

# U.S.-China hegemony competition and New global bridge economy block system (liberalism approach)

Horim Kim  
(Korea university, College of Global Business,  
Program in Converging Technology System & Standardization)

## Abstract

This study attempted to interpret the meaning of the U.S.-China hegemony competition based on liberal theory, and predicted future U.S.-China relations by analyzing the hegemony confrontation between the U.S. and China. During the U.S.-China hegemony competition, countries around China, which are directly threatened by China, were divided into continental and maritime national groups, and the characteristics, concerns, and responses of those countries were considered. It proposed a new maritime-new continent global bridge economic block system, suggested strengthening economic cooperation, technical cooperation, cultural cooperation and liberal international order as its effectiveness, and suggested the need of a new international order during the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

### Key words :

Hegemony competition, Liberalism, Global bridge economic block

## Introduction

The U.S.–China hegemony competition is expected to become more serious in 2022. The Western democratic nations (e.g. U.S., the U.K., Australia, Japan, etc.) have decided the diplomatic boycotts (only athletes participated, and the top of the country did not participate) of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics (Bachman, 2021). The U.S.–China hegemony competition seemed to be sealed by the first phase of the U.S.–China trade dispute in January 2020, but it is getting worse as the COVID–19 pandemic reported in December 2019 hit the world and actively takes emergency measures (e.g. border blockade or social distancing). Developed countries (e.g. U.S, the U.K, France, etc.) devoted themselves to domestic issues, while externally blaming China for the COVID–19 pandemic. The U.S. further tightened Huawei sanctions and systematically blocked access to Chinese companies to U.S. security assets (Stumpf, 2021). China pushed ahead with the enactment of Hong Kong national security law, and began taking measures to support industries underlying the fourth industrial revolution, including semiconductors. In addition, there are many reports that China is expanding its influence to Asia and Africa by strengthening the Northeast Project in Manchuria (i.e. historical region of northeastern China) and China's "One belt, One road" Strategy (Large, 2021). As such, there are concerns about strengthening the U.S.–China hegemony competition, continuing COVID–19 pandemic, accelerating anxiety in the global financial economy (e.g. global securities and raw material markets), threatening economic retaliation due to clashes between the U.S. and China, and Possibility of military conflict between the U.S. and China over Taiwan. (Cropsey, 2021). Therefore, the response strategy of South Korea and other neighboring countries around China, which exist in the direct influence of the U.S.–China hegemony competition, has become very important.

In particular, Korea has a U.S. military alliance with the U.S. and has a U.S. military base in Korea, while China has close economic cooperation as an adjacent country in terms of location. In addition, Korea is in a geopolitical position to serve as a balance between communist and liberal democratic regime forces as

Eurasian continental civilization and Pacific maritime civilization intersect. The U.S.–China hegemony competition is a crisis and an opportunity for South Korea. Recently, the United States has removed all restrictions based on the missile agreement (i.e., restrictions on missile range, disallowing the use of solid fuel, etc. Korea launched the Nuri and showed the possibility of developing intercontinental ballistic bullets (Yu, 2021). It is gradually approaching the role of military balance in Northeast Asia, soaring its self-defense weapon system, including the success of missile development and commercialization, exports of K2 tanks, and development and exports of fighter jets (Jung, 2021). In addition, at the stage of technology commercialization, which are the basis of the fourth industrial revolution such as semiconductors, batteries, and electric vehicles, Korean companies took the lead in the world, preventing the global technological development from falling behind during the Covid 19 pandemic period. The K–quarantine model has settled stably as an advanced country's quarantine–model as it emphasizes public communication using various quarantine methods such as drive–through methods, quarantine according to social distance agreement, and mobile apps. This aspect of Korea as a military, economic, technological, and human rights powerhouse has emerged as a partnership country equal to the United States, not a country receiving aid in relations with the United States (Min, 2021). Therefore, Korea's role as a balance point in the US hegemony competition is gradually increasing. Korea is at a crossroads of very difficult choice as it can be attacked in terms of diplomacy, economy, and technology on the other side by choosing one side between the United States and China,

This study provides a theoretical interpretation of the U.S.–China hegemony competition and attempts to approach the response strategies of neighboring countries in line with the fierce U.S.–China hegemony competition from the perspective of liberalism in international relations. China's neighboring countries, which are directly affected by the U.S.–China hegemony competition, want to create a global bridge economic block with mutual cooperation and agreed economic strategies to prevent military and economic provocations, prevent military conflicts in the East Asia–Pacific, and maximize their interests.

