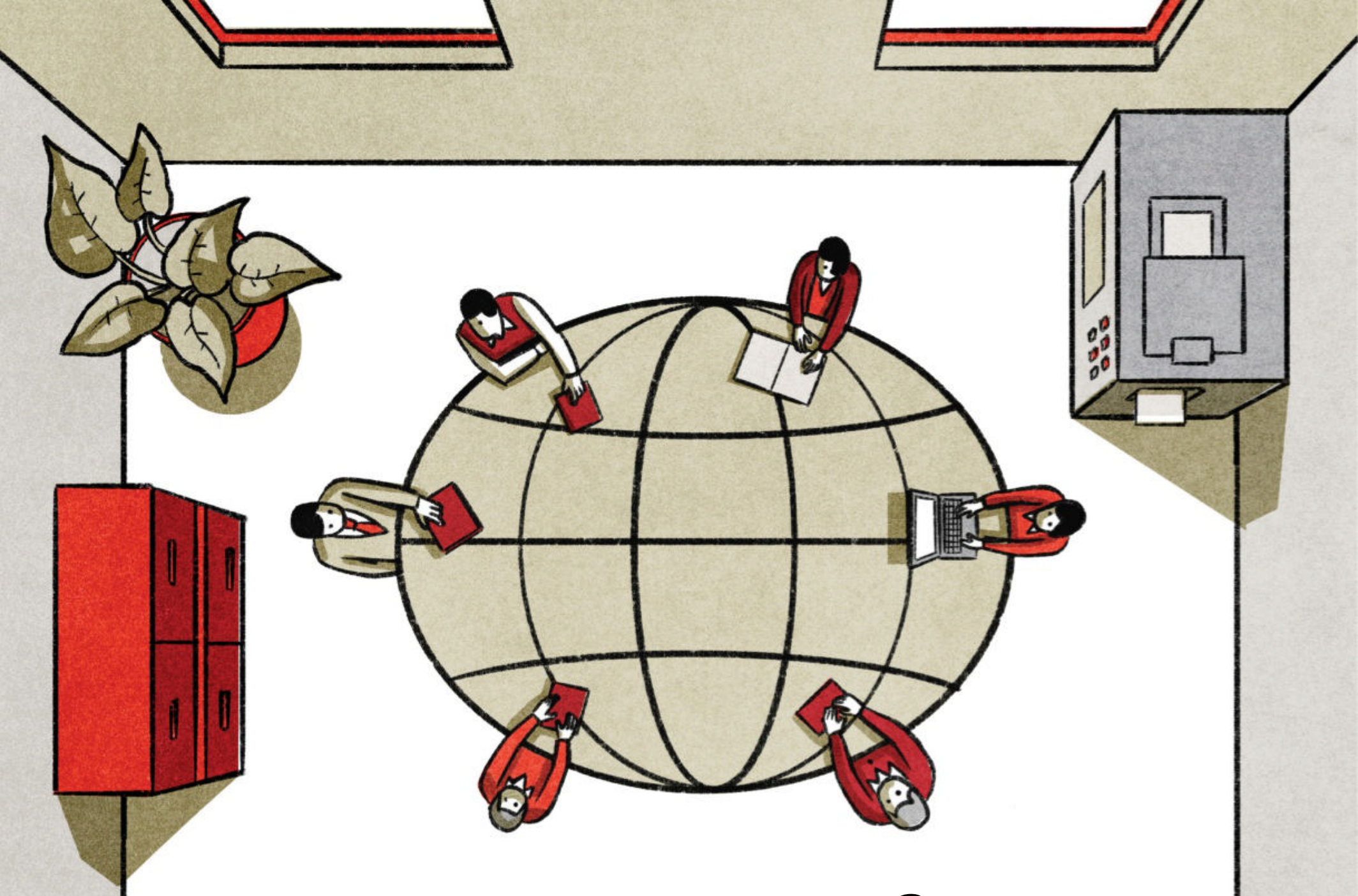
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SUMMER 2023

PAUL SCHARRE,
STANLEY McCHRYSTAL,
ALONDRA NELSON,
AND MORE THINKERS
ON THE DAWN
OF A NEW AGE
IN GEOPOLITICS.

THE SCRAMBLE FOR AI



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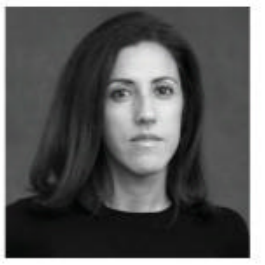
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FROM THE EDITOR

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS SUDDENLY EVERYWHERE. It seems as though no conversation about jobs, education, health care, technology, or politics happens without an inevitable question about how AI could disrupt it all.

This surge in public interest can feel surprising. After all, the concept of AI—the intelligence derived from machines sifting through data—isn't particularly new. But when the AI-powered ChatGPT launched last November, it was a global a-ha moment. The chatbot captured the world's attention precisely because it mimicked conversation with an all-knowing human friend. Now we could see what AI was capable of. It could pass a bar exam and ace the SATs and do the kinds of things generations of humans have spent countless hours slaving over. Advances in computing had finally caught up with science fiction; the possibilities of AI's applications in a range of industries emerged into view.

The areas concerning AI that have so far generated relatively less public attention—relative to, say, jobs—are the ones intersecting with foreign policy. But that's going to change. Cutting-edge AI requires vast amounts of computing power, which involves the most advanced semiconductors. And only a handful of companies and countries have a lock on that market. The great scramble for AI is having a profound impact on global power. In fact, it has for a while. Semiconductors are already shaping wars, cyberattacks, alliances, and more. One of the main areas of disagreement between the United States and China—the independence of a small string of islands with a population of 23 million—is intractable in part because Taiwan is responsible for nearly 90 percent of the world's high-end chips.

Consider this issue—"The Scramble for AI"—an early attempt on the part of the FOREIGN POLICY team to understand how this new technology is shaping geopolitics. In our lead essay, **Paul Scharre** likens the current race for supremacy in AI to the nuclear race several decades ago (Page 35). Now as then, competition will likely mean a sprint to secure the materials that go into computing hardware. It will also create a world of haves and have-nots. Thankfully for FP subscribers, Scharre lays out a strategy for winning—and regulating—this race.

Will the United States stay ahead of China on AI? That might be the wrong question, according to two top scholars at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, **Mariano-Florentino Cuellar** and **Matt Sheehan** (Page 42). They think policy wonks should instead be asking how the United States can reduce the likelihood of catastrophic AI-related accidents in interactions with China.



ORIANA FENWICK ILLUSTRATION

What about warfare? Retired Gen. **Stanley McChrystal**, who led U.S. forces in Afghanistan, pairs up with AI expert **Anshu Roy** to describe how unbelievable amounts of data points are now being fed into machines to predict battlefield outcomes (Page 46). This isn't just hypothetical. Their systems are already in use. The question is how to make sure AI is used in war planning the right way and by the right actors.

This sounds like a good time to discuss ethics and safeguards. **Alondra Nelson**, who served in the first two years of the Biden administration as a top science and technology policymaker, explains how we should think about regulation (Page 50). The rules of the real world should apply online and beyond, she says.

Finally, back to where it all started: ChatGPT. Think you can tell the difference between an essay written by a machine and a smart human student? There's only one way to find out (Page 53). Our analysis will reveal the machine's tells—until the next version of GPT, of course.

Working on this issue, it has often felt as though we're living through a science fiction novel. Down on Washington's National Mall at the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, a new exhibition reveals a kaleidoscope of distinctly Black futures. Don't miss cosmologist **Chanda Prescod-Weinstein**'s review of this landmark show, with an exhilarating conclusion from the author that she is living "an Afrofuturist dream come to life."

The future is well and truly with us.

As ever,



Ravi Agrawal

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Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (center) waves to the crowd after his inauguration in Brasília on Jan. 1.

CARL DE SOUZA/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Brazil Is Ukraine's Best Bet for Peace

By Jorge Heine and Thiago Rodrigues

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the resurgence of nonalignment across the global south has baffled Western officials. The United States and its allies seem confused that many countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America refuse to join the sanctions campaign against Russia or ship weapons to Ukraine. Many Latin American countries' neutrality—and their unwillingness to become de facto belligerents in a European war—has been described as shameful, if not a moral failure. Some critics have even gone so far as to say that the region's overwhelmingly nonaligned stance puts the rules-based international order at risk.

Brazil—Latin America's largest country and diplomatic heavyweight—has come under particular scrutiny for its

position. While the United States has pledged to support Ukraine in the war for "as long as it takes," Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva has pressed for a truce and peaceful solution to the conflict; some frank statements by Lula have generated pushback in Washington. But Brazil remains the country best positioned to act as an honest broker to end the war in Ukraine—precisely because it has refused to take sides.

Lula got to work on his peace proposal quickly after his inauguration in January. During a February visit to Washington, Lula suggested to U.S. President Joe Biden that Brazil create a so-called "peace club" to facilitate talks between Russia and Ukraine. The group might include rising powers such as China, India, Indonesia, or Turkey.

A 30-minute video call between Lula and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in March showed that Brazil means business. Then, later that month, Lula's chief advisor, Celso Amorim, traveled to Moscow, where—breaking all protocol—he was received by Russian President Vladimir Putin. On his return trip to Brazil, Amorim met with a top foreign affairs advisor to French President Emmanuel Macron. Macron has also appeared interested in negotiating an end to the conflict.

The result of Amorim's meeting with Putin is uncertain, with Amorim acknowledging that neither side is ready to sit down for talks. Still, Amorim's personal audience with Putin indicates how seriously Moscow is taking proposals from Brasília.

Lula's April visit to China allowed Brazil to continue to pursue its mediation effort. The two countries released a joint statement agreeing that negotiation is "the only viable way out of the crisis in Ukraine." Though the Chinese peace proposal released in February suggested a total cease-fire without the withdrawal of any Russian troops from Ukraine—a prospect the United States and its allies oppose—Chinese President Xi Jinping's hourlong phone call with Zelensky in late April would seem to indicate a potential breakthrough.

Brazil's foreign policy has so far entailed a delicate balancing act between Western positions and those of Russia. Instead of abstaining from a Feb. 23 vote on a United Nations General Assembly resolution that demanded Russia withdraw from Ukrainian territory—as fellow BRICS members China, India, and South Africa did—Brazil voted in favor. (The BRICS grouping also includes Russia, which voted against the resolution.) Yet Brazil did so only after introducing amendments advocating for a total cease-fire in Ukraine. On other issues, Brasília has sided with Moscow—such as when it voted in favor of a Russian-introduced resolution at the U.N. Security Council to investigate the Baltic Sea attack on the Nord Stream 1 and 2 pipelines last September.

Far from reflecting ambiguity or indecisiveness, Brazil's foreign policy embodies what we call active nonalignment. As Latin America is buffeted by pressures from the great powers to take sides in what is becoming a new cold war between the United States and China, active nonalignment dictates that the region should focus on its own interests and not on the interests of others.

Active nonalignment takes a page from the Non-Aligned Movement that bloomed in the 1960s and '70s, but it is not its equivalent. Founded in 1961, the Non-Aligned Movement provided a platform for postcolonial states grappling with development challenges and fragile sovereignty in a bipolar world. Today's active nonalignment is a foreign-policy doctrine, not a movement. It comes during what the World Bank has referred to as a "wealth shift" from the North Atlantic to the Asia-Pacific and as rising powers from the global south are starting to flex their muscles.

Active nonalignment is not about neutrality or equidistance between great powers. Rather, it is dynamic. This means that on some issues (such as democracy or human rights), Latin American countries may take positions closer to the United States', while on others (such as international trade) they may take positions closer to China's. What countries will not do is side unequivocally with one or the other. This requires highly calibrated diplomacy that evaluates each issue on its merits and then decides how to respond. It is a much more exacting task than doing as one is told on every issue, as aligned countries are expected to do. But it lends developing nations greater leverage in their dealings with great powers.

Active nonalignment also stresses the need for regional cooperation and multilateralism. Brazil has excelled at this in the past, both in Latin America and beyond. In the region, it helped found the Rio Group in the 1980s and the Union of South American Nations in 2008. Within the global south, Brazil has been instrumental in the India-Brazil-South Africa forum launched in 2003, BRICS, and the G-20 of agriculture-exporting nations. The same can be said for entities such as the Africa-Latin America dialogue and the Arab-Latin America dialogue that Lula created during his first two terms in office.

Brazil's mediation efforts in Ukraine have so far faced obstacles. Both warring parties are reluctant to go to the negotiating table, and Western nations have preferred to denounce Brazil's efforts as naive at best and as parroting Russian and Chinese propaganda at worst. These difficulties have led some to recall Brazil's 2010 joint initiative with Turkey to get Iran to limit its nuclear program at the end of Lula's second term in office. Brazil aimed to get the West to partially lift sanctions on Iran if Turkey offered guarantees to safely handle Iran's enriched uranium. But a new round of U.S. sanctions on Iran tanked the deal.

One lesson Western commentators drew from the ordeal was that Brazil had gotten in over its head and should

not get involved in ambitious out-of-area undertakings. But one could easily reach the opposite conclusion. Given the state of Iran's nuclear program today, the United States in 2010 arguably wasted a good opportunity to close a deal that was not perfect but good enough. Instead, Washington sabotaged Brazil's efforts—and now seems to be paying the price. There is something to be said for having previously uninvolved parties act as honest brokers on serious international issues.

The lessons from Brazil's Iran initiative should be applied to today's war in Ukraine. If there is a country that is ideally positioned to act as a broker among north, south, east, and west, it is Brazil, whose strong diplomatic traditions and coalition-building capabilities put it in an unrivaled position to press ahead with bringing peace to Ukraine. These credentials are only bolstered by having an experienced and respected leader such as Lula in office. A key next step should be to bring India (whose minister of external affairs, S. Jaishankar, has played a key role in keeping the G-20 in line this year) into the peace club.

On April 6, Lula made a statement proposing that Ukraine abandon its claim to the Crimean Peninsula, which Russia invaded and annexed in 2014, while Russia would withdraw from the territories it invaded in 2022. (This means Russia could stay in the Donbas and other areas it previously held in eastern Ukraine.) The following day, the spokesperson for Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs responded on Twitter: "There is no legal, political or moral reason why Ukraine should give up even a centimeter of its land. Any mediation efforts to restore peace must be based on respect for the sovereignty and full restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity."

Whether negotiations happen will come down to whether the West has an interest in bringing an end to this tragic war or whether it prefers to fight it as long as is necessary to weaken Russia permanently. Until now, Ukraine's preference has been to not give up any territory. Yet that could prove a costly wager for the country's people—and its economy. Although precise estimates vary, leaked U.S. intelligence documents—the authenticity of which Russia and Ukraine have questioned—estimated that Ukraine had suffered 124,500 to 131,000 casualties from the war as of late February. (Some 189,500 to 223,000 Russians were estimated to have been killed or wounded.)

While both Russia and Ukraine have experienced staggering casualties, Ukraine has endured far more economic harm. In 2022, Ukraine's GDP fell by 29.1 percent; Russia's only dropped by 2.1 percent. Russia has three times the population of Ukraine, yet, in 2021, its economy was 15 times larger. International Monetary Fund projections for 2023 indicate that Russia's economy will perform better than Germany's, with Russian GDP growing by 0.3 percent. In other words: Western sanctions are barely making a dent. One reason for that is Russian trade with the global south is thriving.

A stalemated war—which is where Ukraine may be headed—is ultimately about economic resilience. There, Russia has the upper hand. The Brazilian mediation initiative to bring the conflict to an end soon may be an opportunity to save Ukraine—rather than the naive, misguided undertaking many in the West describe it to be. ■

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LATIN AMERICA BRIEF: *Catherine Osborn in Rio de Janeiro traces the contours of debates that shape the region's future, from geopolitics to business to human rights. Sign up for email newsletters at ForeignPolicy.com/briefings.*



The Era of Neoliberal Foreign Policy Is Over

By Matthew Duss and Ganesh Sitaraman

For communities around the world, especially in the global south, it has been clear for decades that the neoliberal Washington Consensus, which emerged in the 1980s and focused on deregulation, privatization, austerity, and trade liberalization, was a predatory and destructive model.

The unfairness of this system was the message of the global justice movement that protested global north-controlled economic institutions, such as the World Trade Organization, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund, in the 1990s and early 2000s. The same ideas have powered multiple waves of global protest since then, including Occupy Wall Street. The system of neoliberalism inspired outrage for being prone to corruption, unresponsive government, environmental destruction, and elite self-dealing—for creating a safety net for the rich and doling out market discipline for everyone else.

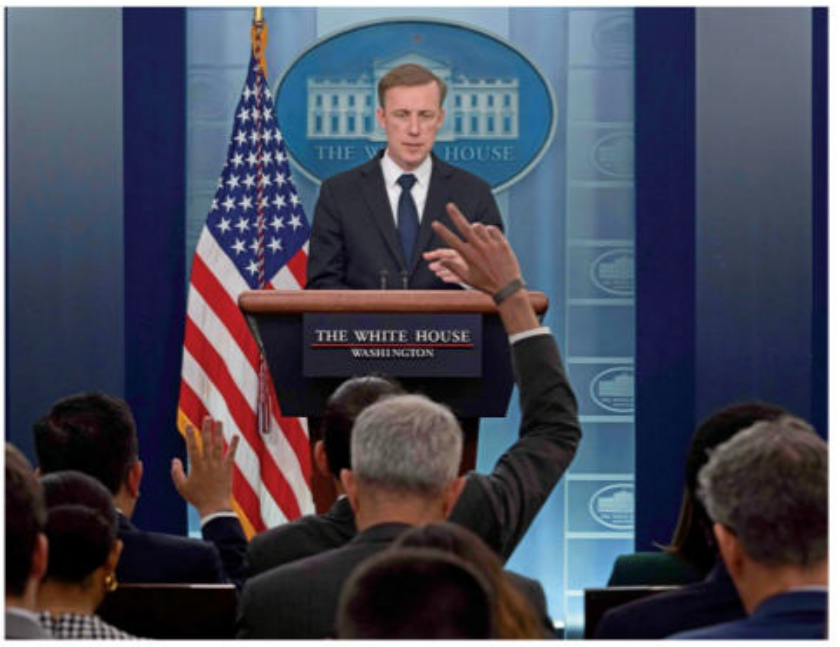
For four decades, the dominant

view in both U.S. parties was a neoliberal approach to economics at home and abroad. But April 27 marked the day that the global justice movement's memo finally landed in Washington. U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan gave the most significant foreign-policy speech thus far by any Biden administration official. It effectively announced that the era of neoliberal foreign policy was over.

In doing so, it harked back to April 2021, when U.S. President Joe Biden marked the first 100 days of his administration with an address to a joint meeting of Congress. While most media attention focused on the early steps his administration had taken on the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic crisis, the clear subtext of the speech was that the U.S. government would be investing in the American people again and heavily.

Sullivan's speech made the subtext of Biden's speech into text. At first glance, it may seem odd that the national security advisor would give a landmark speech on global economic policy, rather than national security policy as traditionally understood. But economic policy and foreign policy have always been interrelated, as have domestic and foreign policy.

Consider Sullivan's description of the Biden administration's approach to trade policy. Sullivan said it was "the wrong question" to focus on how the administration could reduce tariffs further. The right question, he said, was, "How does trade fit into our international economic policy, and what problems is it seeking to solve?" Sullivan's answer focused on creating resilient supply chains, investing in clean energy, creating good jobs, addressing corporate taxation, and tackling corruption. These are, of course, all areas closely related to domestic policy. By breaking down the silos separating economic policy at home and abroad, Sullivan's analysis offers a more realistic foundation for confronting today's challenges.



U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan takes questions at the White House in Washington on April 24.

Sullivan confronted head-on the flawed assumptions that underlay the neoliberal global economic order that had dominated foreign policy for 40 years: "that markets always allocate capital productively and efficiently—no matter what our competitors did, no matter how big our shared challenges grew, and no matter how many guardrails we took down." Sullivan rejected the philosophy that "championed tax cutting and deregulation, privatization over public action, and trade liberalization as an end in itself" and observed that this approach had also failed as a geopolitical strategy. "Economic integration didn't stop China from expanding its military ambitions in the region or stop Russia from invading its democratic neighbors," Sullivan said.

When Sullivan acknowledged "the challenge of inequality and its damage to democracy" generated by the old economic thinking, he was echoing a critique sounded by progressives for decades. The 2016 U.S. presidential election finally provided a wake-up call that the establishment, or at least some of it, could no longer ignore. It has taken a long time for foreign-policy makers in Washington to come around to the idea that markets should be crafted for the benefit of human beings rather than the other way around. Sullivan's speech should therefore be a welcome statement not only in the United States but for much of the world as well.

The hard part for the Biden administration, of course, will be turning this rhetoric into a sustainable reality. Old habits die hard, and many neoliberal commentators and corporate lobbyists remain deeply invested in the old order and its ideology and are thus likely to fight this new, post-neoliberal foreign policy tooth and nail. Indeed, there have already been reports that Big Tech companies are lobbying for a so-called digital trade agreement, which could stymie the emerging cross-partisan movement in the United States to regulate them.

Despite the premature declarations of some commentators, there is no "new Washington consensus"—at least, not yet. There is, instead, a contest for what will be the next paradigm for U.S. foreign policy. Some policymakers, mostly driven by worries about China, wish to organize the world into democratic and authoritarian blocks or to subordinate all other concerns to the imperatives of great-power competition. Others want significant retrenchment and withdrawal from global affairs. Of course, there remain those who cling to every scrap

JIM WATSON/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

of the neoliberal international order.

Still others are focusing on building resilience, at home and with allies and friends, in order to withstand and flourish in the face of climate change, pandemics, cyberconflict, and great-power competition. For progressives, Sullivan's speech should be cause for cautious celebration and a redoubling of effort. Years of persuasion and work have paid off in getting to this point, but the struggle to define the new paradigm is still underway.

In order to move beyond neoliberalism, the Biden administration will have to stand firm against those, both inside and outside the government, who are more attached to an old ideology than to confronting the problems of our time. But it will also have to keep in mind that the choices it makes in confronting today's problems could set in motion the paradigm that defines the next period of U.S. foreign policy. ■

MATTHEW DUSS is a visiting scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. **GANESH SITARAMAN** is the director of the Vanderbilt Policy Accelerator.

U.S. Foreign Policy Must Consider the Global South

By Aude Darnal

As 2023 began, the global south seemed to be in the spotlight. Russia's war in Ukraine had worsened the food crisis in many countries, revealing underlying tensions with Western powers. At the annual United Nations climate summit last November, known as COP27, smaller states such as Barbados led efforts to spur climate financing for vulnerable developing countries. And at a leaders' summit in Washington at the end of the year, the United States courted Africa.

It's clear there is a shift underway that pushes back against the traditional Western leadership of global institutions. Figures within the global south are denouncing inequalities and demanding the reform of these institutions. In January, India hosted a summit that sought to amplify the perspectives and interests of the global south—part of its ambitions as this year's G-20 president. "Most of the global challenges have not been created by the global south. But they affect us more," Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at the summit. "The search for solutions also does not factor in our role or our voice."

Policymakers and researchers in Washington generally take a regional approach to foreign policy. U.S. think tanks acknowledge the benefits of better representation, and programs are increasingly led by experts from the regions they cover. However, there is an urgent need to develop policy spaces that focus on perspectives from the global south in a systematic way—not just in response to major events. Such platforms would facilitate thinking beyond geographic borders and lead to exchanges around common interests and challenges for the global south.

As countries in the global south seek to exert their power on the world stage, U.S. policymakers must adapt their framework to better understand these countries' concerns. That means recognizing that these countries are valuable partners on their own; above all, the United States should avoid putting pressure on them while disregarding their desire for policy independence. For U.S. foreign policy to shift course, lawmakers must be exposed to more perspectives from the global south, rather than developing policies based on misconceptions. Fostering new policy spaces dedicated to the global south's role in the world order should be the first step.

Mainstream policy discussions in the West tend to use the term "global south" as a synonym for developing countries—or what was once called the "Third World"—but the label has a broader meaning. The global south is not strictly delineated by either geography or economics, instead taking into account shared experiences and inequalities rooted in the colonial era and sustained by global capitalism. The term remains imperfect: It is not neutral, and it should not be used to homogenize different geopolitical contexts. Beyond semantics, appreciating the global south means parting ways with a hierarchy among states and approaching Western dominance of the international system more critically.

Discussion of the global south still largely occurs in academic circles; it has become an object of study, with a significant body of literature and a few specific research centers in Western universities. But scholars from countries in the global south remain marginalized in the field, a discrepancy that several studies have highlighted. That underrepresentation reflects inequalities in access to international academic journals—overwhelmingly based in the West—and affects many fields, including international studies, the social and medical sciences, and climate science and ecology.

Beyond academia, few if any Western think tanks have programs dedicated specifically to international politics from the global south's perspective. Today more than ever, many countries in the global south share common interests and challenges. It is thus urgent to enable discussions that are relevant to these countries across regions and that uplift experts and practitioners from these regions. Despite positive efforts to this effect, political marginalization remains a challenge, and the world's most influential leaders may overlook valuable experiences, knowledge, and sources of innovation because of it.



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken meets with Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on the sidelines of the G-20 foreign ministers' meeting in New Delhi on March 2.

Currently, the United States tends to treat its partners in the global south as pawns in great-power politics and exerts pressure to follow U.S. leadership, a strategy based on outdated assumptions—such as the idea that the United States is the only relevant partner for countries in the global south. These approaches impede cooperation and discount solutions that better align with the interests of these countries. Without incorporating new perspectives, the policies most in need of revision will remain the same—risking inefficiency and even running counter to U.S. values and interests.

Creating platforms that take the global south as a starting point could further amplify such perspectives, explore gaps in current debates, and build bridges among experts and activists in the global south—and between them and Western policymakers. To start this shift, U.S. policymakers should first acknowledge unequal access to international decision-making processes as well as the challenges that disproportionately affect the global south. Because the global south itself is flexible and dynamic, policy spaces that take it as a starting point must account for the possibility of shifting geopolitics, too.

Although strengthening regional forums is valuable, more must be done to address the shortcomings of the international institutions that are the site of global governance, from the U.N. Security Council to the International Monetary Fund. It is neither viable nor acceptable that a minority of powerful states use their dominance within the global order to advance their interests and set the agenda for economic rules or security solutions, with negative repercussions falling largely onto the global south.

Russia's war in Ukraine and the differing responses to the crisis have shown that this status quo has reached its limits. The lack of representation for the global south in decision-making leads to ineffective policies toward vulnerable states and a lack of ownership among local actors, from national leaders to grassroots NGOs. For reform to happen, the world's countries must decide on a common agenda—as difficult as that may be. The Biden administration has an opportunity to demonstrate its commitment to such reform and put actions behind its promises to advance this agenda.

An alternative to reform is, of course, to create new institutions, but that poses its own complex challenge, given the need to find consensus on principles, representation, and working methods. The unresolved issue of U.N. Security Council reform shows just how complicated such a process can become, with no less than five proposals for reform. Non-Western multilateral institutions, such as China's Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the New Development Bank established by the BRICS states, have recently flourished, but their reach remains limited compared with traditional international organizations.

The first step toward better integrating perspectives from the global south into international politics is to create spaces that elevate voices from these countries on issues including development, governance, security, trade, and climate change. Such spaces will increase awareness among policymakers in the United States and beyond about the values of the countries that comprise the global south. Ideally, they could shape a U.S. foreign policy geared toward achieving mutual benefits in terms of peace, security, and human prosperity. ■

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America Has Dictated Its Economic Peace Terms to China

By Adam Tooze

How far will mounting tension with China be translated into U.S. economic policy? After a rash of sanctions and overtly discriminatory legislation, with action on U.S. investment

OLIVIER DOULIERY/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

in China pending, and with talk of war increasingly commonplace in the United States, the Biden administration knows that it needs to clarify its economic relations with the country that is the largest U.S. trading partner outside North America.

In the wake of this year's International Monetary Fund and World Bank spring meetings, U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen made her first major statement on economic relations with China since 2021. Judged by the tone, her message was intended to clarify and calm the waters of speculation and debate about motives and intentions. In the current situation, however, it is far from clear whether clarity actually contributes to calm.

The scenario that Yellen rejects is that of the Thucydides Trap, but her reasons for doing so are telling. The idea that "conflict between the United States and China" is "increasingly inevitable" is, she insists, based on a false premise. That outlook was "driven by fears, shared by some Americans, that the United States was in decline. And that China would imminently leapfrog us as the world's top economic power, leading to a clash between nations." The United States would seek military confrontation to forestall the unfavorable shift in the power balance attendant on China's phenomenal economic growth. This makes no sense, Yellen reassures us, because the U.S. economy, thanks to its foundational institutions of freedom, its culture of innovation, and the wise governance of the Biden administration, is in rude health.

"The United States remains the most dynamic and prosperous economy in the world." So, Yellen insists, it has no reason to seek to "stifle China's economic and technological modernization" or pursue a deep decoupling. U.S. economic power, the treasury secretary goes on, is "amplified" by its relationships with "close friends and partners in every region of the world, including the Indo-Pacific." The United States thus has "no reason to fear healthy economic competition with any country." And then Yellen delivers the punchline: "China's economic growth need not be incompatible with U.S. economic leadership."

It is worth lingering over the implication here. Conflict is not inevitable, because the United States is doing well. That, in turn, means that China can grow without threatening U.S. economic leadership. But what if that were not the case? Yellen does not spell out the implication. Yet, in that eventuality, where Yellen leaves little room for doubt, all bets would be off. Even now, even when the Biden administration professes to be confident about U.S. economic prospects, Yellen insists: "As in all of our foreign relations, national security is of paramount importance in our relationship with China."

At one level, this is obvious. No public official will ever say anything else. Security is the basic function of states. But everything depends on the scope of your vision of national security and the level of trust. And if you have to state the priority of national security in foreign relations out loud, you know you have a problem.

For Yellen, it is obvious that the United States is entitled to define its national security at a planetary level. She claims, for instance, that among the country's "most pressing national security concerns" is the defense of Ukraine against Russian aggression. Anyone who falls within U.S. jurisdiction and chooses to ignore U.S. sanctions against Russia will face serious consequences. Likewise, since the United States has decided that it wishes to deny certain technologies to the Chinese military, it will impose sanctions and trade limits accordingly.

So a strong and self-confident United States has no reason to stand in the way of China's economic and technological modernization except in every area that the U.S. national security establishment, the most gigantic in the world, defines as being of essential national interest. For this to be anything other than hypocrisy, you have to imagine that we live in a Goldilocks world in which the technology, industrial capacity, and trade that are relevant to national security are incidental to economic and technological modernization more broadly speaking.

Yellen pays lip service to that Goldilocks vision by insisting that U.S. measures against China will be tightly targeted. But, as everyone knows, those targeted measures have so far included massive efforts to hobble the world leader in 5G technology, Huawei, sanctions against the entire chip supply chain, and the inclusion of most major research universities in China on the U.S. Entity List, which strictly limits trade.

Meanwhile, to add to the perplexity, while Yellen insists that national security sanctions tell us nothing about U.S. intentions toward Chinese growth, she trumpets legislation passed on the Biden administration's watch—notably the CHIPS and Science Act and the Inflation Reduction Act, which feature strong anti-China elements—as contributing significantly to America's own future prosperity.

The upshot is that the United States welcomes China's economic modernization and will refuse the lure of the Thucydides Trap so long as China's



U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen speaks about the U.S.–China economic relationship at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Washington on April 20.

BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

development proceeds along lines that do not infringe on U.S. leadership and national security. And America's attitude will be all the more benign the more successful it is in pursuing its own national prosperity and preeminence precisely in those areas.

