \$13.7 billion, \$3.5 billion, and \$2.1 billion.¹⁰²

The first phase of tariffs was quickly ensured by other threats from Trump, demanding China’s submission or faced more severe tariffs on Chinese exports. Trump threatened an escalated trade war against China by declaring to impose extra imported tariffs on \$200 billion worth of Chinese goods in July and later revised the threats to

⁹⁷ Swanson, "U.S. and China Expand Trade War as Beijing Matches Trump’s Tariffs."

⁹⁸ Qui, "China-US trade: implications on conflicts," 185.

⁹⁹ Hur, "Historical and Strategic Concern over the US-China Trade War: Will They Be within the WTO?," 406.

¹⁰⁰ Chad P. Bown, "More than Soybeans: Trump’s Section 301 Tariffs and China’s Response," *Peterson Institute for International Economies*, April 4, 2018, <https://www.piie.com/blogs/trade-investment-policy-watch/more-soybeans-trumps-section-301-tariffs-and-chinas-response>.

¹⁰¹ Swanson, "U.S. and China Expand Trade War as Beijing Matches Trump’s Tariffs."

¹⁰² Yu, *China-US Trade War and Trade Talk*, 38.

impose a 25 percent import tariffs or roughly \$510 billion of Chinese goods.¹⁰³ On August 23, 2018, the US and China entered the second phase of the trade war by imposing another \$50 billion tariff on its counterpart. At the end of 2018, China's combined retaliation is at \$110 billion of US exports or 70 percent of China's total goods imports from the United States, and the US imposed tariffs over \$250 billion on Chinese Goods. Although the US and China reached a tariff truce after the G-20 meeting in Buenos Aires and announced their intention to halt the escalation of tariffs scheduled in January, the joint statement lacked coordination and even disagreement overstatements. The trade war claimed the WTO as its first victim since the trade war highlighted the vulnerability for WTO to resolve trade disputes, limit unilateral actions, encourage the use of WTO dispute settlement mechanism or mediate the friction between China and the US¹⁰⁴ Despite negotiations and the show of goodwill from both sides, Trump renewed his trade war in May 2019.

By August 2019, the US-China trade relations slid further into uncertainty as both sides continue to announced retaliation tariffs. China announced its retaliation tariffs to respond to Trump's newest tariffs on \$300 billion of Chinese imports, expecting Trump to implement his next round of tariffs, which aimed to include a 15 percent tariff that will cover roughly \$112 billion of imports from China by September 1st and additional tariffs covering roughly \$160 on December 15th.¹⁰⁵ Beijing was ready to announce its version of retaliation tariffs that would impose additional tariffs on \$74.2 billion of US exports, increasing duties on \$28.7 billion of trade on September 1, 2019, and \$45.5 billion on December 15. At this point, majority of the additional retaliation tariffs introduced by Beijing is on the Americans good that was already affected by tariffs declared in the first year of the trade war, and the product coverage of the Chinese retaliation will only increase from 56 percent to 58 percent on September 1 and expanded to 69 percent on December 15.¹⁰⁶

Eventually, both sides reached a "phase one" deal, a deal negotiated between the U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lightizer and Vice Premier Liu He. The "phase one" deal signed on January 12, 2020, an agreement indicates China's commitment to increase US imported goods and services worth \$200 billion.¹⁰⁷ Trump touted the trade

¹⁰³ Yu, *China-US Trade War and Trade Talk*, 38.

¹⁰⁴ Bown, "The 2018 US-China trade conflict after forty years of special protection," 127.

¹⁰⁵ Bown, "US-China Trade War: The Guns of August."

¹⁰⁶ Bown, "US-China Trade War: The Guns of August."

¹⁰⁷ Chad P. Bown, "Unappreciated hazards of the US-China phase one deal," *Peterson Institute for International Economics*, January 21, 2020, <https://www.piie.com/blogs/trade-and-investment-policy-watch/unappreciated-hazards-us-china-phase-one-deal>.

deal is “The greatest trade deals ever made,”¹⁰⁸ which he continued to recite in his re-election campaign. However, many analysts were skeptical over the practicality of the trade deal, noting the difficulty of China’s purchases over \$200 billion of goods. In many aspects, the deal seems doomed to begin with.¹⁰⁹

Economics theory on comparative advantages in a labor-intensive industry

While the Trump administration claimed the trade imbalance was caused by interventionist policies introduced by the Chinese government. The main factor behind the explosive growth in China’s exports was cheaper labor in China.¹¹⁰ China holds a comparative advantage in the labor-intensive industry where the cost of labor is only \$750 per month whereas the cost of labor in the United States is about \$4200 per month. This comparative advantage, along with the security market access and gaining confidence due to the membership from the WTO accession, has led to a large trade surplus in China’s labor-intensive products¹¹¹ and enticed multinational companies to invest and establish their manufacturing site in China through FDI. Michael Enright highlighted the important role of FDI played in facilitating the speed and magnitude of China’s economic ascent. Seeking to minimize the cost, the multinational corporations have increased the exports to the United States while enabling China to increase the comparative advantages in other industries.¹¹²

The Sino-US bilateral trade is dominated by the comparative advantages and specializations. The concept of comparative advantages introduced by David Ricardo and then by Heckscher and Ohlin has transformed the trade flows in both countries. By 2017, the US was exporting aircraft, machinery, miscellaneous grain, seeds, fruit, vehicles, electrical machinery, travel, intellectual property, and transport to China. On the other hand, the US was importing electrical machinery, furniture and bedding, plastics, toys and sports equipment, machinery, travel, transport, and research and development. While the concept of comparative advantages is influential, it is proven to be difficult to measure. Numerous attempts have been to measure the comparative, starting of Balassa in 1965 who introduces the Revealed Comparative Advantage (RCA) index to measure the comparative advantages. To prove and understand the pattern comparative advantages toward industries in China, Zhang, Ebberts, and Mulders calculated the RCA index and concluded that there is substantial evidence to suggest that the Chinese economy has adapted from heavy industries to labor-intensive

¹⁰⁸ Johnson, "5 Takeaways from Trump’s New China Trade pact."

¹⁰⁹ Bown, "Unappreciated hazards of the US-China phase one deal."

¹¹⁰ Paterson, *China, Trade and Power: Why the Wests Economic Engagement Has Failed*, 49.

¹¹¹ Yu, *China-US Trade War and Trade Talk*, 45.

¹¹² Paterson, *China, Trade and Power: Why the Wests Economic Engagement Has Failed*, 49.

industries. A study on the RCA index and the U.S. bilateral service trade with China in 2015 by Nath, Liu, and Tochkov concluded the period from 1992 to 2015 saw the United States has a comparative advantage and benefited from most of the bilateral service trade categories. Compared to the United States, China has a smaller category of comparative advantages, but China is slowly increasing the comparative advantage in computer and information services in the world export market during this period as well.¹¹³

However, when the volume is compared between both countries, it is found that China exports a higher volume of goods on categories with comparative advantage to the United States. On the other hand, the United States with a higher number of categories of comparative advantage goods exports a smaller volume to China. Although the comparative advantages cannot explain some patterns of U.S.-China bilateral trade flow, it can explain the rise of China's advanced technology products exported to the United States, partly due to the foreign-invested enterprises and preferential government policies in China.¹¹⁴ Factors such as special economic zones for the high-tech sector, income tax cuts ultimately shape the favorable conditions for China to export. Furthermore, China's existing comparative advantages have risen and intensified international competition in other categories of industries and goods. Hence, the increasingly comprehensive US-China trade relations created a highly competitive business environment in the United States, leading to the loss of income and employment for the low-skilled workers in America. For this reason, it partly supports the rise of Trump and the decision to declare a trade war against China as many U.S. workers are affected by Chinese imports.¹¹⁵

Chinese unfair business practices, state subsidies, and state-owned enterprise

Between 2002 and 2017, the US government constantly complained about Chinese unfair business practices and use the WTO dispute settlements against China, numbering at 20 cases based on the USTR's Reports. Some China-U.S. dispute settlements were resolved through final legal decisions but that leaves with 11 cases that remain unresolved. China is accused of unfair business practices, illegal subsidies, and the violation of IPR, all of these valid concerns were expressed since China's accession to the WTO in 2001 but yet to be fully resolved by the Chinese government.

A state-owned enterprise is considered, by the CCP, to play an important role in the country's future economic growth. The CCP recognized special attention toward the promotion of a critical network of industrial policies and the protection of domestic

¹¹³ Qui, "China-US trade: implications on conflicts," 182-83.

¹¹⁴ Qui, "China-US trade: implications on conflicts," 183.

¹¹⁵ Qui, "China-US trade: implications on conflicts," 183.

industries. This required China to implement policies targeting foreign firms such as anti-competitive investigations that protect the market share of the domestic industries. This is the core argument of the USTR report that the influence of the Chinese government had altered the Chinese economic system to operate in nonmarket ways. As a result, the nonmarket ways had distorted their output prices. Despite pledges to transform the Chinese economy to be driven by market forces, the 2010 WTO report indicates the minimal reforms and the Chinese's state-owned Enterprises continue to dominate roughly 40 percent of China's GDP. The Chinese government also plays a vital role in the economic decision-making that gives leverages to its state-owned enterprises. These decisions include incentivized households to save a high level of their income where their deposit in state-controlled Chinese banks. Furthermore, the Chinese government continues to enact favorable policies to Chinese firms, especially to the SOEs that are deemed critical to the country's future. These policies include subsidies, tax breaks, preferential loans, trade barriers, FDI restrictions, discriminatory regulations and standard, export restrictions on raw materials (such as rare piles of the earth), technology transfer requirements imposed on foreign firms, public procurement rules that give preferences to domestic firms, and weak enforcement of IPR laws. Many analysts are concerned about the Chinese government's recent actions to intensify their intervention in various sectors.¹¹⁶

Despite promises for economic reform that had driven China's accession to the WTO, these efforts had been stalled as the Chinese government emphasized its importance's role in the economy. To limit market access from imported goods, foreign manufacturers, and foreign service suppliers, the Chinese government expanded its role in the economy through industrial policies, subsidies, guidance, resources, regulations to protect the domestic industries and the state-owned enterprises, and intentional oversight in the discretionary actions of Chinese government regulators. As a result, China's trading partners, including the United States, are displeased over these practices.¹¹⁷ The extend of the Chinese government intervention policies and the involvement of the state-owned enterprise in the Chinese economy can be difficult to determine due to the opaque nature in China and the lack of transparency in the relationship between state actors and businesses. According to one study by the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, the study concluded that state-owned enterprise is largely controlled by the government such as State-owned Assets and Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council even though not every enterprise is identified to be part of the state-owned enterprises. Some enterprises that are not officially recognized as a state-owned enterprise had their decision

¹¹⁶ Pamala Simmons, *Trade with China: Trade Agreements, Agricultural Imports and U.S. Trade Issues* (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2016), 100.