Therefore, this study first explains the U.S.–China relationship based on the theoretical interpretation of the current U.S.–China hegemony competition through liberalism. Second, as the power of the United States and China appears to be a variety of political, military, economic, and cultural influences in the East Asian–Pacific region, concerns from neighboring countries are presented. Finally, it proposes a countermeasure to the crisis of the U.S.–China hegemony competition, a new global bridge economy block system that is a means of bridging continental countries (communist or authoritarian political system, resources of the Fourth Industrial Revolution) and maritime countries (liberal democratic political system, capital and technology of the Fourth Industrial Revolution). The global bridge economic block system can achieve security guarantees/economic growth/virtual world entry and peace guarantees in the crisis of the U.S.–China hegemony competition.

To this end, Chapter 2 attempts a theoretical interpretation of the U.S.–China hegemony competition from a liberal perspective, and predicts future U.S.–China hegemony competition. Chapter 3 presents the concerns of countries around China under the U.S.–China hegemony competition. Chapter 4 discusses the creation and effectiveness of new global bridge economic blocks in continental and maritime countries.

This study increases the validity of the study by setting the following limitations in advance.

First, liberal theory, like other international political theories, has limitations. The reason why the liberal theory was used in this study as a framework for analyzing the US–China hegemony competition is that the current international situation can be analyzed more precisely on the premise that the US–China hegemony competition does not lead to war in terms of the use of asymmetric weapons such as nuclear weapons. The cause of the pursuit of hegemony between economic and military powers is investigated from the nature of the international system's interstate relations. The U.S.–China hegemony competition is analyzed as a competition between the U.S.–centered free democratic–economic zone and China–centered communist–economic zone.

Second, this study limits the geopolitical scope to communist continental countries (North Korea,

Kazakhstan, etc.) and democratic maritime countries (South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Australia, New Zealand, etc.) in neighboring countries of China. Korea has great geopolitical implications as a peninsula country connecting continental and maritime countries through cooperation with countries that are directly threatened by China's economic, military, and territorial expansion.

Third, this study was conducted on the premise that the interpretation of international order has been developed by various theories such as realism, liberalism, and constructivism, and that theoretical interpretation of intersections and differences is possible by various factors for overall understanding. It is cautiously predicted that the new global bridge economic block system of continental and maritime forces threatened by Chinese expansionism could serve as a preventive basis for war by partially offsetting the military, diplomatic, and economic aggression of the U.S.–China hegemony by rules and systems that form a new third economic zone and strengthen a liberal international order system.

## **Theoretical interpretation of the US–China hegemony competition.**

### **1. U.S.–China hegemony competition**

#### **1) Trade and Technology War**

The U.S.–China hegemony war was a conflict over the trade deficit. The Trump administration stressed the readjustment of trade relations based on strict reciprocity. It called for the abolition of unfair trade barriers such as tariffs, subsidies, intellectual property infringement, and exchange rate manipulation, and stressed that all means, including unilateral measures, can be mobilized to do this. (Scherrer & Abernathy, 2017). It was a strong trade pressure on surplus countries, attempts to renegotiate existing free trade agreements such as the Korea–U.S. Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), departure from multilateral and consumerism such as the WTO and the Pan–Pacific Partnership (TPP), and the U.S.–China trade war. The U.S.–China trade war was approached by the U.S. in terms of "national security" (House, 2017). Article 232 of the Trade