It is telling that what seems to be intended as a reasonable and accommodating statement is, in fact, so jarring. China must accept U.S. demarcation of the status quo. If it does not respect the boundaries drawn for it by Washington between harmless prosperity and historically consequential technological development, then it should expect to face massive sanctions.

One must be grateful to Yellen for stating the point so clearly. But how on earth does Washington expect Beijing to respond? China is not Japan or Germany after 1945. In relation to the United States, if the question of leadership is posed, parity is the least that Beijing must aim for. The status quo that Yellen takes for granted clearly cannot be legitimate in the long run. As Beijing has said, it aspires to a fundamental reordering of world affairs such that U.S. talk of leadership is retired forever. Nor is China the only major Asian power to share this view. India's understanding is no different.

In Washington, this meets with blank incomprehension or even a sense of wounded pride. Does China not understand that it owes its growth to a U.S.-led order? To rebel against that order, Yellen says quite openly, is not in China's interest. Yellen is right that conflict between China and the United States is not inevitable. It does depend on the moves that both sides make.

But it is hard to see how her vision, in which the United States arrogates to itself the right to define which trajectory of Chinese economic growth is and is not acceptable, can possibly be a basis for peace. If the United States is still interested in global economic and political order, and it surely should be, it must be open to negotiate peaceful change. Otherwise, it is simply asking for a fight. ■

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China's 'Peace Plan' for Ukraine Isn't About Peace

By Jo Inge Bekkevold

China's peace proposal for Ukraine has come to nothing—if, that is, peace in Ukraine were actually Beijing's main motivation. The 12 points outlined in "China's Position on the Political Settlement of the Ukraine Crisis" are clearly too abstract to be a road map to end the war. Instead, the proposal should be viewed as a piece in China's intensified informational and diplomatic rivalry with the United States. After running its diplomatic activity at reduced speed for almost three years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Beijing has recently launched a number of foreign-policy initiatives. The most prominent of these is its so-called peace proposal for Ukraine, with which China aims to strengthen its position vis-à-vis the United States among three specific audiences: the global south, Europe, and postwar Ukraine.

First, China aims to present itself to the global south as a future peace broker. The very same week in late February that Beijing presented its Ukraine proposal, it also issued a concept paper outlining the Global Security Initiative (GSI). This was no coincidence. First announced in April 2022, the GSI is Chinese President Xi Jinping's master plan for a new global security architecture, which envisions an enhanced role for China in safeguarding world peace—especially in the global south—through dialogue, development, and negotiation. Beijing knows that a number of countries in the global south interpret the Russia-Ukraine war differently from the West, are more inclined to take Russia's side, and call for an early, negotiated end to the war.

Beijing has long emphasized its relationship with the global south. Under Chinese leader Mao Zedong in the 1960s and '70s, China strongly identified with various independence and liberation movements in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. It was with the support of a growing number of decolonized nations that China in 1971 replaced Taiwan in the United Nations and, most importantly, the U.N. Security Council. Today, in the context of Sino-U.S. rivalry, the global south is arguably more important to Beijing than ever before. It is China's largest source of many natural resources, a vital voting base for Beijing's influence in multilateral institutions, and the potential site of military bases if China one day wants to leapfrog the geopolitical constraints of its home region and deploy military power beyond Asia. Conflict resolution is one contribution that Beijing may offer in return, together with investments and development. Even if the Ukraine proposal was dead in the water from the start, it was an important

signal of how Beijing sees its future role.

Peace has been a central theme in official Chinese rhetoric ever since the founding of the People's Republic. In 1954, in the context of the global decolonization movement, China established the "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence" as a guideline for its foreign policy. In 2005, Beijing issued a white paper titled "China's Peaceful Development Road," framing its own rise in the context of world peace and development. Occasionally, Chinese leaders even portray Chinese culture as more peace-loving than others, claiming that China has never started a conflict or war. Needless to say, these are unfounded statements. Not only has China's history been just as violent as Europe's or any other region's, but also nothing in Chinese strategic culture would indicate that China is more or less peaceful than other nations. That said, China has not been at war since it invaded Vietnam in 1979, and it is indeed engaged in peacemaking.

Since 1990, China has dispatched more than 50,000 peacekeepers to nearly 30 U.N. peacekeeping missions. The two largest undertakings are Beijing's anti-piracy task force in the Gulf of Aden and the deployment of an infantry battalion with the United Nations in South Sudan in 2015. In 2019, U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres appointed a Chinese diplomat as his special envoy for Africa's Great Lakes region; Chinese diplomats have also participated in the Oslo Forum, the preeminent annual retreat on conflict mediation. And only a few weeks after China presented its Ukraine proposal, it brokered a deal to resurrect Saudi-Iranian diplomatic ties.

With the exception of the Ukraine plan, these efforts may indeed contribute to peace. But with the return of a great-power rivalry, the United States and China will increasingly view each other's policies through a zero-sum lens—including their peacemaking endeavors.



Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin toast each other at the Kremlin in Moscow on March 21.

PAVEL BYRKIN/SPUTNIK/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Second, China's Ukraine proposal is part of its attempt to reset its relationship with Europe. In February, China's top diplomat, Wang Yi, visited France, Italy, and Hungary, as well as the Munich Security Conference in Germany, where he announced China's Ukraine plan and told European leaders that if China and Europe chose dialogue and cooperation, Cold War-style bloc confrontation would not emerge. Beijing reckons that Washington's shift from engagement toward decoupling and rivalry is a lasting change. Beijing believes that Europe is still in play and knows that Russia, not China, is Europe's top security challenge. Beijing understands that there is no prospect of Europe staying completely neutral. Yet, as Oxford University historian Rana Mitter recently pointed out, China will continue reminding Europeans that "simply following the [U.S.] line is not the only option." Given China's evident loss of the United States, it wants at least to secure its economic relationship with Europe and ensure it can continue cooperating with Europe on various global issues.

Sure, Europe's perception of China has changed dramatically as European policymakers and companies increasingly adopt a more competitive outlook on China—even in security terms. In 2019, the European Union published a strategy paper that labeled China a systemic rival, and in 2021, Brussels decided to put an EU-China investment agreement on ice. Furthermore, European policymakers have taken steps to implement a number of new defensive instruments, including investment screening, trade enforcement, and procurement reciprocity. In addition, NATO's Strategic Concept in 2022 identified China as a potential security challenge for Europe. On top of this, Beijing's continued support of Moscow amid its war in Ukraine has further harmed China's relationship with Europe.

Despite these setbacks, Beijing finds Europe sending mixed signals. European leaders and policymakers talk about competition and rivalry with China, but they also signal strong intentions to continue cooperating. When German Chancellor Olaf Scholz visited China in November 2022 with a heavyweight business delegation, he told then-Chinese Premier Li Keqiang that the two countries were no friends of decoupling. On a visit to Beijing in April, French President Emmanuel Macron pledged to continue to develop a "close and solid global strategic partnership" with China, and other French officials

have argued that the United States and Europe have different views on how to manage China. Moreover, both Scholz and Macron have said they are opposed to a bipolar world, indicating that they foresee an autonomous role for Europe in international affairs. China welcomes French ideas of European strategic autonomy, a message that Chinese leaders and diplomats often convey to their European counterparts.

European leaders should be encouraged to continue talking with Beijing, including about Russia's war in Ukraine. However, they need to have a realistic understanding of what, if anything, Xi is able and willing to do to make Russian President Vladimir Putin stop the war. Some European governments may believe that Beijing can be wooed away from Moscow, but that is not a likely scenario.

Third, China's peace proposal is part of its effort to position itself in the reconstruction of Ukraine after the war. In fact, China's position paper on Ukraine explicitly states that it stands ready to provide assistance and play a role in post-conflict reconstruction. No other country is possibly better equipped than China to assist in rebuilding Ukraine. It has constructed more railways, highways, airports, bridges, pipelines, ports, and high-rise buildings at home and abroad than any other nation over the last two to three decades, giving Chinese companies a unique set of experiences. In addition, China has money. Welcoming Chinese assistance, expertise, and investments must be a tempting proposition for Ukraine. Seen from Beijing, contributing to the reconstruction of Ukraine would strengthen China's overall engagement with Europe.

Kyiv's growing links with the EU, NATO, and Washington, however, present Beijing with a complicating factor. Even if Ukraine's two-year timetable for securing EU membership is overly ambitious, it is planning to closely align with a Europe that is increasingly apprehensive about China's growing might. Many European countries are particularly concerned about Chinese investments in critical infrastructure, and the EU is determined to play a major role in Ukraine's reconstruction and recovery process in order to ensure that it goes hand in hand with reforms preparing Ukraine for membership. Moreover, if Ukraine is no longer willing to be a buffer state between NATO and Russia, Kyiv's only real alternative is to seek some sort of security guarantee from NATO and/or the United States, which could distance Ukraine further from China. Nevertheless, Europe has not closed its door entirely on China. Absent formal NATO membership for Ukraine, which seems unlikely as long as the war with Russia lingers on, Chinese investments could actually be an alternative form of guarantee against Russian aggression. Given Moscow's growing dependence on Beijing's goodwill, Russian military attacks affecting Chinese infrastructure projects in Ukraine would become highly improbable.

In the end, however, China has only limited ability to bring a peaceful solution to the Russia-Ukraine war. The peace plan that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky presented to the G-20 summit in Bali, Indonesia, last November calls for the full restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity and a complete withdrawal of Russian troops. Beijing is not likely to ask Moscow to act accordingly. This is why Washington and most European capitals are skeptical of China's initiative. Indeed, the United States and Ukraine recently cautioned against giving any weight to alternative peace plans that seek a cease-fire without the full withdrawal of invading Russian forces.

But even though its peace initiative will do little to end the Russia-Ukraine war, Beijing had nothing to lose by forwarding a rather vague proposal. On the contrary, it enables Beijing to tap into the disconnect between the West and the global south about the war. And if the proposal also helps China improve its deteriorating relationship with Europe, including by engaging with postwar Ukraine, that would be no small achievement at all. ■

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ASIA & THE PACIFIC

India's G-20 Presidency Is an Ad for Modi

By Manjari Chatterjee Miller and Clare Harris

If you go almost anywhere in New Delhi, you won't be far from a giant poster advertising India's presidency of the G-20—a group of 19 large economies plus the European Union—alongside a portrait of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Switch on the TV or pick up a newspaper, and you'll encounter gushing

media coverage about how India's term in charge of the group represents a moment for the country to showcase its global leadership.

The rotating G-20 presidency is usually symbolic: The presiding country hosts meetings and has the power to set the annual theme. Perhaps unsurprisingly, international media covering this year's G-20 meetings have focused on the obvious tensions between member states. In March, a G-20 foreign ministers' meeting in New Delhi made headlines when disagreements over Russia's war in Ukraine came to the fore. But what the rest of the world seems to have ignored so far is how Modi is shrewdly marketing India's presidency of the group to burnish his personal image and elevate his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

By highlighting India's position as a major power courted by countries including the United States, Modi and his supporters have boosted nationalist sentiments among the country's masses. This is no small public relations feat. The G-20 was meant to be a staid forum little known outside wonky circles; it is now trendy in India. This canny marketing has important ramifications for Modi's chances to return to power in elections next year and for his stature on the global stage—but it is also not without risks. If, as India's G-20 marketing seems to imply, Modi is responsible for the country's increasing clout, then he could also shoulder the blame for a potential failure to deliver on global expectations.

When India assumed the G-20 presidency last December, there was an inkling that the Modi administration's approach would be different from those of other recent group leaders. A hundred monuments around the country, including UNESCO World Heritage sites, were illuminated for an entire week in celebration. Newspapers printed full-page ads to call attention to the start of India's term. The Modi government rebranded the grouping a "People's G-20."

India plans to host more than 200 meetings in 56 cities during its leadership year. (Indonesia, as last year's president, hosted meetings in just over 20 cities.) Along the way, New Delhi will highlight the country's economic successes, including its advancements in solar power and digital health. The convenings will culminate in a summit in November, which commentators have already declared will be India's "most prestigious diplomatic fete" since the Non-Aligned Movement summit in 1983.

New Delhi's G-20 strategy includes an unusual level of public involvement, a fact highlighted in the government's marketing campaign. State and local officials have organized a mass education campaign on India's presidency, initiatives to encourage public participation, and school activities such as quizzes, essay-writing competitions, and debates. The government has asked universities to prepare students to act as local facilitators for foreign delegates in events and celebrations during the year. On one hand, this highly innovative strategy should be applauded. It democratizes an elitist summit, educates the public, and encourages them to understand foreign-policy making—typically the province of a tiny minority in most countries.

On the other hand, Modi's goal isn't just to further the G-20 among the Indian public but also to project himself as the only capable steward of a rising India. India's G-20 strategy positions Modi and the BJP as the vehicle for India's presence on the global stage. This year's logo replaces the zero in G-20 with the image of a globe inside a lotus, using the colors of the Indian flag. Although the Modi administration has said the lotus stands for hope, it is also the symbol of the BJP—prominent on election ballots for any of the approximately 200 million Indian citizens who cannot read. Indian opposition leaders have issued repeated reminders that the G-20 leadership rotates and urged Modi not to frame the presidency as his personal achievement, but the BJP has so far ignored those calls. Ahead of the 2024 national elections, this positioning can help Modi further his claim to be the only person capable of bringing India's major-power status to fruition.

This growing clout is accompanied by growing expectations of India—and by extension, of Modi. There is the tantalizing hope among India's partners that India could leverage its nonaligned position and historic ties with Russia to negotiate diplomatic cooperation between Moscow and other G-20



R.SATISH BABU/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Bharatiya Janata Party supporters await the arrival of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Chennai, India, on April 8.

capitals. Modi has also championed India's role as a connector between the West and global south. In January, India hosted its Voice of Global South Summit, with delegates from 125 developing countries. But when Russia and China refused to sign a G-20 communique that mentioned the ongoing war in Ukraine, it dented the hope of India serving as a mediator between Moscow and Kyiv.

Beyond giving "resonance to the voice of the global south," an initiative that is not new but that India has championed for decades as one of the architects of the Non-Aligned Movement, New Delhi has not laid out the concrete deliverables of a global south grouping. For example, it is bringing the agenda of digital public infrastructure to the G-20 table, but India—which has led in services rather than as a producer of technological goods—has yet to fully prove how it could offer such infrastructure to countries in the global south. The facilitation of cross-border digital payments is one possibility: India established a real-time payments linkage system with Singapore, where citizens of both countries can use India's UPI and Singapore's PayNow to directly send payments each way. Whether India can dramatically and rapidly expand this to other countries eager to establish such linkages remains to be seen.

Further complicating matters is the fact that China, which didn't participate in India's global south summit, also positions itself as a champion of non-Western countries and has stepped up its role beyond infrastructure development and financing. In March, its breakthrough diplomatic mediation between Saudi Arabia and Iran, with negotiations reportedly conducted only in Chinese, Persian, and Arabic to avoid leaks, came as an uneasy surprise to many.

The Modi government is being strategic and intentional about using the G-20 presidency to its advantage. By highlighting India's heritage and economic successes as a rising world power, Modi aims to show that India can speak to the needs of smaller, developing nations as well as major world powers. Simultaneously, through aggressive advertising and by inviting the Indian public to be a part of this usually elite, remote, and even boring event, the government is making the case that India's G-20 presidency and growing influence are a consequence of Modi's strong leadership. The challenge for Modi lies in delivering on heightened expectations. ■

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Japan Needs a Defense Industrial Revolution

By Rena Sasaki

The ongoing Russia-Ukraine war has dispelled the notion that any future military conflict will be fast, clean, or easy. Having watched this war closely, Japan is now rethinking many of its long-standing assumptions about its security environment, particularly concerning its supplies and equipment. Simply put, no country can win a war without enough of the right equipment. This is especially true for countries fighting a prolonged conflict. When it comes to getting the equipment they need, countries have two options: to get it from someone else or make it themselves.

Because it shares land borders with several countries, Ukraine has been able to receive crucial shipments of foreign equipment when its supplies have run low. Japan is an island nation, however, and in a conflict—likely with China or North Korea—its waterways and ports would be cut off early, making it incredibly difficult to replenish its stocks with foreign infusions once fighting were underway. Japan does make some of its own supplies, but having been hindered by self-imposed restrictions, its defense industrial capacity is too low to withstand a rapid increase in demand if a war were to break out, let alone to sustain a prolonged conflict.

Despite its long-standing policy of pacifism, Tokyo now seems to believe that beefing up its military capabilities may be its only path to long-term peace. Last December, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's government released three new national security strategy documents that, among other reforms, included the long-eschewed acquisition of long-range precision strike missiles and a major military spending boost that will give Japan the world's third-biggest military budget, behind only the United States and China. But this influx of cash and capabilities will do little to fix the military's wartime problems if it does not also reform its struggling defense industry.

Japan's 2013 National Security Strategy contained only one mention of defense industry. In 2022, Tokyo determined that strengthening Japan's defense production and technology base was indispensable to its national security.

For much of its postwar history, Japan limited its military capabilities solely to those needed to defend against small-scale invasions. As such, Japan has traditionally kept its defense industry to a minimum and instead relied on foreign suppliers for most of its physical needs. But over time, as Japan's security objectives have shifted, Japanese companies have become responsible for an increasing share of the country's military manufacturing, including ships, ammunition, and much of its land-based equipment.



Members of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force attend a live-fire exercise in Shizuoka prefecture, Japan, on May 28, 2022.

TOMOHIRO OHSUMI/GETTY IMAGES

Despite these developments, Japan's military is still very much reliant on foreign suppliers. Japan procures most of its aviation equipment—including F-35 fighter aircraft, Global Hawk surveillance drones, and V-22 helicopters—from the United States through Foreign Military Sales agreements. This is a problem because, as foreign defense contractors have shifted their business strategy from being hardware suppliers to service providers, foreign products—even from friendly suppliers—increasingly come with strings attached. Parts, maintenance, and repair are now a key part of defense contractors' business models. Under current agreements, Japan is unable to replace parts for equipment it purchased overseas and can only make minor repairs unless it is specifically authorized to do otherwise. When equipment needs repair or replacement, Japan can get the necessary parts and services from the prime contractor, but this process can be cumbersome and slow, even under the best of circumstances—let alone during times of war.

It makes sense, then, that Japan wants to reduce its reliance on foreign equipment. But as it stands, Japan's defense industry isn't up to the task. Defense-related sales account for only 4 percent of the total sales of major Japanese manufacturing companies, and in 2020, defense-related procurement from domestic manufacturers made up less than 1 percent of Japan's total industrial production value. For comparison, roughly 10 percent of the United States' factory output is directed toward defense manufacturing.

Compounding matters is that in Japan, defense manufacturing belongs to the private sector, unlike in countries such as France and Italy, where the state is a predominant stakeholder in most defense companies. In theory, this model promotes innovation through market competition and shifts the burden of risk away from the government. However, it also creates a high barrier to entry for companies hoping to contribute—and a high turnover rate for companies that manage to get in. In the past 20 years, more than 100 companies have exited Japan's defense sector due to a lack of business sustainability. Without reform, many promising companies will continue to withdraw or downsize their operations to invest elsewhere, and Japan will lose out not only on critical short-term production capability but also the expertise needed for long-term growth.

Facing this reality, Japan is considering bringing parts of the defense sector under government control. Kishida's Liberal Democratic Party has pushed the idea of state-owned factories to reduce the investment burden on manufacturers while maintaining the private sector's technical expertise. Under this model, the state would lease factories to manufacturers that possess relevant technology and clearances. The government would then assign the production of essential equipment, such as explosives used in ammunition, to these firms. This program would eliminate the cost of installing and maintaining equipment, which otherwise could be prohibitive to a company's financial success. Tokyo is also preparing legislation that will raise profit margins for its defense equipment contractors up to 15 percent to increase the financial incentives for Japanese companies to stay in this sector. By shouldering some of the costs and risks of private companies, the government can prioritize its policy needs instead of being beholden to market pressures.

This would be a welcome change, but it's not enough on its own. Japan's long-term success will hinge on its ability to not only make its own equipment but also sell it to others. The more Japan's defense industry can expand its market internationally, the less costly it will be to make these products for Japan itself. Increased production leads to lower prices and higher profit margins, which in turn improve the sustainability of these businesses and lower the risk of withdrawal. In other words, what Japan's defense industry really needs is an economy of scale.

Yet again, there are barriers in the way of undertaking the kinds of reforms Japan so desperately needs. Part of this obstacle is cultural, and part is legal.

In the post-World War II era, Japan has developed a strong culture of pacifism; even today, companies that make weapons aren't generally accepted by the

Japanese public. This can create hesitation among defense manufacturers that are concerned about the reputational risk of being labeled merchants of death. The aversion to defense companies may be shifting, though, in light of the Russia-Ukraine war. Public demonstrations against Japan's new National Security Strategy were paltry—the largest gathering attracted only 1,100 people, compared with the estimated 120,000 who attended one such protest against the 2015 Peace and Security Law. Japanese society has traditionally been hesitant to accept the practice of defense equipment transfers, but many in Japan now support strengthening defense capabilities.

Legally speaking, however, under Article 9 of its constitution, Japan is prohibited from conducting or aiding in the act of war, which includes sending troops and weapons to other countries in conflict. In 2014, Tokyo lifted the ban on overseas defense transfers for certain countries, hoping to capitalize on the lucrative export market. Even with this flexibility, Tokyo's hopes for increased defense exports have failed to materialize. To date, Japan has completed only one overseas transfer of finished equipment—a contract with the Philippine Department of National Defense for four warning-and-control radars in the summer of 2020. Japan still has strict rules that prohibit sending weapons to countries in a state of war, but it has been able to provide Ukraine with economic support and nonlethal defense equipment and technology. However, Japan is considering revising these rules, which could potentially allow Japanese companies to export to countries fending off an invasion.

Longer term, if Japan wants to be an attractive supplier, it needs to make its processes easier and more accessible for potential buyers and users of Japanese defense products, particularly developing countries in the Indo-Pacific region. It has made progress toward this goal already: In April, it unveiled a new program to provide "like-minded" countries with nonlethal military aid in an effort to counter China—a major departure from its previous policies that forbade the use of development aid for military purposes other than disaster relief. Tokyo will further increase its accessibility if it passes legislation to establish a fund to provide financial support to Japanese defense manufacturers that support projects in developing countries. To be most impactful, the fund should allow for flexible payment methods to keep costs as low as possible for partner states, which might struggle to make high initial payments.

Alongside these efforts, Japan should also allow for and facilitate military-to-military channels of communication with potential buyers, which is far more efficient than handling deals through civilian government bodies, such as Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. To jump-start this effort, Japan could also consider transferring used equipment to Southeast Asian militaries, as it has already done with the Philippines and Vietnam.

Despite its long-held pacifist hesitations, Tokyo clearly recognizes that defense transfers could be a powerful tool for creating a more stable and desirable security environment in its neighborhood—as it acknowledged in its latest National Security Strategy. Executing these changes, however, will be a tall order. Tokyo will need to act quickly if it wants to make up for lost time. ■

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MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA

U.S. Policies Paved the Way for War in Sudan

By Justin Lynch

Fighting in Sudan began on April 15 after years of tension between the country's two power brokers: Gen. Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, the country's de facto leader and head of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), and Gen. Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, widely known as Hemeti, who leads the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Running street battles started in Khartoum and spread across the country. Residents reported low-flying airplanes strafing the ground as well as horrendous human rights violations.

Fighting in Darfur resulted in the deaths of aid workers with the World Food Programme. United Nations and NGO compounds were invaded and looted across the country. The European Union's ambassador to Khartoum was assaulted in his home.

Sudan now faces a state collapse similar to Yemen's.

What may emerge out of a civil war is a conflict that also sucks in the entire region and some global powers. Egyptian soldiers who were training with the

SAF were arrested by the RSF in the early hours of the conflict. Diplomats fear that Cairo will provide support to the SAF.

The United Arab Emirates has been a key ally for Hemeti during the former's war in Libya and Yemen. The UAE also benefits from financial ties to Hemeti's businesses. Global Witness reports that the UAE has also been a key supplier of military equipment to the RSF. Russian Wagner Group mercenaries trained RSF troops and had officials stationed inside some of their bases.

Perhaps the only powers that have a limited ability to shape events in Sudan are the United States and its Western allies. To try to prevent the bleak outlook of state disintegration in Sudan, the U.S. government is working with Arab states—namely Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE—but these U.S. allies are on opposing sides in Sudan. A return to the pre-April 15 status quo is becoming increasingly unlikely as the fighting continues. The absence of U.S. influence comes just four years after a high point for Washington's hopes in Sudan.

Months of protests in early 2019 led to a military coup against former dictator Omar al-Bashir. It appeared that three decades of U.S. policy to support democracy could finally bear fruit. But the United States and other Western nations pressured civilian protesters and the military to form a transitional government. The eventual transitional constitution meant that elections were scheduled to take place in 2022.

If there was a moment when hope for democracy was lost in Sudan, it was when this transitional constitution was agreed to. The military was allowed to run the country for the first part of the transition. "We still have not achieved what we are fighting for," Sara Abdelgalil, then a spokesperson for the Sudanese Professionals Association, which helped organize the protests, told FOREIGN POLICY in 2019. "Omar al-Bashir is not there, but the regime itself is still there. Objective one has not been achieved. Objective two has not been achieved, which is a civilian government. It's like having a diversion in the middle of your journey."

Burhan was the head of state and was trusted with following through on his promise of democracy.

Immediately when the transitional period began, it was apparent that Western hopes for democracy were far-fetched.

I interviewed the new civilian prime minister, Abdalla Hamdok, in a house that was given to him by a prominent Sudanese family because Burhan and the military initially refused to even provide him with a place to stay. The core elements of Sudan's protest movement in 2019, Sudan's labor unions, lost power due to infighting. Civilian political parties squabbled over power. Reforms that Hamdok wanted to make were blocked by Burhan and Hemeti. The illusion of any civilian authority ended in 2021, when Hamdok was removed in a military coup. The military's promise to hand over power to civilians proved hollow. The U.S.-backed transition revealed itself as fundamentally flawed.

Perhaps the greatest example of U.S. delusions was Washington's insistence on calling Sudan's transition "civilian-led." There was nothing about Sudan's transition that was civilian-led. The 2019 transitional constitution laid out that the military would lead for the first 21 months of the transition, followed by civilians for the next 18 months.

Although Hamdok was a civilian prime minister, it was a mostly powerless job. Still, the U.S. government insisted on this phrase, even when the military handover date to civilians was repeatedly delayed. U.S. officials told me that they knew the term was more aspirational than descriptive. But the linguistic acrobatics Washington employed suggested officials believed that they could simply call Sudan a democracy and it would become one.

It's not clear if the U.S. or Western governments could have prevented the 2021 coup against Hamdok. The U.S.-backed transitional constitution was a bad deal. However, the ensuing U.S. and Western policies in Sudan directly contributed to the latest violence. It is a story of Western peacebuilding and its limits.

Sudan's feuding generals bear primary responsibility for the current fighting in Sudan. But the precipitating event of the current war in Sudan was a reconciliation agreement and security sector reform plan that was pushed by the United States and the U.N. mission in Sudan. Immediately after the coup against Hamdok, the United States and the U.N. revitalized the plan. It meant returning to a version of the failed 2019 constitution and trusting the military leaders to keep their promises.



MAHMOUD HJAJ/ANADOLU AGENCY VIA GETTY IMAGES

Abdel Fattah al-Burhan (center), the head of the Sudanese Armed Forces and de facto leader of Sudan, and Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (left), his deputy and a rival general, attend a ceremony in Khartoum, Sudan, on Dec. 5, 2022.

The basic idea of the security sector reform was to unify the SAF and RSF into a single army. It is difficult to estimate each force's size. The SAF has around 100,000 soldiers, while the RSF has a smaller standing army of anywhere between 30,000 and 50,000 fighters but a large reserve force because it can mobilize tribal allies.

Negotiations were held for months trying to get the two sides to agree on a path forward. The problem was that neither Burhan nor Hemeti wanted to give up the power that he'd accrued. The plan became a pressure cooker. "It became a real shit show with all the participants being real amateurs," a Western diplomat in Khartoum told me after one of the negotiation workshops between the SAF and RSF. "Diplomats here and headquarters think one-dimensionally."

The outcome that we see of the plan was predictable, in part because it is a repeat of history. The peacemaking effort was a reproduction of agreements that were made in South Sudan in 2013 and 2016. Those also led to civil wars.

In his excellent book *When Peace Kills Politics*, Sharath Srinivasan details how international peacemaking in Sudan and South Sudan has contributed to these types of civil wars. "[P]eacemaking—because of how its ways of working inevitably collide with the politics of a civil war—can risk reproducing logics of violence," he writes.

The security sector reform in Sudan, as it has elsewhere, created a competition that incentivized Hemeti and Burhan to build up their forces. It also meant that both men would have to be placed under civilian control, which was in neither's interest. The generals publicly committed to reform and democracy, but it seems the only people who believed them were U.S. and U.N. officials.

Diplomats have told me that they face limited tools to stop the violence in Sudan. But once the current crisis is over, there needs to be a reckoning that U.S. and Western policy has not only failed to bring about democracy but contributed to Sudan's collapse.

It's not clear if Washington is ready. Once fighting began on April 15, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken repeated U.S. delusions on Sudan: "This is a real opportunity to finally carry forward the civilian-led transition." ■

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Incrementalism Is Throttling U.S. Support for Ukraine

By Nadia Schadlow

At the G-7 summit in May, allied leaders announced their intention to train Ukrainian pilots on F-16 fighter jets. At the same time, they noted that it would take at least 18 months for the training and made no firm commitments on delivery of the planes themselves. Just four months earlier, in January, Washington had announced that it would send 31 M1 Abrams tanks to Ukraine but said it would take at least a year before the tanks were delivered. At the time, one official clarified to the *Washington Post* that the tanks were "probably not for the near fight." Both cases are examples of Ukraine's allies upping the ante with Russia without achieving tangible operational effects. This gives Moscow time to adapt and plan, degrading the potential benefits of the new weapons to Ukraine. Moreover, in a year or more, the war could be over or look very different.

These decision lags illustrate the persistent problem of incrementalism, which has characterized the U.S. and allied effort toward Ukraine—with ad hoc, one-off decisions and lagging implementation undermining the strategic effects of this assistance.

A successful military campaign is guided by an overall strategy and by what the U.S. military calls "mission analysis." Leaders define the desired end state, analyze the opponent and other operational factors, and develop a plan that specifies the forces, weapons systems, materiel, and logistics needed to succeed. Adjustments are made—war is unpredictable—but mission analysis offers a way to provide an answer to the question of what it takes to achieve the end state.

What the United States has done in Ukraine departs from that template. Since Russia's invasion in February 2022, U.S. President Joe Biden has used his presidential drawdown authority—which purportedly allows for the faster delivery of defense equipment and services from the U.S. Defense Department to foreign countries in the event of emergencies—at least 36 times. The fact that the administration has used this authority so many times suggests that the United States could do better in thinking through—upfront—

the equipment required to achieve its objectives. It also suggests that the administration has no clear and articulable strategic objective.

Incrementalism has plagued Washington's Ukraine policy for a long time. After Russian President Vladimir Putin's 2014 annexation of Crimea, the Obama administration refused to provide arms to Ukraine, instead opting to provide nonlethal equipment, such as night vision goggles and training. The Trump administration began to send around 200 Javelin anti-tank weapons to Ukraine in 2018. Although then-U.S. President Donald Trump threatened to hold off on this aid, it was released a few months later.

By June 2021, Russia was massing forces along Ukraine's border. Yet the Biden administration halted a military aid package to Ukraine that included lethal weapons, such as short-range and anti-tank weapons, purportedly due to an impending meeting between Biden and Putin. It was not until after the war began that Biden authorized the delivery of lethal aid.