¹¹⁷ Simmons, *Trade with China: Trade Agreements, Agricultural Imports and U.S. Trade Issues*, 101.

effectively controlled by their state-owned enterprise owners and other entities and firms can be owned or controlled indirectly through SOE subsidiaries as well.

Therefore, Aluminum is a prime example of the Chinese industrial policies. From 2005 to 2017, the world production of primary aluminum was doubled with China as the main source of expansion. Its share of global aluminum production increased from less than 25 percent to more than 54 percent in that period. However, the exact form of Chinese government intervention is difficult to identify and target with existing WTO rules. A study in the aluminum industry suggests that Chinese firms benefited through both direct and indirect governmental supports, which include energy subsidies, below-market-rate loans, and tax concession provided by local authorities. Furthermore, the Chinese government-imposed export taxes and VAT rebates on the different grades of aluminum, aiming to control the price of lower-grade aluminum while export higher grade aluminum at a higher price. Thereby showing China's willingness to exercise market power to its economic advantage using subsidies and taxes. Meanwhile, China was also eager to limit the export of certain goods, such as rare materials, which increased the costs on foreign producers while domestic Chinese producers received subsidies. Also, state intervention in China has opened the possibility of other countries, including the United States and Germany, to intervene in their industries to remain competitive against China. Another issue is how cheaper to produce are exported to third world countries and ended up in the US economy. Therefore, Chinese subsidies could trigger beyond the protection of domestic industries but also policies that could destabilize international cooperation.¹¹⁸

Foreign investment in China/ forced transfer of technology

Part of the 2018 US tariffs implemented toward Chinese imported goods was to address concerns over the violation of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), the critical component to the American economic growth and global competitiveness.¹¹⁹ This is the core argument of the Trump's decision to declare a trade war against China, to impose tariffs over \$250 or 47 percent of US imports from China under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974. Section 301 allowed the Trump to revoke any acts, policies, or practices of a foreign government that is "unjustified, unreasonable, or discriminatory," enables immediate retaliatory action by following the US Secretary of State without the intervention from the WTO. There are multiple justifications over the use of Section 301; first, China's high import tariffs incentivized foreign companies to relocate their production facility to China and take advantage of cheap labor and access to the Chinese consumer market. But establishing a production facility in China must satisfy a set of requirements in accordance with the Chinese regulations including forcing foreign

¹¹⁸ Bown, "The 2018 US-China trade conflict after forty years of special protection," 125-27.

¹¹⁹ Hur, "Historical and Strategic Concern over the US-China Trade War: Will They Be within the WTO?," 407-08.

firms to form joint ventures with domestic firms, many of which were Chinese state-owned enterprises. For this reason, the US companies could be easily forced into turning over their technology involuntarily, or on noncommercial grounds, to maintain access to Chinese consumers.

Once again, it is difficult to determine whether the foreign firms voluntarily or involuntarily established their facilities in China due to the Chinese tariffs. Before joining the WTO, the Chinese tariffs were relatively higher than those imposed by the United States and may have helped incentivize foreign investments; thus, it may not violate WTO rules.¹²⁰ Secondly, it is difficult to determine whether China had been phasing out its joint-venture requirements¹²¹ but it is evident that some sectors still maintain restrictions. According to the Chinese government document called “Foreign Investment Catalogues” which was revised in 2017, the document still retains too many restrictions on foreign investments, and over 28 sectors, including internet and e-commerce, and artificial intelligence, remain classified as restricted sectors.¹²² The third reason is the difficulty to define, monitor, and enforce rules around the forcible transfer of technology. It is normal for some technology to be spillover, but it is difficult to distinguish what technology had been forced to transfer.¹²³ The fourth reason is the Chinese government can provide alternative policies that incentivize joint-venture, leading to the coerced transfer of technology. These practices appeared mainly in the equity joint venture sectors such as an electric vehicle. The Chinese government purposefully drafted regulations to incentivize forging partnerships between foreign automakers and the Chinese firms to meet the requirements of new energy vehicles.¹²⁴ Then lastly, the overly complex bureaucracy and time-consuming processes, and the required approval from the Ministry of Commerce and other Chinese government agencies further incentivize foreign firms to form joint-venture with the locals.¹²⁵

Despite China’s effort to tackle these allegations, such as passing a new law on FDI at China’s national congress conference in March 2019,¹²⁶ it does not improve the US’s perception of China. Mounting evidence only confirmed China’s intention to pursue policies that operated in grey areas of the WTO, convinced that China is no longer interested to continue its economic reforms toward a market-based economy nor discontinues its implementation of subsidies. Meanwhile, the United States believes that WTO Dispute settlement is no longer the best solution to tackle the trade issues

¹²⁰ Bown, "The 2018 US-China trade conflict after forty years of special protection," 128-29.

¹²¹ Bown, "The 2018 US-China trade conflict after forty years of special protection," 129.

¹²² Yu, *China-US Trade War and Trade Talk*, 80.

¹²³ Bown, "The 2018 US-China trade conflict after forty years of special protection," 129.

¹²⁴ Bown, "The 2018 US-China trade conflict after forty years of special protection," 129..

¹²⁵ Yu, *China-US Trade War and Trade Talk*, 80.

¹²⁶ Yu, *China-US Trade War and Trade Talk*, 82.

against China. Both US and China ruled out WTO as a dispute mediator and the refusal to reach new agreements under the influence of WTO revealed the US dissatisfaction over the WTO.¹²⁷



¹²⁷ Bown, "The 2018 US-China trade conflict after forty years of special protection," 130.

Chapter 3: Jacksonian tradition on the domestic influences toward Trump foreign policy

The US foreign policy can be analyzed through the synthesis of American values or principles and national interests. The work of Walter Russell Mead argues that the analysis of the foreign policies of administration or presidents through international relations can distort the reasons behind the decision. To accurately understand the country's foreign policy is to understand the prominent "traditions" of foreign policy or statecraft. The core of the tradition of the U.S. foreign policy is based upon the admiration for the founding principles and two elements: "admiration for the founding principles" and "enlighten ideas of the Revolutionary era," and "a sober recognition that under their guidance the American Republic has enjoyed a far happier political and material existence than any other commonwealth of comparable size in the history of the world."¹²⁸ Similarly, other scholars such as McDougall argues that the analysis of American foreign policy has been distorted by the dichotomies of realism-to-idealism or internationalism-to-isolationism that mainstreamed international relations often overlooked the importance of the American principle and national interests.¹²⁹

Named after President Andrew Jackson, the Jacksonian tradition and its principle behind Jacksonian tradition portrayed what Walter Russell Mead described as "a community of political feeling" that focused on self-reliance, equity, individualism, honor, and courage. A community draws a commonality with "the protestant Scotch-Irish" element of British colonization of North America.¹³⁰ The term folk community is closely associated with "the white Protestant males of the lower and middle classes." This is a "folk" that Mead refers to as "Christian in religious background, if not always in practice. They are European in origin – but largely without strong ties to a specific country other than the United States – and self-identify with American society from the colonial era until today."¹³¹ The Scotch-Irish element which Mead described as "hardy and warlike people, with a culture and outlook formed by centuries of bitter warfare",

¹²⁸ Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 96-97.

¹²⁹ Michael Clarke, and Anthony Ricketts, "Donald Trump and American foreign policy: The return of the Jacksonian tradition," *Comparative Strategy* 36, no. 4 (2017): 367, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01495933.2017.1361210>.

¹³⁰ Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 227.

¹³¹ Hilde Eliassen Restad, "Whither the 'city upon a hill'? Donald Trump, America First, and American Exceptionalism," *Texas National Security Review* 3, no. 1 (2020): 81, <https://tnsr.org/2019/12/whither-the-city-upon-a-hill-donald-trump-america-first-and-american-exceptionalism/>. Also see Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 226.

elements shaped the American community who settled in the new world.¹³² These American communities or creeds in the mid-nineteenth century were closely related to “the North European ancestry, Protestantism, patriarchal familial leadership,” and the belief in the superiority of the “white race”, which was identified by Roger M. Smith.¹³³ Therefore, Jacksonian political philosophy is not an ideology, rather it is driven by instinct. But because Jacksonian political philosophy is not rooted in the “media and the professoriate,”¹³⁴ supporters of Jacksonian school is not an intellectual movement but “an expression of the social, cultural, and religious values of a large portion of the American public.”¹³⁵ Jacksonians also believe the media and the professoriate are distrustful and only try to advance their class agenda despite their credential.¹³⁶

Jacksonian Tradition and the 2016 US election

The 2016 presidential election was a contest between liberal internationalism led by the Democrat nominee, Hillary Clinton, and economic protectionism led by the Republican nominee, Donald Trump. Clinton’s foreign policy focused on the liberal internationalist that can sustain the US primacy, and promote democratic values, free-market capitalism, traditional security alliances, and the export of American ideas and norms. On the other hand, Donald Trump and his “America First” represented a foreign policy platform that goes against the “foreign-policy elites” whom Trump proclaimed to “ripped off” the American people, bringing the importance to the folk community.¹³⁷ Trump and his “America First” slogan is a shock to the world, it is not a new slogan in the history of the US politic but Trump’s slogan is eerily similar to Pat Buchanan and his “America First” in the 1990s. Buchanan’s slogan “America First” was resurrected with a vision of “fearful isolationism, nativism, and protectionism.” His version focused on the economy and culture, which he advocated for the return of American status as the world manufacturer after the post-Cold War era. Buchanan proposed deep tax cuts to prevent U.S. industries from relocating their facilities abroad and supporter of white, Christian identity and stand against the globalization and multiculturalism.¹³⁸

¹³² Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 227.