Expansion Act presented a national security threat as the basis for the addition of tariffs on Chinese steel and aluminum, and the Defense Authority Act of 2019 controlled the leakage of key technologies, including examining the impact of Chinese capital invested in the U.S. on U.S. national security. He also strongly criticized China's 2025 manufacturing, which aims to strengthen its capabilities in high-tech industries and transform it into a technology-intensive industrial structure, for destroying the fair trade order. The same is true of sanctions banning transactions with Chinese companies such as Huawei and ZTE, and banning exports of U.S. semiconductor equipment, parts, technologies, and software to Fujian Jinhua Semiconductor, a key semiconductor company. As such, the U.S.–China trade war is aimed at maintaining technological hegemony in the era of the 4th industrial revolution beyond solving economic problems. As such, the United States has formalized China as a challenger to the current international order, replacing economic issues with national security issues through a full-scale and high-intensity trade and tariff war against China. The Biden government defined the current world as a confrontation between democratic and authoritarian camps, and pointed out that China is the biggest threat to the open world. It also suggests that the adoption of protectionist trade policies is inevitable, saying that the method is intended to be achieved through various international cooperation and solidarity methods, institutional and normative pressure instead of unilateral tariff imposition. It shows that the aspect of the US–China hegemony war is developing systematically. (Biden Jr, 2021) On the other hand, China is pursuing a strategy to reduce external dependence by strengthening technical independence and shifting its domestic development strategy. At the end of July 2020, President Xi Jinping announced a "double cycle" to shift from export-oriented 'international grand cycle strategy' to domestic-oriented 'domestic grand cycle strategy' and create a virtuous cycle between the two, centered on the latter. The meaning is to further develop China's economy against the United States. (Kim et al., 2021).

## 2) Currency and financial war.

The trade and technology war inevitably entails a

monetary and financial war. So far, China has pursued export-oriented economic policies, and its price competitiveness based on the undervaluation of the yuan has continued economic growth. However, now, policies that develop both domestic demand and exports needed a shift in monetary policy that induces the undervaluation of the yuan. To this end, the yuan tried to play a role as a key currency by raising the international status of the above easing to escape excessive dependence on the dollar and creating an economic zone of the yuan. The movement of monetary and financial power appears in the final stage of the implementation of hegemony.

Looking at the process, China jumped on the East Asian crisis in the late 1990s and the U.S. financial boom and achieved a sharp rise in exports to the U.S. and contributed to the solidification of the U.S. monetary and financial sectors by investing in U.S. government bonds. However, the 2008 financial crisis from the U.S. revealed vulnerability to the U.S.–centered financial order, and the 2012 "National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)" mandated the evaluation of the threat of national intelligence caused by China's U.S. government bonds, putting the issue of monetary finance at the heart of national security (Kong, 2019). The Trump administration demanded the opening of the financial market, suspension of exchange rate manipulation, and appreciation of the yuan, and designated China as a currency manipulator in August 2019.

On the other hand, China implemented internationalization of the yuan as an alternative as pressure from the United States strengthened. In 2016, the yuan began to be included in the IMF's special withdrawal currency basket, and international payments became the fourth-largest international currency. China has expanded its currency swap agreement with 33 countries to sign currency swap agreements worth more than 3 trillion yuan. In addition, a total of 97 countries, including 27 prospective member countries, have established the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) to financially support the One Belt, One Road strategy (Kong, 2019).

As such, even during the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. continues to take measures to exclude China from the U.S.–centered financial system. The U.S.

also mentioned China's default on U.S. government bonds, and China said it would gradually sell U.S. government bonds and diversify its foreign exchange composition in response (Lee, 2021). China is strengthening its attempts to form an economic zone centered on China through One-on-One Road, and the U.S. proposed a new framework called an anti-China economic block called the Economic Prosperity Network (EPN) to prevent the emergence of new monetary and financial powers (Lee, 2020).

## 2. Theoretical interpretation of the US-China hegemony competition.

### 1) Overview.

The development process of international political theory, which has been established from the standpoint of a powerful country, has supplemented limitations and contradictions as the two major theories of realism and liberalism have been newly interpreted and applied by several perspectives. Liberalism and realism in the 20th century developed within international environmental changes and constraints through the Cold War and the post-Cold War. In particular, after the post-Cold War, liberalism influenced the communist camp beyond the democratic camp of the West, allowing the discussion of global international cooperation. In other words, the U.S. decision to support China's joining to the WTO from a liberal point of view led to the development and commercialization of the 4th industrial revolution technology, and China was able to achieve a technological revolution. Naturally, the U.S.-centered economic zone and China-centered economic zone collided with each other, and neighboring countries of China were threatened with infringement of cultural and territorial sovereignty caused by China's rise in economic and military power.