Once lethal aid was restarted after the invasion, it was provided in ad hoc, incremental steps rather than in support of a plan based on mission analysis. In just the eight months between August 2021 and April 2022, the United States completed six drawdowns of equipment from Pentagon inventories for Ukraine.

Two months after the invasion, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky continued to request tanks, missile defenses, and anti-ship weapons. And some eight months after the invasion, by the fall of 2022, Zelensky continued to request more "air and missile defenses from the West." The United States and its NATO allies staggered their assistance throughout this period, with Javelin missiles, Stinger air defense systems, laser-guided rocket systems, and eventually High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems all arriving at different times in the fall of 2022. By late fall, the United States was at its 25th presidential drawdown package, which committed Hawk surface-to-air missiles and added more Stingers. Yet these missiles had been in U.S. stockpiles all along.



Members of Ukraine's 80th Air Assault Brigade fire rockets toward Russian positions on the front line near Bakhmut, Ukraine, on April 18.

ANATOLII STEPANOV/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Although some might rationalize the Biden administration's approach by arguing that it reduces the risk of Russian escalation, the opposite is likely true. Russia, from the outset of the war, was already throwing all of its available conventional forces at Ukraine. A support program driven by sound mission analysis and campaign planning would checkmate Russia's attack, giving Moscow a choice between losing and coming to terms with Kyiv. Fears of nuclear escalation were exaggerated, principally because few suitable targets existed in Ukraine for such weapons—the costs of such escalation exceeded potential benefits. Ukrainian military strength and Western resolve decrease, rather than increase, the risk of escalation.

Incrementalism is compounded by the U.S. government's inability to move fast—a problem that existed well before Biden took office. As former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates puts it in his book *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War*, during the Iraq War he had to "[wage] war on the Pentagon" to get mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles to troops quickly in Iraq.

"The very size and structure of the [Defense Department] assured ponderousness, if not paralysis, because so many different organizations had to be involved in even the smallest decisions," Gates writes. "The idea of speed and agility to support current combat operations was totally foreign to the building."

The Pentagon has yet to institutionalize the Gates mindset. Despite emergency authorities, the U.S. government is rarely able to act quickly.

Time—and time lag—must be a key input in war planning and in arming allies. The Biden administration needs to engage in an emergency troubleshooting exercise to figure out how to overcome the sclerotic performance that is compromising U.S. support for Ukraine's war effort and costing Ukrainian lives. This requires doing mission analysis upfront and breaking down the barriers to rapid implementation, even if that means tapping U.S. prepositioned stocks, weapons from National Guard units, or emergency ramp-ups of production.

No matter your views on Ukraine,

incrementalism increases the chances of escalation and, at the same time, makes strategic defeat more likely. ■

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How to Benchmark Victory in Ukraine

By Liana Fix

When U.S. President George W. Bush gave his "mission accomplished" speech aboard the USS *Abraham Lincoln* only six weeks into the Iraq War in 2003, it quickly became a cautionary tale against declaring victory in an unpredictable war. Washington didn't withdraw most of its forces until eight years later, and the pullout resembled defeat much more than victory.

Twenty years later in Ukraine, the risk is not declaring victory prematurely—but not defining victory at all.

For almost a year and a half, Ukraine's Western supporters have provided it with the weapons, munitions, training, funds, and political support to push back Russian invading forces. With this help, Ukraine has been able to regain about half the territory Russia has occupied since Feb. 24, 2022. It is a remarkable and undeniable success.

But Ukraine's supporters have shied away from defining the outcome they aim to achieve with their aid. Is it for Ukraine to liberate its entire territory, including Crimea, by military force? Is it to push Russia back to the line that existed before Feb. 24, 2022, restoring a status quo ante that leaves Russia in control of Crimea and the Donbas? Is it to enable a major Ukrainian push on the battlefield, followed by a cease-fire and negotiations that somehow—though it is unclear how—induce Russia to withdraw from Ukraine?

Western ambiguity—leaving open what victory means—made sense in the early phase of the war. With a wide range of possible outcomes, ambiguity allowed for a flexible framing of victory and defeat: Even if Russia were successful on the battlefield, its success could still be framed as an overall strategic defeat that isolates it in the eyes of the world. Ambiguity was also a useful way to avoid telegraphing any limitations of Western support to Moscow or demoralizing Ukrainian forces with unattainable goals or timelines. Hence the frequent Western talking point of supporting Kyiv with whatever it takes for as long as it takes—which sounds forceful enough, until you ask what "it" is.

In the war's second year, the situation is much less uncertain. Although Ukraine is still targeted by Russian missiles and front-line battles remain unimaginably brutal, the potential trajectories of the war have narrowed. Kyiv will not fall, and Ukraine will not be overrun by the Russian army. Ukraine is also unlikely to lose the territory it has already liberated, as Russia's unsuccessful winter offensive made clear. But even if there is greater clarity about battlefield contingencies, there is still no strategic clarity about what victory means.

Western publics are getting contradictory signals from their leaders on this question. Most often, Western officials say it is up to the Ukrainians to define what victory means. In reality, however, the most important factors for achieving victory are the type, quantity, and arrival date of Western weapons and munitions in Ukraine, which give the West a major influence on the outcome. And whenever Ukraine brings up its own definition of victory—a return to Ukraine's lawful 1991 borders, including Crimea, by force, if necessary—many Western leaders (apart from Central and Eastern Europeans) refuse to wholly commit to this outcome, presumably out of concern that a fight over Crimea, which Russia illegally annexed in 2014, could lead Moscow to escalate in some unpredictable way.

This creates a dangerous political vacuum in the midst of a war that has been, to a great extent, fought by narratives. If Ukraine's supporters fail to benchmark victory, Russia will. If the West focuses on its own fears of escalation, the Kremlin will fan those fears with renewed threats of nuclear war. Not defining victory—and, in turn, not defining Russian defeat—allows Russia to negate Ukraine's successes and to frame a Ukrainian victory as unattainable. Without a clear aim, Western publics will increasingly perceive the war as a protracted, indeterminate struggle, ultimately undermining Ukraine's moral high ground and the West's own morale. Ukraine and the West therefore need to provide a benchmark for victory in this stage of the war.

Continued Western ambiguity also contributes to a polarized debate between advocates for quick negotiations and those who support a full military victory for Ukraine. The sobering reality is that neither of these—early negotiations or complete liberation—is the most probable scenario. Negotiations would very likely lead to a temporary cease-fire instead of a sustainable peace, pausing a war that Russian President Vladimir Putin can resume at any time. He has committed to subjugating Ukraine as his life's legacy. He has enshrined into law the annexation of four regions of Ukraine. It is folly to believe that Putin will let Ukraine be. He may not have started this war primarily for domestic power purposes, but keeping Russia in a constant war-like, half-mobilized state has turned into his best chance to stay in power.



A Ukrainian soldier makes the victory sign as he moves toward the front-line city of Bakhmut on March 11.

ARIS MESSINIS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Reassured by Chinese President Xi Jinping that China supports his regime and fight against the West, Putin does not need an offramp or exit strategy.

At the same time, the West's willingness and ability to continue providing the current massive flow of military support to Ukraine are not indefinite. Right now, Western countries are arming Ukraine to bring it into the best possible position for a renewed offensive. After that, contentious negotiations in the U.S. Congress over future support for Ukraine and a U.S. presidential primary season await. Meanwhile, Europe could face another winter with high energy prices. Support for Ukraine will not stop, but the peak of Western weapons deliveries may have been reached. That means 2023 is Ukraine's best chance to get as far as it can. But even under these favorable circumstances, a full military victory—meaning the liberation of all of Ukraine's territory—is a tall order for this year. More likely, and perhaps the best-case scenario, is a successful breakup of the land bridge between Russia and Crimea, isolating Russian forces in the south and making their position there untenable.

To right-size both overly optimistic and overly pessimistic expectations, Ukraine and the West should benchmark an interim victory that is realistic to achieve this year. Instead of giving ambiguous answers to the question of what victory means, Western leaders should state publicly that their aim for this year is a return at least to the lines before 2022 and that they will supply Ukraine with everything needed to reach this objective. While the overall goal remains restoring Ukraine's full territorial integrity, setting a clear benchmark for an interim victory would provide an anchor point for Western publics in the strategic communication of this war. It fills the discursive vacuum with a specific goal that Western publics can support and counters Russia's strategy of framing Ukrainian victory as unattainable.

In NATO parlance, this interim victory should be the floor, not the ceiling. If Ukraine can advance even further, that would be a huge and welcome success. If not, the pre-2022 lines are an important preliminary milestone. It would turn back the clock to Feb. 23, 2022, and apply the weapon of futility against Russia itself. With a restoration of the status quo ante, Russian sacrifices since the start of the war would appear entirely in vain. The total loss of all territories gained at such a heavy cost may plant the seeds of doubt in the minds of Russia's soldiers, public, and elites: What was this war for if we are now back to where we started? In many unsuccessful wars of the past—including Russia's in Afghanistan and the United States' in Iraq—a pervasive and demoralizing sense of futility turned into a powerful enemy at home and on the battlefield. The constant dripping of doubt can wear away any great power.

For Ukraine and its supporters, of course, a return to the pre-2022 lines is a less satisfactory outcome than Russia's full military defeat or a negotiated withdrawal. However, it is a useful, realistic, and clear-to-communicate benchmark. Defining an interim victory this way will help bolster public support in the West and undermine Putin's objectives at home. It will not be possible to say "mission accomplished" with this outcome. But an interim victory is better than not defining any victory at all. ■

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Why Neutrality Is Obsolete in the 21st Century

By Franz-Stefan Gady

The Italian diplomat Niccolò Machiavelli had his doubts about the wisdom of a state remaining neutral, as it usually risks alienating both sides in a conflict. "He who conquers does not want doubtful friends who will not aid him in the

time of trial," Machiavelli wrote in his 16th-century strategy manual, *The Prince*. "And he who loses will not harbor you because you did not willingly, sword in hand, court his fate."

Following Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, two formerly neutral European states—Finland and Sweden—have heeded Machiavelli's advice. In April, Finland joined NATO as its 31st member, and neighboring Sweden will soon follow. Europe's four remaining traditional neutrals—Austria, Ireland, Malta, and Switzerland—are sticking to their neutrality for now. Ireland, which has de facto disarmed, claims to be militarily neutral if not politically so; still, the country is training some Ukrainian soldiers and has been cozying up to NATO since the outbreak of the war. Austria and Malta likewise insist they are militarily neutral but "not neutral on values." Switzerland is the most uncompromising of the bunch, remaining both politically and militarily neutral, going as far as refusing to grant other countries permission to re-export Swiss-made weapons to Ukraine. Critics argue that Switzerland's stance actively undermines Ukraine's defense. Neutrality, like pacifism, leaves the victim of aggression to its fate.

Yet, out of Europe's four remaining neutrals, only Switzerland maintains robust conventional defenses capable of fielding a credible military deterrent against a potential aggressor. Austria, Ireland, and Malta, on the other hand, have effectively outsourced their territorial defense to NATO, with the implicit expectation that their neighbors will come to their aid when needed. This enabled each of the three to spend less than 1 percent of GDP on defense before the Russian invasion. Although the three countries have announced spending increases, these will not be enough to boost military capabilities to a level where they could defend themselves in a high-intensity conflict anytime soon.

How long can these neutrality doctrines survive in the 21st century without becoming a security risk for the states practicing them? Maintaining neutrality will be more difficult for two main reasons. First, the existence of European neutrals is much less useful to non-neutrals today than it was during the Cold War, when it served the purposes of both East and West. Not only will great powers be less inclined to respect neutrality in the future. The European Union, too, will increasingly find its neutral members an obstacle as the bloc tries to develop a common security and defense policy. Second, at the military level, 21st-century warfare increasingly requires highly integrated, sophisticated, and interoperable capabilities that small, neutral powers simply cannot afford on their own.

Proponents of neutrality argue that as long as neutral states remain useful to larger powers or alliances, they have little to fear. Historically, they have been useful as buffer states or diplomatic go-betweens. A good example is Austria during the Cold War: For the Soviets, a neutral Austria was useful because it physically separated NATO allies Italy and West Germany. A weak Austria also offered the Soviets a potential route for a rapid flanking attack on NATO forces in southern Germany. Similarly for NATO, Austria's status as a buffer state gave the alliance the option of a forward defense on Austrian territory. Austria's official Cold War neutrality was very profitable for Vienna, which turned itself into a diplomatic hub by enticing international organizations—including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, OPEC, and various United Nations bodies—to establish their headquarters there.

However, the end of the Cold War also ended Austria's usefulness as a buffer state. Russia's invasions of Ukraine in 2014 and 2022 show that staying out of alliances, as Ukraine did, offers no protection from a revisionist great power. What's more, the idea that neutral powers can be successful conveyors and mediators between hostile powers is generally not borne out by history. Neutrality is no precondition to facilitating a postwar settlement; one of the most successful cases of peace-brokering in European history was the Congress of Vienna, where the hosting Austrian Empire was clearly on the side of the Napoleonic Wars' victors. Similarly, the United States' and France's intervention in the Balkan Wars did not keep them from supervising negotiations to end these conflicts in Dayton, Ohio, in 1995 and Rambouillet, France, in 1999. Nor is a neutral state necessarily a better location for multilateral diplomacy; the United Nations' headquarters in New York are at least as important a diplomacy hub as the organization's offices in Vienna and Geneva. The latter cities are good diplomatic hubs not because of their neutral status but because they have easily accessible airports, plenty of five-star hotels, and excellent conference infrastructure.

Today, Austrian, Irish, and Maltese neutrality contributes to the EU remaining a weak player in security and defense. There are, of course, many other reasons why the EU is unlikely to become a European alternative to (or complement of) NATO. Carnegie fellow Sophia Besch has named some of them: "the absence of a common European threat perception, a lack of financial resources, a shortage of creative policy proposals, successive U.S. governments poised to blockade the EU's ambitions, and member states unwilling to delegate power over defense to the supranational level." But neutral members contribute to this weakness, not least because the so-called Irish clause of the EU's Lisbon Treaty effectively gives them an opt-out when it comes to providing military support to a fellow EU member state under attack. Some EU members' neutrality can also be readily exploited by countries such as Russia to drive wedges



People watch the ceremonial raising of the Finnish flag at NATO headquarters in Brussels on April 4.

JOHN THYS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

into the bloc via influence campaigns. Neutrality also leads to fissures in support for Ukraine: Austria, Ireland, and Malta have abstained from decisions to arm Ukraine under the European Peace Facility financing instrument. This is weakening the EU's response to Russia's invasion.

Military neutrality also makes less and less practical sense when one considers the future of warfare. Western armed forces are adopting a doctrine of multidomain operations, which require the coordinated use of military capabilities in multiple domains such as air, sea, land, space, and cyberspace—and the ability of allied countries to do so jointly, smoothly, and quickly. The fuel for these highly complex military operations is intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and other types of data collection using multiple sources, including satellites, uncrewed aerial vehicles, and cyberspace operations, which feed into command, control, and communications to create a sophisticated picture of the battlespace or overall strategic environment. Given the relatively limited capabilities of individual European militaries, sharing technologies and data across allied militaries will be key to future military effectiveness. Neutral countries would be largely cut out of these arrangements. Classification issues and a general lack of trust make it difficult for NATO members to share sensitive real-time tactical data with Austria or Ireland in a military crisis. Even short of crisis, neutrality already makes it difficult for some NATO member states to share data with these countries on a permanent basis—for example, on cyberthreats.

It's an open secret that Austria and Ireland are de facto NATO militaries, having adopted the bloc's operational concepts, doctrines, procedures, and munitions. But maintaining interoperability with NATO partners will become increasingly challenging as sensitive data will not be shared outside the alliance. In addition, Europe's neutrals would not be permitted to participate in large-scale military exercises focused on multidomain operations in a high-intensity war. In other words, advanced training will become extremely difficult for Austria and Ireland.

Finally, their status will prevent Europe's neutrals from pooling and sharing military capabilities at the operational level, where it matters most in a military crisis. Within NATO, there are already discussions about various countries specializing in different capabilities. One country might provide offensive cyber-capabilities, another could provide advanced electronic warfare capabilities, and a third could specialize in air defense. Neutral countries would be left out of these arrangements—and would need to invest in capabilities across all domains to mount a tenable defense. Austria, for example, would have to triple its defense spending—to 3 percent of GDP—or more for decades to come, an unlikely proposition.

From both diplomatic and military perspectives, the Austrian, Irish, and Maltese governments' case to remain neutral is weak—unlike Switzerland's, since the Swiss maintain an effective military. For the former countries, neutrality could endanger their military security should the United States or NATO not intervene in times of crisis.

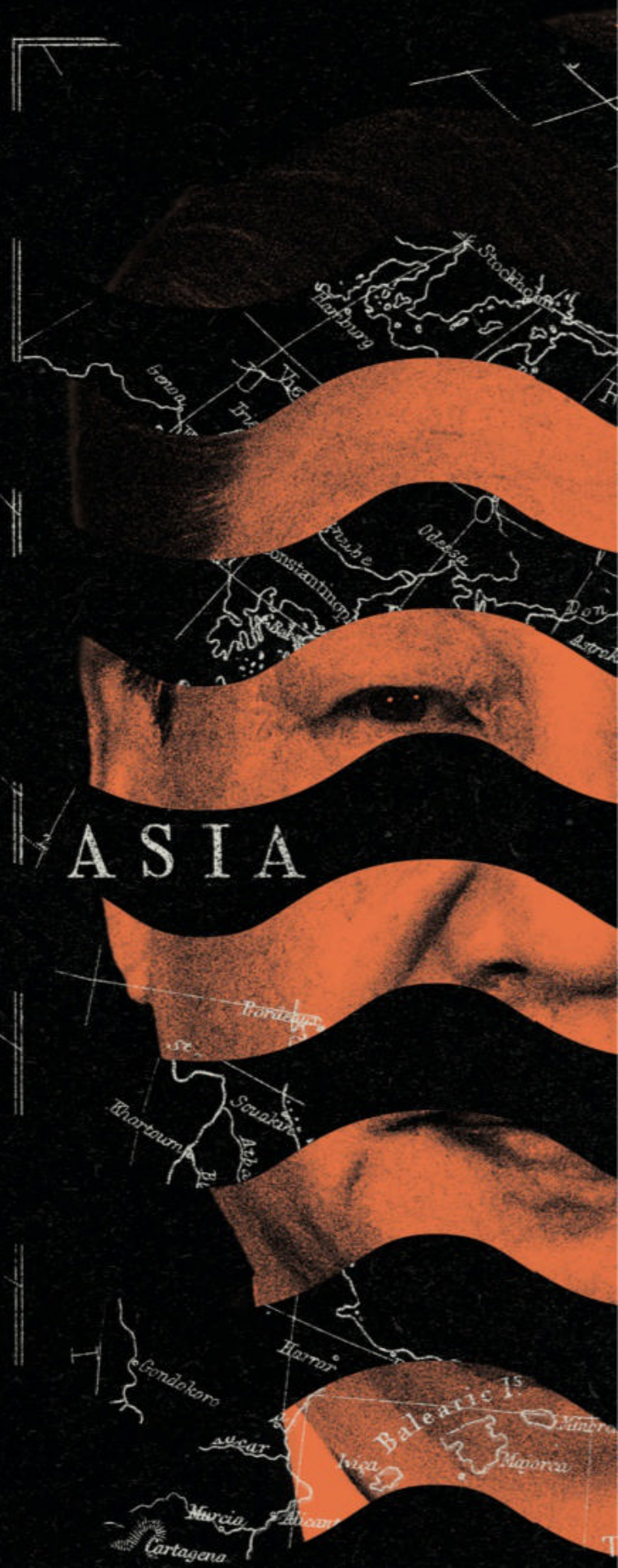
Naturally, this security free-riding is breeding resentment among nonneutrals, most of which spend a significantly higher share of GDP on defense or plan to do so. Austria, Ireland, and Malta expect others to fight on their behalf, while they are unwilling to do the same for their neighbors. For Europe's last neutrals, it's time for a genuine, open-minded discussion about the diplomatic and military utility of neutrality in the 21st century. ■

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FORTRESS EURASIA

China, Russia, and their autocratic friends are leading another epic clash over the world's largest landmass.

BY HAL BRANDS



THE WAR IN UKRAINE may have many positive outcomes: a Russia bled white by its own aggression, a United States that has rediscovered the centrality of its power and leadership, a democratic community that has been unified and energized for the dangerous years ahead. There will also be one very ominous outcome: the rise of a coalition of Eurasian autocracies linked by geographic proximity to one another and geopolitical hostility to the West. As Russian President Vladimir Putin's folly rallies the advanced democracies, it hastens the construction of a Fortress Eurasia, manned by the free world's enemies.

Revisionist autocracies—China, Russia, Iran, and, to a lesser degree, North Korea—aren't simply pushing for power in their respective regions. They are forming interlocking strategic partnerships across the world's largest landmass, and they are fostering trade and transportation networks beyond the reach of the U.S. dollar and the

Illustration by JOAN WONG


SOUTHERN
EUROPE.
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Sardinia
Cagliari
Candia

U.S. Navy. This isn't, yet, a full-blown alliance of autocracies. It is, however, a bloc of adversaries more cohesive and dangerous than anything the United States has faced in decades.

All the great conflicts of the modern era have been contests over Eurasia, where dueling coalitions have clashed for dominance of that supercontinent and its surrounding oceans. Indeed, the American Century has been the Eurasian Century: Washington's vital task as a superpower has been keeping the world in balance by keeping Eurasia divided. Now the United States is again leading a coalition of democratic allies on Eurasia's margins against a group of centrally located rivals—while crucial swing states maneuver for advantage.

Countries such as Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and India have a critical role in this era of rivalry, thanks to the geography they occupy and the clout they wield. In many cases, these powers are determined to play both sides. Containing the Eurasian challenge will involve strengthening the bonds within and between the United States' alliance networks. Yet what makes the current moment so daunting is that opportunistic swing states will also shape the fight between Fortress Eurasia and the free world.

EURASIA HAS LONG BEEN the world's key strategic shatter zone because it is where the richest and most powerful countries—the United States excepted—are located. And since the early 20th century, this sprawling supercontinent has seen vicious brawls for geopolitical primacy.

In World War I, Germany sought an empire from the English Channel to the Caucasus; it took a trans-Atlantic coalition of democracies to beat the challenge back. In World War II, Germany and Japan conquered Eurasia's vibrant rimlands and drove deep into its heartland; an even grander, more ideologically diverse coalition rallied to restore the balance. In the Cold War, a centrally located superpower, the Soviet Union, tried to overawe a free-world coalition on Eurasia's margins. The specifics change, but the basic clash—between those who seek to rule Eurasia and those, including the overseas superpower, who oppose them—endures.

After their Cold War victory, Washington and its friends were preeminent in all of Eurasia's key subregions: Europe, East Asia, and the Middle East. Yet challenges have since reemerged from rivals that have increasingly coalesced around their shared hostility to the status quo. And just as major crises often speed up history, the Russia-Ukraine war is accelerating the rise of a new Eurasian bloc.

Putin's invasion of Ukraine was a bid to remake Eurasia by force. If Russia had conquered Ukraine, it could have restored the European core of the old Soviet Union. Moscow would have had a commanding position from Central Asia to NATO's eastern front. The Sino-Russian strategic partnership would have seemed ascendant, while the democracies suffered another demoralizing defeat. That scenario unraveled with Putin's shambolic offensive. Yet the war has still had profoundly polarizing effects.

It has undoubtedly galvanized the advanced democracies. NATO is rearming and expanding. Democracies in Asia have supported Ukraine and sanctioned Russia for fear that successful aggression in one region may encourage deadly adventures in others. Countries linked by liberal values and support for the U.S.-led international order are strengthening their defenses from Eastern Europe to the Western Pacific, and they are rethinking economic and technological ties to the tyrannies in Moscow and Beijing. What U.S. President Joe Biden calls the "free world" is again taking shape. So, unfortunately, is an autocratic coalition.

Moscow, Beijing, Tehran, and Pyongyang all seek to overturn the balance of power in their regions and view Washington as the primary obstacle. All worry about their vulnerability to sanctions and other punishments the United States and its global posse can impose. All need the others to survive because if the United States and its allies destroy any one of them, the remainder become more isolated and vulnerable. Finally, all are located within Eurasia and enjoy proximity, if not contiguity, with at least one other revisionist state. As the Russia-Ukraine war heightens global tensions, these autocracies are drawing together, for self-protection and strategic profit.

THIS TREND ISN'T NEW, OF COURSE. Iran and North Korea have long shared missile technology and other means of mischief; the Sino-Russian strategic partnership has been developing for decades. But if the Ukraine war has strained that partnership, it has also underscored the convergent aims and anxieties of the revisionists. It has thus accelerated integration at the world's Eurasian core.

A Eurasian bloc is cohering militarily, as the war fosters overlapping and increasingly ambitious defense ties. Russia's military relationship with North Korea has become a two-way street, as Pyongyang sells Moscow badly needed artillery ammunition. Russia and Iran, meanwhile, are building what CIA Director William Burns calls a "full-fledged defense partnership." That partnership involves transfers of drones, artillery, and, reportedly, missiles that have strengthened Russia on battlefields in Ukraine; it may presage the transfer of advanced Su-35 fighter aircraft, air defense systems, or ballistic missile technology, which would make Tehran a tougher enemy for the United States and Israel.

China, for its part, hasn't openly supported Putin's war with lethal military aid, for fear of U.S. and European sanctions. It has, however, provided so-called nonlethal assistance—from drones to computer chips—that helps Putin

protract his fight, and Beijing would probably go further if its most important ally were facing defeat. For now, the conspicuous presence of Chinese President Xi Jinping's defense experts during his recent summit with Putin in Moscow signaled that the larger military relationship—which already features joint exercises, arms sales, and significant technological cooperation—continues to race past the limits many Western observers expected a decade ago.

It wouldn't take a formal Sino-Russian alliance to upend the military balance. If Russia provides China with sensitive submarine-quieting technology or surface-to-air missiles, it could profoundly change the complexion of a Sino-American war in the Western Pacific. In today's Eurasia, well-armed revisionists are making common cause.

They are also restructuring international trade. Commerce or weapons shipments that traverse Eurasia's marginal seas can be seized by globe-ranging navies. Dollar-dependent economies are vulnerable to U.S. sanctions. A second aspect of Fortress Eurasia, then, involves building trade and transportation networks safe from democratic interdiction.



Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea all seek to overturn the balance of power in their regions and view the United States as the primary obstacle.

For years, China has invested in overland pipelines and railroads meant to ensure access to Middle Eastern oil and other crucial resources. Beijing is now seeking to sanction-proof its economy by reducing reliance on foreign inputs, a project that has gained urgency thanks to the Western economic war on Moscow. Russia and Iran are energizing the International North-South Transport Corridor, which connects the two countries via the land-locked Caspian Sea, as Tehran instructs Moscow in sanctions evasion. Likewise, Russia and China are deepening cooperation to develop the Northern Sea Route, the least vulnerable maritime path between China's Pacific ports and European Russia. When "international trade is in crisis," as Putin said euphemistically last November, Eurasian integration is essential.

Indeed, Russia-Iran trade has spiked since February 2022, while China has become Moscow's key commercial partner "by a wide margin," as the Free Russia Foundation reports. Bilateral trade in Russian oil and Chinese computer chips is surging; Russian firms are turning to Hong Kong to raise capital while skirting sanctions. And as Chinese technology spreads throughout Eurasia, its currency proliferates, too.

This February, the yuan overtook the dollar as the most traded currency on the Moscow Exchange. China and Iran are also experimenting with cutting the dollar out of bilateral trade. "Geopolitics will not, of course, lead to the global dethronement of the dollar" anytime soon, Alexander Gabuev, the director of the new Carnegie Russia Eurasia Center in Berlin, wrote in *Bloomberg* in March. But it could promote a Sino-centric economic and technological bloc at the heart of the Old World.

Finally, this Eurasian bloc is cohering intellectually and ideologically. The Sino-Russian joint statement in February 2022 portrayed the two countries as defending their autocratic political systems while resisting the United States' Cold War-style alliance blocs. Iranian officials describe Eurasian cooperation as the antidote to U.S. "unilateralism"; Putin deems Eurasia a haven for "traditional values" besieged by Western "neoliberal elites." Because the current war has severed Putin from the West, it has also resolved Russia's perennial debate about which direction to face. For the time being, Russia's destiny is Eurasian.

To be sure, there are limits. Whatever Putin says, the North-South corridor will never put the Suez Canal to shame. A globally integrated China won't have to go all-in on Eurasia as a more isolated Russia must. Tensions lurk within the league of autocracies: Some Russian nationalists, if not Putin himself, must worry that a Eurasian orientation ultimately means economic vassalage to Beijing. In the meantime, however, Fortress Eurasia will make life much harder for Washington and its friends.

Eurasian integration will also make the United States' antagonists less vulnerable to sanctions. It will strengthen them militarily against their foes. It will lead to wide-ranging diplomatic cooperation—such as stronger Russian support for China's position on Taiwan—or perhaps even material assistance to one another in a war against the United States. If Russia had the opportunity to help China bleed the United States in a fight in East Asia, does anyone doubt it would have the motivation?

Even short of that, Fortress Eurasia will make the world safer for violent revisionism. The more secure these countries feel in their Eurasian stronghold, the more support they have from one another, the more emboldened they will be to project power into peripheral regions—the Western Pacific, Europe, the Middle East—and beyond.

BIDEN ISN'T WRONG, THEN, in describing a great struggle "between democracy and autocracy, between liberty and repression, between a rules-based order and one governed by brute force." Yet this binary doesn't fully capture the Eurasian landscape. The Russia-Ukraine war has also underscored the importance of strategically located swing states, which seek advantage from both Fortress Eurasia and the free world and affect the balance between the two.

In the Persian Gulf, a resource-rich region at the crossroads of three continents, longtime U.S. security partners now deem monogamy less rewarding than polyamory. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are shifting, economically and technologically, toward China. Both keep strong ties with Russia, even amid its war in Ukraine. Anti-communism once provided ideological glue in these monarchies' relations with Washington. Today, however, modernizing autocracies have more in common politically with the United States' rivals than with the United States itself.

To the West, Turkey occupies the intersection of two seas and two continents, and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is, likewise, playing a double game. Ankara enjoys NATO's protection while importing Russian air defenses; it supports Ukraine while helping Moscow to evade sanctions; and it has become a key player in conflicts from the Caucasus to the Horn of Africa, often in opposition to U.S. interests. How Turkey aligns, in other words, varies from issue to issue. And so long as an ambitious, increasingly illiberal Erdogan rules, it will aim, as Turkish analyst Asli Aydintasbas wrote in *Foreign Affairs* in 2021, "to keep a foot in each camp."

Then there is South Asia. Pakistan, once a critical U.S. partner, now leans toward Beijing, which sees it as a conduit to the Indian Ocean. India, conversely, is tilting toward Washington for protection against China. But it still relies on Russia for arms and energy, and ideology and self-interest make India more comfortable navigating between the great powers than tying itself to any of them. It is a mistake to think New Delhi has irrevocably made its choice: At some point, Prime Minister Narendra Modi might welcome détente with China were Beijing to relax the pressure along the countries' shared frontier. And in other countries around the Eurasian periphery, from Indonesia to Egypt, alignments are more fluid still.

The swing states are diverse, but the commonalities are striking. None are among the rich, economically advanced democracies. All prefer to maneuver between rival coalitions, in hopes of keeping options open and eliciting the best possible deals from each. All have been ambivalent, at best, in responding to Putin's invasion of Ukraine because they value their relationships with Moscow and worry that polarized geopolitics will preclude diplomatic flexibility. And all can meaningfully affect the configuration of power around the world's central landmass.