¹³³ Clarke, "Donald Trump and American foreign policy: The return of the Jacksonian tradition," 368.

¹³⁴ Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 226.

¹³⁵ Restad, "Whither the 'city upon a hill'? Donald Trump, America First, and American Exceptionalism," 80.

¹³⁶ Mead, "The Tea Party and American Foreign Policy: What Populism Means for Globalism," 14.

¹³⁷ Clarke, "Donald Trump and American foreign policy: The return of the Jacksonian tradition," 370.

¹³⁸ Restad, "Whither the 'city upon a hill'? Donald Trump, America First, and American Exceptionalism," 79.

At its core, Jacksonian tradition believes the role of government should exclusively focus on the preservation of physical security, identity, and the economic prospect of the American people at home while minimizing its action beyond their border.¹³⁹ Hence, they hold a suspicious stand against the political elite and promote a competent federalist system,¹⁴⁰ and they are dubious over the prospect of domestic and foreign affairs.¹⁴¹ As Mead argues "that government should do everything in its power to promote the well-being-political, economic, and moral-of the folk community. Any means are permissible in the services of this end, as long as they do not violate the moral feelings or infringe on the freedoms that Jacksonian believes are essential."¹⁴²

But in the 2016 election, Jacksonian expressed their belief over the incompetency of the government and its failure to promote the well-being-political, economic, and moral-of the folk community. These core beliefs of Jacksonian tradition were being challenged with Two-third of U.S. adults have little or no confidence in the federal government. The Pew Research Center survey found 75 percent of the participants believe the American's trust in the federal government had been shrinking, and many Americans are suspicious of political elites. The survey also shows the lack of confidence in key leadership groups with the elected official as the most distrusted group, followed by business leaders, and journalists.¹⁴³ The survey reflected the discontent of Jacksonian supporters who witnessed challenges on the political well-being, and at the same time, felt the urgency of the crisis is undermined by the Democratic elitist and media who are heavily biased toward non-intellectual. These groups formed what a political science Charles Murray described as "The formation of a New Upper Class"¹⁴⁴ who never leave the bubble. This group of the upper class or the "narrow elite – people with national influence" dominates and drives entertainment industries, technological innovations, government, global finance, and the mass media, and pushed their liberal agenda, not for economic equality, but for spreading "the cosmopolitan relativism to the masses."¹⁴⁵ At the same time, this group discriminates against Americans who are not intellectuals. Another Pew Research Center survey

¹³⁹ Zakaria, "The New China Scare: Why America Shouldn't Panic About Its Latest Challenger."

¹⁴⁰ Clarke, "Donald Trump and American foreign policy: The return of the Jacksonian tradition," 369.

¹⁴¹ Restad, "Whither the 'city upon a hill'? Donald Trump, America First, and American Exceptionalism," 80.

¹⁴² Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 238.

¹⁴³ Lee and Andrew Perrin Rainie, "Key findings about Americans' declining trust in government and each other," *Pew Research Center* (2019). <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/07/22/key-findings-about-americans-declining-trust-in-government-and-each-other/>.

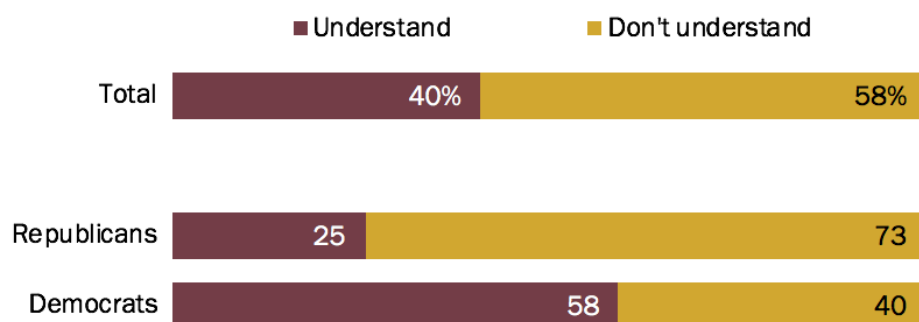
¹⁴⁴ Salena Zito, and Brad Todd, *The Great Revolt: Inside the Populist Coalition Reshaping American Politics* (New York: Crown Forum, 2018), Chapter 9: A Culture of Craving Respect, Epub.

¹⁴⁵ Zito, *The Great Revolt: Inside the Populist Coalition Reshaping American Politics*, Chapter 9: A Culture of Craving Respect.

found that one week out prior to the 2016 Election Day, 58 percent of the Clinton backers have a hard time respecting someone who supports Donald Trump for president.¹⁴⁶ There are multiple ways of the upper class to influence the public, by force if necessary, one of them is through public figure speech such as Hilary Clinton's statement after two months out from the election where she told a crowd of donors that "you could put half of Trump's supporters into what I call the 'basket of deplorable. ... The racist, sexist, homophobic xenophobic, Islamophobic, you name it.'"¹⁴⁷ This is an extremely unfair remark on Trump supporters, nevertheless, captured the message of the liberal agenda. The new upper class also spread their messages in form of entertainments and mainstream media, where they often depicted unintellectual Americans as the victims of an antagonist, ultimately, they discriminately distanced their bubble from the unintellectual American. This pushback can be observed through the report conducted by Pew Research Center, as shown in Figure 1, found almost three-quarters (73 percent) of Republicans feel the news media do not understand them.¹⁴⁸

Almost three-quarters of Republicans feel misunderstood by the news media

% of U.S. adults who say news organizations ___ people like them



Note: Percent who did not answer not shown. Independents not shown.

Source: Survey conducted Feb. 22-March 4, 2018.

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Figure 1: American public felt the new media is depicting false representations of their ground.

¹⁴⁶ Zito, *The Great Revolt: Inside the Populist Coalition Reshaping American Politics*, Chapter 9: A Culture of Craving Respect.

¹⁴⁷ Zito, *The Great Revolt: Inside the Populist Coalition Reshaping American Politics*, Chapter 9: A Culture of Craving Respect.

¹⁴⁸ Jeffrey Gottfried, and Elizabeht Grieco, "Nearly three quarters of Republicans say the news media don't understand people like them," *Pew Research Center* (2019). <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/01/18/nearly-three-quarters-of-republicans-say-the-news-media-dont-understand-people-like-them/>.

Jeffrey Gottfried and Elizabeth Grieco, “Nearly three-quarters of Republicans say the news media don’t understand people like them,” Pew Research Center, January 18, 2019.
<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/01/18/nearly-three-quarters-of-republicans-say-the-news-media-dont-understand-people-like-them/>

Therefore, when Trump said famously, “I love poorly educated,” a remark that drew criticism from mainstream media outlets, it never hurt Trump electorally with his new coalition. That is because Trump supporters understood well that they are not the intellectual nor intellectual should dictate how Trump supporters should live their lifestyle. They had enough of the upper class pretending to be the decision-maker of cultural institutions in America and misrepresenting the Trump supporters as worthless. Trump’s voters felt the establishments are biased toward the educated and only disrespect toward those who freely choose their lifestyle. This mentality of a cultural siege was manifested in the campaigns and had undoubtedly helped Trump to win the 2016 presidential election.

While the American public continues to hold negative views against political elites and media, they also felt that their political representatives, the Republican party, had failed them as well. For over three decades, Salena Zito and Brad Todd explained how the Republican platform attracted voters through “robust gun-level conservatism or a vanilla chamber of commerce-style corporatism,”¹⁴⁹ a style that Trump’s campaign vehemently opposed and ignored.¹⁵⁰ And despite Trump victories in the state primary and caucus victories, he was unable to attract the support of Republican elected officials with only just eleven congressmen, one of the GOP’s fifty-four then-senators, and just three sitting governors. To the anti-Trump Republicans, who largely have higher-income and college-educated suburbs, they simply saw Trump as not socially acceptable to support.¹⁵¹ Regardless, Trump won the Republican nomination in 2016 because Trump tapped into the resentment of much of the Republican electorates, who were furious over the party’s leadership and their inability to deliver campaign promises to reverse Barack Obama’s policies or often make an overly optimistic campaign that could not be achieved. The resentment toward the Republican party was also fueled by the alarming changes in the American society and culture, including “the growing visibility and influence of racial and ethnic minorities,” which Trump

¹⁴⁹ Zito, *The Great Revolt: Inside the Populist Coalition Reshaping American Politics*, Chapter 11: Localism, Not Globalism.

¹⁵⁰ Zito, *The Great Revolt: Inside the Populist Coalition Reshaping American Politics*, Chapter 11: Localism, Not Globalism..

