

Alfredo Toro Hardy's recently published book [\*China versus the US: Who Will Prevail?\*](#) (New Jersey, World Scientific, 2020), aims at answering two sets of questions. In the first place: Did China challenge the United States too hard and too soon and, by doing so, seriously affected the chance to attain its objectives? Can Washington still contain China's ascendancy and retain its current leading status? In the second place: What are the options that can result from the clash of these two giants? Which of these options has the strongest probability of prevailing?

By weighing the national power of both China and the United States, through a balanced power profile, the author tries to answer the first set of questions. This leads him to analyse how well they rank in six different aptitude categories. These are the convergence aptitude (their capability to rally other countries behind them); the strategic aptitude (their capability to maintain a steady and rational course of action); the universality aptitude (their capability to project their own cultures and values globally); the military aptitude (their capability to deter aggression by the other one, or to prevail against it should hostilities ensue); the economic aptitude (their capability to sustain a faster GDP growth); and the technological aptitude (their capability to obtain primacy in a group of key emerging technologies).



Image source: REUTERS/Hyungwon Kang

With a clearer vision of how well China and the United States rank in their respective comprehensive national power, and hence of the timing involved for each of them, the author proceeds to undertake the second set of questions. Meaning, the options resulting from their clash and the probabilities of each of these options.

Five options are therein analysed: The U.S.' containment of China; a power-sharing agreement; the war between them; America's withdrawal; and the collapse of the Chinese Communist Party's regime. A measurement of the probabilities of these options follows.

According to the author, what makes this rivalry so complex is that both countries perceive themselves as pinnacles within human history. Finding themselves entangled in an emerging Cold War, the Middle Kingdom and the Exceptional Nation have not an easy way out. The reason being that both nations are prisoners of their history and of their national myths. While as a Civilisation-State with millennia of glorious past China feels entitled to a leading role, Americans feel challenged in their self-perceived providential entitlement to be a "beacon for humanity".

**Get your copy - [China versus the US: Who Will Prevail](#)**

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*\*The author, Alfredo Toro Hardy, is a Venezuelan retired diplomat, scholar and author, with a PhD on International Relations. Before resigning from the Venezuelan Foreign Service in protest for the events taking place in his country, he was one of its most senior career diplomats. As such, he served as Ambassador to the United States, the United Kingdom, Spain, Brazil, Singapore, Chile and Ireland. He directed the Diplomatic Academy of his country, as well as other Venezuelan academic institutions while being a Visiting Professor at several universities abroad, including Princeton. He has been a Fulbright Scholar and a two-time Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center Resident Scholar. Author or co-author of thirty-five books and thirty peer-reviewed papers on international affairs, he is a contributor to the Spanish edition of The Kootneeti.*

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