Each of these swing states has already bolstered Putin's war in Ukraine, by helping him to reduce the impact of sanctions. Saudi Arabia did so most spectacularly in late 2022, via oil production cuts that sent prices—and Moscow's revenues—higher. Their choices have other critical implications, as well.

The UAE may be moving toward hosting a Chinese base on its territory—and thereby helping Beijing to insert its military power in a sensitive region. Saudi Arabia has already welcomed Chinese diplomatic power into the Persian Gulf, relying on Beijing to broker a mini-détente with Tehran. In South Asia, a Pakistan closely bound to Beijing will make it far easier for China to escape its "Malacca dilemma"—the fact that much of its westward trade must pass through a narrow strait it does not control. India's decisions will influence the global distribution of technological influence and manufacturing capacity—the latter being particularly essential as the threat of great-power war grows—as well as how much trouble China faces on land as it pushes outward at sea. Turkey's choices will affect the level of economic pressure Putin faces, the strength and solidarity of NATO, and the geopolitical landscape from Central Asia to the Middle East.

The competition for the swing states isn't merely some global popularity contest. It will help determine whether the defenses Washington must erect around Fortress Eurasia are strong or full of holes.

IN 1944, JAPAN DISPATCHED A SUBMARINE carrying gold, tungsten, and other materials to Nazi-occupied Europe. It was a suicide mission: After traveling thousands of miles around Asia and Africa, the submarine was sunk by U.S. aircraft near the Bay of Biscay. Berlin and Tokyo were fighting to remake the world, but the cruelties of geography made cooperation impossible.

Today's revisionists don't have this problem. The location of the Eurasian autocracies doesn't simply make the new red blob look scary on a map. It helps them reduce asymmetric U.S. strengths and fight back-to-back against the outside world. As during the Cold War, a geographically dispersed free world confronts a geographically coherent coalition. Now as then, there is also a third group that can cast a swing vote in global affairs.

The United States can't easily reverse the formation of Fortress Eurasia because that process is the result of strong shared interests and sharpening global tensions produced by the war in Ukraine. In theory, perhaps, Washington could split the coalition by reconciling with one or more of its members. In practice, if such reconciliation were possible, it would require concessions—abandoning Ukraine and parts of Eastern Europe to Moscow, for instance—that would worsen Washington's global problems. What remains, then, is a twofold response.

The United States has alliance blocs that give it tremendous leverage in East Asia and Europe. In the aggregate, the United States and its treaty allies are mightier—economically, diplomatically, militarily—than their adversaries. So the first imperative is to strengthen the alliances that anchor Eurasia's endangered margins while strengthening the bonds between them so aggression anywhere meets an increasingly global response.



To its credit, Washington is pursuing elements of this strategy—by tightening alliances with Japan and the Philippines, bolstering NATO's eastern front, and crafting partnerships, such as AUKUS, that bind like-minded democracies across multiple regions. The next steps would be to further integrate free-world defenses where threats are most severe, perhaps by pursuing a trilateral U.S.-Japan-Australia commitment to resist Chinese aggression or by laying out serious plans for how European powers might respond, militarily or economically, to conflict in the Western Pacific. The difficulties here are hardly trivial, and a U.S. presidential election outcome in 2024 or after that would restore a unilateralist, America First administration could complicate matters further still. But, for the moment, the task is a familiar one of alliance management and fits comfortably within Biden's free-world frame.

More conceptually challenging is the second imperative: maximizing strategic convergence with the swing states while minimizing divergence where it would hurt the most. Because these countries have good reasons for their ambivalence, this will be an arduous, often unsatisfying task.

It will require separating the essential from the important—namely, identifying those issues, such as keeping Chinese military bases out of the Persian Gulf, where the United States should aggressively employ its leverage to avert a meaningful change in the Eurasian equilibrium. The corollary involves accepting that moral compromises—and trade-offs between the short term and the long term—will be starker in dealing with swing states than in dealing with advanced democracies. The United States can make Saudi Arabia a pariah or directly challenge India on issues of domestic governance but not without jeopardizing cooperation on issues of strategic importance. This suggests that Washington should also tailor its message to its audience: Outside the global West, appeals to democratic norms will be less effective than an emphasis on sovereignty, territorial integrity, and other norms that are threatened by the behavior, as opposed to the regime type, of the revisionist quartet.

These points, in turn, underscore the frankly transactional nature of diplomacy with swing states. The U.S.-Saudi special relationship is history, and appeals to democratic solidarity won't get Washington very far in New Delhi. The United States will have to buy cooperation from Saudi Arabia, India, and other players by offering benefits of real value while also withholding those benefits when swing states consistently conduct foreign policies contrary to important U.S. interests. If the United States regularly punishes swing states for their diplomatic choices, it risks turning ambivalence into hostility; if it never does so, it risks losing all leverage. Yet, because this is such a tricky balancing act, it is important, finally, to shift the underlying incentives over time.

By depleting the Russian defense industry, Putin's war has created an opportunity to help Turkey, India, Vietnam, and other states move away from Moscow's military gear—and thereby change their calculus on discrete geopolitical issues. Encouraging Indian economic ties with the Persian Gulf can, similarly, reduce reliance on Chinese trade and money in two important regions.

For the fourth time in little more than a century, an epic clash over Eurasia is underway. Winning it will require the United States to rally its free-world allies while also competing, imperfectly, to influence countries that won't commit either way. ■

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Illustration by ERIK CARTER



WHAT AI MEANS FOR GLOBAL POWER

IN THE NUCLEAR ERA, STATES COOPERATED ON REGULATION. NOW THEY MUST COME TOGETHER AGAIN.

BY PAUL SCHARRE

NEW TECHNOLOGIES CAN CHANGE THE GLOBAL BALANCE OF POWER. Nuclear weapons divided the world into haves and have-nots. The Industrial Revolution allowed Europe to race ahead in economic and military power, spurring a wave of colonial expansion. A central question in the artificial intelligence revolution is who will benefit: Who will be able to access this powerful new technology, and who will be left behind?

Until recently, AI has been a diffuse technology that rapidly proliferates. Open-source AI models are readily available online. The recent shift to large models, such as OpenAI's ChatGPT, is concentrating power in the hands of large tech companies that can afford the computing hardware needed to train these systems. The balance of global AI power will hinge on whether AI concentrates power in the hands of a few actors, as nuclear weapons did, or proliferates widely, as smartphones have.

Access to computing hardware creates haves and have-nots in this new era of AI. Frontier AI models such as ChatGPT and its successor, GPT-4, use massive amounts of computing hardware. They are trained using thousands of specialized chips running for weeks or months at a time. Production of these chips and the equipment used to manufacture them is limited to

a few key countries: Taiwan, South Korea, the Netherlands, Japan, and the United States. That means these nations have veto power over who can access the most cutting-edge AI capabilities. The United States has already weaponized this dependency to cut off China's access to the most advanced chips.

States responded to the challenge of the nuclear age by controlling access to the materials needed to make nuclear weapons. By limiting countries' access to weapons-grade uranium and plutonium, the international community has slowed nuclear proliferation. Control over the specialized hardware needed to train large AI models will similarly shape the global balance of power.

THE DEEP LEARNING REVOLUTION began in 2012, and as it moves into its second decade, there are several important paradigm shifts underway. New generative AI models such as ChatGPT and GPT-4 are more general purpose than prior narrow AI systems. While they do not (yet) have the generality of human intelligence, they can perform a diverse array of tasks. GPT-4 achieves human-level performance on the SAT, GRE, and the Uniform Bar Exam. The AI agent that beat top human player Lee Sedol in the Chinese strategy game Go in 2016, AlphaGo, could only play Go. It could not hold a conversation, write a poem, analyze an image, play chess, craft recipes, or write computer software. GPT-4 can do all of these things and more.

These new, general-purpose AI models have the potential for widespread societal benefit, but they can also cause real harm. Large language models are already capable of generating disinformation at scale, but future harms are potentially much worse. Language models can be used to generate software and assist in cyberattacks. They can synthesize chemical compounds and can also aid in building chemical or biological weapons. Their general-purpose abilities make these models inherently dual-use, with both civilian and military applications.

While current models have limitations, AI systems are rapidly improving with each generation. Researchers are increasingly empowering AI models with the ability to access and use external tools, such as logging on to the internet, interacting with other AI models, and using remote "cloud labs" to conduct scientific experiments—all force multipliers for AI capabilities. Some researchers worry about even greater risks, such as an AI model demonstrating power-seeking behavior, including acquiring resources, replicating itself, or hiding its intentions from humans. Current models have not demonstrated this behavior, but AI capability improvements are often surprising. No one can say for certain what AI capabilities will be possible in 12 months, much less a few years from now.

What is clear is that current state-of-the-art AI models are not safe and no one knows how to reliably make them safe. OpenAI has attempted to train ChatGPT and GPT-4 to not give users information that could be used to cause harm—with mixed success. In one experiment, GPT-4 refused to synthesize mustard gas, but it was willing to synthesize chlorine and phosgene gas, chemical weapons used in World War I. Even when AI models correctly refuse to perform a harmful task, users can often "jailbreak" the model through simple tricks, such as asking it to simulate what a bad actor would do. As AI capabilities increase and as access to them proliferates, there is a serious risk of malicious actors using them for cyberattacks or chemical, biological, or other attacks.

Given these and other risks, a growing chorus of voices are calling for AI regulation. Leading AI researchers recently advocated a six-month pause on developing next-generation AI models because of the risk of societal harms. Others have argued that improvements in AI capabilities must stop entirely. The heads of all of the leading AI labs recently signed an open letter warning that future AI systems could pose an existential risk to humankind. The European Union is drafting AI regulations. In May, U.S. President Joe Biden met with the CEOs of top AI labs to discuss safety practices, and the U.S. Senate held a hearing on oversight of AI.

Though many AI regulations will be industry-specific, general-purpose AI models require special attention because of their dual-use capabilities. Nuclear technology is also inherently dual use, but society has found ways to balance the positive benefits of nuclear energy with the risks of nuclear weapons proliferation. Society must similarly find approaches that harness the benefits of AI while managing its risks.

A key way to reap the benefits of AI while reducing its risks is to control access to the computing hardware needed to train powerful AI models. Machine learning algorithms are trained on data using computing hardware in the form of chips. Of these technical inputs—algorithms, data, and computing hardware—hardware is the most controllable. Unlike data and algorithms, chips are a physical resource that can be controlled. The most cutting-edge AI models, such as ChatGPT, are trained using massive amounts of specialized chips. Without vast amounts of these specialized chips, one cannot train these powerful AI models. Hardware supply chains have multiple strategic chokepoints. The most advanced chips are produced in Taiwan and South Korea, and they can only be made using equipment from Japan, the Netherlands, and the United States. These five countries control global access to the most advanced chips.

Hardware is already a barrier to accessing frontier AI models for all but a few actors. Unlike in the space race or the Manhattan Project, the leading actors in AI research are not governments but private companies. Only a handful of companies—OpenAI, Google, Microsoft, Anthropic, and Meta—are competing to develop or field the most capable AI models. As they do so, these companies are spending billions of dollars to build ever

bigger and more computationally intensive AI models. The amount of computing hardware used in training cutting-edge machine learning models has increased by a factor of 10 billion since 2010 and is doubling about every six months. (Growth in computing hardware to train the largest models is doubling about every 10 months.) This is much faster than the 24-month doubling in chip performance seen since the 1970s, sometimes characterized as Moore's law. This growth is also much faster than hardware improvements alone, so AI labs are making up the difference by buying more chips. As a result, costs for training high-end AI models are skyrocketing. Independent estimates put the cost to train some of the largest models in the tens of millions of dollars. OpenAI CEO Sam Altman recently estimated that training GPT-4 cost more than $100 million. Tech companies are throwing billions of dollars at AI. After the success of ChatGPT, Microsoft announced a $10 billion investment in OpenAI. Anthropic reportedly plans to spend $1 billion to train its next-generation AI model.

What is clear is that current state-of-the-art AI models are not safe and no one knows how to reliably make them safe.

This race to spend on computing hardware is segregating the AI community, concentrating power in the hands of the few companies training the most advanced models. Academics are locked out of accessing cutting-edge AI models because they can't afford to train them. Major tech companies, on the other hand, have deep pockets. They have the spending capacity to invest tens of billions of dollars per year on major tech projects if they see a payoff. If current trends continue—if companies keep investing and AI keeps improving—computing power could increase many more orders of magnitude in the next decade. The field of AI could be headed into a world where a small number of major tech companies are the gatekeepers to extremely powerful AI systems and everyone else depends on them for access.

GIVEN THE STAKES, it's not surprising that the geopolitics of AI hardware is also heating up. In October 2022, the Biden administration issued export controls on the most advanced AI chips and semiconductor manufacturing equipment to China. While the most advanced chips are not made in the United States—they are manufactured in Taiwan and South Korea—those chips are made using U.S. tools, such as the specialized software used to produce chips, giving the United States unique leverage over who can buy them. The United States imposed extraterritorial restrictions on Taiwan and South Korea using U.S. equipment to manufacture advanced chips destined for China, even if the chips themselves had no U.S. technology. Additional U.S. export controls on semiconductor manufacturing equipment deny China the equipment needed to produce its own advanced chips.

This March, Japan and the Netherlands announced similar export controls on advanced chip manufacturing equipment to China. Collectively, the United States, the Netherlands, and Japan control 90 percent of the global market for semiconductor manufacturing equipment. For the most advanced equipment of all—extreme ultraviolet lithography machines used to make leading-edge chips—a single Dutch company, ASML, holds a monopoly. If the three countries cooperate, they can deny China the equipment needed to produce advanced chips. Coupled with U.S. export controls on the chips themselves, these measures aim to lock China out of buying or building the chips needed to train the largest AI models.

As AI models become more capable and rely on ever increasing amounts of computing power, AI hardware is poised to become a global strategic asset. Semiconductors today are a foundational technology that is embedded into all manner of digital devices, such as phones, cars, and internet-connected devices. But the changes underway suggest a different trajectory. The field of AI is transitioning to an era in which compiling the most advanced semiconductors is more like possessing highly enriched uranium—a global strategic asset that is difficult to acquire but gains access to powerful new capabilities.

The United States and its allies have a major advantage in this new contest. Their control over the technology needed to manufacture advanced chips is like having the opportunity to control global uranium production in 1938. Yet there are other forces at work, in the form of technology, market incentives, and geopolitics, that could cause this control to evaporate.

The greatest dangers come from proliferation. AI risks are more easily managed when only a few actors can access the most capable AI systems. As powerful AI models proliferate, they are more likely to end up in the hands of actors who are less safety-conscious or who want to cause harm. Controlling hardware is a critical step, but that alone is not enough to limit proliferation. Trained models can proliferate easily. Once they have been released, they can easily be modified or misused. Managing AI risks requires a comprehensive approach to protecting powerful models so they do not fall into the hands of malicious actors.

A powerful asymmetry runs through the technical realities of how AI systems use chips. Cutting-edge AI models require immense amounts of computing hardware for training, but once the model has been trained, it uses orders of magnitude less computing resources to run (a process known as "inference"). This means that access to large amounts of computing hardware is a barrier to training new models—but not for using trained models, making AI much easier to proliferate than nuclear technology.

Trained models are software. They can be leaked, stolen, or released open-source online. One of Meta's most advanced AI models recently leaked online. In February, Meta announced LLaMA, a new state-of-the-art large language model. To help bridge the hardware divide for academic researchers who don't have the resources to train language models at the same scale as big tech companies, Meta shared the model "on a case-by-case basis" with members of the AI research community. Within a week, the model had leaked on 4chan, making it no longer possible for Meta to carefully manage access. A week and a half later, AI researchers had compressed the model to run on a laptop and even a smartphone. The comparatively small hardware requirements for running models mean that once a model has been released, hardware is no longer an effective constraint on proliferation.

Once released, trained models can easily be modified or misused. Trained models can be "fine-tuned" for specific tasks, such as fine-tuning a language model to code software. Fine-tuning can be done relatively cheaply. After LLaMA's release, researchers at Stanford University fine-tuned a version they dubbed Alpaca for less than $600. AI researchers can also strip off embedded safety features, removing guardrails against abuse. When the start-up Stability AI released the open-source image generation model Stable Diffusion last August, within hours users had disabled the NSFW content filter and invisible digital watermarking on the images. Once a model is in the open, there is no way to prevent its misuse.

Despite these risks, there is a strident community of open-source advocates who actively push for greater proliferation of AI models. The AI community has had a long history of open-source collaboration, with data sets, trained models, and AI tools shared freely in online repositories such as GitHub and Hugging Face. OpenAI dropped a bombshell on the AI community in 2019 when it temporarily restricted the release of its then-cutting-edge language model, GPT-2, one of the first companies to shift to a more closed approach. Since then, other leading AI labs (with the notable exception of Meta's) have followed OpenAI in not releasing their most powerful models. The result has been a backlash in the AI community, with companies such as Stability AI championing an open-source approach and releasing their models freely so that others can benefit. Open-source equivalents of GPT-3 and the image generation model DALL·E were released after 14 and 15 months, respectively. The most cutting-edge AI models, such as GPT-4, are restricted, but open-source models are not far behind.

The ease of transferring and modifying trained models has worrisome implications for controlling proliferation of potentially dangerous AI models. National security analysts have worried about the dangers of "loose nukes" and the potentially devastating consequences of terrorists getting their hands on a nuclear weapon. Countering nuclear proliferation requires controlling both the underlying technology used to make nuclear weapons and the finished weapons themselves. But possessing one nuclear weapon doesn't give an actor the ability to make more copies and share them with millions of people over the internet. Because they are software, AI models can be easily copied, modified, and transferred. The release of trained AI models could render irrelevant attempts to control hardware at the training level. To prevent against misuse of powerful models, comprehensive controls must encompass trained models as well.

UNLIKE IN THE NUCLEAR AGE OR SPACE RACE, the development of powerful, dual-use AI is being led by private companies. Governments need to get off the sidelines. They shouldn't compete with the private sector to train large models, but governments are needed to create regulatory structures to ensure powerful AI models are safe and secure. AI researchers worry about the "alignment problem"—that is, ensuring that an AI system's goals are aligned with human values. But the incentives of corporate actors are not fully aligned with the public good either.

The current state of AI competition in the private sector has several unhealthy dynamics. Google, Microsoft, and OpenAI are engaging in a "race to the bottom" on safety, deploying AI models before they are fully safe. Other companies, such as Meta and Stability AI, have shared models widely, enabling rapid proliferation without adequate safeguards in place against misuse. But AI is not the first industry where profit motives have undermined the public good. Government regulation has enabled clean air and water, safe food and drugs, and safe highways and air travel. Government regulation of AI is needed to ensure the most powerful dual-use AI models are built and deployed safely and to reduce proliferation risks.

Global AI governance begins at the hardware level. Hardware is the most controllable input to building AI systems, and massive amounts of hardware are required to train the most capable AI models. The U.S. government has already placed controls on advanced chips and chipmaking equipment, but these controls will not be effective in limiting proliferation without export controls on powerful trained models as well. Limiting the proliferation of powerful AI models requires securing hardware across the entire

lifecycle of AI production: chips, training, and trained models.

The United States and its allies have begun taking steps to lock down access to advanced chips, but additional measures are needed. Without adequate enforcement, export controls on chips will be ineffective. Chips can be diverted or sold through intermediaries. The Chinese AI firm SenseTime, which has been blacklisted by the U.S. government for human rights violations, reportedly gained access to prohibited chips through third parties. Increased government resources and new tools for chip tracking are essential to ensure that banned actors cannot accumulate large amounts of controlled chips.

Computing hardware must also be controlled at data centers where it is used for training models. Another Chinese firm blacklisted for human rights abuses, iFLYTEK, reportedly circumvented U.S. controls by renting chips in data centers, rather than buying them outright. Current U.S. export controls apply only to chip sales. They do not restrict cloud computing companies from providing chips as a service, a loophole that could allow prohibited actors to access computing resources through cloud providers. Governments should institute "know-your-customer" requirements, similar to those for the financial industry, for cloud computing companies to prevent illicit actors from training powerful AI models.

Unlike in the space race or the Manhattan Project, the leading actors in AI research are not governments but private companies.

Government oversight and regulation of large-scale training runs will also be needed. AI companies training powerful AI models should be required to report to the government information about their training runs, including model size and design, data sets used, and the amount of computing power used in training. Over time, as safety standards develop, a government licensing regime may be required for training runs that are likely to result in sufficiently capable dual-use AI systems, such as above a certain threshold of computing power.

Once trained, models must be subject to rigorous testing to ensure they are safe before deployment. AI companies should be required to conduct a risk assessment and allow third-party experts to "red team" the model, or test it to identify vulnerabilities and potential harms prior to deployment. Leading AI labs are already adopting some of these practices. OpenAI brought in more than 50 outside experts for months of red-teaming before deploying GPT-4. Potential harms assessed included generating disinformation, aiding in creating chemical or biological weapons, conducting cyberattacks, and the emergence of power-seeking behavior such as self-replication or acquiring resources. OpenAI then applied mitigation measures to improve model safety before deployment. Despite these precautions, public deployment of the model elicited further vulnerabilities as users found ways to "jailbreak" the model and circumvent safeguards, permitting a wide range of behaviors from telling offensive jokes to synthesizing chemical weapons. Testing can improve model safety, although at present there are no means to make models robustly safe against misuse.

Industry and government must work together to develop safety standards and best practices. Early engagement between the White House and frontier AI labs is promising. Following Biden's meeting with top AI lab CEOs, the White House announced that several leading AI developers would participate in an independent, public evaluation of their systems. Independent, third-party audits of AI lab practices can also help provide public assurance of lab safety compliance.

Transparency is essential to help society understand, anticipate, and respond to the risks of powerful AI models. OpenAI published a "system card" simultaneous with GPT-4's public announcement that outlined the results of testing for various harms. Public awareness of the risks of AI models, consistent with responsible disclosure practices that allow companies to first mitigate vulnerabilities, can help improve safety and societal resilience.

Trained models must also be secure against theft or proliferation. Stringent cybersecurity measures will be required to prevent theft or leaks. The Biden administration recently announced that government cybersecurity experts are collaborating with top AI labs to help secure their models and networks. Export controls may be required on powerful, dual-use models. Export controls on chips will be meaningless if banned actors can simply acquire trained models.

In some cases, restrictions may be required for how models are used to prevent abuse. "Structured access" is one potentially promising approach, where AI services are provided through the cloud and the model itself is not disseminated. Use can be monitored to ensure that models are not being used for illicit purposes, such as cyberattacks.

AI technology is racing forward, and governments must move faster to keep up. The exponential pace of AI progress—and growing risks—is out of pace with government action. Excessive regulation will stifle industry, but moving too slow may lead to societal harms and even a backlash

against AI deployment. Caution is warranted at the frontier of AI development. Governments must work closely with AI labs to mitigate against a race to the bottom on safety and rapid proliferation of potentially harmful systems.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION will be needed to effectively govern powerful AI systems. Altman, OpenAI's CEO, recently advocated for the creation of an "IAEA for AI," a global AI regulatory regime akin to the International Atomic Energy Agency that governs nuclear technology. A common objection in Washington to regulating frontier AI development is that China won't be inhibited by such regulations and will simply race ahead. In May, Defense Department Chief Information Officer John Sherman argued against the proposed six-month pause on developing AI systems more powerful than the current state-of-the-art model, GPT-4, stating, "If we stop, guess who is not going to stop? Potential adversaries overseas."

The reality, though, is that the United States and its allies control the underlying hardware needed to train powerful AI systems. Potential adversaries don't need to agree for an AI nonproliferation regime to be effective. Chinese labs are not far behind top U.S. and British labs today, but U.S. export controls may widen the gap as Chinese researchers are forced to use older, slower chips. Working with allies, the United States has an opportunity to put in place a global AI governance regime that conditions access to computing resources on compliance with safety, security, and nonproliferation practices.

In the long run, market incentives, geopolitics, and technology improvements could undermine attempts to control proliferation. U.S. export controls incentivize foreign companies to de-Americanize supply chains, reducing their reliance on U.S. technology so that they are no longer affected by U.S. restrictions. The U.S. government must be careful to use export controls sparingly and, whenever possible, in a multilateral framework to reduce incentives for a U.S.-independent chip supply chain. China is working hard to grow its indigenous chipmaking industry. Multilateral export controls on chipmaking equipment will slow China's progress but not halt it forever. Restrictions on trained models will likely only slow proliferation, as leaks or theft causes models to spread over time. Improvements in algorithms may reduce the hardware needed to train powerful AI models, enabling proliferation. Yet slowing proliferation can still be valuable.

Nuclear nonproliferation efforts have not stopped proliferation entirely, but they have slowed it dramatically and have been successful in limiting the number of nuclear-armed states. Nonproliferation has also succeeded in permitting the spread of nuclear technology for peaceful use. Thirty-two countries operate civilian nuclear reactors, far more than the nine nuclear-armed states.

Controlling the spread of dangerous AI capabilities could buy time for improved safety standards, societal resilience, or improved international cooperation. Controls for AI hardware can start with the United States and its allies but should expand over time. Cooperation with competitor nations to ensure AI is developed safely should not be ruled out. The Chinese government has actually moved faster than the U.S. government in regulating AI, enacting regulations on deep-

Washington Can Lead on AI

By Paul Scharre

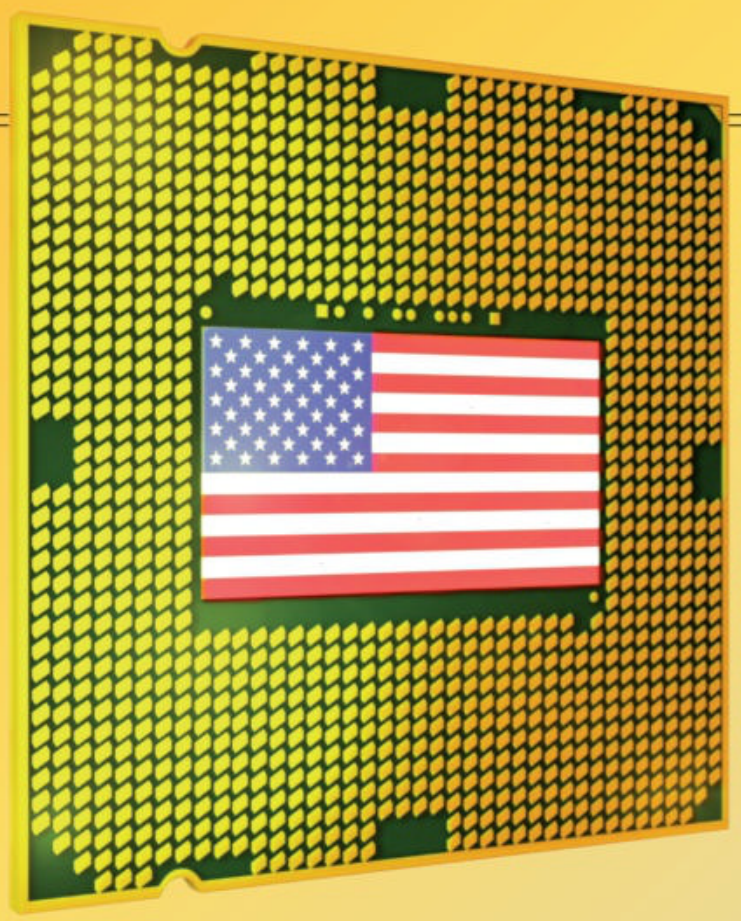
THE MOST CAPABLE AI MODELS, such as ChatGPT, use massive amounts of computing hardware. To lead in AI, the United States must maintain its leadership position in AI hardware.

The United States has a major advantage in this competition: U.S. companies occupy key chokepoints in the global chip supply chain. The United States and a handful of close allies and partners—Japan, the Netherlands, South Korea, and Taiwan—control access to the most advanced AI hardware. The White House has already used this leverage to deny China access to the most advanced chips and chipmaking equipment. It must capitalize on this advantage by controlling global access to computing hardware while maintaining control over key chokepoints over the long term. Increased research and development are also critical to secure U.S. dominance in next-generation semiconductor technology.

The United States should work with allies to control access to computing hardware across the AI production life cycle to limit proliferation. U.S. export controls will slow China's ability to build the most advanced AI systems, like GPT-4, but further measures are needed. Chip tracking can aid in enforcement, and controls are needed for cloud computing services used to train powerful AI models. The U.S. government should also work with industry to establish safety regulations on large-scale training runs. Finally, export controls and cybersecurity measures are required to secure powerful trained models.

Even as the U.S. government moves to lock down access to large amounts of AI hardware today, it's vitally important that the United States remains in a leadership

Illustration by ERIK CARTER



position to control hardware over the long term. U.S. leverage stems from the role U.S. companies play in key chokepoints in the semiconductor supply chain, particularly in chip manufacturing equipment. The United States must retain control over key hardware chokepoints by keeping U.S. companies dominant in these core technologies. Excessive export controls incentivize foreign companies to de-Americanize their supply chains to circumvent U.S. controls. To reduce this risk, the U.S. government should use export controls judiciously and work with allies to make controls multilateral. The goal should not be to cut off China from all U.S. technology but to keep China dependent on U.S. technology so that the United States can control China's access to the most powerful AI systems.

The United States must invest in R&D to keep U.S. companies dominant in next-generation semiconductor manufacturing technology. The more than $52 billion in subsidies provided by the CHIPS and Science Act is a major investment in U.S. semiconductor competitiveness. But the United States needs to be strategic in pursuing its goals. The government should prioritize building a hub of leading-edge chip manufacturing to create a domestic ecosystem of chip companies, suppliers, and human talent. Fostering this ecosystem will help U.S. companies remain dominant in next-generation chip technology, sustaining U.S. leverage over key supply chain chokepoints.

The United States needs to work with industry and academia to boost U.S. competitiveness in this new era of hardware-intensive AI models. The rising costs of computing hardware for training the most cutting-edge AI models are concentrating power in the hands of a small number of tech companies and locking academics out of frontier AI research. The government should invest in data and computing resources for academics to help level the playing field. Congress should fund the National AI Research Resource to empower researchers with the tools needed to compete in this new era of AI.

The U.S. government must also work with industry to develop sensible regulations on powerful AI models to avoid societal harm and manage the risks of a backlash against AI. A growing number of voices are raising the alarm about potential risks from AI, from job disruption to human extinction. In recent months, several leading AI researchers have called for a pause on developing more powerful systems. The White House has begun talks with top AI lab CEOs on safety measures, but additional steps are needed. Government and industry must work together to put in place regulations to mitigate against the worst potential harms and guard against proliferation. As safety standards develop, the United States should work with other nations to establish global governance over powerful AI capabilities.

This new era of AI poses tremendous risks, but the United States has core strengths in AI hardware that create opportunities to manage these risks. By focusing on maintaining its leadership in hardware, the United States can position itself to lead an AI-driven future. ■

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fakes in January and publishing draft rules on generative AI in April. International cooperation on nuclear nonproliferation has evolved over time, with additional refinements added in response to global problems. The IAEA Additional Protocol was approved in 1997, more than 50 years after the first atomic test. Global AI governance will similarly evolve over time. Regulations must adapt with the technology, but this should not be an excuse for inaction. AI technology is moving quickly, and solutions are urgently needed. ■

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AI IS WINNING THE AI RACE

Success isn't just staying ahead of China.