¹⁵¹ Zito, *The Great Revolt: Inside the Populist Coalition Reshaping American Politics*, Chapter 9: A Culture Craving Respect.

emphasized over his campaign.¹⁵² Trump and his Jacksonian's instinct did not immediately align with the conservative orthodoxy, he promised not to cut spending on the two largest government programs; the social security, and Medicare. Trump also promised to increase federal spending on infrastructure projects, attacked on trade deals such as NAFTA, and promised to bring back the lost jobs in the manufacturing and mining sectors. His campaigns strongly appealed to the white voters in small to medium-sized cities and rural areas that had been devastated by the Great Recession and struggled to make a strong economic recovery.¹⁵³

Trump's voters also felt that economic well-being is being challenged. They saw the corporate elitists and American industries titans enriching themselves by relying on cheap Asian laborers coupled with domestic knowledge in the finance, marketing, logistics, and engineering spheres. This can be expressed through the comparison of the top 25 companies in 1995 and 2016. The top 25 companies in 1995 are very different from the top 25 companies in 2016, with the majority of the companies associated with the energy and manufacturing sector such as General Motors, Exxon, and Ford Motor. However, by 2016, the top companies were dominated by Technology and retail sectors, businesses that focused on outsourcing or importing goods from abroad, these companies include Walmart, Microsoft, and Apple. Even before Trump arrived at the political scene, these groups have already formed a coalition, which was detailed by a New York Times analysis over presidential donations in the 2012 election. The New York Times discovered that "Obama received 91 percent of checks from Apple employees, 89 percent of those from eBay employees, and 81 percent from Microsoft employee."¹⁵⁴ And when Trump arrived at the scene, Trump was facing a behemoth coalition of CEO who endorsed Clinton and pushed Trump to seek other allies who favor more localism rather than globalism.¹⁵⁵ Meanwhile, the ordinary American felt that the economy is rigged to benefits only the wealthy and special interests group. The survey conducted by the Pew Research Center discovered that 70 percent of the participants felt that the economic system in their country is unfair

¹⁵² Alan I. Abramowitz, *The Great Alignment: Race, Party Transformation, and the Rise of Donald Trump* (London: Yale University Press, 2018), Chapter seven: Negative Partisanship and the Triumph of Trump, Epub.

¹⁵³ Zito, *The Great Revolt: Inside the Populist Coalition Reshaping American Politics*, Chapter 11: Localism, Not Globalism.

¹⁵⁴ Zito, *The Great Revolt: Inside the Populist Coalition Reshaping American Politics*, Chapter 11: Localism, Not Globalism.

¹⁵⁵ Zito, *The Great Revolt: Inside the Populist Coalition Reshaping American Politics*, Chapter 11: Localism, Not Globalism.

and that most Americans believe there is too much inequality in the United States.¹⁵⁶ Combined with Trump's eagerness to divorce the Republican from corporatism, Trump tapped into the Rust Belt voters who also felt that the government has not been protecting the economic prospect. The majority of the Rust Belt, who had worked a blue-collar, hourly wage, or physical-labor job, had experienced a job loss that showed the skeptical view of multilateral international agreements. Over 85 percent of this group agreed that "The United States should make our own decisions on major issues and challenge other nations to follow our example". More importantly, 79 percent of this group are hostile toward large corporations, a group that Rust Belt believed these large corporations "don't care if the decision they make hurt working people."¹⁵⁷

And lastly, the moral of the folk community whom Mead referred to as white Christian background felt that the government had not been preserving the white, Christian culture in the country. The racial resentment, the concept referred to the subtle feeling of hostility toward African Americans, is not a new phenomenon but a concern that was raised since 1992 when the demographic trends were quickly changing among the American voting population. The share of non-white populations increased dramatically largely stemmed from the large-scale immigration to the United States from Latin America and Asia between the 1980s and the 2000s and the younger average age and higher fertility rates of the non-white populations.¹⁵⁸ This trend continues as the population grew more diverse but the effects of immigration are different between the Democratic and the Republican party. Throughout the 1990s to 2012, the nonwhite share of Republican voters fell while the nonwhite share of Democratic voters increased steadily. By 2012, GOP enjoyed 55 percent of white voters compared to the Democrat with only 39 percent of white voters. Several factors that drove white voters into the Republican platform was the economic issues over government spending and taxation, and the cultural issues such as abortion and same-sex marriage. But in the end, race played the primary role in the 2016 election as it represented the white voters' fear over the loss of their dominant status in American society and politics.¹⁵⁹ Trump was successfully appealed to the dramatic increase in racial resentment by promising to reduce the number of immigrants, especially from Mexico and Muslim-majority

¹⁵⁶ Ruth Igielnik, "70% of Americans say U.S. economic system unfairly favors the powerful," *Pew Research Center* (2020). <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/01/09/70-of-americans-say-u-s-economic-system-unfairly-favors-the-powerful/>.

¹⁵⁷ Zito, *The Great Revolt: Inside the Populist Coalition Reshaping American Politics*, Salena Zito and Brad Todd, Chapter 2 Red-blooded and Blue collared.

¹⁵⁸ Abramowitz, *The Great Alignment: Race, Party Transformation, and the Rise of Donald Trump*, Chapter six: White racial resentment and the rise of the Donald trump.

¹⁵⁹ Abramowitz, *The Great Alignment: Race, Party Transformation, and the Rise of Donald Trump*, Chapter six: White racial resentment and the rise of the Donald trump.

countries, which Trump called them “shithole.”¹⁶⁰ Instead of following the Republican platform that appealed to diversity, Trump has continued to promote ethnic nationalism of white culture.

Skeptical against liberal world order.

Following these Jacksonian tradition’s attitudes, it can influence several important implications for American foreign policy. Firstly, Jacksonians are devout nationalism and they are skeptical over the idea of the liberal world order. Therefore, Jacksonian tradition clashes with the Wilsonian tradition who seek to transform international affairs through international institutions as a mean to promote “democracy, humanitarianism, and identity while actively remains pacifist.”¹⁶¹ Jacksonian tradition despised Wilsonian tradition and their concept and even argued that “ the world community Wilsonian want to build is a moral impossibility, even a moral monstrosity,”¹⁶² their version of the world only contains violent and anarchic nature that only accept the Westphalian view of international relations, granting the freedom of the state to handle its domestic affairs. Jacksonian supporters believe the state should be ready when other states violate their international obligations or threatening the values and national interests, as long as the threat is imminent and credible,¹⁶³ a striking contrast to the Jeffersonian tradition who saw the military as a hindrance to liberty value and unnecessary expenditure.¹⁶⁴ Therefore, when it comes to the military and call to arms, Jacksonian wholeheartedly supported strong physical security and preemptive strike to secure their values and national interests.

However, this mass popular patriotism proved to be difficult to garner; for example, the American intervention in the former Yugoslavia and Somalia where the American public was constantly exposed to the unspeakable atrocities committed by both sides. What is lacking is the support for the intervention which Jacksonian supporters found it difficult to connect these atrocities to the national interests.¹⁶⁵ Especially in the Second World War where the phrase “America First” is strongly associated with “isolationist, defeatist, anti-Semitic national organizations that opposed

¹⁶⁰ Restad, "Whither the 'city upon a hill'? Donald Trump, America First, and American Exceptionalism," 84.

¹⁶¹ Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 245.

¹⁶² Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 245.

¹⁶³ Mead, "The Tea Party and American Foreign Policy: What Populism Means for Globalism," 35.

¹⁶⁴ Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 215.

¹⁶⁵ Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 246-47.

America from entering into European War.”¹⁶⁶ The movement gained support from many prominent figures such as the future President Gerald Ford, the future U.S. Supreme Court Justice Stewart Potter, Walt Disney, and million members of anti-war students who took to the street in America. Their movement is not isolationism nor pacificism but the true purpose is to ensure America put the country first before rooting for their old countries that many Americans immigrated from.¹⁶⁷ The upsurge of nationalism can rarely occur and difficult to mobilize in American history as seen by both President Woodrow Wilson and President Franklin D. Roosevelt and they are struggled to rally public support to participate in both World Wars.¹⁶⁸ It was not until the attack on American shipping, the Lusitania, and the Zimmermann telegram, a German offer to Mexico to regain territory lost in the Mexican War in return of helping Germany against the United States, that President Wilson began to gain popular support to join the First World War.¹⁶⁹ And it was the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 that rallied Jacksonian supporters to the side of President Franklin D. Roosevelt.¹⁷⁰

Trump and his “America First” had been pointed out to be influenced by the Jacksonian tradition. Trump’s statements on foreign policy issues are often focused on protecting the American people, and most of the time, driven by an “instinctive” approach that made him opposition to the liberal internationalism of his opponent. Political analysts argue that “Trump won’t be guided by ideology. He doesn’t appear to have one. He’s a gut-feel guy, a zero-sum strategist, and a bottom-line businessman. He won’t approach problems as if the world’s sole superpower can afford to be generous, to do more so that others can do less. He sees no special responsibility to be magnanimous, or even patient. Being No. 1 does not mean playing the role of provider. It’s about winning. It means being the toughest, smartest-. In short, Trump will probably try to remake U.S. foreign policy in his own (self-) image.”¹⁷¹ And this lack of support for American global leadership and the liberal international order was largely popular with Trump supporter who agreed America is doing too much for the world. Trump accurately reflected the opinion of the public by accusing the world of ripping off America's wealth in his first inaugural speech, stating that America must be protecting

¹⁶⁶ Restad, "Whither the 'city upon a hill'? Donald Trump, America First, and American Exceptionalism," 78.

¹⁶⁷ Restad, "Whither the 'city upon a hill'? Donald Trump, America First, and American Exceptionalism," 78-79.

¹⁶⁸ Clarke, "Donald Trump and American foreign policy: The return of the Jacksonian tradition," 369.

¹⁶⁹ Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 247.

¹⁷⁰ Clarke, "Donald Trump and American foreign policy: The return of the Jacksonian tradition," 369.