### 2) Realism Theory

Aggressive realism theory can be applied to this phenomenon. Mearsheimer (2021) assumed that the international system is an anarchic system, that powers necessarily have and improve aggressive military power, that no country is clearly aware of the intentions of the other country, that the most important goal of the power is survival, and that

the state is a rational actor. Mearsheimer (2021) argued that the powers collide fatefully, and in reality, the most active way to survive is to become an unchallenged hegemony. Mearsheimer (2021) also suggested three things to the characteristics of the hegemony. The first is that it cannot be a global hegemony that dominates the entire planet, the second is that it wants to become a regional hegemony in its region, and the third is that it has a hegemony status on its continent and prevents the emergence of a hegemony in other continents. China also has a powerful military power after China's remarkable economic growth and pursue hegemony on the Asian continent, not because of the inherent aggression of Chinese culture or the judgment of Chinese politicians (Meersheimer, 2021).

However, realism focuses on power struggle under anarchy, and aggressive realism presupposes that war between powers is ultimately inevitable, so it is not suitable for use in real life as an inter-state response strategy for neighboring powers.

### 3) Liberalism Theory

In international relations, liberal theory is well represented in the book "Power and Interdependence" (Kehanane & Nye Jr, 1973; Kehanane & Nye, 2017). Robert O. Keohanne and Joseph S. Nye interpreted international politics closer to reality by approaching them from the perspective of a complex interdependence model. In terms of complex interdependence model, relations between countries are already closely and complexly linked not only to formal diplomatic channels but also to informal channels (e.g. transnational, and international relations) are often multiple and overlapped with military security issues and various domestic and foreign policies.

First, it is complex interdependence in the field. In the regional international system of mutual dependence, national policy is not subordinate to political and military goals and varies according to the problem area. As the effectiveness of military power decreases and the importance of each policy field becomes more equal, political negotiations between countries also shows various variations such as linkage strategies depending on the problem area.

Second, it is regional complex interdependence.

Under complex mutual dependence, as the distinction between domestic and international policies becomes ambiguous, the agenda setting becomes more subtle and differentiated. Complicated domestic groups will try to politicize problems and convert domestic issues into international issues, and transnational economic organizations, bureaucratic intergovernmental networks, and trade unions will exert transnational function.

Third, it is the complex interdependence of channels. The potential role of international organizations will increase tremendously in a world where alliances are formed by informal channels (i.e. transnational and trans-governmental channels) rather than official channels such as countries or governments. In addition, increasing the role of international organizations has the effect of strengthening the status of domestic departments in related fields, and by forming alliances with non-governmental organizations, it will ensure linkage strategies such as trade, currency, and environment for weak countries. Therefore, in the case of countries around China amid the U.S.–China hegemony competition, the reality is that the U.S. and China are complexly connected. For example, Korea has a military and security alliance with the United States as a liberal democratic camp, but it is very economically related to China.

#### 4) The United States, China, and Countries around China based on a liberal perspective.

##### (1) Complex interdependence in the field.

During the 2010 Senkaku Islands territorial dispute, China banned exports of rare earth elements to Japan, turning the dispute over territorial issues into an economic issue between countries and companies. In 2017, China implemented economic retaliation against the U.S. Forces Korea's deployment of THAAD in Korea, raising anti-Korean sentiment in China, causing serious damage to Korean companies and the Korean economy. Military security issues have been transformed into management of private enterprises, economic issues between countries, and further cultural conflicts between countries. China partially suspended imports of Australian beef on May, 2020, which mentioned the "Corona China Responsibility Theory" due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, and imposed an 80% tariff on Australian barley on the 18th, making

it virtually impossible to export barley. The diplomatic issue damaged economically to private farmers and livestock industries, and seriously hit the Australian economy, which relies on exports to China at 34.7%. When Japan expressed its "concern" over China's enactment of Hong Kong national security law on May of the same year, China threatened to impose trade retaliation. The universal value issue of human rights is the result linked with economic issues. As such, it can be seen that the relationship between countries, especially the relationship between the powerful countries and the neighboring countries, is linked to a number of other international issues.