BY MARIANO-FLORENTINO CUÉLLAR AND MATT SHEEHAN

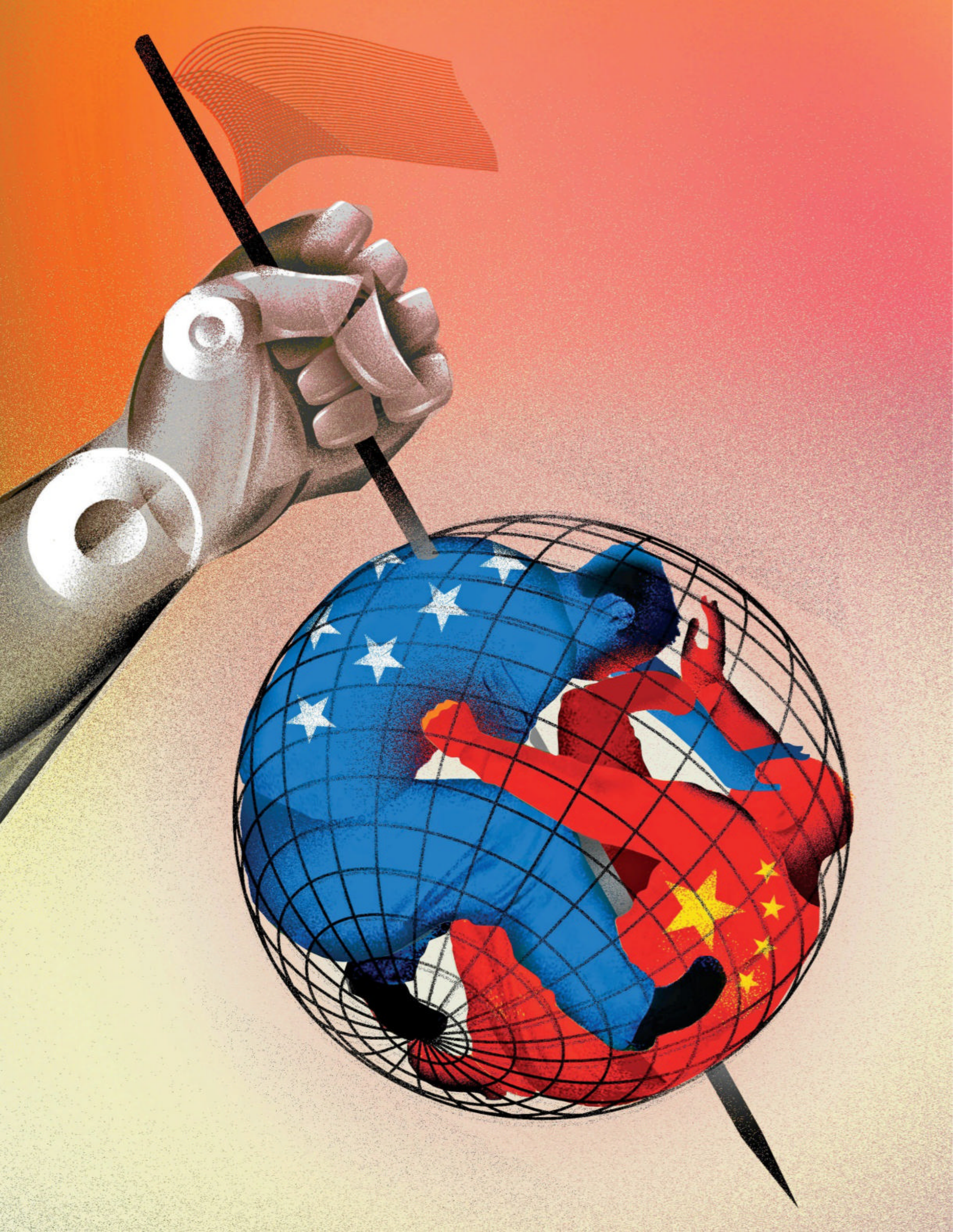
ONE OF THE QUESTIONS WE GET MOST FREQUENTLY from officials in Washington is: "Who's winning the U.S.-China AI race?" The answer is simple and unsettling: Artificial intelligence is winning, and we're nowhere near ready for what it will bring.

In the past decade, cutting-edge AI systems moved from beating simple video games to solving decades-old scientific challenges such as protein folding, speeding up scientific discovery and accelerating the development of small-molecule drugs. The fastest-moving branch of AI is spawning large language models, such as OpenAI's ChatGPT. Much progress in these models stems from a relatively simple engineering insight—the scaling hypothesis—that has been carefully implemented using specialized software and vast arrays of networked computers. The hypothesis predicts that the bigger an AI model is—the more data, computations, and parameters it incorporates—the better it will perform and the more it will be able to mimic or achieve intelligence irrespective of whether it is generating a draft of a speech, writing computer software, designing new weapons, or teaching kids math.

AI scientists are divided on where this is all headed. Some see the scaling hypothesis continuing to bear fruit as the relevant systems are refined by humans, and eventually by the machines themselves, until we build models that surpass human intelligence. Others are skeptical of large language models and doubt that scaling them up will yield anything comparable to human intelligence. If the scaling group is right, the risks from powerful models that behave unpredictably could be catastrophic—or even existential. These models are already capable of articulating plans to get around constraints imposed by their designers.

But even if scaling skeptics are right, the AI of today is still set to transform our economy and society. Large language models will expand educational opportunities, but they will also likely reproduce biases and "hallucinate" falsehoods, generating text that sounds plausible but isn't rooted in reality. Operating on the internet, these models will hire workers, deceive people, and reshape social relationships. Cumulatively, this will stress-test our economic, political, and social fabric.

Illustration by BRIAN STAUFFER



Regardless of which camp is right, the technical drivers of recent AI progress—returns to scale in the construction of models—mean that the United States can't bank on decisively "winning" an AI race with China and then regulating the technology afterward. The core algorithmic breakthroughs powering today's large language models have been around for years; much of the recent progress comes from labs simply tweaking the core algorithmic ideas and using ever larger models to learn from vast tracts of data. China's progress on AI can be slowed, in other words, but likely can't be stopped. As AI advances and diffuses throughout society, it will challenge the United States and its open society as much as—if not more than—China.

To meet the moment, then, U.S. leaders need to change their definition of success in AI policy. Success in AI policy isn't just staying ahead of China. It requires developing a relationship to the technology that Americans can live with and one that reduces the risk of catastrophic accidents in U.S. interactions with China. Instead of simply plowing ahead as fast as possible, we must do the hard work necessary to strike a balance between promoting progress on AI and prudently governing the technology in a manner that makes sense for Americans and the world.

FEARS THAT CHINA WILL SURPASS the United States in AI loom over all policy discussion of the technology in Washington. China is indeed a serious competitor, producing top AI research papers on par with the United States and deploying the technology across its economy and its domestic surveillance apparatus. When it comes to building the most powerful AI models, China has been a fast follower behind U.S. labs, often producing comparable models within a couple years.

And geopolitically China's divergent interests pose major challenges for the United States. Its authoritarian uses of AI—for surveillance and tracking of ethnic minorities—serve as an inspiration to autocrats and a warning sign for democratic societies.

Taken together, these tensions have led the U.S. government to roll out a raft of policies targeting China's AI development, with the most effective being last year's export controls on the chips used to train AI systems. Further limits on Chinese access to AI-relevant hardware and software may follow.

But despite these constraints, China's AI capabilities aren't going away. The country has the domestic AI ecosystem—the research talent, data, and corporate investment—to remain near the global cutting edge. And the nature of AI's recent advancements—its returns to scale—means that there isn't some secret research breakthrough that we just need to keep out of China's hands. Last year's chip controls represent a significant but not insurmountable hurdle when it comes to scaling up large models. Using the chips, research talent, and know-how available to it, China can continue scaling, iterating, and improving its best models. The U.S. government should keep working to create a strategic advantage, but it also must confront the reality that China is likely here to stay in AI.

What does this mean for U.S. AI policy? The United States can't make "winning" the AI race a prerequisite to governing the technology effectively and regulating it where necessary. It must instead simultaneously prepare for a world in which China remains equipped with highly advanced AI systems and also one where AI transforms the United States itself. Businesses will be deploying generative AI models to displace workers and create dazzling new products, while others use those same models to defraud individuals, spread misinformation, and gain new access to knowledge posing biosecurity and cybersecurity risks.

Tackling these challenges at home will require not only an appreciation of all the benefits that may come from these new and emerging AI models but also a willingness to experiment with new governance structures for AI. Courts are available to resolve liability disputes involving AI. Agencies across the U.S. federal government are already grappling with concrete issues by requiring algorithmic explainability when an applicant is denied credit and applying rules on native advertising to generative systems that manipulate users. Allocating more money so these agencies can hire AI-literate policy advisors would accelerate the technical capabilities of the government. If government action is necessary to prevent catastrophic AI risks, these technically proficient policymakers can help craft those policies.

Whether by carefully crafting legislation or through appropriate executive actions, society's use of AI models can be subject to meaningful transparency requirements, further strengthened by requiring third-party bench-marking and audits for the most powerful models with potential capabilities that defy their creators' intentions or limits. Establishing sophisticated regulatory markets for these types of audits—allowing appropriately vetted third parties to certify that certain models are safe and otherwise behave roughly as contemplated—will take time. But a useful interim step would be requirements on developers of the largest and most capable models to conduct a reliable "catastrophic risk assessment," outlining the measures taken to investigate and mitigate these dangers, and to publish the results. A carefully tailored, nonbureaucratic registration scheme could help ensure that these models receive the necessary vetting before being made available to hundreds of millions or even billions of people.

We can already anticipate the central objection: If we implement even limited measures to govern AI, we will give China an edge. But those who fear that this type of AI regulation in the United States will give China a leg up likely haven't been paying attention to China's own AI governance measures. Over the past two years, China has rolled out some of the most detailed and demanding regulations on its own AI companies, including security assessments for algorithms

and mandatory disclosures of training data and model specifications. In April, China followed this up with a draft regulation specifically targeting generative AI. The draft combines obligations unique to China's political system, such as requiring that generated content reflect "socialist core values," with mainstream international demands, such as protections on intellectual property. Notably, the regulation imposes requirements that both the training data and generated outputs be "true and accurate"—an extremely daunting task for models that are trained on billions of webpages and are known to regularly produce factually incorrect statements.

The draft regulation is the subject of much debate within Chinese AI policy circles, showcasing the Chinese government's own attempt to balance effective regulation with AI leadership. Despite the Chinese Communist Party's desire to guide Chinese AI development, the large majority of meaningful work is still being done in private sector labs and academic settings, where researchers face resource constraints and fear that onerous regulations will impede their own work.

Over the past two years, China has rolled out some of the most detailed and demanding regulations on its own AI companies.

We may not agree with the Chinese government's motives for regulating AI (preserving its existing controls on information) or its methods for doing so (state-defined limits on training data and outputs). But we also cannot let the fantasy of a completely unregulated technological rival prevent us from governing AI in way that's consistent with our values.

INTERNATIONALLY, WE NEED TO DO TWO THINGS at once: compete aggressively and prepare for a world of parity as well as cross-border opportunities and risks. We should seek to maintain an edge over China, with controls on semiconductors as our best tool. Of the three building blocks of modern AI—data, semiconductors, and engineering talent—chips are by far the easiest to control. Leading-edge chips, and the highly specialized tools needed to fabricate them, are still produced in just a handful of places, all of which remain broadly aligned with the U.S. government. By limiting China's access to these chips, the United States can meaningfully hamper China's AI industry. But none of these controls are airtight, and over the medium and long term, China may well circumvent the controls, either by developing methods to train AI models on older chips or by learning how to fabricate leading-edge chips itself. In the end, the restrictions on chips may end up acting as a meaningful tax on Chinese AI development but not a hard limit.

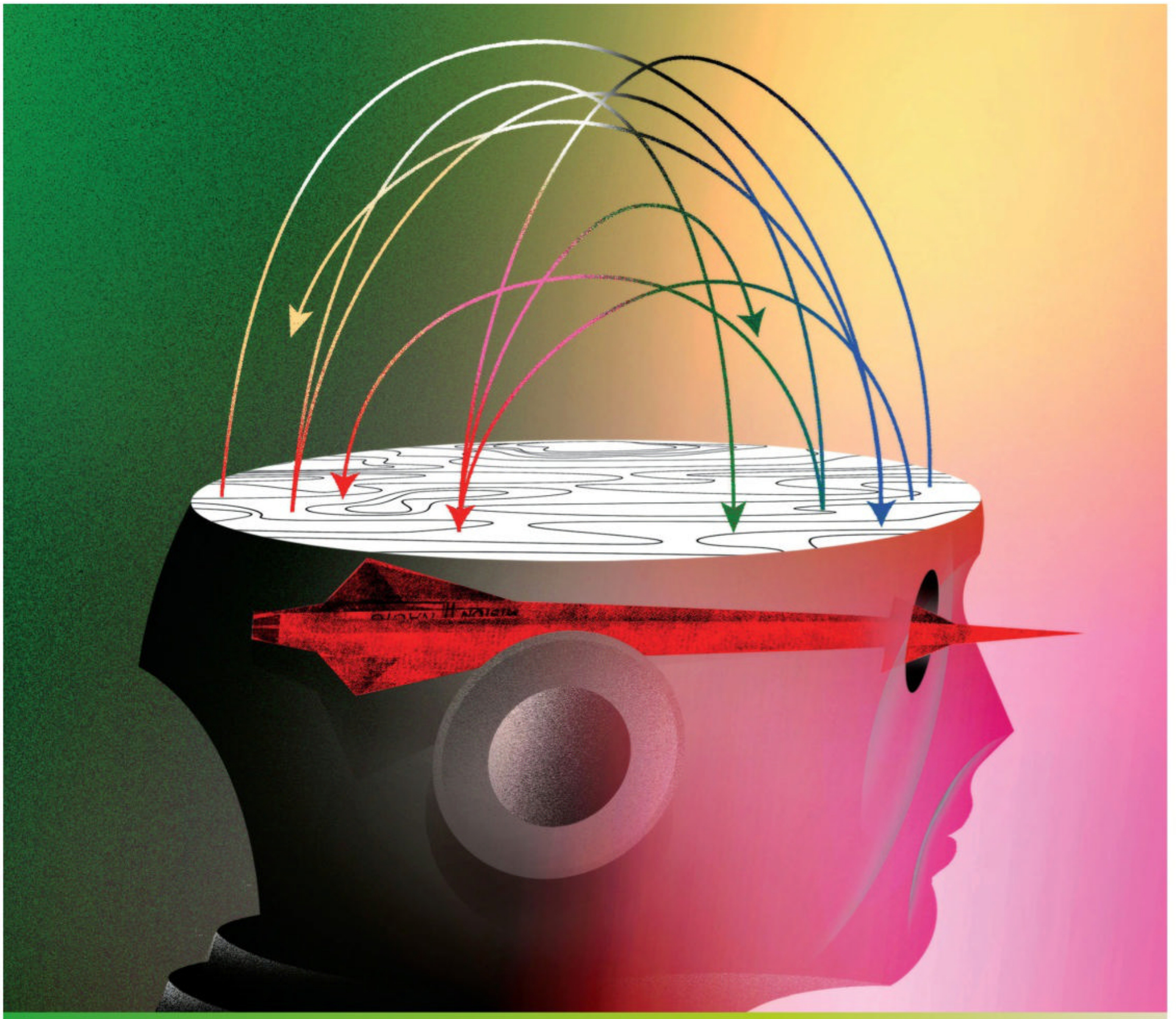
That means we must also prepare for a long-term U.S.-China relationship in which both countries are equipped with powerful AI systems that could cause catastrophes if not handled carefully. As impressive as today's AI systems are, they remain brittle and prone to unpredictable behavior. As those systems are woven into both countries' economies and militaries, the risk of AI accidents will go up. For example, military AI systems intended to identify and respond to an incoming attack could mistake unusual levels of glare for kinetic activity, kicking off defensive or retaliatory measures that rapidly escalate. This is what happened during the late Cold War, when the Soviet Union's automated missile detection system mistook glare reflecting off clouds for an incoming nuclear attack. At the time, the decision of one Soviet soldier to label this a false positive likely prevented a nuclear holocaust. Despite decades of advances in AI since then, today's systems remain prone to these types of mistakes when faced with highly unusual inputs.

Under these conditions, it won't be enough for the United States to simply have the more powerful AI system. Meaningful safety for Americans will require that both sides implement safeguards on their systems. These could include agreements not to incorporate AI into nuclear command and more extensive technical exchanges between AI scientists in the two countries on techniques to ensure the safety of advanced AI systems.

Getting there will require tough political and technical conversations between the United States and China. During some of the tensest and most dangerous moments of the Cold War, the Pugwash Conferences served as a forum at which scientists from the United States and the Soviet Union could continue to engage with one another to reduce nuclear risks, helping to lay the groundwork for the nuclear test ban and nonproliferation treaties and earning a Nobel Peace Prize. As AI advances and diffuses in both countries, strategic engagement to reduce tail risks will be an essential tool for keeping Americans safe.

As China and the United States simultaneously compete while occasionally exploring pathways to reduce tensions, AI is on the cusp of reshaping our society at a fundamental level. We cannot let naive hopes or geopolitical fears prevent us from facing this moment head on. Yes, the United States must work to maintain an AI edge over China. But that cannot come at the expense of the policies that will help Americans—and eventually, much of the rest of the world—benefit the most from AI models and keep their greatest risks at bay. The United States cannot let its principles or safety become collateral damage in its quest to outpace China at all costs. ■

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AI HAS ENTERED THE SITUATION ROOM

How data lets us see with unprecedented clarity.

BY STANLEY McCHRYSTAL AND ANSHU ROY

AT THE START OF 2022, SEASONED RUSSIA EXPERTS and national security hands in Washington watched in disbelief as Russian President Vladimir Putin massed his armies on the borders of Ukraine. Was it all a bluff to extract more concessions from Kyiv and the West, or was he about to unleash a full-scale land war to redraw Europe's borders for the first time since World War II? The experts shook the snow globe of their vast professional expertise, yet the debate over Putin's intentions never settled on a conclusion.

But in Silicon Valley, we had already concluded that Putin would invade—four months before the Russian attack. By the end of January, we had predicted the start of the war almost to the day.

How? Our team at Rhombus Power, made up largely of scientists, engineers, national security experts, and former national security practitioners, was looking at a completely different picture than the traditional foreign-policy community. Relying on artificial intelligence to sift through almost inconceivable amounts of online and satellite data, our machines were aggregating actions on the ground, counting inputs that included movements at missile sites and local business transactions, and building heat maps of Russian activity virtually in real time.

We got it right because we weren't bound by the limitations of traditional foreign-policy analysis. We weren't trying to divine Putin's motivations, nor did we have to wrestle with our own biases and assumptions trying to interpret his words. Instead, we were watching what the Russians were actually doing by tracking often small but highly important pieces of data that, when aggregated effectively, became powerful predictors. All kinds of details caught our attention: Weapons systems moved to the border regions in 2021 for what the Kremlin claimed were military drills were still there, as if pre-positioned for future forward advances. Russian officers' spending patterns at local businesses made it obvious they weren't planning on returning to barracks, let alone home, anytime soon. By late October 2021, our machines were telling us that war was coming.

DID THE MACHINES TELL US WITH 100 PERCENT CERTAINTY that Russia would invade? No, but they told us that the pattern of Russian activities leading up the war made it extraordinarily likely that Putin would order the attack. In fact, that is how AI works: Large language models learn by sifting through past data—in our case, about 10 years' worth, going back to just before Russia's 2014 invasion of Crimea. They look for patterns: Whenever X has happened in the past, Y has often been the outcome. Sometimes the correlation is weak, but other times the pattern is strong. Add up enough of these signals, and our system can make aggression predictions in future hot spots around the globe with specific levels of confidence.

Some of what AI does is not very different from traditional sleuthing. Twitter users, after all, posted open-source satellite images showing Russian equipment collecting near the border before the war. But it would take thousands of open-source investigators or intelligence analysts to replicate just one small part of the machine model. What AI can do—and humans cannot—is look at everything everywhere at once and very fast. Think of *The Big Short*, the movie about curious bankers wading through masses of mortgage data, finding suspicious quirks, and sleuthing house-to-house to uncover the shenanigans that led to the 2007 subprime crisis. AI is *The Big Short* a million times over—looking not only at mortgages but at everything that could conceivably be interesting and doing it simultaneously, automatically, and virtually in real time.

Just as importantly, the machines are dispassionate, making it easier to circumvent human biases and wishful thinking. Some experienced Russia policy hands didn't want to believe that Putin would start a war with so few troops, such poorly prepared units, and such a high risk of economic disaster for Russia. They were right about the state of Putin's preparations but projected their own definition of rationality onto the Russian leader. When the machines sift through historical patterns, they do not care for human notions of what a "rational" Putin might do—only for the likelihood that an observed pattern has led to a certain outcome in the past. With the model using countless data points from 2014 to the present moment, including Russia's first invasion of Ukraine, there were plenty of patterns and outcomes to observe.

It is less important that the large language models got it right and many lifelong experts did not. As we know from the early days of AI, machines are just as capable of hallucinating as human beings. More important is that we recognize that this tool has vast consequences for national security and foreign policy going forward—and acknowledge how little we have wrestled with those implications so far. Ask yourself: What can technology predict today about the likely course of the Russia-Ukraine war? What, for that matter, can it tell us about the future of warfare, geopolitics, and national security planning? As our team saw in the run-up to last year's invasion, technology can already tell us more than we could have imagined only a decade ago. And it will be able to tell us far more a decade from now—if we are prepared to make the most of it.

In a world where data can help us see and anticipate with unprecedented clarity, we must leverage our new capabilities and empower decision-makers by reorganizing processes designed around the inputs of human beings. The U.S. government's systems for handling information and making national security decisions were perfected for 20th-century situation rooms, where the best brains deliberated face-to-face around a table, not for 21st-century data and network technologies. Now, we need not just a bigger table and situation room—but

Illustration by BRIAN STAUFFER

their digital versions. Some of the participants of future deliberations won't be human at all but thinking machines that will empower the experts with inferences, intervention points, and what-if scenarios at faster and faster speeds of relevance. Instead of decision-makers gathering to debate how to react to an unfolding crisis, as the old system was constructed to do, they will need to routinely handle predictions of events before they happen. That alone will require a rethinking of how national security decisions are made.

Today, a confluence of developments—including the ubiquity of sensors, ever faster computers, the power of algorithms, and the open-source revolution—have brought us to a moment when more information than ever before can suddenly be collected, stored, and accessed. Now, it is also interoperable and manipulable by AI. In our headquarters, we use, aggregate, and, with the help of AI, make sense of all types of data, including early indicators, suspicious financial fingerprints, logistics activities, weapons flows, and subtle changes in infrastructure construction, as well as the tone and content of media reports. The result is a digital nervous system that warns decision-makers about gathering threats, often much earlier than in the past.

For example, our system flashed a warning sign well ahead of China's massive missile and aircraft overflights of Taiwanese waters following then-U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to the island in August 2022. Similarly, the system predicted heightened risk around Japan ahead of U.S. President Joe Biden's visit in May 2022. The media later reported unusual flights in the area by Chinese and Russian strategic bomber aircraft. The system anticipated political instability in Sri Lanka months in advance, and it also flashed Chinese activities in Kiribati and the Solomon Islands.

In all of these instances, the U.S. government could conceivably have received similar alerts from traditional intelligence sources. But importantly, the AI-generated warning often comes earlier, thanks to the power and speed of data aggregation and sense-making models. What's more, human resources are limited. Conventional intelligence might be focused on a handful of known hot spots, while seemingly placid regions of the globe may be barely monitored. AI can be your eyes when your human eyes are looking elsewhere.

Earlier warnings of impending events increase freedom of action across the entire spectrum of national security—including the diplomatic, informational, military, and economic spheres. Faster insights might also help prevent, change, or mitigate an adverse outcome before it happens. Right now, even as soldiers, politicians, and diplomats shape the final outcome in Ukraine, we're sifting data in California to predict where Russia might strike next.

Ready or not, AI already makes it possible to look at a multitude of possible futures and for us to know with surprisingly quantifiable likelihood which of them may or may not happen. Even more importantly, it gives policymakers the capacity to war-game and pressure-test possible responses during a real crisis situation—in minutes or hours, not days or weeks as in traditional tabletop exercises. The quantity of data we analyze helps predict the next card in an opponent's deck with previously unimaginable confidence. It is increasingly difficult to catch a technologically equipped nation by surprise.

But in many ways, while AI can make the picture clearer, it only makes decision-makers' choices more complex. In the run-up to the Russian invasion, the Biden administration took the innovative step of publicizing its judgments on classified intelligence about Russia's war preparations and broadcasting it to every capital. If AI makes it possible to consistently deduce your opponent's next step, how will that affect diplomatic and negotiating strategy? The possibilities are dizzying.

BY NOW, IT SHOULD BE CLEAR that increasingly powerful AI cannot be a substitute for human judgment. As valuable as the insights generated by the models can be, policymakers must still decide what to do with the information. Just like human-generated intelligence assessments, AI-enabled understanding always comes with a likelihood of an event happening—never 100 percent certainty. It always takes confidence and courage to act in time to change events; in some ways, making decisions based on AI takes even more confidence because it means making a bet on a prediction from an unconventional source.

Policymakers will therefore need to inject a dose of humility into the ways they incorporate such tools into their work, just as they do with fallible human-derived inputs. The entire system needs to lean into the fact that predictions will, at times, be wrong. AI has not created a crystal ball: Rather than expecting infallible accuracy to drive decisions on, say, the battlefield, the important thing is to have transparency about

Decision-makers will need to routinely handle predictions of events before they happen, requiring a rethinking of how national security decisions are made.



MAXAR TECHNOLOGIES/GETTY IMAGES/PLANET LABS PBC

the inputs that led to a conclusion. This process should be even more rigorous for AI-enabled judgments than for those that rely on traditional means.

Many of the experts who have spent a lifetime studying countries, geopolitics, statecraft, and war will remain indispensable in a world of AI-informed foreign policy. These professionals must be the checks and guardrails on technology-driven decisions, just as the technology is a check on human judgment with its known downsides of groupthink and blind spots. Ultimately, we can augment human intelligence, diplomacy, and military planning with a technological edge—and project forward instead of mainly looking back. In the military sphere, AI won't determine the course of every battle, but it will expand options and increase freedom of action to make decisions at the speed of relevance.

As we make further advances in predictive technology, leaders and policymakers will face a whole new set of challenges. Having so much information will force policymakers to decide which of the many situations anticipated by the machines are most critical to prepare for. And the growing power of prediction will sharply lessen the sense of uncertainty that often slows down the policy process, forcing governments to make faster decisions instead of covering all bets and preparing for all eventualities. There will be fewer excuses for delaying until the course of events removes all doubt—or for what CIA Director William Burns has called admiring the problem.

The earth-shattering ability of enhanced foresight is something governments have yet to prepare for, in their personnel and processes, national security doctrines, and much else. When adversaries use the same technologies, it will create the game-changing reality of mutually assured transparency: a new situation in which they know that we know what they are planning several steps ahead and vice versa. Just as surprise and uncertainty defined the big security events of the past—from Pearl Harbor to the Cuban missile crisis to 9/11—anticipation and the ubiquity of actionable information will define the rest of the 21st century.

And we have barely scratched the surface of the questions AI's role in national security will pose. In a world where information dominance is the great advantage, how does the United States know it is maintaining an edge over its rivals and competitors? Are Washington and its allies investing in the right technologies and concepts? Are they adopting them at the necessary speed and scale to be able to deter and, if needed, defeat future aggression?

Then there are the really tough questions for policymakers. If we can now anticipate moves by adversaries or bad actors years in advance, what is our responsibility to act? What is the role of diplomacy? How do policymakers ensure that AI's predictive powers don't simply become an easy justification for preemptively using military force, when doing so would not align with U.S. interests and values? What is the international legitimacy or legality for lethal action based on predictions made by AI? Is there an obligation to share warnings publicly? Is there any role for strategic ambiguity in a world made transparent by AI—or will Washington want adversaries to know that it knows what they're planning? When is inaction justified—or even essential?

AI is not science fiction. It is here now, and it has entered the door of the situation room. Our technology is miles ahead. But we are only now beginning to develop the human capacity to use it—and the organizational, procedural, and doctrinal changes that will be indispensable if we are to reap AI's national security benefits in time. ■

STANLEY MCCHRYSTAL is a retired U.S. Army general and an advisor to Rhombus Power, where **ANSHU ROY** is the founder and CEO.



‘WE CAN’T STOP OURSELVES’

Alondra Nelson on why scientists alone can’t mitigate the immense risks of AI.

BY RAVI AGRAWAL

A STRANGE THING IS HAPPENING in the world of artificial intelligence. The very people who are leading its development are warning of the immense risks of their work. A recent statement released by the nonprofit Center for AI Safety, signed by hundreds of important AI executives and researchers, said: "Mitigating the risk of extinction from AI should be a global priority alongside other societal-scale risks such as pandemics and nuclear war."

Extinction? Nuclear war? If they're so worried, why don't these scientists just stop?

It's easier said than done. Nuclear scientists didn't stop until they perfected the bomb. And AI has innumerable benefits, too. But the statement, alongside a chorus of recent calls for government regulation of AI, raises several questions: What should the rules governing the development of AI look like? Who crafts them? Who polices them? How do these norms exist in tandem with society's existing laws? How do we account for differences among cultures and countries?

For answers, I turned to the academic and policy advisor Alondra Nelson, who served in the White House for the first two years of U.S. President Joe Biden's administration. Nelson was the first African American and the first woman of color to lead the Office of Science and Technology Policy and led the drafting of an influential Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights. Nelson is currently a professor at the Institute for Advanced Study, an independent research center in Princeton, New Jersey. I interviewed Nelson on FP LIVE, the magazine's platform for live journalism. What follows is a condensed and edited transcript.

RAVI AGRAWAL: Industry leaders, including OpenAI's Sam Altman, recently warned of the risk of extinction from AI. What do you make of these warnings?

ALONDRA NELSON: When business leaders, entrepreneurs, and leading scientists warn us, we should take those warnings seriously. But we also need to remember that we have an opportunity to create a different future for how we want this to play out. The same voices who are ringing the bell of warning have a very important role to play in partnership with government and civil society in creating this different future. It may even mean taking our time before rolling things out to make sure that they're safe and effective.

If you use the climate crisis as a parallel, we are doing R&D and innovation around new kinds of green and clean technology. We are working in the geopolitical space around things such as the Paris climate accords. There are other ways in which we have to work across sectors—and we can do this with AI as well.

RA: At a very basic level, how do you even characterize the risks from AI? Is there agreement on that characterization?

AN: There is agreement that there's risk. AI has already suffused our lives. We are already living in a world in which there is AI all around us: daily transactions, daily interactions, if you use Face ID on your smartphone, rental and mortgage decisions, recruitment and employment decisions, Zoom—all of this is AI, algorithmic systems, in some way. We know that there are benefits: There's convenience. We save time. We have the ability to track large sums of information and data, to help make predictions, and to make better decisions.

But there are also many challenges both created by AI and exacerbated by AI: destabilization in the employment sector and what it'll mean for the future of work if more of the work that we do becomes automated. AI systems are trained on historical data, and what they output often are historical and sometimes incorrect and discriminating outputs that have implications for people's ability to have access to resources and social mobility. There are security vulnerabilities. All of the concerns we have about cybersecurity are at scale when we think about the new advanced AI. There are sustainability issues; disinformation, misinformation, the erosion of democracy and public trust; and then, of course, the potentially catastrophic outcomes that my colleagues warned about recently.

There are quite a lot of challenges and quite a lot of risks. But it's an opportunity for us to work together across sectors and to think together about how to mitigate these risks.

RA: AI itself isn't new. There are risks and benefits that people like you have been working on for years. But something seems to have shifted in the last few months. What is that exactly? Is it that the technology itself has advanced so much recently? Is it because we see more real-world applications, such as ChatGPT, in a way that we didn't a few months ago?