¹⁷¹ Ian Bremmer, "Trump in the World: What Could Actually Go Wrong? The Definitive Guide to the Global Risks of a Donald Trump Presidency," *Politico* 2016, <http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/06/2016-donaldtrump-international-foreign-policy-global-risk-security-guide-213936>

its border from “the ravages of other countries making our products, stealing our companies, and destroying our jobs.” He urged protectionism as the solution that will return the great prosperity and strength to the American people.¹⁷²

Reasons behind the withdrawal US out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership are how American industries and American workers have negative views toward the trade agreement,¹⁷³ and how the trade agreement only further the trade deficit from its trading partners.¹⁷⁴ In other words, Trump and the administration see the liberal institution incapable of delivering beneficial to his core bases, the blue collars, meanwhile, the profiteers are the countries that have a trade agreement with the United States. His argument is well supported by the American people, and especially to Trump supporters. A report researched by the Pew Research Center revealed that the majority of the American while believing that trading with other countries is a good thing, does not feel they are benefited from the trade. The report, shown in figure 2, indicates that 34 percent of the participants said that trade will destroy jobs in the U.S. and another 24 percent said that trade will not increase or decrease the number of jobs in the United States. Similarly, 31 percent of participants think that trade will decrease wages.¹⁷⁵ Driven by Trump’s political base and the Republican party, Trump saw the necessity to review and renegotiate the current trade agreements. A report conducted by the Pew Research Center showed that 67 percent of the republican voters considered free trade agreements to be a bad thing for the U.S.¹⁷⁶ Furthermore, the current U.S. Trade Representative, Robert E. Lightizer, explained his negative opinion toward TPP. He argued that TPP was fundamentally flawed as it “was always primarily about geopolitics, not economic.”¹⁷⁷ Accepting the TPP would also worsen the prospect of American industries and American workers¹⁷⁸ While the sentiment on trade agreement

¹⁷² Restad, "Whither the 'city upon a hill'? Donald Trump, America First, and American Exceptionalism," 82.

¹⁷³ Restad, "Whither the 'city upon a hill'? Donald Trump, America First, and American Exceptionalism," 82.

¹⁷⁴ Steinbock, "U.S.-China Trade War and Its Global Impacts," 526.

¹⁷⁵ Bruce Stokes, "Americans, Like Many in Other Advanced Economies, Not convinced of Trade's Benefits," *Pew Research Center* (2018). <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2018/09/26/americans-like-many-in-other-advanced-economies-not-convinced-of-trades-benefits/>.

¹⁷⁶ Bruce Stokes, "Republicans, especially Trump supporters, see free trade deals as bad for U.S.," *Pew Research Center* (2016). <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/03/31/republicans-especially-trump-supporters-see-free-trade-deals-as-bad-for-u-s/>.

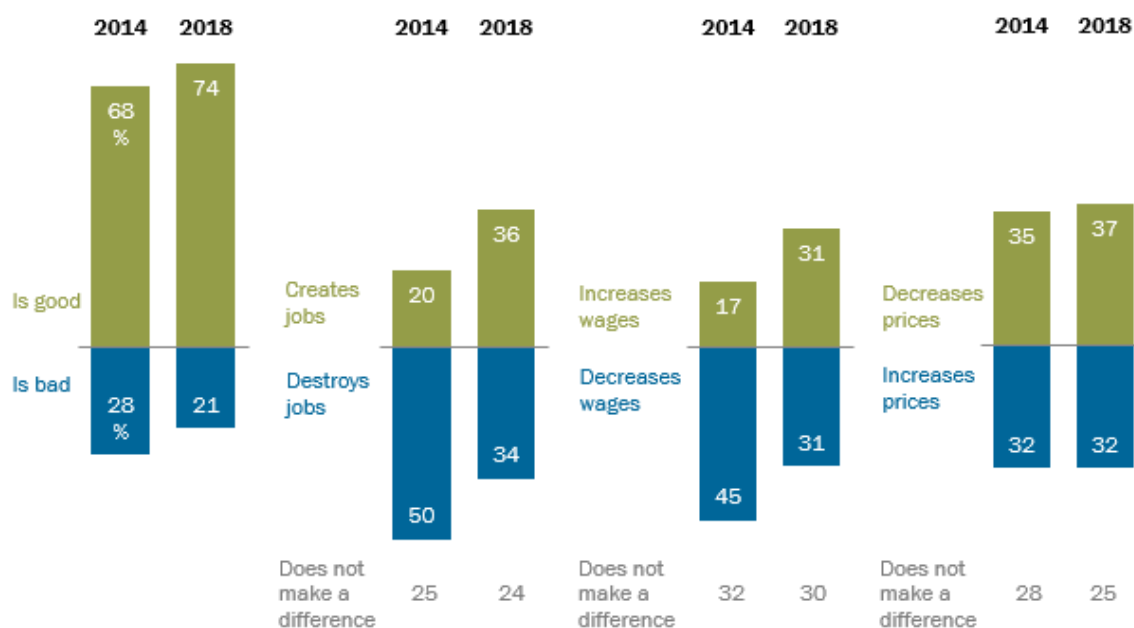
¹⁷⁷ Robert Lightizer, "How to Make Trade Work for Workers: Charting a Path Between Protectionism and Globalism," *Foreign Affairs*, June 9, 2020, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-06-09/how-make-trade-work-workers>.

¹⁷⁸ Lightizer, "How to Make Trade Work for Workers: Charting a Path Between Protectionism and Globalism."

had been shifting positively for the Republican, it ultimately shaped Trump's foreign policy and trade relations.

Americans think trade is good for the U.S., but doubt its benefits

Trade with other countries ...



Source: Spring 2018 Global Attitudes Survey. Q25-Q28.

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Figure 2: The majority of the Americans do not see the benefits of the current trade agreements. Bruce Stokes, "Americans, Like Many in Other Advanced Economies, Not convinced of Trade's Benefits," *Pew Research Center*, September 26, 2018. <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2018/09/26/americans-like-many-in-other-advanced-economies-not-convinced-of-trades-benefits/>

Honor and Reputations

Next is the attitude that implicates Jacksonian sentiment toward the U.S. foreign policy, the significance of the code of honor, and the reputation of a country. As Mead had noted "Jacksonian foreign policy is a deep sense of national honor and a corresponding need to live up to, and be seen to live up to, the demands of an honor code. Some things are so disgusting and cowardly that we can't do them, and some indignities so demeaning that we can't suffer them at the hands of others."¹⁷⁹ The perception of national honor requires America to live up to its commitment, they promised to protect and defend their country or their allies. The concept of "honor" also

¹⁷⁹ Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 250.

applies to other international actors and shapes both perception and the U.S. foreign policy. To gain a status of the honorable enemy, the enemy of the United States must reflect certain rules and characteristics that Americans deemed honorable such as “fight cleanly, provide fair treatments to the civilians in occupied territory, and refrains from mistreatment of prisoners of war.” Performing the opposite or use sneak attacks, and exploited generosity will be labeled as a dishonorable enemy; for example, Jacksonian viewed Islamic State as a dishonorable adversary that should be destroyed by any means necessary.¹⁸⁰ Reputation is an important aspect of Jacksonian U.S. foreign policy, it ensures other international actors will shape the way others treat us. This reputational calculus is the prominent feature of the American foreign policy; Robert Kennedy claimed how he advised his brother, President John F. Kennedy, against Pearl Harbor-like “sneak attack” when the Soviet deployed their nuclear missiles in Cuba. Jacksonian was also outrageous when President Barack Obama failed to follow through his threats after Syrian President Bashar al-Assad used chemical weapons in 2013.¹⁸¹

Dishonesty became the core that shifted the US-China trade relations as both the Democrats and Republicans have been viewing China unfavorably and began to question the beneficially of the bilateral diplomatic relations since China began opening its economy.¹⁸² The United States government and the American elites had hoped an integrated China would increase the development, the wealth of the country, and its democracy. This framework from the Clinton administration from the late 1990s to the beginning of the 21st century is a concept that American elites believed and has shown promising results in the post-World War era where the international framework and rules were established by the US and its allies.¹⁸³ Therefore, till the early 21st century, the US had put up plenty of effort to integrated China into the global economy, to secure China's most-favored-nation status and support China's accession to the World Trade Organization.¹⁸⁴ However, the American elites were thoroughly disappointed to learn that their free and open framework in China did not yield a result as they had hope for. A speech in July 2020 by Michael R. Pompeo has revealed the decline of US perception of China has remained gradual decline; “Look, we have to admit a hard truth. We must admit a hard truth that should guide us in the years and decades to come, that if we want to have a free 21st century and not the Chinese century of which Xi Jinping dreams, the old paradigm of blind engagement with China simply won't get it done. We must not continue it and we must not return to it... The kind of engagement we have been pursuing has not brought the kind of change inside of China that President Nixon had hoped to induce. The

¹⁸⁰ Clarke, "Donald Trump and American foreign policy: The return of the Jacksonian tradition," 373.

¹⁸¹ Clarke, "Donald Trump and American foreign policy: The return of the Jacksonian tradition," 369.

¹⁸² Jian, "US Policy Adjustment toward China and its Implications for China-US Relations," 43.

¹⁸³ Jian, "US Policy Adjustment toward China and its Implications for China-US Relations," 43.