##### (2) Regional complex interdependence.

In November 2019, the Trump administration issued an executive order banning the use of TikTok, an app that shares silly, lively, and strange videos in the United States. The reason is the security logic that Byte DANCE, the parent company of TikTok based in Beijing, China, can hand over users' personal information to the Chinese government (Jeon, 2019). U.S. sanctions do not apply to users who use them in the U.S., but to companies with servers in other countries, showing current international relations that cross borders and cross virtual and reality. Since then, the Biden administration has canceled this executive order, but national security logic shows that interstate problems with personal information or transactions in the virtual world can occur on a large scale, both domestically and abroad.

##### (3) Complex interdependence in the channels.

At the ASEAN summit in November 2019, leaders of each country expressed concern about China's move to establish a military base in the South China Sea and held COC (Code of Conduct) consultations to prevent accidental military clashes in the South China Sea (Noh, 2019). On the day China announced the RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership) agreement in November 2019, the U.S. administration announced the Blue Dot Network Plan at the Indian-Pacific Business Forum. The United States encouraged participation of allies, including South Korea, emphasizing the need to establish an "Economic Prosperity Network (EPN), an anti-China economic block (Kim Young-man, 2020). About 70 civic groups in the United States submitted an official letter demanding withdrawal of the Japanese

government's decision to release contaminated water from Fukushima into sea. In addition, the UN Human Rights Commission of Korea expressed concern that it could affect numerous lives in the Pacific Ocean. International issues can be discussed between countries or through informal channels beyond countries(Kang, 2021)

## Concerns of countries around China

Countries around China can be divided into continental and maritime countries. Continental countries(e.g. North Korea, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, etc.) have essential resources (e.g. rare earth elements, etc.) for the Fourth Industrial Revolution on the basis of the communist political system. It has been incorporated into the economic sphere of China and Russia, showing excessive dependence. Military and diplomacy also fail to pursue their own routes. Maritime countries have technologies (Data, Network, AI, etc.) that lead the Fourth Industrial Revolution on the basis of a liberal democratic political system, and have economic power and financial structures to support it. It has been incorporated into the US economic zone and shows excessive dependence. Military and diplomacy are also at a crossroads between powers rather than pursuing their own routes.

However, there are similarities. As China's economic power grows after the United States and military and diplomatic power rise accordingly, it is afraid of treating its past history and cultural heritage as if it were its subordinate country to neighboring countries. This is because President Xi puts the legitimacy of his absolute power on the realization of a "strong and united China."(Kim, 2018). The Chinese dream is the principle of integrating the Han Chinese, minority porridge, coastal and inland, the poor and the rich into one. It contains the will integrating Taiwan and Hong Kong and engaging in territorial disputes with neighboring countries. The revision of the Hong Kong Election Act means that it will root out opposing forces against China and take full control of Hong Kong, and Taiwan will be integrated into the mainland by 2027. Mongolia is also afraid of China. China is Mongolia's largest investor and largest trading partner.

As of the end of 2018, 85% of Mongolian exports were exports to China, 36.9% of imports were from China and 28.1% from Russia. Mongolia exists under the influence of China. However, Mongolia has 31 million tons of Hitoruy reserves, accounting for about 16.8% of the world's rare earth reserves after China. In August 2019, U.S. Defense Secretary Esper visited Mongolia. Mongolia wants US economic intervention and political intervention because it provides a more breathing space in relations with China and Russia (Ali, 2019), and Korea is also wary of China's expansion. President Trump also revealed that Xi Jinping made remarks at the 2017 U.S.–China summit, saying, "Korea has been part of China for thousands of years." In the recent promotional video for the 2022 Beijing Olympics, it is still enhancing the probability of cultural invasion by showing hanbok, fan dance, and sang-go spinning, saying it is the culture of Chinese minorities (Kim, 2021). Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are also wary that China may exert influence on Central Asia. As China's economic power grows to the level of the United States, its military power becomes bloated, and neighboring countries are paying keen attention to countermeasures, fearing that economic sovereignty, military sovereignty, diplomatic sovereignty, territorial sovereignty, and cultural sovereignty will be eroded.