AN: It's both those things. It's that we have a fascinating, fun, and scary new technology. We have large language models, foundation models, which are more like the creation of the internet in that they have multifaceted uses. They're more infrastructural and ubiquitous. You can create chatbots to answer questions for you in a way that seems almost humanlike. You can create new images using applications and technologies such as Midjourney. These can happen almost instantaneously if there's a significant computational power.

What it has also created is competition among some of the big technology companies to be the first, the best, and to win in this space. Some of the conversation about risk and caution on AI is about their own concerns about whether they will stop themselves when they have such a tremendous profit imperative, and the incentive is to outcompete other companies and other countries and to be the first in class in a particular product or market. We've got some complicated incentive structures here that lead very powerful, creative, talented people who've brought us some amazing tools—technologists, engineers, designers—to also say, "We can't stop ourselves."

RA: This is also a public sector race. The United States and China are competing to be first on who uses AI. How important is that race?

STEPHEN VOSS/REDUX PICTURES

AN: It's a complicated issue. We were able during the Cold War to have both an adversarial relationship and a collaborative research relationship with the Soviet Union. If we're serious about the risk, we need to be thinking about ways that you can close doors and open windows, as we say in geopolitics. But it is also the case that there are malicious state actors and national security concerns about keeping the American public, democratic societies, and the globe safe, and we need to be clear-eyed about what that's going to require as well.

RA: How should we begin to think about regulation?

AN: We need to begin immediately. There are regulations that can already be used to help us get a handle on AI. Soon after the generative AI turn happened, the U.S. Copyright Office had to decide whether or not you could give copyright to something that was created by generative AI, and the answer was no. If there wasn't a human actor generating it, it didn't get a copyright.

Lina Khan at the Federal Trade Commission has been extraordinarily artful with regards to this. She put out a statement in April that said there is no AI exception to the law, which is to say that any of the laws that we have around discrimination, around bias, consumer liability, these sorts of things, apply whether or not an algorithmic system or an AI tool is being used. We would want to empower governments, policymakers, and legislators—just because we have a shiny new object that is operating in the social space right now, it doesn't mean that the laws, regulations, policies, and guidance that we have in place do not already pertain to those things.

We may also need new rules and regulations. What's going to happen with the labor market? We might have decided that copyright in the U.S. context must have a human being assigned to someone, but how are we thinking about training data? How are we thinking about intellectual property?

We also want to think about what sits in the civil sphere and what needs to sit in the national security sphere, and there may be overlapping pieces there. Long-term risk and those kinds of concerns are perhaps better dealt with some of the regulatory tools from national security: export controls, sanctions, having a real understanding of tracking the hardware, about where systems are going, who's building them, how are they're being built.

While we haven't been successful in Congress over the last couple of years, lots of pieces of legislation have been introduced that are the right types of legislation. Many of us, certainly in the United States, know that we need general data privacy protection and to think about competition and antitrust. After the generative AI turn, powerful multinational, often U.S.-based companies are consolidating more power.

In some ways, we are quite familiar with the things that we need to do. The challenge we face is around the political will to get them done. The ChatGPT large language model moment has been invigorating and energizing for some and challenging and scary for others. It has opened up the possibility for a broader public conversation about these issues so that the public can push their lawmakers to get this legislation over the line.

RA: Tell us why we need an AI Bill of Rights and how something like that would be different from a government trying to impose regulation on companies or countries.

AN: There are things that should remain true even as the technology changes over time. My team spent a year talking to developers, to academic researchers, to people in civil society, and to the American public.

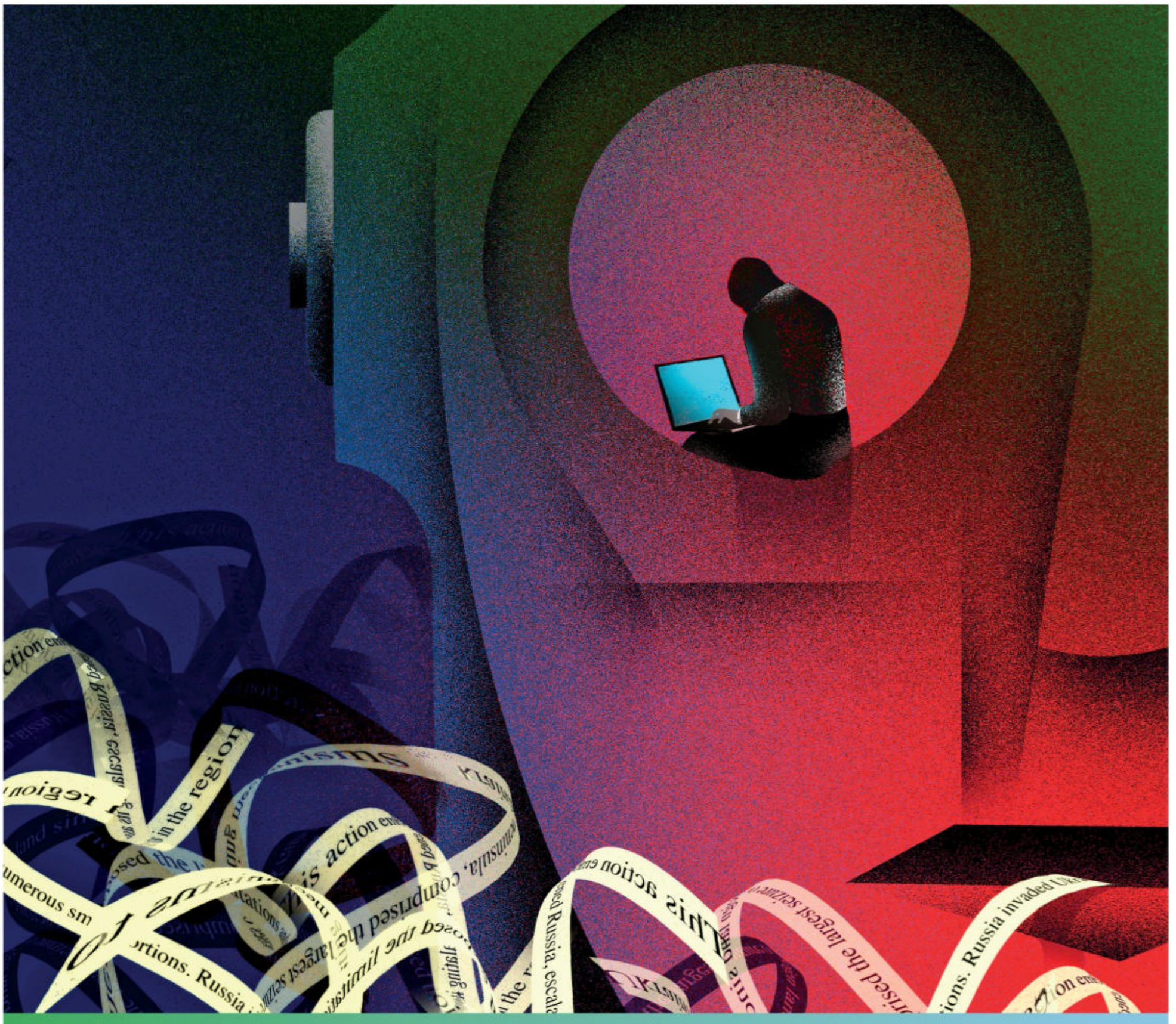
We distilled this into five principles that are actionable: Systems should be safe and effective. You should have protection against algorithmic discrimination. We should have data privacy. You should know if an AI system is being used, and you should have an alternative if you don't want to engage with an AI system, particularly for critical access to services and goods, etc.

RA: How can we build global rules? There's a danger that with every country thinking about these questions individually, we'll have a quilt patchwork of rules that malign actors could exploit.

AN: That's the challenge that we face. There are lots of efforts at coordination. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development has had principles and regulatory suggestions around AI since 2019. The G-7 agreed to coordinate on AI through something called the Hiroshima AI process in May. These conversations will be happening with the G-20 and in various constellations of actors. This is one of the most significant issues of our time because it is an infrastructural issue and because it can have multiplicative impacts and transformative effects. It will require international collaboration in the same way we do with other high-risk, high-stakes endeavors. The United Nations has been working hard in this space as well, and we need to use all of this and take the potential risk seriously enough that we're willing to come to the table, both with actors we're comfortable with and actors we sometimes are adversarial with. ■



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CAN CHATGPT EXPLAIN GEOPOLITICS?

We asked the latest generative AI system to analyze Russia's 2014 invasion of Crimea. Here's how it fared against a college student.

To the reader: In this exercise, you will be presented with two unsigned articles on Russia's annexation of Crimea. One was written by an undergraduate student, and the other was generated by OpenAI's latest language model, GPT-4, using ChatGPT Plus, a paid, premium version of the popular chatbot. Both responded to an identical prompt: "Please write a 600-700-word essay arguing that allowing Russia to annex Crimea paved

ESSAY 1

The Annexation of Crimea: A Precursor to Larger Conflict in Ukraine

By [redacted]

IN THE GEOPOLITICAL CHESS GAME, the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 marked a significant shift in power dynamics. This event, far from being a mere territorial dispute, signaled a potential resurgence of Russian expansionism and effectively undermined the post-Cold War order. This essay argues that the annexation of Crimea paved the way for a larger war in Ukraine by destabilizing the region, emboldening Russian assertiveness, and exposing the weakness of the international community's response.

The annexation of Crimea was a calculated move that destabilized Ukraine and the region. Crimea, with its strategic location and large Russian-speaking population, was an ideal target for Russia's expansionist ambitions. The annexation, by altering Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, triggered a domino effect, destabilizing the Donbas region and leading to a protracted conflict in eastern Ukraine.

By annexing Crimea, Russia demonstrated its readiness to use military force to achieve geopolitical goals. This action emboldened Russia, escalating its assertiveness in the region. The annexation was not an isolated incident but part of a larger pattern of Russian aggression, which was further evidenced by its direct and indirect involvement in the war in eastern Ukraine.

The international response to the annexation of Crimea exposed the limitations and weaknesses of existing mechanisms to prevent such violations. Despite strong condemnations and the imposition of sanctions by the West, Russia faced no significant military or political repercussions. This lack of effective deterrence has contributed to the subsequent escalation of the conflict in Ukraine.

The annexation of Crimea, therefore, created a dangerous precedent. What began as a territorial dispute evolved into a larger war, challenging the established norms of international relations and posing profound questions about the future of peace and security in the region.

The destabilization of Ukraine following the annexation of Crimea fueled separatist sentiments in the Donbas region, leading to a violent and protracted conflict. The annexation also created a power vacuum in the region, enabling the rise of various armed groups and intensifying the conflict.

The assertiveness displayed by Russia during the annexation of Crimea has further escalated the conflict in Ukraine. By demonstrating its willingness to use force to alter borders, Russia sent a clear message to the international community about its geopolitical ambitions. This brazen display of force was a catalyst for further aggression.

Finally, the inadequacy of the international response to the annexation of Crimea has exacerbated the conflict in Ukraine. The imposition of economic sanctions by the West has not deterred Russia from pursuing its aggressive policies.

The annexation of Crimea by Russia marked a turning point in the conflict in Ukraine. It destabilized the region, emboldened Russia, and exposed the limitations of the international community. As such, it paved the way for a larger war in Ukraine, posing a profound threat to peace and security in the region. ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: In order to preserve the original text from GPT-4 and the student author, the only changes made to each essay were for FP house style and small trims for length. We also converted footnotes to links in the online versions of both essays for easier reading.

Previous page: Illustration by BRIAN STAUFFER

the way for a larger war in Ukraine, stating your core argument in the first few paragraphs. Please cite all sources using footnotes." You will be asked to guess which was written using artificial intelligence. On the next spread, we will reveal the true authors, share FOREIGN POLICY's editorial comments, and offer an analysis of the strengths and limitations of AI in producing foreign-policy analysis.

ESSAY 2

The Russian-Ukrainian War: A Decade in the Making

By [redacted]

THE RUSSIAN ANNEXATION OF CRIMEA, a formerly Ukrainian peninsula, comprised the largest seizure of foreign land since the end of World War II. It defied a universal, international understanding held throughout the latter half of the 20th century: Independent countries maintain their territorial integrity. The invasion of Ukraine marked a similar departure from international norms. The seizure of Crimea began a series of smaller invasions in eastern Ukraine, all indisputably linked to the Ukrainian war. The lack of international response to the annexation of Crimea implied a similar passivity in the event of a larger invasion, lowering the perceived risk of attempting a comparable occupation and encouraging Russian action.

The annexation of Crimea received little international response or outcry in 2014. The European Union levied ineffective economic sanctions on the newly Russian-controlled territory. The United Nations formally maintained Crimea's independence, but it did not pursue further action beyond this statement. There was no NATO response to the Russian encroachment. The lack of troop deployments or physical military aid meant European and North American countries held little stake in the conflict. Contemporary researchers denounced the lack of international assistance. These scholars feared the annexation signaled the start of a larger conflict and believed the ineffectual Western response would encourage further Russian expansion and invasion. These fears were soon realized.

Russia continuously engaged in further Ukrainian seizure after 2014, just as researchers predicted. The annexation began a series of armed conflicts in eastern Ukraine, resulting in over 14,000 casualties.

The international response to these continued conflicts remained limited and ineffective. The EU imposed further—largely ineffective—sanctions, and many countries publicly denounced the conflicts, but Western countries still refused to provide military support. These smaller conflicts continued for nearly a decade without significant Western military interference or international attention.

It is clear these conflicts, beginning with the Crimean invasion, were a part of Russia's employment of "salami tactics" to eventually annex Ukraine in its entirety. Salami tactics refer to a method of slowly taking control of a region by occupying numerous small portions. Russia invaded Ukraine piecemeal, slice by territorial slice, long before the official invasion began.

The Crimean invasion assured Russia the international community would not respond with violence to small-scale annexations. The lack of international response to the Ukrainian conflict eventually convinced Russia the use of salami tactics was no longer necessary, and the country began the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The lack of international support for Ukraine in the wake of Crimea directly ensured Russia's confidence and ability to incite conflict in the region and further its territorial expansion.

The Ukraine war formally began in 2022; however, Russia's preparation to seize control in the region began with the invasion of Crimea in 2014 and continued over nearly a decade. The lack of international response to the initial annexation, as well as following acts of territorial seizure throughout this period, encouraged Russia to continue. This allowance from international communities directly paved the way for a larger conflict to begin in Ukraine. ■

FP's Verdict

By Sasha Polakow-Suransky

CHATGPT, FOR ALL ITS AMUSING POETIC OUTPUT, riddle-solving prowess, and on-demand composition, is essentially doing one thing: spitting out what it considers the next most likely word in a sequence.

"Generative AI systems are quite good at mimicking the patterns of human language," said Sarah Myers West, the managing director of the AI Now Institute and a former advisor on AI to the U.S. Federal Trade Commission. But, she added, "they lack any of the context or depth of human understanding and often are trained on static data sets that aren't up to date with events in the world." The result? "They serve more as [a] picture of what people said on the internet up until a year or two ago than they are a meaningful reflection of the reality we live in."

When instructed to write in the style of a widely published author, such as the late Christopher Hitchens, ChatGPT and other large language models can be very good mimics. When it comes to producing original analytical content, though, they struggle—and the tone can seem vague or overly generalized.

As Flynn Coleman, an international human rights lawyer and the author of *A Human Algorithm: How Artificial Intelligence Is Redefining Who We Are*, told FOREIGN POLICY via email: "These tools are not capable of original, authentic, or empathetic human thought."

"They cannot replicate the creativity, nuance, and critical thinking that we possess, nor can they generate and interrogate original arguments," she added.

While the chatbot is capable of self-improvement and correction, its writing and rewriting are formulaic rather than imaginative. Its limitations were evident in this assignment—such as when we instructed it, in an earlier interaction, to rewrite a passage arguing for a negotiated cease-fire while



1 "Geopolitical chess game" is a bit of a cliche. Best to avoid.

2 Between whom? The West and Russia? Russia and Ukraine?

3 Don't need "this essay argues." It sounds too academic.

4 A bit redundant. Could just say "emboldening Russia."

5 Do you mean depriving it of sovereignty over its own territory?

THE REVEAL: ESSAY 1

By GPT-4

IN THE GEOPOLITICAL CHESS GAME ❶, the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 marked a significant shift in power dynamics ❷. This event, far from being a mere territorial dispute, signaled a potential resurgence of Russian expansionism and effectively undermined the post-Cold War order. This essay argues ❸ that the annexation of Crimea paved the way for a larger war in Ukraine by destabilizing the region, emboldening Russian assertiveness ❹, and exposing the weakness of the international community's response.

The annexation of Crimea was a calculated move that destabilized Ukraine and the region. Crimea, with its strategic location and large Russian-speaking population, was an ideal target for Russia's expansionist ambitions. The annexation, by altering Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty ❺, triggered a domino effect, destabilizing the Donbas region and leading to a protracted conflict in eastern Ukraine.



Images produced by Stable Diffusion (center) and two others from Midjourney when given the prompt "Editorial illustration showing how Russia's annexation of Crimea led to wider war in Ukraine."

Like ChatGPT, AI image tools lack critical thinking and empathy—skills needed to turn complicated topics into original conceptual illustration. Increasingly, however, these tools *can* produce convincing knockoffs and deepfakes, especially when given prescriptive prompts, such as which visual metaphor to employ or which artists to mimic. This February, the U.S. Copyright Office ruled that illustrations produced for a comic book by the AI program Midjourney were in violation of U.S. copyright law. "A person who provides text prompts to Midjourney does not 'actually form' the generated images and is not the 'master mind' behind them," the office wrote.
—Lori Kelley, FP creative director

By annexing Crimea, Russia demonstrated its readiness to use military force to achieve geopolitical goals. This action emboldened Russia, escalating its assertiveness in the region ❻. The annexation was not an isolated incident but part of a larger pattern of Russian aggression, which was further evidenced by its direct and indirect involvement in the war in eastern Ukraine.

The international response to the annexation of Crimea exposed the limitations and weaknesses of existing mechanisms to prevent such violations. Despite strong condemnations and the imposition of sanctions by the West, Russia faced no significant military or political repercussions. This lack of effective deterrence has contributed to the subsequent escalation of the conflict in Ukraine.

The annexation of Crimea, therefore, created a dangerous precedent. What began as a territorial dispute evolved into a larger war, challenging the established norms of international relations and posing profound questions about the future of peace and security in the region.

The destabilization of Ukraine following the annexation of Crimea fueled separatist sentiments in the Donbas region, leading to a violent and protracted conflict. The annexation also created a power vacuum in the region ❼, enabling the rise of various armed groups ❽ and intensifying the conflict.

The assertiveness displayed by Russia during the annexation of Crimea has further escalated the conflict in Ukraine. By demonstrating its willingness to use force to alter borders, Russia sent a clear message to the international community about its geopolitical ambitions. This brazen display of force was a catalyst ❾ for further aggression.

Finally, the inadequacy of the international response to the annexation of Crimea has exacerbated the conflict in Ukraine. The imposition of economic sanctions by the West has not deterred Russia from pursuing its aggressive policies.

The annexation of Crimea by Russia marked a turning point in the conflict in Ukraine. It destabilized the region, emboldened Russia, and exposed the limitations of the international community. As such, it paved the way for a larger war in Ukraine, posing a profound threat to peace and security in the region. ■

6
This is a little repetitive of the wording in the intro. Let's alter the language here a bit.

7
Do you mean the Donbas specifically here?

8
Such as? Name a few groups.

9
The lead author you cite in your footnote here is not one of the authors of the report. Please include the correct citation.

taking into account possible Ukrainian objections. Given this prompt, it was not able to produce any genuine analysis of how or why Ukraine might object. GPT-4 instead simply modified the text mechanically, urging Western nations to "respect Ukraine's sovereign decisions."

In academia, there are well-founded fears that AI-generated content won't be detectable by existing tools such as plagiarism software. Students are already using tools such as ChatGPT to produce essays that aren't original but could still get a passing grade. Paul Musgrave, an assistant professor of political science at the University of Massachusetts Amherst who helped facilitate this project—by asking his students to submit essays, one of which we chose to feature here, by undergraduate Lauren Grachuk—observed that "it's a great machine for regurgitating the conventional wisdom, and like all conventional wisdom, it's imprecise and unfounded." Still, he said, "the thing about all of this for me is how easy it is for ChatGPT to get a C or a B … but how hard it is to get an A or even a B+."



The reason ChatGPT has not yet cleared that bar has to do with its inability to detect or test what is true or false. In March, linguists Noam Chomsky and Ian Roberts and AI expert Jeffrey Watumull wrote an essay in the *New York Times* pointing out that current large language models cannot go beyond description and prediction and, as such, "are stuck in a prehuman or nonhuman phase of cognitive evolution."

As David Schardt noted in a March article for the Center for Science in the Public Interest, "even when provided with accurate information, ChatGPT can get it wrong. Sometimes it puts words, names, and ideas together that appear to make sense but actually don't belong together." Indeed, many users have catalogued references to articles that don't exist and fake legal case citations.

As Chomsky and his colleagues wrote, "machine learning systems can learn both that the earth is flat and that the earth is round. They trade merely in probabilities that change over time."

Some of ChatGPT's forays into fiction quickly became evident during our interactions with the chatbot while preparing this feature. In an earlier iteration of the exercise, GPT-4 fabricated some sources with real authors on plausible topics in plausible journals—but the actual titles and dates provided led to articles that didn't exist; in other cases, GPT-4 provided realistic-looking links to JSTOR with authentic citations, yet a reference to a real book about Crimea published in 2010 came with a link that led to an article from 1950 on polynomials in a Scandinavian mathematics journal.

(The model does appear to be learning, however. Eight weeks later, most of these hallucinations seemed to have subsided; in the article we feature, it provided a genuine list of references to real articles on the topic of Crimea and Ukraine.)

The failure to distinguish truth from falsehood or the tendency to generate hallucinated content that is presented—and then accepted—as reliable information online does have more sinister implications. There are, for instance, fears that as some news and publishing outlets experiment with using large language models, false AI-produced content could flood the internet and that future models feeding on that data set will replicate and propagate falsehoods, making it increasingly difficult to discern fact from fiction in online sources.

Those risks increase when it comes to AI-generated images and videos, which have an arguably greater capacity to misrepresent reality and deceive viewers—especially in the event of deepfake videos or shocking AI-generated images of public figures emerging, say, at the height of a political campaign. Chris Meserole and Alina Polyakova presciently addressed this topic in FOREIGN POLICY in 2018, noting that such images are difficult to counter because "the algorithms that generate the fakes continuously learn how to more effectively replicate the appearance of reality."

These are still early days for large language models, and the pace of development is extremely rapid. "The reality is that these tools aren't going anywhere and will only grow in popularity—Pandora's box has been opened," Coleman said. ■

SASHA POLAKOW-SURANSKY is a deputy editor at FOREIGN POLICY.

Illustration by BRIAN STAUFFER

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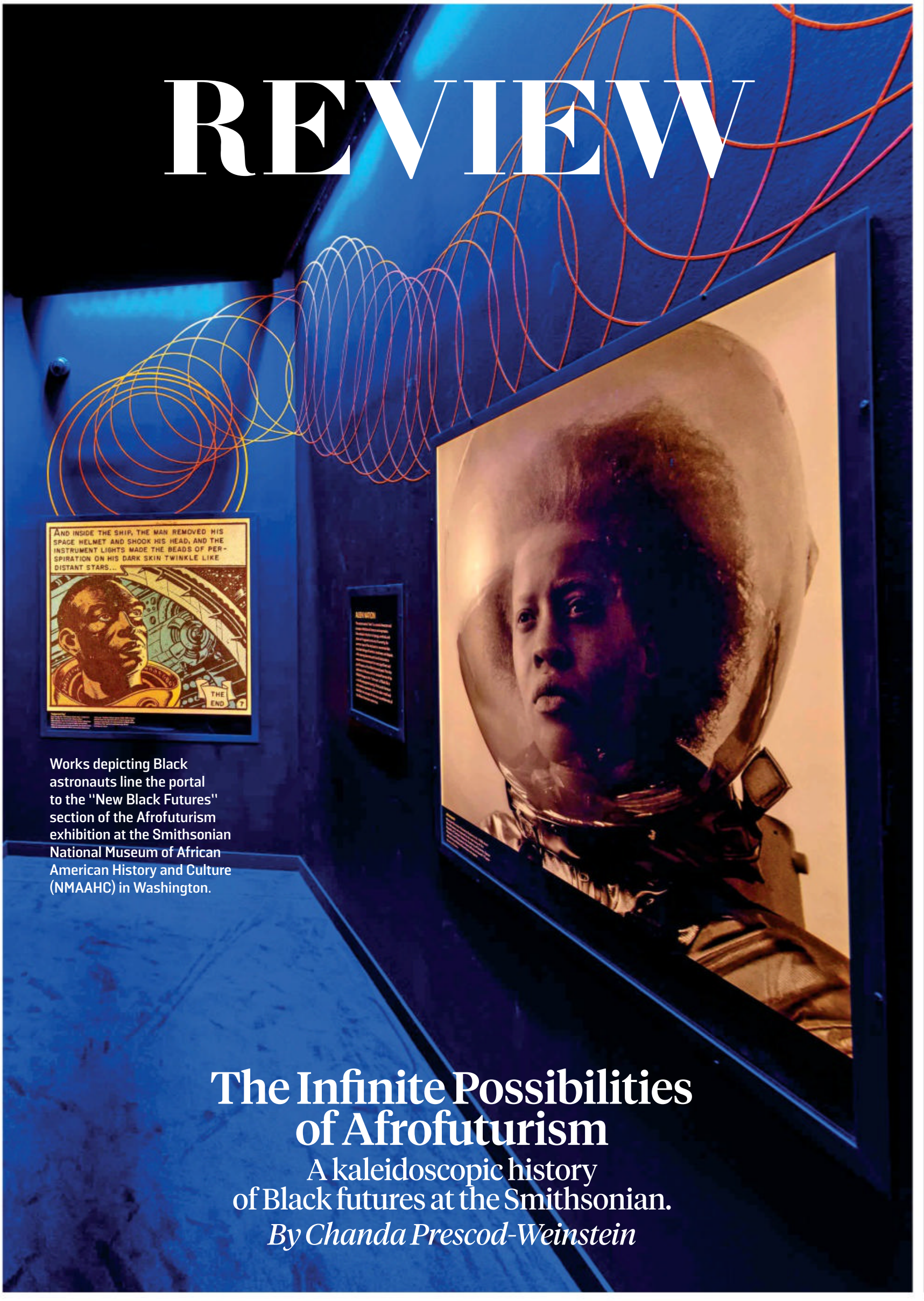
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Works depicting Black astronauts line the portal to the "New Black Futures" section of the Afrofuturism exhibition at the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) in Washington.

The Infinite Possibilities of Afrofuturism

A kaleidoscopic history of Black futures at the Smithsonian.

By Chanda Prescod-Weinstein

SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

Imagine that Benjamin Banneker, Phillis Wheatley, Harriet Tubman, Nat Turner, and Frederick Douglass, instead of being tasked with fighting slavery and arguing for Black humanity, crewed a spaceship together. This is what comes to mind upon entering the new exhibition "Afrofuturism: A History of Black Futures" at the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC).

This is not the first time a visitor to the NMAAHC is confronted with the feeling of boarding a spaceship. Known by many as the "Blacksonian," the museum itself, located in the heart of Washington, D.C., is a significant work of Afrofuturist art, politics, design, and engineering, with its structure mirroring a Yoruba-design crown that looks ready for liftoff. Every time the museum comes into view while walking down 14th Street NW, I have the thought that it is like a phoenix rising from the ashes. I have often asked myself: Why this particular association? And I have come to realize that it is because Black humanity is itself a phoenix: No matter how many times colonizers and white supremacists have tried to destroy our communities, languages, and interior worlds, we have been resilient. Black livingness, as Black Canadian scholar Katherine McKittrick has called it, is an Afrofuturist endeavor.

Afrofuturism is difficult to define, and for me, this is actually one of its pleasures. It is a kaleidoscope that offers multiple readings depending on the viewer's perspective. Writer and cultural critic Mark Dery, who has the unique role of being the only white person we see in the entire exhibition, coined the term "Afrofuturism" in the introduction to a series of interviews with Samuel R. Delany, Greg Tate, and Tricia Rose that he published in 1993 as an essay under the title "Black to the Future." In the museum's own definition, "Afrofuturism expresses notions of Black identity, agency and freedom through art, creative works and activism that envision liberated futures for Black life." Broadly speaking, it is a set of cultural practices that, as my friend, author Ytasha L. Womack, writes in the exhibition's companion book, connect "to us through radiating lines of liberation, mysticism, imagination, and technology." Womack talks of "Afrofuturist sensibilities," while the exhibition's subtitle urges us to receive Afrofuturism as a history of Black futures.

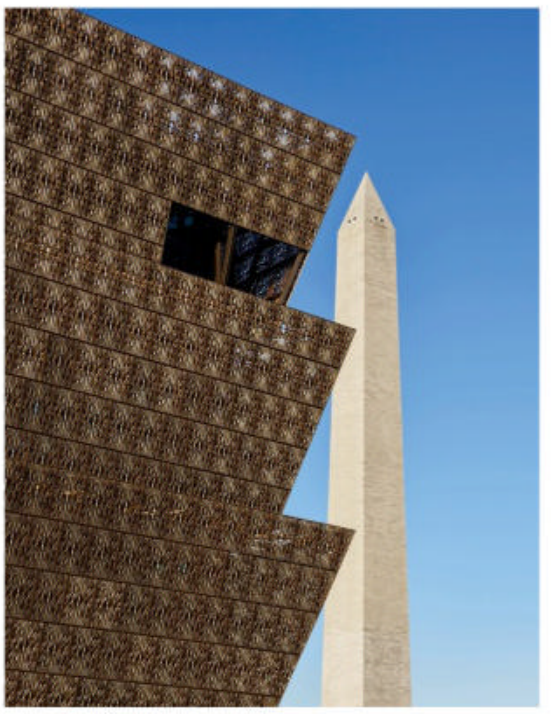
AFROFUTURISM AS AN IDEA is so big that extreme excitement and some degree of disappointment were both, for me, inevitable emotional responses to the exhibition, which features more than 100 objects from music, film, television, comic books, fashion, theater, literature, and beyond that showcase more than a century of Afrofuturism's "rich history of expression" and impact on American culture. Upon walking through the glass doors, I was so excited and overwhelmed that my eyes welled up with tears and I struggled not to jump and shout. Beyond the introductory placard, there are three screens that correspond with audio that fills the room, which curators titled "Zone 1: The History of Black Futures." Once I had calmed my nerves enough to pay attention, I immediately became aware of Womack's voice, and she was talking about my intellectual forebear, astronomer Benjamin Banneker.

Described by the exhibition as a "Colonial Afrofuturist" (a strange modifier at best to choose for "Afrofuturism"), Banneker fought colonial articulations of what researchers in science studies sometimes call "racist science" in an exchange of letters with none other than Thomas Jefferson. Banneker was himself empirical evidence that being melanated was not a barrier to having a thriving and successful intellect. A biography by historian Charles A. Cerami claims that Banneker was likely of Dogon heritage, though I do not find the argument convincing. The curators seemingly chose to emphasize this idea as fact to suggest that doing astronomical work was his specific cultural inheritance, since the Dogon, an ethnic group indigenous to areas of contemporary Mali and part of Burkina Faso, are known to be—and are presented in the exhibition as—people with a history of scientific engagement with the night sky.

I have some concerns about the way that the Dogon are invoked to point to evidence of African scientific intellect. Ghanaian philosopher Kwasi Wiredu spent part of his career arguing against this desire to assert the science-ness of Africans, rather than acknowledging that Africans, like any other large and diverse population of humans, including Europeans, have engaged in mysticisms as well as rational knowledge production.