¹⁸⁴ Jian, "US Policy Adjustment toward China and its Implications for China-US Relations," 43-44.

truth is that our policies – and those of other free nations – resurrected China’s failing economy, only to see Beijing bite the international hands that were feeding it.”¹⁸⁵

Reputation also played a crucial role in identifying China through the lens of the US perception. The general thinking of the US Strategic community viewed the reputation of the authoritarian rivals as the challenger to the dominance of the US and the West. They reasoned that authoritarian rivals have never submitted to the Western liberal order, but they were coerced into the order due to the hierarchy of the order that enforced the rules and norms to the weak countries. The rise of China has so far insisted the perception is true with China acted aggressively to assert its dominance over the South China Sea¹⁸⁶ through what the international community now deemed as an unlawful act.¹⁸⁷ Furthermore, the release of the US National Security Strategy at the end of 2017 and other documents had confirmed that China is aiming to challenge US hegemony and argued that China and Russian are both geopolitical “revisionist powers”.¹⁸⁸ Furthermore, Trump, through social media platform, continue to accuse China of stealing American intellectual properties.¹⁸⁹ This is corresponding to the American’s attitude toward China which has continued to view China negatively. Despite polarization between the Democrat party and the Republican party, both shared a similar view on China. Pew Research had researched the American views toward China on August 13, 2019. They found that the majority of the Americans hold unfavorable views toward China and saw the friction in the current bilateral economic relationship.¹⁹⁰ According to the Pew Research Survey on the perception of China, the unfavorable opinion of China has increased among both sides of party lines. As shown in Figure 3, Republican-leaning views China more negatively than others at 70 percent

¹⁸⁵ Michael R. Pompeo, *Communist China and the Free World’s Future*, 2020, The Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

¹⁸⁶ Bhavan and Bac Pham Jaipragas, "South China Sea: message for Beijing in Vietnam, Malaysia defence white papers," *The South China Morning Post*, December 16, 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3042060/south-china-sea-message-beijing-vietnam-malaysia-defence-white>.

¹⁸⁷ Bloomberg, "Australia joins US in rejecting China’s claims in South China Sea," *The South China Morning Post*, June 25, 2020, <https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/australasia/article/3094674/australia-joins-us-rejecting-chinas-claims-south-china-sea>.

¹⁸⁸ Jian, "US Policy Adjustment toward China and its Implications for China-US Relations," 45.

¹⁸⁹ Donald J. Trump, "Our Country has lost, stupidly, Trillions of Dollars with China over many years. They have stolen our Intellectual Property at a rate of Hundreds of Billions of Dollars a year, & they want to continue. I won’t let that happen! We don’t need China and, frankly, would be far...." Twitter, 2019.

¹⁹⁰ Laura Silver, Kat Devlin, and Christine Huang, "U.S. Views of China Turn Sharply Negative Amid Trade Tension: Over half of Americans see friction in the current bilateral economic relationship, and more now see China as a threat," *Pew Research Center* (2019). <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2019/08/13/u-s-views-of-china-turn-sharply-negative-amid-trade-tensions/>.

but the unfavorable opinion of Democrats also increased from 47 percent to 59 percent.¹⁹¹ Overall, the majority of the American at 60 percent of the participants were found to hold a negative opinion toward China as seen in Figure 4.¹⁹²

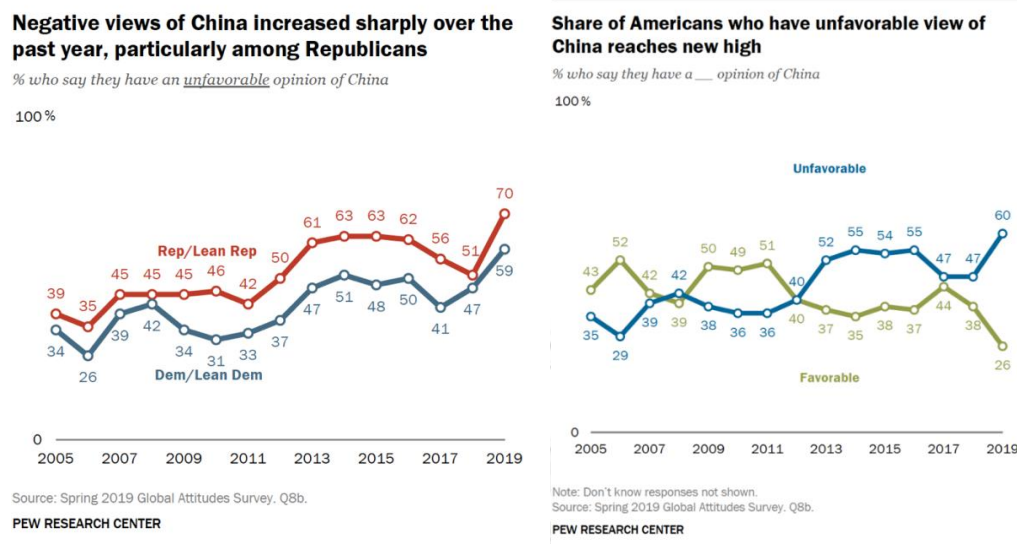


Figure 3 (Left): Both sides of the political party have a similar level of negative perceptions toward China. Laura Silver, Kat Devlin, and Christine Huang, "U.S. Views of China Turn Sharply Negative Amid Trade Tension : Over half of Americans see friction in the current bilateral economic relationship, and more now see China as a threat" *Pew Research Center*, August 13, 2019. <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2019/08/13/u-s-views-of-china-turn-sharply-negative-amid-trade-tensions/>

Figure 4 (Right): Since the rise of President Trump, Americans began to view China more negatively. Laura Silver, Kat Devlin, and Christine Huang, "U.S. Views of China Turn Sharply Negative Amid Trade Tension : Over half of Americans see friction in the current bilateral economic relationship, and more now see China as a threat" *Pew Research Center*, August 13, 2019. <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2019/08/13/u-s-views-of-china-turn-sharply-negative-amid-trade-tensions/>

With the Trump administration and the US government agencies declared China is a threat as well as the American public's viewing them similarly, this phenomenon has allowed hardliners in the government to dominate the US policy toward China. Hence shifting from "cooperation plus competition" to "full competition", making this trade war between US and China different from previous trade tensions or economic disputes because this trade war focusses mainly on the competition of interests instead of a competition of interests and strategy.¹⁹³

¹⁹¹ Silver, "U.S. Views of China Turn Sharply Negative Amid Trade Tension: Over half of Americans see friction in the current bilateral economic relationship, and more now see China as a threat."

¹⁹² Silver, "U.S. Views of China Turn Sharply Negative Amid Trade Tension: Over half of Americans see friction in the current bilateral economic relationship, and more now see China as a threat."

¹⁹³Jian, "US Policy Adjustment toward China and its Implications for China-US Relations," 45-46.

Unilateralism

Lastly, Jacksonian sentiment on war doctrine is to fully engage in a conflict without restraint and achieve the “total victory.” The idea of “limited war”, as Mead argued, is considered by Jacksonian to be “oxymoronic.” The only way to wage a war is to concentrate all of its weapons and organize a coordinate and swift strike at the enemy, this is the Jacksonian war doctrine.¹⁹⁴ While other schools of tradition, for different reasons, may see the benefits of a limited war in both objectives in war and the degree of force one is prepared to employ, Jacksonian does not and fully embrace the total mobilization for war efforts. However, this does not imply that Jacksonian is a bloodlust school of tradition, they understood the price of the war of which Jacksonian is equally invested to avoid casualties. If the total mobilization is not worth fighting for, then Jacksonian does not see the benefits of waging war.¹⁹⁵ But limited engagement has also cost many presidencies in the past, Truman and Johnson's presidency are prime examples. Other like Nixon and his then-Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, spent enormous efforts to downplay the withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam, even naming the withdrawal as “peace with honor.” The Obama administration too faced the outrageous from Jacksonian when his administration negotiated for a nuclear agreement with Tehran or normalized its relations with Cuba.¹⁹⁶ However, the Jacksonian concept of war also aimed to minimize as few American casualties as possible. Jacksonian, unlike other schools, were cherish over the idea of engaging the enemy without deploying ground combatants and blame the leadership of the enemy for their casualties.¹⁹⁷

Therefore, the first victim of the trade war is the WTO whom Jacksonian despised not only because of the disbelief over the international institutions and multilateral agreements but also how WTO limited the US ability to respond to the crisis. The establishment of WTO serves three main purposes; it serves to provide “a regulated stage for members to consult and negotiate their trade agenda,” to ensure that “no member nation is discriminated against in terms of trade,” and the provision of “a functional adjudicatory system to allow for settlement of trade disputes” to forestall trade wars.¹⁹⁸ To follow their obligations and strengthen the multilateral trading system, the dispute settlement understanding in WTO's Article 23 ensure that “the multilateral trading system is preserved, sustained, and protected against members taking laws into

¹⁹⁴ Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 254.

¹⁹⁵ Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 254.

¹⁹⁶ Clarke, "Donald Trump and American foreign policy: The return of the Jacksonian tradition," 370.

¹⁹⁷ Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 255.

¹⁹⁸ Tolulope Anthony Adekola, "US–China trade war and the WTO dispute settlement mechanism," *Journal of International Trade Law and Policy* 2 (2019): 2, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JITLP-02-2019-0011>.

their own hands,” emphasizing the multilateral approach to solve trade disputes and forbidden any unilateral actions from its members.¹⁹⁹

However, the announcement of a trade by the Trump administration and Chinese retaliation against US unilateral actions neglected these provisions. When Trump and his administration announced the decision to impose tariffs on steel, solar panels, washing machines, and aluminum from its trade partner. His administration cited Section 232 of its 1962 Trade Expansion Act, which stated that the President of the United States can “impose tariffs on imported goods that constitute a threat to the nation’s national security” based on the recommendation of the US Secretary of Commerce.²⁰⁰ To this, the administration and the USTR, Robert Lightizer, explains how China exploited WTO rules to gain unfair trade advantages against the United States.²⁰¹ However, following the example of US unilateral actions, China and other trading nations began to justify their withdrawal of the WTO concession against the United States.²⁰² Lighter further accused WTO of straying from its original mission, calling it “litigation of society” and “made-up jurisprudence that undermines U.S. sovereignty and threatens American jobs.”²⁰³ Signifying the lack of importance of the WTO toward resolving the trade war between the US and China.