## Response of countries around China: creation of a new global bridge economic block system and strengthening of the liberal international order

### 1. Meaning and importance of the new global bridge economy block system.

The 4th Industrial Revolution can be seen as an entry into an intelligent society based on big data. If the current international relationship was formed as a result of the existing 3rd industrial revolution, it is predicted that a new international relationship will be formed through the 4th industrial revolution. Therefore, even neighboring countries, not the current powers, can create a new international order if the leader technology and finance of the Fourth Industrial Revolution are combined. In this respect, the new global bridge economy block system is meaningful. The characteristics of continental countries around

China oriented toward de-Chinaization can be summarized into four categories. First, it is a country that exports abundant resources in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, such as rare earth elements. Second, it is unified in China-centered economic zones such as selling its resources and products/services. Third, it can be influenced by the military, diplomatic, and territorial rights of China. Fourth, during the Fourth Industrial Revolution, they want a new economic block that is not subordinate to the economic power of the United States and China while not reducing their status.

On the other hand, the characteristics of maritime countries around China can be summarized into four categories. First, it is excellent in software power such as artificial intelligence technology and new energy technology such as nuclear technology. Second, economic power is close to developed countries and is part of the U.S.-centered economic zone of liberal democracy and free market. Third, the economic, military, diplomatic, and territorial rights can be strongly influenced by China's economic power. Fourth, they want a new economic block that is not subordinate to the economic power of the United States and China while not reducing their status.

The continental resource-centered state group and the marine technology finance-centered state group can be combined into a new economic block based on two similarities and create synergy. This synergy includes transactions of digital assets by digital currency in the virtual world in addition to trade and finance markets in the current physical world. For example, it refers to transaction in a virtual world (or metaverse) made in the communication (e.g., 6G) of satellites surrounding the Earth. The NFT blockchain system gives scarcity to digital assets and can form a new economic zone for digital assets. In other words, it is possible to create a new economic zone in countries around China by pioneering a new virtual economic zone without affecting the hegemony of the existing physical economic zone.

The possibility of the formation of such a new economic block can be confirmed in the Indo-Pacific Strategic Report (IPSR) released by the US Department of Defense. The U.S. emphasized the rule of law, civil society development, transparent rule, and fair competition, and suggested that cooperation

with allies should be a top priority, while the U.S. cooperates with allies and partners that share values. If you agree with the universal values of the United States and do not affect the existing U.S.-centered hegemony, it is not unreasonable to create a new economic block. Rather, if it is the creation of a new economic block that reduces China's influence, it can be confirmed that it may receive support.

The United States strengthens relations with its allies (Japan, Korea, Australia, Philippines, Thailand + Britain, France, Canada) and partners (Singapore, Taiwan, New Zealand, Mongolia) and promotes cooperation with India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, and will continue to engage in Brunei, Laos, Cambodia, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, and Tonga. All countries in India and the Pacific, except China, Russia, and North Korea, have been defined as cooperative countries (Lee, 2019).

## **2. Effectiveness of the new global bridge economy block system**

Recently, many studies have shown that the Arctic Ocean's thawing speed is accelerating and expanding (McCrystal, Strove, Serreze, Forbes, & Screen, 2021). Russia has developed a North Sea route and is seeking logistics benefits by turning logistics to the North Sea route (Jeong, 2021). However, Russia and Korea are getting closer than Japan due to territorial issues between Russia and Japan (Yoo, 2021) and the trade war between Korea and Japan (Jeong, 2021). In addition, when the North Sea route is developed, Alaska, the United States, appears as the center of logistics, which helps the U.S. national interest. Russia and the United States have common interests in China's threat, and it is significant in that they can have a different logistics hegemony than before by turning logistics from the Atlantic and Pacific oceans to Arctic ocean through the new route, Arctic route.

Therefore if continental and maritime forces among countries around China create a new global bridge economic block in Korea, a peninsula country, the Pacific Ocean and the North Sea could be connected to create a new logistics economic zone. The Arctic route departing from Busan to Vladivostok, Alaska, and Rotterdam (the Netherlands) is 12,700km (Arctic route), which can reduce navigation by 8,300km from

the existing Suez canal (21,000km, Far East European route). In addition, the railway departing from Busan is connected to the Trans-Siberian Railway from Vladivostok by land and goes to Europe. And, if the Bering Strait is connected by overpass, it can go from the United States to Canada and Europe along the northern end of Russia or the Trans-Siberian line. As the axis of global logistics moves from the Atlantic to the Pacific and Arctic seas, the effectiveness of the new marine-new continent global economic block system can be seen to increase through land, sea, and air routes.