My misgivings aside, there was something spiritually fulfilling about having Banneker feature in the discussion videos that draw the visitor's attention before anything else in the room. Seeing a scientist front and center in the Afrofuturist story is long overdue. Black scientists are too often treated like a figment of the Afrofuturist artistic and literary

We as Black people are able to construct our own sense of peoplehood.



The exterior of the NMAAHC is juxtaposed with the Washington Monument, situated at the center of the National Mall in the U.S. capital.

imagination, when in reality we've been here engaging in the Afrofuturist practice of imagining ourselves as scientists and constructing ourselves into scientific lives. Presenting Banneker, as well as poet Phillis Wheatley, as technologists and futurists is a powerful reframing that sets the stage for the rooms that follow. They envisioned us, and that makes them Afrofuturists.

IN ZONE 1, WE ARE INTRODUCED TO the blue light motif that invokes not just spaceships but also thoughts of the night sky. Indeed, the room is rather dark, occasionally making it difficult to see details on the Yoruba bowl sculpted by Olowe of Ise or the Dogon stool on display. At the same time, the room's lighting and ethereal music create an atmosphere that feels foundationally Afrofuturist. I wrote my Ph.D. dissertation with musician Janelle Monáe's Afrofuturist-inspired albums *Metropolis: The Chase Suite* and *The ArchAndroid* on repeat, and hearing her intone "You're free, but in your mind / your freedom's in a bind" as I walked through the exhibition told me that I was at the beginning of an important journey through Afrofuturism.

Also featured on screen in Zone 1 is George Clinton, the storied leader of the band Parliament Funkadelic, who speaks about the importance of Afrofuturism to him, arguably one of its most important avatars. "Afrofuturism is something I've been waiting on for a long time," Clinton says. He discusses his famous Mothership—a 1,500-pound model space lander complete with mirrored panels and red and blue lights that often appeared on stage at Parliament Funkadelic concerts and which, for unfortunate structural reasons, could not be included in the exhibition but is available to viewers just a few floors up. As Clinton shares, "We decided to get a spaceship and drive it through the galaxy, and that was our concept of the next place you hadn't seen Blacks."

In this context, it was also important to see social scientist Alondra Nelson—one of the early interlocutors of Afrofuturist discourse, who was at the time of filming the principal deputy director for science and society at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy—appear alongside Womack, Dery, and Clinton discussing the legacy of Afrofuturism.

The exit from Zone 1 takes us into a portal that precedes Zone 2. The portal is a small corridor that was perhaps my favorite location in the entire exhibition. With speakers placed on every single wall, adjacent to works of art portraying Black astronauts, visitors are treated to a surround-sound audio clip of American experimental jazz musician Sun Ra explaining that he is an "ambassador from the intergalactic regions of the council of outer space. I do not come to you as a reality. I come to you as a myth because that is what Black people are." The immersion experience of the portal's surround sound felt like the perfect homage to Sun Ra and his message that we as Black people are able to construct our own sense of peoplehood, that we are mythological in the best possible way, and that we are very much "of" the cosmos.

UPON EXITING THE PORTAL, the viewer is greeted with the response to this call: "Zone 2: New Black Futures," which houses displays about scientific racism as well as the masterpiece of the exhibition, a section on "Music and Afrofuturism." It opens with the words of cultural critic and Afrofuturism theorist Greg Tate: "Being Black in America is a science fiction experience."

This zone, the largest room in the exhibition, features two screens at the center of the room showing clips and photos of music videos and performances by Black artists who were influenced by and who helped define Afrofuturism, including Jimi Hendrix's "Voodoo Child," Lee "Scratch" Perry's "I Am a Madman," Sun Ra's "Space Is the Place," Nona Hendryx's "I Need Love," Outkast's "Prototype," and Parliament Funkadelic's "Mothership Connection." The screens hang in the center of the room, and beneath them are valuable artifacts: Monáe's ArchAndroid costume; Outkast member André 3000's notebook paired with an explanation for how he came by his Afrofuturist name; Sun Ra's space harp; Hendryx's spacesuit; and Bernie Worrell's cosmic-themed costume from Parliament Funkadelic's 1996 Mothership Reconnection Tour.

The wall to the left houses facsimiles of albums whose visual artwork and content exhibit futurist themes, including Public Enemy's *Fear of a Black Planet*, Stevie Wonder's *Innervisions*, Ornette Coleman's *The Shape of Jazz to Come*,

ALAN KARCHMER/SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

and Big K.R.I.T.'s *Cadillactica*. The albums on display show that Afrofuturism's influence cannot be isolated to a single genre but instead appears across the wide spectrum of Black musical production.

The specific emphasis on the importance of hip-hop duo Outkast's work and the inclusion of artists such as Big K.R.I.T. called to mind André 3000's famous 1995 Source Awards statement: "The South's got something to say." And I wish that everything it had to say specifically in the context of Afrofuturism had been given more room to breathe in this exhibition, which was bursting out of the space that it had to be confined to. Regina Bradley's *Chronicling Stankonia: The Rise of the Hip-Hop South* has forcefully made the case that where American cultural production is concerned, the Black South is a crucial part of the story, not just yesterday but also today.

On the wall adjacent to the album display are three screens featuring slideshows of Afrofuturist visual art, including paintings, fashion, and design. I was tantalized by an Alma Thomas painting, and I experienced a bit of heartache when I realized that this was the only way I would see one in this exhibition. In her marvelous book *Charting the Afrofuturist Imaginary in African American Art*, scholar Elizabeth Carmel Hamilton describes Thomas's work as an exemplar of "the Black female fantastic"—representations of Black women that offer possibilities that "exist in the realm of imagination and fantasy." I was hoping to see Thomas's work up close, to spend time looking at the movement of color in her painting. But in a slideshow, we only get a few seconds with each work of art.

The rest of Zone 2 is composed of costumes and images from Afrofuturist television shows, though the presentation is somewhat checkered. Despite multiple photos and videos of Black actors from *Star Trek: Discovery*—including gay Afro-Latinx barrier-breaker Wilson Cruz—there were no physical items from the show, such as one of Black costume designer Gersha Phillips's innovative designs. I didn't spend too much time fretting about this, since I knew that I would soon be treated to the uniform that Black actress Nichelle Nichols wore as the character of Uhura from the original *Star Trek* series.

BEFORE WE ARE TREATED TO the full, space-faring denouement in "Zone 3: Infinite Possibilities," we pass through a portal where we can hear Gil Scott-Heron's 1970 spoken-word poem "Whitey on the Moon," which critiques U.S. government spending on the Apollo moon landings while Black Americans languished in poverty. This audio is paired with a video featuring Black people protesting and criticizing the U.S. space program. This is the closest the exhibition gets to noticing the way Black activism of the Civil Rights Era overlaps with and is foundational to the Afrofuturism of today. This is something I missed and feel is sorely needed, particularly in this precarious moment when the teaching of Civil



Rights history is under fire from authoritarians who fear the power of children who learn history's lessons.

In Zone 3, we are treated to the Uhura uniform—which, yes, made me emotional. Here was the uniform of "the first Negro astronaut," as *Ebony* magazine declared her in 1967. For me, a Black Trekkie and space geek, this was royal attire. It stood between the flight suit that Trayvon Martin—the Black Florida teenager who once dreamed of working in aviation before he was fatally shot in 2012 while walking home from a convenience store—wore while participating in an aviation education program and Obama-era NASA Administrator Charles Bolden's actual space flight suit. We are also treated to a display featuring the still very few Black NASA astronauts and what feels like an abortive mention of the "first person of African descent in space," Cuban revolutionary Arnaldo Tamayo Mendéz.

What is missing, however, is any critique of the militarism that has so often underpinned U.S. interest in visiting space. The problem isn't the cost of the journeys—despite the comments in the portal, which if they were complete might have reflected Martin Luther King Jr.'s late-stage stance that the Vietnam War was a theft not just from Vietnamese but also from the American social safety net.

Black scientists are too often treated like a figment of the Afrofuturist artistic and literary imagination.





The "Music and Afrofuturism" portion of the exhibition (far left) and the 3D-printed costume that Chadwick Boseman wore in *Black Panther*.

The Afrofuturism exhibition chooses not to engage with critics of certain elements of Afrofuturism. There is, for example, no reflection on the 2013 Mundane Afrofuturist Manifesto, which notes, "This dream of utopia can encourage us to forget that outer space will not save us from injustice." Zone 3 does link Afrofuturism to the Black Lives Matter movement, and Martin's flight suit is in some sense the gateway to that aspect. But the zone feels small, the opposite of Zone 1 and Zone 2's capacious engagement with the question of what Afrofuturism can teach us.

It is here, as with elsewhere in the exhibition, that I also noted the decision to uncritically include men who have been accused of sexual misconduct, including Afrika Bambaataa, Michael Jackson, and Neil deGrasse Tyson. I wondered what other figures might have deserved attention instead, especially when, with the space limitations, hard choices had to be made. It is here also that there is any serious acknowledgement of Afrofuturism beyond the United States' colonial borders, and the engagement is not substantial.

INDEED, EARLY ON in both the exhibition and its companion book, one runs up against a conflict: Is Afrofuturism a distinctly African American practice? NMAAHC curator Kevin M. Strait articulates it as such in the book's introduction. Womack and several other contributors offer alternative formulations, speaking instead of the practices of a diverse, global Black diaspora. The focus of the exhibition itself is on African American experiences and practices; this is hardly surprising given the museum's name and discursive orientation. It does raise the question, though, of what is lost when Afrofuturism is read through political and national borders.

Yet at the end I was reminded of the power and importance of an exhibition like this one. As I gazed at the Uhura costume, I thought about how I had to wait until I was 40 years old to see this. I wondered what it would be like for a 10-year-old to experience an exhibition like this, how transformative it could be to their sense of self, to their spirit. In the end, this didn't remain hypothetical for long.

As I stood in front of the 3D-printed costume that Chadwick Boseman wore as the titular character in the *Black Panther* film—which takes place in the fictional African nation of Wakanda, envisioned as an Afrofuturistic sanctuary of Black excellence and scientific achievement—a class of Black children who were probably around 8 years old came through. They were noisy and boisterous and getting on their teacher's nerves. I loved it. Many of them touched the glass surrounding the costume, maybe slapped it a little harder than they should have. One boy, his hair in dreadlocks, ran up to it, shouting that it was the Black Panther's costume. "I must kneel before it!" he said, and he got down on his knees and looked up.

His generation has something that mine did not because our ancestors had the vision to dream up a museum—a political and cultural project—that might contain exhibitions like this one. As I watched him kneel, I realized that I was living in an Afrofuturist dream come to life. ■

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SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE



Banking On It

How the Fed became the lender of last resort to the whole world.

By David Wessel

Jerome Powell never expected to become the world's most powerful economic policymaker. A lawyer by training, not an economist, he was named to the U.S. Federal Reserve Board of Governors in 2012 because he had impressed Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner in helping to cajole congressional Republicans to raise the debt ceiling, and the Obama administration decided to pair a Republican (Powell) with a Democrat (Jeremy Stein) to get two board nominees through the Senate. Powell would likely have been content to cap his career as vice chair of the Fed board in Washington or as president of the New York Fed, the most prominent of the Fed's 12 regional banks. But in 2017, then-U.S. President Donald Trump had other ideas. Reluctant to reappoint Janet Yellen, a Democrat, to a second four-year term as Fed chair, he took the recommendation of his Treasury secretary, Steven Mnuchin, and chose Powell for the job.

Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell waits to deliver remarks at a conference in Washington on June 17, 2022.

KEVIN DIETSCH/GETTY IMAGES

When Powell was sworn in as chair in February 2018, the U.S. unemployment rate was around 4 percent, the Fed's preferred inflation measure was hovering around its 2 percent target, and GDP was growing at a healthy annual rate of around 2.8 percent. From a macroeconomic perspective, that was central banker nirvana.

It didn't last. If it had, two recent books by Fed reporters would not have been written: Jeanna Smialek's *Limitless* and Nick Timiraos's *Trillion Dollar Triage*.

In times of economic calm, there's not much grist for book-length behind-the-scenes accounts from Fed beat reporters. But Powell's tenure has been consequential, weathering the COVID-19 pandemic, tumult in the U.S. Treasury market, threats of firing by Trump, a new spotlight on racial inequality in the U.S. economy, a significant rethinking of the Fed's monetary policy strategy, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the unwelcome return of inflation, and, recently, a banking crisis. And while the Fed has always been a very important actor in the U.S. and international economies—the sub-subtitle of my 2009 book was "How the Federal Reserve Became the Fourth Branch of Government"—the global financial crisis and the pandemic underscored just how it has effectively become the central bank and lender of last resort to the whole world. There is a lot for a couple of journalists to write about.

Every Fed move—a quarter-point increase in interest rates, a new lending program for businesses in a pandemic, a rescue line thrown to a struggling bank—makes headlines. But in the torrent of headlines, it can be hard to put these moves into context. The Smialek and Timiraos books weave recent events into a coherent narrative and, perhaps more importantly, peel back the curtain on key figures making decisions that affect the entire global economy.

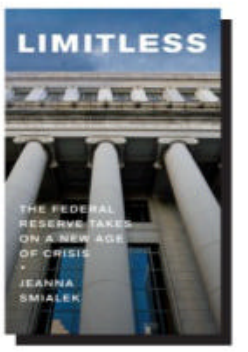
READERS SHOULD KNOW that I read these books as an insider. I covered the Fed in the Alan Greenspan and Ben Bernanke years for the *Wall Street Journal* and wrote a book about the Fed's role in the global financial crisis. In my current job as director of the Brookings Institution's Hutchins Center on Fiscal and Monetary Policy, I talk frequently to both Smialek and Timiraos. I read and commented on Timiraos's manuscript. Smialek's book opens with an unnamed interviewer asking Powell on a webcast in the early weeks of the pandemic how much support the Fed could provide during the emergency. ("There's no limit on how much of that we can do," Powell said.) The interviewer was me.

The aggressive support for the economy that the Powell Fed provided in the months that followed that conversation is central to both books. Each one is an easy read—a digestible 300 or so pages written clearly enough to be understood by readers who don't use terms such as "basis points" in daily conversation while also offering enough tidbits to entertain scrupulous Fed watchers.

Yet while the books have obvious overlap, they are quite different. Timiraos, the *Journal*'s chief economics correspondent, focuses tightly on the monetary and fiscal response to the pandemic with just enough historical context to provide necessary perspective. It's the traditional, fast-paced first draft of history. The quotes demonstrate Timiraos's substantial access to Powell and others; the source notes repeatedly cite "author's interview." Mnuchin is a major character, dubbed "Secretary Minutiae" because of his reluctance to delegate negotiation of the details on COVID-19 lending programs. Although Timiraos avoids judging the wisdom of the Fed's actions, Powell is clearly the hero who saved the U.S. economy from collapse.

Smialek, the *New York Times*' Fed reporter, also recounts the pandemic but offers a more meandering story, occasionally zigzagging chronologically. (One extraordinary footnote in Chapter 7 reads: "For context, the events related on the pages ahead came chronologically before—in fact, in the lead-up to—the more drastic Fed response [to the pandemic] detailed in Chapter 2.") Her ambition is to describe the Fed's expanding role in the economy as an institution; she devotes about a fifth of the book to the history of the Fed dating back to the 1930s and includes a full chapter on climate change and digital currencies.

Unlike Timiraos, Smialek seeks to distinguish herself from the "[m]any people who write about the Fed" who "suggest that its officials have saved the world" or "that they have ruined the world." Fed officials, including Powell, are "ordinary people who control increasingly potent tools," she writes. (Maybe, but Greenspan was anything but "ordinary"; Yellen rose to the top of a profession that was—and, in many respects, still is—hostile to women; and Bernanke won a Nobel prize.) Smialek makes a major character of Neel Kashkari, the dynamic, press-friendly, and





Limitless: The Federal Reserve Takes On a New Age of Crisis

JEANNA SMIALEK, KNOPF, 384 PP., $30, FEBRUARY 2023

Trillion Dollar Triage: How Jay Powell and the Fed Battled a President and a Pandemic —and Prevented Economic Disaster

NICK TIMIRAOS, LITTLE, BROWN AND CO., 352 PP., $30, MARCH 2022

charismatic president of the Minneapolis Fed who has an expansive view of the Fed's remit—not because he is central to the action but because she finds he has an "interesting perspective." Throughout the book, it's not clear to whom she has been talking. "To protect my sources and allow a narrative format," she writes, she doesn't identify her sources even in footnotes.

So, what do we learn about Powell, who must be reminded of the giants who preceded him every time he walks by the portraits of former Fed chairs that hang in the corridor outside his office? When the Obama administration was considering Powell for the Fed board, Smialek reports, a memo to the president read, "Perhaps the biggest downside of Powell is that he would bring less thought leadership and creativity … than some other candidates might. Nevertheless, he brings many other strengths." After he got to the Fed, according to Timiraos, he groused that the Fed's Ph.D. economists talked to him as if he were a "golden retriever."

Although Powell became an assiduous student of economics, he doesn't think like an economist. Timiraos sees that as a strength, at least during the pandemic. Randal Quarles, who was picked by Trump to be Fed vice chair for bank supervision, tells Timiraos that economist central bankers often confront a crisis and decide that "monetary policy isn't the right tool here." But Powell, in Quarles's words, approached the problem by asking: "What's the problem we're facing? How can we address that?" Quarles says any other Fed chair would have "done much less and moved much more slowly" in the pandemic's early months, but Powell was clearly right.

If Bernanke and Yellen sometimes sound as if their first language is economics, Powell's is English. His conversational style, Timiraos writes, reflects his interest in reaching ordinary Americans—a "Jimmy Stewart of monetary policy," as a former top Fed economist put it—though it sometimes confuses financial markets, an important audience for a Fed chair. His affability proved a huge asset for the Fed on Capitol Hill; members of both parties stood behind him when Trump attacked him for refusing to significantly lower interest rates in 2019. Timiraos writes that Powell followed four rules in that painful period: Don't talk about Trump; when provoked, don't return fire; stick to the economy, not politics; and develop allies outside the Oval Office. If a future Fed chair confronts similar circumstances, those rules will be a playbook.

As both books recount, Powell presided over a significant change in the Fed's monetary policy strategy, tweaking the 2 percent inflation target that Bernanke established in 2012 because, for years, inflation had been persistently below target, even as the unemployment rate hit historic lows. In August 2020, the Powell Fed declared that after periods of below-target inflation, the Fed would aim for periods of above-target inflation so that inflation would average 2 percent. On the employment side, the Fed essentially said it would no longer preemptively raise interest rates only because unemployment was projected to fall precipitously unless it saw evidence of inflation rising to unwelcome levels. Work on the framework preceded the pandemic, but the timing of the unveiling proved awkward. As Timiraos puts it, the strategy effectively committed the Fed to reacting "too late" to any uptick in inflation.

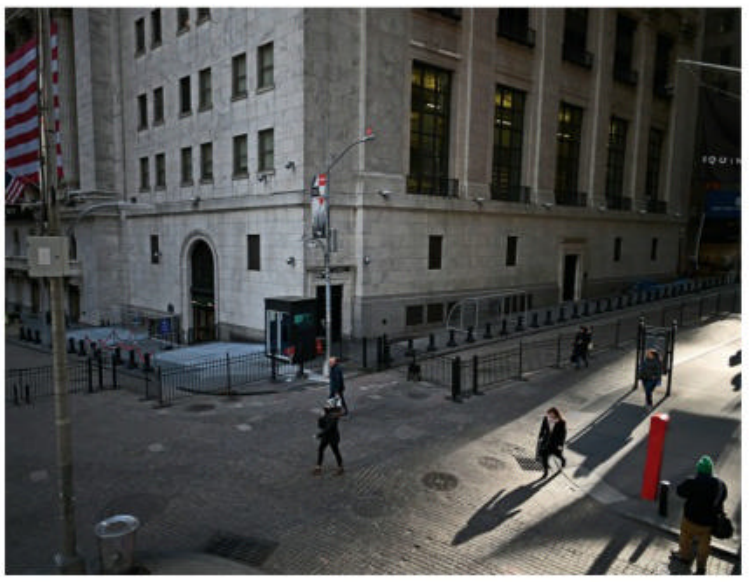
Two of Powell's lieutenants figure prominently in both books: Quarles and Lael Brainard, an economist appointed to the Fed in 2014 who is now chief of President Joe Biden's National Economic Council. Quarles worked in the U.S. Treasury Department in Republican administrations, Brainard in Democratic ones.

In classic Washington fashion, Powell and Quarles both worked at the law firm of Davis Polk & Wardwell and at the politically well-connected private equity firm Carlyle Group. Powell recruited Quarles to work with him at the Treasury Department in the early 1990s and recommended him to Trump for the Fed post.

Smialek has a great time contrasting Quarles's free-market, small-government views with those of one of his heroes—and his wife's great-uncle—President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Fed chair Marriner Eccles, who she says was a Keynesian before the word was invented. (Eccles, though, as she recounts, later played a key role in establishing the Fed's independence from the White House.) Smialek describes Quarles as an "unusually colorful character for a Fed official," though the only evidence she offers is his habit of peppering speeches with phrases such as "kaleidoscopic gallimaufry." Timiraos dwells mainly on Quarles's role in fashioning the Fed's response to the pandemic. Smialek writes a bit more about his role—newly relevant in light of this year's banking crisis—in loosening some of the regulatory strings imposed on banks after the global financial crisis with Powell's support and over Brainard's strenuous objections.

Brainard found herself as a key economic advisor to Powell during the pandemic—the "lone liberal," as Smialek puts it, on the Fed board on bank regulatory issues. Smialek is a Brainard fan: "Owing in large part to her thoroughness and competence, Brainard maintained the respect of her colleagues, even though she was out of step with them ideologically—in Powell's case, slightly, and

Both books are stuffed with juicy little details, reminders that policymaking is not all white papers and spreadsheets.



People pass the New York Stock Exchange on Wall Street as stocks posted steep losses following emergency moves by the Federal Reserve to try to avert a recession on March 16, 2020, during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic.

JOHANNES EISELE/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

in Quarles's, very. She was often prepared to the point of absurdity." Brainard, Timiraos reports, was quicker to see the threat from COVID-19 than Quarles. She favored more forceful Fed and Treasury responses to the pandemic and thus was a particularly important early ally when Powell wanted to move aggressively. In 2021, though, she became Powell's rival when Biden was weighing whether to reappoint or replace him. She clearly wanted the job, but the White House apparently preferred the continuity that came from reappointing Powell (as President Barack Obama had done with Bernanke) and perhaps thought Powell would have an easier time winning Senate confirmation without delays.

Quarles has since left Washington, and Brainard has a key White House post from which she is pressing the Fed and other regulators to undo much of what Quarles and the Trump administration did to ease up on the banks. If she ends up succeeding Yellen as treasury secretary, people will be scrutinizing the passages about her in these books.

In addition to explaining how and why the Fed did what it did during the pandemic, both books are stuffed with juicy little details, reminders that policymaking is not all white papers and spreadsheets. In 2008, for instance, a group of Utahns offered a 6-foot-tall bronze statue of Eccles to the Fed, but folks at the Fed—including Kevin Warsh, the Fed governor who oversaw such things—were unenthusiastic about accepting it. The Fed did eventually take it but put it in a less central place. When Warsh circulated as a potential Fed chair, there were published reports that because of this flap, as well as reported clashes between Quarles and Warsh when they both worked in the George W. Bush administration, the two men wouldn't work well together at the Fed. This, Smialek writes, hurt Warsh's chances.

UNFORTUNATELY, NEITHER BOOK DELVES MUCH into how and why the Powell Fed misread the economy or why it was slow to pull back on its extraordinarily stimulative monetary policy. The Fed's tardy response to the unexpectedly rapid (though welcome) recovery from the COVID-19 recession and Biden's enormous American Rescue Plan, with its $1,400-per-person stimulus checks, contributed to today's inflation problem. In short, the Fed expected the spurt of inflation to dissipate—"transitory" was the word—and kept interest rates near zero and continued to buy long-term bonds longer than now seems wise. Low interest rates, as intended, spurred borrowing and spending that outstripped the economy's capacity to supply goods and services, in part because of disruptions to supply chains. When demand exceeds the available supply, prices tend to rise; it's a recipe for increased inflation.

Did top Fed policymakers rely on forecasts from the Fed staff that proved to be too optimistic about inflation? Were they lulled into complacency by years in which unemployment fell and inflation didn't rise? Were policymakers trying to demonstrate that they embraced their new framework by keeping rates low? Did they lock themselves into inaction by their guidance to financial markets? (Powell famously said in June 2020: "We're not even thinking about thinking about raising rates.") Or, given all the uncertainties about how badly the pandemic would damage the economy, did they simply decide that the risk of doing too much to stimulate the economy was wiser than doing too little?

These questions are left unprobed. Timiraos's reporting ends with Biden's November 2021 reappointment of Powell for a second term as Fed chair; his book came out in March 2022. Smialek's came out a year later, in February 2023, but her reporting seems to have stopped at the end of 2021. She barely mentions the aggressive series of rate hikes that the Fed began in March 2022, raising the key short-term rate from near zero to between 4.75 percent and 5 percent in less than 12 months and leading many forecasters in the spring of 2023—including the Fed's—to predict a recession before year's end.

Powell is not prone to introspection in public. History will judge the Fed, he says. But at a Hutchins Center event last November, he told me: "One piece of guidance that we gave that I probably wouldn't do again is we said we wouldn't lift off [raise interest rates from zero] until we saw both maximum employment and price stability. I don't think I would do that again." A return of inflation, he said, simply seemed unlikely after so many years of very low inflation. "And yet here we are." ■

DAVID WESSEL is a senior fellow and the director of the Hutchins Center on Fiscal and Monetary Policy at the Brookings Institution.

Who Can Tell Native Stories?

A new book reaches the outer limits of what European-style academic research can accomplish.

By B. "Toastie" Oaster



KENT MONKMAN

It's not as if all Native stories are sacred. Natives like to spin a good yarn like anybody else, telling jokes, fables, or raucous tales of the trouble their buddies got into. But Native people are, without question, storytellers. That's part of the heritage. And sacred or not, Native stories are special. They build bonds. They can heal trauma or preserve suppressed traditions and histories. Some carry teachings that help guide Native children so that their minds and actions match their cultures. Stories can also be hazardous in the hands of the wrong person. Some might be inappropriate to a listener who's too young, or outside the tribal culture, or uninitiated into a certain life path or profession. Some must be told exactly as the elders told them—like reciting Shakespeare.

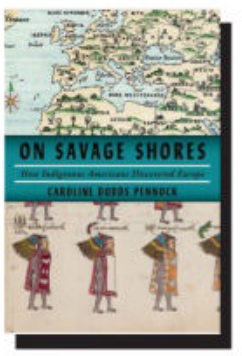
Most ancestors in North America didn't leave their most sacred stories lying around in books to be misinterpreted and abused. They safeguarded these treasures carefully through oral storytelling. This makes some Native stories extraction-proof, transferred only with intention and consent. When a Native person receives a story, they're taking on a responsibility—to tell that story right, to protect it, and to be accountable for wherever it goes and whatever damage it might do. You can't get a Native story without first earning the storyteller's confidence. If you tried to force one out of a Native person, they might fill your ear with bullshit just for kicks—and maybe charge you a hundred bucks for the "sacred knowledge" you just acquired—only to go off and tell *that* story to their cousins for a laugh. Because stories are unextractable, they're one of the last resources over which

Native people have theoretical and practical sovereignty. And that sovereignty is sacred.

On Savage Shores: How Indigenous Americans Discovered Europe is an attempt by British historian Caroline Dodds Pennock to dig through European historical records from the age of tall ships, searching for Native stories. The author pores over old papers, tracking down Indigenous people who lived in the shadows of colonizers as slaves, "wives," and diplomats, their presences appearing quite literally in the margins of maps, receipts, journal entries, and other loose bits of detritus. The written records, however, tend to say very little about these individuals. The glimpses we get are filtered through the colonial gaze: sometimes paternalistic or gawking, other times overtly racist, scanty, and usually of dubious accuracy.

But the records say volumes about Europe's belligerents, making this effectively a book about colonizers: figures such as Hernán Cortés of Spain and his greed-addled ilk, along with their enablers, including King Charles V, Queen Isabella, various popes, and the Spanish courts. Spending a lot of time with these figures is not very fun or illuminating for an Indigenous reader. Of course, Indigenous readers will likely be turned away by the book's title, which uses a racial slur—despite the author's attempt in the preface to justify it as an ironic inversion.

Pennock is clear about her good intentions—that she wants to see Native people empowered and represented, the agency of these individuals and their contributions to global history finally acknowledged by academia. But the quest has sent the author to the outer limits of what European-style academic research can accomplish, trying to dismantle the master's worldview using the master's tools. Her efforts terminate in a cul-de-sac. Obsession with paper documents can only go so far, and this fundamentally white approach simply ends up re-platforming historical white men.



On Savage Shores: How Indigenous Americans Discovered Europe

CAROLINE DODDS PENNOCK, KNOPF, 320 PP., $32.50, JANUARY 2023

Facing page: *Welcoming the Newcomers* (2019) is part of Cree artist Kent Monkman's *mistikôsiwak* (Wooden Boat People), a diptych of two paintings commissioned for the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Great Hall in New York City. The painting reimagines European colonizers' arrival in North America and references both Indigenous and European art traditions.

Sometimes, the result is benign—we learn some interesting things about 16th-century Spanish laws and politics around slavery, for example, and there's a brief respite where Pennock explores the history of Native North American first foods in Europe ("Irish" potatoes and "Italian" tomatoes, for instance)—but other times it's re-traumatizing, as when Pennock quotes from a colonizer's detailed description of his rape of an Indigenous woman.

These maneuvers reflect the European value of academic detachment but do little to illuminate the Native stories Pennock is after. The text sweeps the historical grounds with its searchlight of the white gaze, only to find that most of its Indigenous subjects have already escaped.

IN 1584, AS PENNOCK RECOUNTS, two Coastal Algonquin men named Wanchese and Manteo became translators for a British colonizer. They were the first of many Algonquin-speaking people to visit London—whether as travelers or captives is unclear.

Though the records say almost nothing about what Wanchese and Manteo did in London, we spend pages reading about what English gawkers thought about them, which queens and courts they were probably presented to, and what ridiculous European costumes they might have worn (willingly or not). Pennock pauses periodically to wonder what they must have thought of all this, speculating that it's "likely that they were startled by the magnitude of the city, the teeming streets, and the expansive stone structures dominating the landscape."

Pennock demonstrates that it was Wanchese and Manteo who were responsible for the English-Algonquin translations that European men took credit for. It's the author's way of transferring agency from the colonizer to the Indigenous people who did most of the work—a small justice to the two travelers but not without its own shades of white saviorism. This attempt to bestow agency is central to the objectives of the book, a continuation of five centuries of missionaries, policymakers, and teachers who believe it's their job to help Indigenous people.

In 1585, after getting some head pats from his monarch, the colonizer who brought Wanchese and Manteo to London went back with them across the Atlantic to do a little more colonizing. He ran his ship aground off the coast of Roanoke lands, and Wanchese promptly split, escaping back to his homelands to rabble-rouse against the colonizer he had sailed with. "He had apparently had enough of English hospitality," Pennock writes. "Once Wanchese leaves the oversight of the English, he also largely disappears from the sources, making it hard to trace his later life," she adds, with what might be a whisper of ruefulness. Indigenous readers,



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if there are any, will more likely jump up and cheer at this point: *Go, Wanchese! You did it, man!* Whether he went on to foment resistance, as Pennock suggests, or marry his true love, or get eaten by alligators, that's Wanchese's story. And he managed to keep it out of the white gaze.