Furthermore, the Trump administration also cited Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, which specified that the USA Trade Representative (USTR) has the power “to impose measures to fight against the foreign country’s trade activities, which impairs the rights enjoyed by the USA.” Enacted section 301 is mainly to respond to China’s unfair trade practices related to the forced transfer of US technology and intellectual property.²⁰⁴ Indeed, the USTR reports of 2017 contain materials accusing and condemning the Chinese government’s action that impaired the interests of the US. Despite the US submitted its claim against China regarding the violation of Intellectual Property Rights in the WTO, Therefore, the Trump administration believed the US

¹⁹⁹ Adekola, "US–China trade war and the WTO dispute settlement mechanism," 3.

²⁰⁰ Adekola, "US–China trade war and the WTO dispute settlement mechanism," 4.

²⁰¹ Edward Alden, "Trump hired Robert Lighthizer to win a trade war. He lost.," *Foreign Policy*, August 2, 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/08/02/trump-hired-robert-lighthizer-to-win-a-trade-war-he-lost/>.

²⁰² Adekola, "US–China trade war and the WTO dispute settlement mechanism," 4.

²⁰³ Lightizer, "How to Make Trade Work for Workers: Charting a Path Between Protectionism and Globalism."

²⁰⁴ Hur, "Historical and Strategic Concern over the US-China Trade War: Will They Be within the WTO?," 408.

government must counteract these activities by invoking its Section 201 of the Trade Act of 1974.²⁰⁵



²⁰⁵ Adekola, "US–China trade war and the WTO dispute settlement mechanism," 4.

Chapter 4: The Trade War – retaliation and the 2020 trade agreement

Eventually, both sides agreed with the trade war, the trade deal on January 15, 2020. President Trump made signed an executive deal to the Chinese government to import an additional \$200 billion worth of American goods and services over the next two years. However, the deal seemed to have exposed flaws from the very beginning because many economic analysts predicted that Beijing will import less than the listed figure. Combined with the ongoing retaliatory tariffs that the Chinese government imposed on 56.7 percent of US exports to China is one of the main skepticisms that the deal does will not hold up. The \$200 billion purchase pledge to Beijing shows President Trump's goal which is to rapidly expand the US exports sector. Although the agreement seemed to show a lack of cooperation because the agreement mostly stated the final amount Beijing have to import from the US or else, they would face the consequences. Without caring about the trading process, this can erupt to the Beijing government diverting its agreement and hampering international commerce even more. For instance, China can purchase more American soybeans by cutting imports of oilseeds from Brazil. This shows the potential of coercive trade can hurt other countries that are not directly involved in this trade deal.²⁰⁶

Beijing will have to import an additional \$76.7 billion in 2020 and \$123.3 billion in 2021 totaling the amount to \$210.9 billion and \$257.5 billion respectively.²⁰⁷ Given that US exports to China in 2019 are already estimated to be \$20 billion lower than the amount in 2017, shows that the additional commitment made by the Beijing government is very unrealistic. Since it already did not cover the amount agreed in the phase one deal. To fulfill the agreement, it must suddenly increase its purchases by \$240 billion within two short years.²⁰⁸ If this deal is to be fulfilled, it would result in a 92 percent increase in US exports to China between 2017 and 2021.²⁰⁹ In hindsight, US export growth to China averaged at 21 percent per year during China's economic upswing at more than 10 percent annually from 2000 to 2007.²¹⁰ Now that China's economy is growing at a slower pace, combined with the effects of the trade war, and

²⁰⁶ Bown, "Unappreciated hazards of the US-China phase one deal."

²⁰⁷ Bown, "Unappreciated hazards of the US-China phase one deal."

²⁰⁸ Bown, "Unappreciated hazards of the US-China phase one deal."

²⁰⁹ Bown, "Unappreciated hazards of the US-China phase one deal."

²¹⁰ Bown, "Unappreciated hazards of the US-China phase one deal."

the ongoing situation of the pandemic, sustaining 18 percent annual export growth over 4 years is challenging and ambitious.²¹¹

Despite the impracticality of the trade deal, Trump's additional \$200 billion export to China corresponded to the Jacksonian sentiment toward the U.S. foreign policy. For instance, if China could not live up to its commitment to buy an additional \$200 billion of American goods, Trump will likely use to bash the negative reputation and to convince his American supporters to re-elect him in the upcoming election. Since the success of this trade deal will be determined by the trade statistics reported by both countries. It is unlikely that the American public will be able to get a hold of the 2020 US exports to figure well before Trump's re-election campaign in November and China could potentially manipulate its importing figures if they could not uphold its commitment.²¹²

Furthermore, the trade deal also represented Jacksonian sentiment on war doctrine, which is to fully engage in a conflict without restraint. The lack of participation by international institutions, such as the World Trade Organization, will allow the United States to further set its term onto China. Ultimately, if the US Trade Representative believes China has not purchased the amount inscribed in Chapter 6 of the agreement, the US Trade Representative will unilaterally determine the level of retaliation needed. However, it is also important to note that the trade deal does contain a termination clause. A clause that can be used if China feels the trade deal pushed disputes too far but it would fall into Trump's hand as he could use the termination clause to convince his voter that China is not interested to cooperate on trade issues raised by the United States.²¹³



The Economic Costs of the Trade War

The cost of the Trade war has undoubtedly affected both the United States and China economies. Especially for the United States, losses are reflected in the higher prices for US consumers, which absorbed roughly 8 percent of the cost of the tariffs²¹⁴ and forced American companies to lower their profit margins, cut wages and jobs for U.S. worker, defer potential wage hikes or expansions, and raise prices for American

²¹¹ Bown, "Unappreciated hazards of the US-China phase one deal."

²¹² Bown, "Unappreciated hazards of the US-China phase one deal."

²¹³ Bown, "Unappreciated hazards of the US-China phase one deal."

²¹⁴ Nicita, "Trade and trade diversion effects of United States tariffs on China," 13.

consumers or companies.²¹⁵ An analysis of the Commerce Department estimated that the tariff has already cost \$46 billion since February 2018.²¹⁶ The trade war caused economic pain on both sides and led to the diversion of trade flows away from China and the United States. According to the report by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development on “the effect of the United tariffs on China”, the report confirmed the trade diversion effect for the first half of 2019 to be about \$21 billion with substantial benefits toward Taiwan, Mexico, the European Union, and Vietnam.²¹⁷ Meanwhile, the over U.S. economic growth slowed, the trade war effectively forced many in the agriculture, manufacturing, and transportation sectors is hit the lowest level of growth since the last recession.²¹⁸ A 2019 study by Moody’s Analytics found that the trade war had already cost nearly 300,000 US jobs and an estimated 0.3 percent of real GDP.²¹⁹ Other studies such as the Tax Foundation estimated that the long-term impact of the trade war will cost 0.51 percent of the GDP and cost over 395,000 jobs.²²⁰ A 2019 report from Bloomberg Economics estimated that the trade would cost the U.S. economy \$316 billion by the end of 2020.²²¹ The trade deficit since the trade war had decreased from \$419.2 billion in 2018 to \$345 billion in 2019; however, it should be noted that the U.S. deficit with China decreased but not its overall trade deficit. This is due to the trade diversion to other countries.²²²

China also felt the effect of the trade war but clearly, the effect is not enough to capitulate to the Trump administration’s demand for major economic reform. According to the UNCTAD, Chinese exporter is forced to decrease their price by 8 percent to remain to compete in the US market.²²³ To counteract the effect of the trade war, Beijing is forced to lower its tariffs for other trading partners and potentially open paths for other countries to export Chinese goods to the United States. While the trade deal signed on January 15, 2020, resembled the Beijing’s initial agreements on

²¹⁵ Ryan and Abraham Denmark Hass, "More pain than gain: How the US-China trade war hurt America," *Brookings Institution*, August 7, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2020/08/07/more-pain-than-gain-how-the-us-china-trade-war-hurt-america>.

²¹⁶ "Donald Trump’s tariffs cost US companies US\$46 billion to date, trade war data shows," *South China Morning Post*, January 10, 2020, <https://www.scmp.com/news/world/united-states-canada/article/3045460/trumps-tariffs-cost-us-companies-us46-billion-date>.

²¹⁷ Nicita, "Trade and trade diversion effects of United States tariffs on China," 13.

²¹⁸ "Donald Trump’s tariffs cost US companies US\$46 billion to date, trade war data shows."

²¹⁹ Mark Zandi, Jesse Rogers, and Maria Cosma, "Trade War Chicken: The Tariffs and the Damage Done," *Moody's Analytics* (2019). <https://www.moodyanalytics.com/-/media/article/2019/trade-war-chicken.pdf>

²²⁰ York, "Tracking the Economic Impact of U.S. Tariffs and Retaliatory Actions."

²²¹ Hass, "More pain than gain: How the US-China trade war hurt America."

²²² Hass, "More pain than gain: How the US-China trade war hurt America."

²²³ Nicita, "Trade and trade diversion effects of United States tariffs on China," 13.

increasing good purchases from the United States and improving the intellectual property protection, the trade deal did not specify any reductions toward subsidies, state-owned enterprises, and state-sponsored interventionist policies nor showing any commitments toward economic reform, a reform promised since China's accession to the WTO.²²⁴

Global transformation and the Resurrection of the populist and unilateralist

One of the most fundamental caused by the trade war between the US and China is how both countries' relationships reflect the transformation of globalization. The evolution from trade frictions to trade war between both sides revealed the deep resentment among the American population over globalization. Once hailed to the American people as a path to increase inclusiveness, Americans were disappointed to learn that the globalization has only benefited the wealthy and group with special interests and remained unsolved.²²⁵ The anti-globalist movement focuses beyond the trade war between the United States and China, they also eye trade frictions with European countries, Canada, South Korea, Japan, and India. The American withdrawal from the TPP, the renegotiation of NAFTA and KORUS FTA, and the neglecting the WTO dispute settlement to resolve China's unfair business practices but not fully removed itself from the international institutions showed that the US is interested to reshape the norms and order of globalization, and wants to rebuild the globalization dominated by the US and the West.²²⁶

What we can observe from Trump's trade war is the dramatic shift in the US-China relations shows the long-lasting effect of the Trump administration, Xu Jian referred to the change as the "Trump phenomenon."²²⁷ This phenomenon that aided Trump to the presidency has its root from populism that began to flare up across the globe, and especially in recent years. The rise of populism is not a unique nor accidental local phenomenon but a product of social transformation in the world brought forth by the scientific and technological revolution, especially the information revolution. The profound impact on the scientific and technological revolution left the public to fend for themselves as automation galvanized the jobs ordinary citizens previously held. Furthermore, the revolution caused the public to be distrustful of the social elites, not because social elites are incapable of perception and persuasion but because the scientific and technological revolution changed the economic development, social communication as well as state and social government. Like the first Industrial

²²⁴ Hass, "More pain than gain: How the US-China trade war hurt America."