## Conclusion.

This study attempted to interpret the meaning of the U.S.-China hegemony competition based on liberal theory, and predicted future U.S.-China relations by analyzing the hegemony confrontation between the U.S. and China. During the U.S.-China hegemony competition, countries around China, which are directly threatened by China, were divided into continental and maritime national groups, and the characteristics, concerns, and responses of those countries were considered. It proposed a new maritime-new continent global bridge economic block system, suggested strengthening economic cooperation, technical cooperation, cultural cooperation and liberal international order as its effectiveness, and suggested the need of a new international order during the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

China's economic and military hegemony has a great influence over all fields such as economy, military, diplomacy, and unification, so the response strategies of neighboring countries such as Korea are very important. In addition, the Korean Peninsula is pressured by China and the United States to participate in its strategies due to its geopolitical, geo-economic, and technical importance. As such, countries around China are strongly required to take new countermeasures in order not to be in a situation of bilateral choice. The current U.S.-China hegemony competition is a power showdown between China seeking hegemony in the East Asia-Pacific region and the U.S. to stop it, but since it is a showdown in the economic region, support and response from

neighboring countries are important. Countries around China, including Korea, should strengthen international relations by protecting liberal international relations, pursuing universal values such as peace, human rights, and democracy, and make efforts to find solutions within the liberal international order to prevent war from occurring between the U.S. and China.

It is very important for the continuation of peace in the region not to be forced to choose between the U.S.-China hegemony competition by consolidating countries around China into new economic block rather than the U.S. and Chinese economic zones. In particular, in the era of the 4th Industrial Revolution, the Korean Peninsula serves as a bridge between continental and maritime states among countries around China, and should be taken as a good opportunity to create a new economic block. The United States and China are trying to secure partners with allies to expand their economic and military influences under the international system. Therefore, countries around China must maintain regional peace and prosperity by maintaining the U.S.-China hegemony competition within the new international system that does rule out local military conflicts.

This study predicts that the U.S.-China hegemony competition will continue. China will continue until 2049 to achieve China's dream, and the United States will make efforts to reduce China's influence. Countries around China maintain economic cooperation with China for their economic development, but if China's military and territorial expansion is likely to become a reality, it is likely to show a more favorable attitude toward the U.S., which is far away for its security. In addition, if the United States excessively demands a military coalition to block China economically, military and diplomatic, it will make the United States feel burdened by the Chinese blockade by not supporting the United States. In particular, collective action of countries around China can affect the aspect of the US-China hegemony competition. It is possible to prevent local military conflicts from a liberal perspective based on free trade, multilateralism, and international law. This study predicts that the new economic block system will partially offset the unilateral and coercive demands of the U.S. and China under the U.S.-China hegemony competition with

cooperation and multilateral responses for economic and political liberal international order. Protecting the liberal international order is a very important issue for countries around China. The war occurs not as an all-out war between countries competing for supremacy between the U.S. and China, but as a local war of neighboring countries. Therefore, continental and maritime countries around China should work together within the global international order rules by forming a new global bridge economic block system to ensure that the resolution of the risks arising from the US-China hegemony fight works.

## References

- Ali, I. (2019). With an eye on Russia, China and a horse, Pentagon chief visits Mongolia. REUTERS.
- Bachman, L. R. a. R. (2021). U.S. Diplomatic Boycott of Beijing 2022 Puts American Athletes in a Bind. WSJ. Retrieved from <https://www.wsj.com/articles/beijing-olympics-diplomatic-boycott-team-usa-11638967958>
- Biden Jr, J. R. (2021). Interim National Security Strategic Guidance. Retrieved from
- Cropsey, S. (2021). Needed: A Military Strategy for China. WSJ. Retrieved from <https://www.wsj.com/articles/needed-military-strategy-for-china-taiwan-conflict-invasion-11635886657>
- House, W. (2017). National Security Strategy of the United States of America. December 2017.
- Jeon, S. (2019). What is a 15-second video called "TikTok"? Even the U.S. Congress "threatens national security." The JoongAng. Retrieved from <https://www.joongang.co.kr/article/23640103#home>
- Jeong, J. S.. (2021). Impact of Japan's export regulations to Korea and prospects for economic relations between Korea and Japan. Japanese criticism, 24.
- Jeong, M. (2021). Forecast of arms 'Exports > Imports' this year... K-Bangsan, the first step in exporting countries. ChosunBiz. Retrieved from <https://biz.chosun.com/industry/company/2021/12/28/52IWKV24GRHGJBF4S52HLYOHFY/>
- Kang, Y. (2021). Even U.S. civic groups have stepped up to "withdraw the discharge of contaminated water from Fukushima daily." Hankook Ilbo. Retrieved from <https://www.hankookilbo.com/News/Read/A2021061514330004785>
- Keohane, R. O., & Nye Jr, J. S. (1973). Power and interdependence. *Survival*, 15(4), 158-165.
- Keohane, R. O., & Nye, J. S. (2017). Power and interdependence. *Conflict After the Cold War: Arguments on Causes of War: Arguments on Causes of War and Peace*, 167.
- Kim, H. Lee, W. Lee, S. Cho, Y. Lee, C. Lee, S. & Cha, D. (2021). Strategic competition between the U.S. and China during the Biden administration and Korea's choice study.
- Kim, J. B. (2018) Xi Jinping "Sticking to One Chinese Principle..." "Any act of division will fail." Yonhap News Agency. Retrieved from <https://>

[www.yna.co.kr/view/AKR20180320097600083](http://www.yna.co.kr/view/AKR20180320097600083)

Kong, M. (2019). The co-evolution of the US hegemony and East Asian regional system. *Korean Political Research*, 28(3), 139-175.

Kim, S. (2021). "Hanbok = Minority costume" Among them, "Blue" that I couldn't say... "Hanbok State Council" for domestic flights. *NewDaily*.

Kim, Y. M. (2020). U.S. alliance strengthens China's isolation...Establishment of Indo-Pacific Partnership and Economic Block. *Yonhap News TV*. Retrieved from <https://www.yonhapnewstv.co.kr/news/MYH20200522014900038?srt=1&d=Y>

Large, D. (2021). *China and Africa: The New Era*. John Wiley & Sons.

Lee, D. W. (2019). India of the United States. Pacific strategy and the Korean Peninsula. *Situation and policy* (12), 3-4.

Lee, S. (2021). Monetary hegemony competition between the U.S. and China and prospects for international political and economic order. *Political Information Research*, 24(3), 25-49.

Lee, W. H. (2020). [The Future of U.S.-China Competition and Korea's Strategy I: Four Hotspots of Economic Conflict] *U.S.-China Digital Currency Competition: Digital Yuan vs. Digital Dollar*. EAI Special Report, 1-14.

McCrystall, M. R., Stroeve, J., Serreze, M., Forbes, B. C., & Screen, J. A. (2021). New climate models reveal faster and larger increases in Arctic precipitation than previously projected. *Nature communications*, 12(1), 1-12.

Mearsheimer, J. J. (2021). The inevitable rivalry: America, China, and the tragedy of great-power politics. *Foreign Aff.*, 100, 48.

Min, T. E. (2021). Evaluation of the Korea-U.S. summit and future prospects: Tasks left by the Korea-U.S. summit.

Roh, H. (2019). A weak ASEAN meeting. A weak "severe check theory". *Seoul economy*.

Scherrer, C., & Abernathy, E. (2017). Trump's Trade Policy Agenda. *Intereconomics*, 52(6), 364-369.

Strumpf, D. (2021). U.S. Set Out to Hobble China's Huawei, and So It Has. *WSJ*. Retrieved from <https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-set-out-to-hobble-chinas-huawei-and-so-it-has-11633617478>

Yu, C. (2021). Russia, Japan, and the Kuril Islands strengthen their armed forces...Anti-Ship missile deployment. *Yonhap News Agency*.

Retrieved from <https://www.yna.co.kr/view/AKR20211202188100080>

Yu, Y. (2021). Experts say, "Securing ICBM technology by launching Nuri." *Chosun Ilbo*. Retrieved from <https://www.chosun.com/economy/science/2021/10/22/VL5RXM347ZFYLEXZFMSPQE3VY/>

Receiving Date : December 2, 2021

Reviewing Date : December 9, 2021

Reporting Date of Article Appearance : December 16, 2021