²²⁵ Jian, "US Policy Adjustment toward China and its Implications for China-US Relations," 54.

²²⁶ Jian, "US Policy Adjustment toward China and its Implications for China-US Relations," 55.

²²⁷ Jian, "US Policy Adjustment toward China and its Implications for China-US Relations," 55.

Revolution, the scientific and technological revolution impact and distorted society created anxiety and confusion for the ordinary people. As the social elitists begin to fall behind the revolution, their social authority will usually decline as well.²²⁸

For the public to respond to the dynamic of the scientific and technological revolution, the emerging populist explores and tried all possibilities of social reform programs that incur tremendous pains and turbulence as well as violent domestic conflicts that could ultimately be escalated into war. However, once the reform is successful, the social transformation will bring progress to the world just as the Industrial Revolution in the 19th century has a lasting impact on today's world. According to predictions, it is expected that traditional professions such as taxi drivers, lawyers, and security brokers will disappear or decline substantially following the rise of artificial intelligence and the development of technologies. The war against scientific and technological revolution is not a new phenomenon but the differences between today's revolution and the 19th century's revolution are that the social elite's authority in the information era has diminished with the traditional media incapable of guiding the public opinion toward their interests. Meanwhile, the internet, a product of the information era, has link people to people; hence, becomes more influential in public opinion.²²⁹

The symbolism of the trade war, therefore, focused on the populist led by scientific and technological innovation, leading to globalization and automation. The cheaper and vastly available manpower in China, along with the WTO accession gave confidence for foreign investors to outsource their facilities to China. The automation allowed not only the Western countries but also developing countries to produce a fraction of the cost had tremendous effects on the jobs in the western world. Both factors contributed greatly to the Chinese's comparative advantages that allowed China to export more to the United States. In response, Jacksonian tradition, flared by the rise of Donald Trump, created an upheaval in international affairs as well as the urgency to reform the US-China relations. Just as the social changes are driven by the Industrial Revolution in the 19th and 20th centuries, the current social changes will create great turbulence and conflicts between the United States and China as we have witnessed in the trade war today.

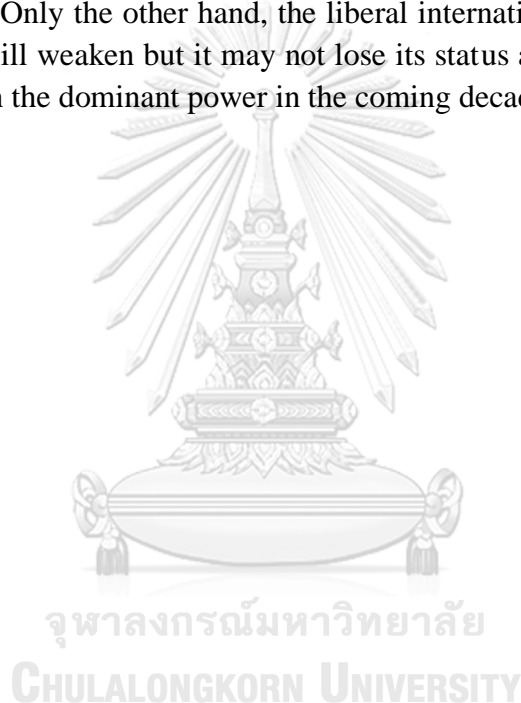
The trade war also symbolized the instability of the multi-polar international politics as US-China relations become less reliant on international institutions. This is demonstrated when Trump legitimizes a trade war in the name of "National security", redefining a new order based on a state of exception.²³⁰ As China slowly closing the

²²⁸ Jian, "US Policy Adjustment toward China and its Implications for China-US Relations," 56.

²²⁹ Jian, "US Policy Adjustment toward China and its Implications for China-US Relations," 56-58.

²³⁰ Steinbock, "U.S.-China Trade War and Its Global Impacts," 539.

gap and now reaching two-thirds of the US economy, the US began to intensify its pressure on China unilaterally but this is not the first US faced a challenger. In the 1980s, when Japan's economy was roughly two-thirds of that of the US, the US began to intensify its pressure on Japan, leading to trade conflicts with Japan. Similarly, it would make sense that the US would intensify its pressure on China.²³¹ The Jacksonian sentiment not only finds the liberal international order completely delusional; they also forbid to compete against China with constraint.²³² Therefore, the intensifying competition between China and the US, and especially the attitude of the US influenced by the Jacksonian tradition will only worsen the environment of the multi-polar international politics. Xu Jian expected that the future growth rate for China's economic size will slow down and earlier estimation of China surpassing the US economy will likely be delayed. Only the other hand, the liberal international order built by the US post World War will weaken but it may not lose its status as the dominant power and expected to remain the dominant power in the coming decades.²³³



²³¹ Jian, "US Policy Adjustment toward China and its Implications for China-US Relations," 59-60.

²³² Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*, 245.

²³³ Jian, "US Policy Adjustment toward China and its Implications for China-US Relations," 60-61.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This paper argues the US foreign policy continues to be intertwined with the US domestic deriving from the needs to impress the public opinion. The rise of Donald Trump to the presidency was aided by Jacksonian tradition, a cultural movement that observed the deterioration of American values and the abandonment by the government and the political elites in the country. The decline pressured Jacksonian supporters to counteract the decline; however, Jacksonian supporters mainly those who are poorer and lived in smaller white communities were often ridiculed by the mainstream media and entertainment for their less-educated background. Meanwhile, the government, the core of Jacksonian tradition's value, is not serving in the interests of the people but rather the wealthy and the special interests' group. This elite bubble, a group of powerful entities trusts that they can control the country and strengthened themselves, forgot that the power still lies within its people, and among them, Jacksonian, who already deeply suspicious of the powerful and felt neglected, cast their vote in defiance against the elitists.

In the context of the US-China trade relations, the rise of China as an example of the elites who wanted to exploit the comparative advantages that China exhibits, namely the large pools of cheap labor, and move their labor-intensive industries to take advantages. This is the core idea of the US-China trade relations, which began before the Second World War. The US-China relations were reversed after the CCP declared the establishment of the People's Republic of China, and it was reversed again after the rise of Deng Xiaoping finally normalizes the relationship between the two countries. But it also brings back the core idea of establishing good trade relations with China, which is to exploit its cheap labor. Influenced by the elitists and the liberal agenda, US foreign policy used the reduction of tariffs to incentivize China to join the global economy and the WTO. In return, China promised to start and continue its economic reform to transform China into a market economy, a promise that China has yet to achieve.

China continued to be used as a political tool to increase the popularity of US politicians. Ever since the US-China relations were established, the United States saw the importance as well as opportunities to protect its American lives and properties aboard. Showing strengths and dominant position to the public became an ideal strategy that can easily gain popular supports at home. This was done since 1842 when the US landed marines to protect Americans from the Chinese mobs. Similarly, Trump campaign to show strengths and the dominant position over China by continuously condemning China of unfair business practices toward US firms and forced transfer of US technologies and promote his "America First" policies based on unilateralism. A strategy coincides with the deeply suspicious of the elitists who exploited globalization to relocate their production facilities from the US to China, promote immigration policies, and removing many manufacturing jobs from the United States.

This translates into the US foreign policy, their core values of anti-multilateralism and international cooperation of the Jacksonian tradition led to Trump's decision to withdraw from the TPP and begins to negotiate trade agreements with its allies. They also began to defend their honor and reputations of once the manufacturing power of the world while portraying China as a villain whose rise was contributed by stealing American's intellectual properties and the supports of the wealthy and special interests' groups. And the rise of China also created fear that the US will lose its position in the world, a reputation that Jacksonian wishes to preserve. Lastly, Jacksonian does not believe in a war with constraint, they want to go all-in and anything that stands in its way will be considered as an enemy. WTO is already despised by the Jacksonian supporter became unimportant to the trade war, an international institution that aims to minimize the trade disputes and tensions was seen by Jacksonian as a hindrance toward achieving the total victory

It is important to recognize the effect of the trade war has on the US, China, and the world. In terms of economic cost, no one wins the trade war. Even with the trade deal signed in 2020, the economic prospects of both countries have declined with a reduction in GDP growth, several jobs, and the trade diversion effect that forced companies in China to relocate to other countries. The economic cost from the trade war caused as many as 300,000 lost jobs to the American people and a long-term impact on the GDP. The trade deal which the Trump administration negotiates is not the total victory and question over its practicality remains unclear. Furthermore, the trade war also fostered a global transformation that resurrected the populist policies and unilateralism. The scientific and technological revolution has created unequal societies and instabilities that lead to conflicts. As a response, politicians, and electorates elected populist leader to protect their society. This includes the use of unilateral policies that may upset other countries. However, with the United States and China at the top of the global economy, their actions will influence others to pursue similar policies and could jeopardize the liberal international order is built.

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