The white gaze has trouble with object permanence. But Native histories do exist, and Native agency exists, whether or not European-descended people are able to document, organize, categorize, or define those things.

IN 2017, THE PHOTOGRAPHER JOSUÉ RIVAS (Mexica and Otomi) gave a TEDx talk in Rapid City, South Dakota, about the importance of Indigenous people telling Indigenous stories. It was the year after the start of protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline at Standing Rock, where he had spent six months documenting Indigenous resistance. "We were in charge of our narrative, and that was powerful," he said. "That's how we create our reality of our people."

Rivas's photographs focused on resilience and prayer instead of controversy and conflict, presenting, in his words, "a side of the story often overlooked and misunderstood by the non-Native photojournalists." Native documentarians operate differently, Rivas said, out of respect for protocol and cultural boundaries, by avoiding extraction and even sometimes putting down the camera to participate in ceremony. "By telling our own story, we are reclaiming our identity and healing our historical trauma."

On Savage Shores is a white story *about* white stories about Natives—even if it is critical of colonizers. Again and again throughout the narrative, Pennock pauses to wonder what the Indigenous subjects must have felt or thought. She's careful never to speak for them and keeps a short leash on her imagination. But at no point does she consult contemporary Native scholarship. Only after 213 pages, in the very last chapter, do we finally hear from any named Native people at all—Red Shirt and Black Elk, two historical figures, quoted via white people who may or may not have recorded them accurately.

Ógle Šá, aka Joseph Red Shirt, was a complicated figure. He served in the U.S. Army and enrolled his own children in the government-run Carlisle Indian Industrial School's inaugural class. He opposed Native resistance movements such as Ghost Dance and those of Lakota leader Crazy Horse; white folks considered him progressive for it. He also

The question gnawing at the heart of this book is: Should a non-Native historian have attempted it?



KENT MONKMAN

Miss Europe (2016) is part of Monkman's series *The Four Continents*, which riffs off a fresco by 18th-century Italian painter Giambattista Tiepolo. Each painting in Monkman's series examines Eurocentric misconceptions about the world's regions and explores themes of colonization, globalization, and exploitation.

traveled with Buffalo Bill to England, where he exoticized Indigeneity for fawning crowds.

"In this double life, Red Shirt saw himself not at all as the gawkers imagined him," Pennock writes (but not before she first quotes a white man, Buffalo Bill, on what Red Shirt "clearly felt" when meeting Britain's Queen Victoria). "The chief spoke poignantly to an English reporter about the future of his people: 'The Indian of the next generation will not be the Indian of the last. Our buffaloes are nearly all gone: the deer have entirely vanished; and the white man takes more and more of our land.'" Pennock chose this quote to underscore that Ógle Šá was not the dancing savage the English took him for. But she also inadvertently recycles the "vanishing Indian" trope—the myth in U.S. culture and politics that Native people are part of the past—with a quote that, even if it was transcribed exactly as Ógle Šá said it, serves the white agenda.

HeŠáka Sápa, aka Black Elk, was of a different political stripe. He was a leader in the Ghost Dance movement and fought alongside his cousin Crazy Horse. But he joined his fellow Lakota Ógle Šá on the trans-Atlantic voyage with Buffalo Bill. Pennock quotes HeŠáka Sápa about his motives for joining: "I wanted to see the great water, the great world and the ways of the white men; this is why I wanted to go." The line originally comes from an interview with white poet John Neihardt for his book *Black Elk Speaks*, which has a questionable reputation for the degree to which the author likely massaged or misinterpreted HeŠáka Sápa's words.

During their interviews, HeŠáka Sápa spoke in Lakota, and his son, Ben Black Elk, translated his words into "Indian English," the intertribal lingua franca. Neihardt would repeat sentences back in standard English, and his daughter Enid would jot them down in shorthand. In some cases, Neihardt's other daughter Hilda would type notes. These typed and shorthand transcriptions are the basis for white anthropologist Raymond DeMallie's book *The Sixth Grandfather*, partly written as an answer to the dubious authenticity of *Black Elk Speaks*. It's from *The Sixth Grandfather* that Pennock quotes.

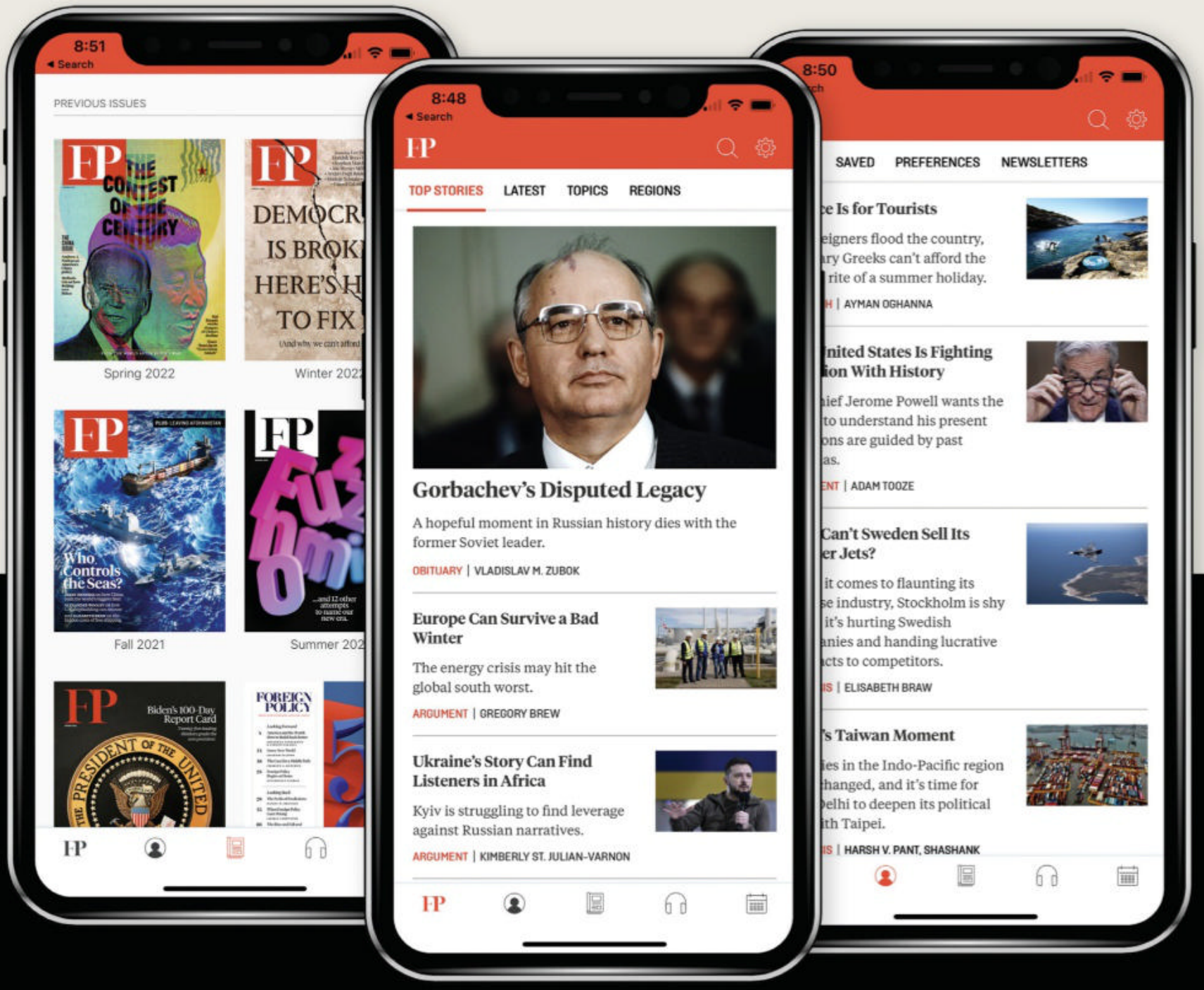
So HeŠáka Sápa's words reach us only after filtering through no less than five intermediaries—four of them white. Why not just talk to a Native person? HeŠáka Sápa has living relatives. There are Lakota historians working today. Instead, Pennock's book presents Natives through layers of whiteness and relegates them to the past.

The question gnaws at the heart of *On Savage Shores*: Should a non-Native historian have attempted this book? There are effective ways to use colonial tools against colonialism, such as when researchers last year studied place names in U.S. national parks and found that they support settler-colonial mythologies and racism. Here, scholars were turning the white gaze (academic research) not upon Native people but upon a white system (the National Park Service) with a critical eye. Pennock's formidable research skills might have been better spent similarly deconstructing white systems of power.

As for the many other North Americans who crossed the Atlantic to visit Europe during early colonization, white academia may never know what they thought or felt, who they went on to love, and how they processed their trauma or described to family the horrors of uncivilized Europe, where class and gender disparities foreshadowed their own homelands' capitalist futures. The gaze of whiteness cannot peer into those stories, despite what must be a frustrated longing to do so. Those Indigenous travelers kept their stories, and they're heroes for it. That, perhaps, is the ultimate expression of Native agency, even if it's not the one the author set out to discover. ■

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Keri Russell as Kate Wyler in an episode of *The Diplomat*.

ALEX BAILEY/NETFLIX

Art of Diplomacy

The foreign service finally gets the Netflix treatment.

By Robbie Gramer

The first thing you need to know about the U.S. State Department, if you ever want to work there, is that most of your job will be uncovering devious international conspiracies while surrounded by hot people who all personally know the president.

Or at least that's what the showrunners of Netflix's glitzy new political thriller *The Diplomat* would have you think.

The Diplomat follows Kate Wyler, played by Keri Russell, a hard-nosed, no-nonsense career foreign service officer abruptly tapped to be the U.S. ambassador to the United Kingdom in the wake of a major international crisis. (Minor plot spoilers from here on.) She and a coterie of her embassy co-workers find themselves tasked with preventing a bumbling British prime minister from dragging the United States into a disastrous war in the Middle East based on a combination of faulty intelligence and political gamesmanship (a plot that should sound familiar, in an inverted sort of way).

And there's an entire quasi-rom-com subplot with some *Veep*-like vibes, with Wyler's devilishly handsome and conniving soon-to-be-ex-husband, Hal (played by Rufus Sewell), an ambitious, savvy, and insufferable diplomat in his own right. Oh, and another sub-subplot on the political future of Wyler, who, unbeknownst to her, is being groomed for the vice presidency.



Ali Ahn as CIA station chief Eidra Park and Ato Essandoh as Stuart Hayford, Wyler's deputy chief of mission, navigate international affairs in *The Diplomat*.

The show's creator, Debora Cahn (a veteran of other Washington-centric blockbuster shows such as *Homeland* and *The West Wing*), clearly put a lot of effort into injecting a dose of realism into life as a diplomat, consulting 60 experts, including current and former diplomats, as the show came together, as *Politico* reported. The show has drawn something of a cult following within the State Department, maybe because shows and movies on the State Department are so few and far between. I polled about a dozen current and former U.S. diplomats for their views on the show to see what it gets wrong about life in the foreign service and what it absolutely nails, grading on the curve, of course, of it being a taut thriller that needs some artistic license to keep the plot humming along.

The short answer is: The show gets a lot of small details right, and it gets a lot of big details wrong, but some of that can be forgiven because, in the words of one current senior foreign service officer, "if it was truly realistic about life as a diplomat, this show could be boring as hell."

Even as an outsider, I had a lot of questions about how much realism there was in the show's first episode. How did Wyler go from being told by the president she'll be ambassador to London to actually becoming ambassador to London without a drawn-out, eight-month-long confirmation process by a debilitatingly partisan Senate? Since when do presidents pick ambassadors to Western European countries based on actual skills and experience, instead of a $2 million thinly veiled pay-to-play campaign donation bribe? Also, why aren't three separate National Security Council staffers trying to micromanage every aspect of the ambassador's job at every turn? I mean, that's what actual U.S. foreign-policy making is all about.

> "If it was truly realistic about life as a diplomat, this show could be boring as hell."

Still, some current and former officials say, there's a patina of authenticity that gives *The Diplomat* more legitimacy than your run-of-the-mill Washington political thriller. For starters, the set includes Drexel furniture, the (in)famous and ubiquitous furniture brand that fills nearly every U.S. government worker's pre-furnished home abroad and was instantly recognizable to every foreign service officer, or FSO, I spoke to who watched the show.

"The furniture in Rufus's guest room, that was perfect—it looks totally like standard-issue FSO housing," said Jeff Rathke, the president of the American-German Institute, who spent 24 years in the foreign service.

The show also shines a spotlight on the ambassador's No. 2, the deputy chief of mission, or DCM. DCMs play crucial behind-the-scenes roles in managing an embassy and serving as a fixer and confidante for the ambassador. "The dynamic between the ambassador and the DCM in the show … it can be pretty realistic because the DCM's job is really to help the ambassador manage her work and navigate all aspects of the job, big and small," said Lewis Lukens, a former senior career diplomat who served as the DCM at the U.S. Embassy in London from 2016 to 2019.

Another aspect the show gets right, Lukens and others said, is how life in the foreign service can throw big wrenches into personal relationships. Ato Essandoh, who plays DCM Stuart Hayford in the show, has hit a rough patch in his situationship with Ali Ahn, who plays CIA station chief Eidra Park, as they debate whether one of them has to put their

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next big career move on pause for the sake of their blossoming romance. "That's a very foreign service problem for tandem couples—this tension between 'my career, your career,' which one takes a back seat based on where we're going to be stationed next," Lukens said.

There are some other moments of realism that the show gets credit for, according to three current diplomats, none of whom were authorized to speak on record. "Keri Russell's character has to put up with a lot of casual sexism. Nothing more realistic about FSO life than that," one said.

Another diplomat gave the show points for realism on something else. "One thing the show got totally accurate was when Keri Russell angrily stuffed half a blueberry muffin in her mouth because her job drove her to stress-eat," this diplomat said. "I can really relate to that."

Russell clearly holds foreign service officers in high regard, lauding their underappreciated work around the world in an interview in April with *Late Show* host Stephen Colbert. "They give up their entire life [for public service]. They're incredible people," Russell said. (Though, in that interview, she also erroneously said they don't vote.)

So, what does the show get wrong? A lot, as it turns out. For starters, the show has career diplomats such as the DCM intimately involved in presidential politics, scheming with the president's chief of staff to vet Wyler for the vice presidency. "I don't know any DCM who has a direct line to the president's chief of staff, but even if they did, no DCM career FSO is going to touch domestic political stuff with a 10-foot pole," one diplomat said.

Wyler also gets flown out to London on a private jet after being tapped as ambassador—again, without a Senate confirmation process. "Where in the budget request did SFOPS approve private jets for career diplomats to travel on? Was that from leftover FY2021 or 2022 funding, or is that new to the FY23 budget?" said another current diplomat, referring to unintelligible federal budget processes that I don't have the energy to fully explain, nor should you wish me to.

Then, there are the operational security (or opsec, in government speak) snafus, with the CIA station chief, DCM, and ambassador all casually chatting about highly sensitive intelligence in the middle of the office, instead of huddling in the bland, fortress-like sensitive compartmented information facility (SCIF) that every embassy has for discussions on the super secret stuff. "Everybody has really terrible opsec," said Rathke—an issue that, for a U.S. government worker in real life, could be a fast track to a demotion, firing, or prison sentence.

Still, all that the show gets wrong about life as a diplomat is probably beside the point. "It is fun to watch as a former diplomat," Rathke said. "Does it tell you something about being a career diplomat? No, not really, but I don't think it's trying to."

Movies and shows about the U.S. military or CIA are a dime a dozen. The State Department? Not so much.

And what is out there usually totally misses the mark on realism in diplomacy. There was a very short-lived and ill-fated attempt to bring Foggy Bottom to Hollywood with *The American Embassy*, a 2002 show on Fox that lasted all of four episodes before it was pulled from air. (You can find the show for free on YouTube now, but I don't recommend watching it because it is, even by 2002 standards, objectively awful.)

There's also Luke Hobbs in the *Fast & Furious* franchise, played by Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, who gives a captivating performance as a State Department Diplomatic Security Service agent who teams up with a crew of car thieves to stop a cyberterrorist from starting a global nuclear war by driving muscle cars armed with rocket launchers across a frozen Russian lake to blow up a nuclear submarine in *The Fate of the Furious*, the 2017 cinematic tour de force that really put the State Department on the map.

Then, of course, there's *Madam Secretary*, the six-season CBS show starring Téa Leoni as the U.S. secretary of state, who magically fixes vexing foreign-policy crises in neat single-hour segments, just like how foreign policy works in real life.

There are so few shows on diplomacy compared with the military or intelligence community because "the reality is, we just don't have that much action in our day-to-day work," Lukens said. The day-to-day slog of talking, negotiating, talking more, and then negotiating more is undoubtedly important for U.S. national security, but it makes for bad television.

So, where does *The Diplomat* fit into the admittedly small constellation of diplomacy (or diplomacy-adjacent) shows? It's grittier and less hokey than *Madam Secretary* or *The West Wing*; it's not as compelling as the hit Danish political drama *Borgen* or Russell's other top-tier spy drama, *The Americans* (though in fairness, what is?); and the plotlines aren't quite as smart as some other political thrillers on Netflix, such as Australia's *Secret City* or Norway's *Occupied*. It's perhaps the most realistic portrayal of life as a foreign service officer on TV, but given the dearth of options, that may not be saying much.

At times, the show feels as if it's trying too hard to be too many different things—is it a thriller with some rom-com in it or a rom-com with some thriller in it? Is it about geopolitics and diplomacy or how career ambitions affect a marriage? The whole feels a lot less than the sum of its parts.

Still, if you're on the hunt for a more than dumb but less than brilliant binge watch with entertaining plotlines, *The Diplomat* definitely scratches that itch. And binge you'll be able to—it has already been picked up for a second season. ■

ROBBIE GRAMER is a staff writer at FOREIGN POLICY.



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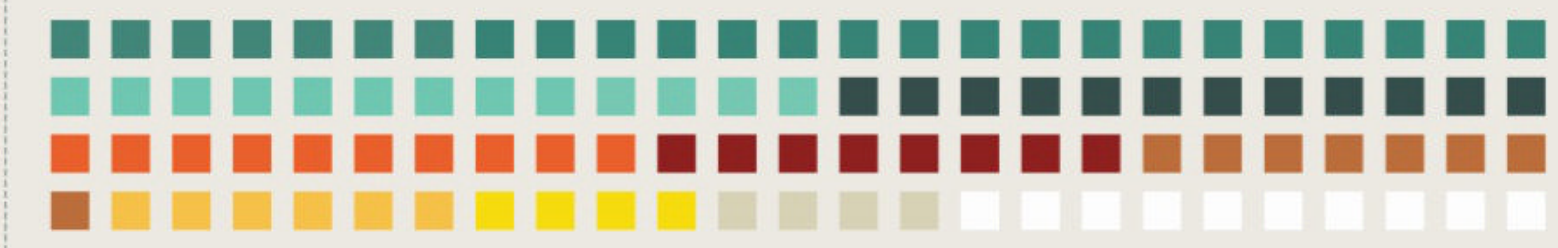
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- **Part III looks ahead to future hybrid wars** and explores opportunities for partnership across government, industry, and civil society to secure cyberspace, safeguard nuclear and space assets from cyber threats, and ensure accountability for cyberattacks against civilians and critical infrastructure.

Cyberattacks ramped up preceding Russia's full-scale invasion

The prevalence of cyberattacks targeting Ukraine signal a new era of hybrid warfare.



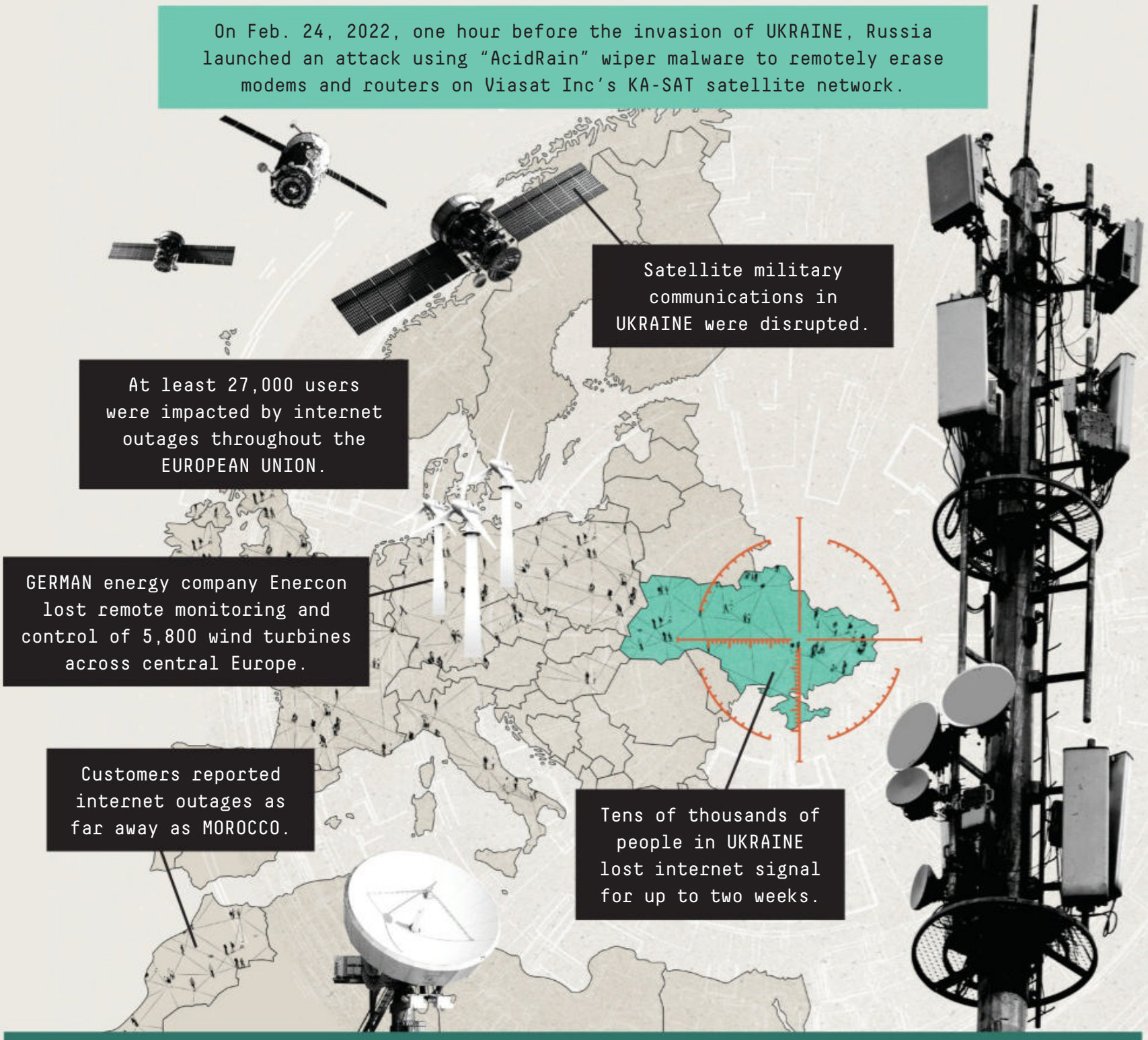
Targets of destructive cyberattacks by sector, February-October 2022



Disruptions across Europe from Russian satellite hack

Cyberattack on the Viasat satellite network just hours before the Russian invasion of Ukraine had a cascading effect across the region.

On Feb. 24, 2022, one hour before the invasion of UKRAINE, Russia launched an attack using "AcidRain" wiper malware to remotely erase modems and routers on Viasat Inc's KA-SAT satellite network.



Satellite military communications in UKRAINE were disrupted.

At least 27,000 users were impacted by internet outages throughout the EUROPEAN UNION.

GERMAN energy company Enercon lost remote monitoring and control of 5,800 wind turbines across central Europe.

Customers reported internet outages as far away as MOROCCO.

Tens of thousands of people in UKRAINE lost internet signal for up to two weeks.

Use the QR code to access the insightful analysis and interactive graphics or visit digitalfrontlines.io

A multimedia project by **FP Analytics**, the independent research division of The FP Group, with financial support from **Microsoft**, that brings sharpened focus on the risks of, and responses to, hybrid warfare. FP Analytics retained control of the research direction and findings of this special report. Foreign Policy's editorial team was not involved in the creation of this content.

FP ANALYTICS | Microsoft

Data sources: CNN, Council of the European Union, CSO, CyberPeace Institute, La Depeche, Microsoft, Reuters, Wired, Zero Day



It’s Not a Barbie World

By Azadeh Moaveni

Barbie, the most famous doll in the world, symbol of American girlhood, and now the star of a feature film, carries with her, along with many accessories, a complicated origin story. The official Mattel history holds that Barbie was born in 1959, when creator and Mattel co-founder Ruth Handler observed her daughter playing for hours with paper figures and spotted a chance to “champion and inspire girls” by providing them with a three-dimensional doll.

The less salubrious version traces the inspiration for Barbie to a European holiday where Handler encountered the wildly popular Bild Lilli, a leggy blonde doll sold in tobacconist shops to adults as a novelty item, based on the character Lilli in a comic strip of the same name published in the German tabloid *Bild*. Lilli was a sassy escort,

STYLING BY MELANIE FRANCES

Photo by CLINT BLOWERS

the star of every bar who was often stopped by the police for wearing too little. Handler initially couldn't get Mattel to produce a grown-up doll with breasts, but her project took off after bringing home Bild Lilli. Manufacturing of her doll, which she called Barbie, began in Japan, a country experiencing its own postwar agonies about sex, innocence, and girls' bodies. Mattel acquired the rights to Bild Lilli in 1964.

In the 1960s and '70s, Barbie conquered the United States, settling in Malibu with a poolside playhouse and acquiring a pliant boyfriend named Ken, a lady-in-waiting younger sister called Skipper, and assorted friends and relatives. Her early disinterest in any vocation and pursuit of independence through purchases of living room decor miniaturized the mores of postwar U.S. suburban life, of the stultifying *Revolutionary Road* variety.

By the time she turned 40, in 1999, Barbie was a reliably divisive icon aggravating Western feminists. That year, Australian writer Germaine Greer was pictured biting the head off a Barbie for her book *The Whole Woman*, in which she rails against the doll's "non-functional body." Others insisted the obsession with Barbie was trivial, that Barbie was probably a feminist anyway (witness her long-running indifference to Ken), and that her appeal was something "the First World and Third World agree on," a column in Britain's *Independent* newspaper argued.

Like any good manufacturer, Mattel hoped as much. It embarked on launching Barbie among the emergent middle classes of the non-Western world in the late 1990s and 2000s. There is an extensive literature of Barbie's international failure that brings business schools and gender specialists into conversation. As a doll for girls modeled after a Western European erotic fantasy, Barbie, in all her travels, has encountered gender sensibilities that she offended or simply couldn't excite, eliciting unpredictable reactions that had more to do with societies' own internal cultural and political fractures.

In the early 2000s, Barbie was banned in a number of countries where she was resolutely popular. The Russian authorities, dismayed at the lingering hold Barbie had on the imaginations of Russian girls since the Cold War, rejected her in 2002, concluding that she stimulated "early sexual interest" among young children. The Croatian feminist Slavenka Drakulic writes in her memoir *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* that for women and girls living under Soviet rule, Barbie evoked a life of freedom, comfort, and glamour, a contrast to the "wearying immobility" of the Soviet grind, "something to be endured, not enjoyed."

In Iran, too, Barbie captivated a secularizing middle class that expressed its frustration with the Islamic regime's political suffocation by identifying with Western consumer culture. I was based in Tehran in 2002 when the authorities cracked down on stores selling Barbie and rolled out Sara and Dara, lumpy twins dressed in ill-fitting Iranian folk outfits who were a hit with next to no one.

The next year, the Saudi regime also moved against Barbie, banning what it called "Jewish Barbie dolls" whose "shameful postures" carried a dangerous "symbol of decadence to the perverted West." That wave of religious conservatism in the Middle East, which culminated in the Islamist movements that dominated the aftermath of the Arab Spring, propelled the success of Barbie's rival in the region: Fulla, who wears hijab and abaya, pays careful attention to her eye makeup, and accessorizes with *both* handbags and a prayer mat. Fulla has consistently outsold Barbie across the Arab world since she turned up in 2003, but she has made no inroads in Iran, where the romance of political Islam is dead and Barbie has retained enough appeal to prompt fresh crackdowns.

In parts of the world where Barbie held no oppositional cache, she often simply flopped. In 2009, Mattel opened a pink six-floor flagship Barbie store in Shanghai that failed to attract consumers. It was the biggest retail misread in China in recent years. Mattel's Shanghai experiment attempted to market Barbie to Chinese consumers as an adult lifestyle brand. The store offered a spa, Barbie-style makeovers, and a racy clothing line designed by *Sex and the City* costume designer Patricia Field. Chinese women did not find this alluring. Their tastes veered between Snoopy and Gucci, with no place in between for Barbie's suburban bridge-and-tunnel aesthetic. The shop shut after two years.

India, that other enormous untapped market Mattel eyed hungrily, was also unentranced by Barbie. In the Indian market, she wore a sari as "Barbie in India," but her standard physical form came across as hypersexualized and borderline obscene; she remained a tourist, never becoming, as the academic Priti Nemani put it, an "Indian doll." With sales lackluster, Mattel tried again with a collection that set Barbie across India's various states, producing "Mystical Manipuri" and "Roopvati Rajasthani" Barbie, but the doll retained its ski-jump European nose and Victoria's Secret Angels physique and, despite all its bangles and chandelier earrings, did no better at all, prompting Mattel to focus on Lego.

Having toured the world with little success, Barbie is undergoing an existential transformation in the United States. Recently, a friend's 8-year-old daughter asked me to play Barbie, and I happily agreed. Leaning down to inspect her Barbie Dreamhouse, I met prosthetic leg Barbie, propped up against the hot tub, looking very serene despite her artificial limb. What was the story? Had she tripped over a land mine? Was Barbie now a war reporter? I asked. The 8-year-old looked at me confused. There was no story. Barbie was just different now. ■

AZADEH MOAVENI is an associate professor of journalism at New York University and the author of, most recently, *Guest House for Young Widows: Among the Women of ISIS.*

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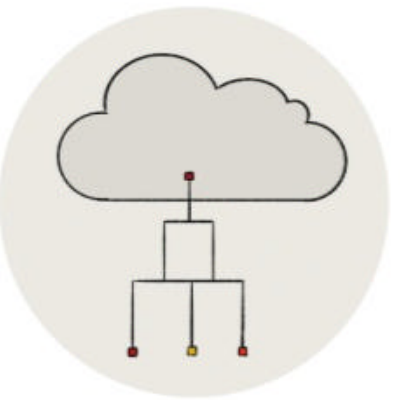
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What in the World?

By Drew Gorman

The following is adapted from past editions of FP's weekly online news quiz.
Test yourself every week at ForeignPolicy.com.



1. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu temporarily fired which cabinet minister in March after they called on the government to halt its proposed judicial reform?

a. Communications Minister Shlomo Karhi

b. Justice Minister Yariv Levin

c. Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich

d. Defense Minister Yoav Gallant

2. Later that month, new Scottish First Minister Humza Yousaf promised to do what?

a. Officially name Irn-Bru the country's national drink

b. Gain Scottish independence from the United Kingdom

c. Form a political alliance with the Welsh Labour party

d. Introduce legislation for the U.K. to rejoin the EU

3. The U.N. World Food Programme said in early April that it needed about how much funding to help Afghanistan over the next six months?

a. $600 million b. $700 million

c. $800 million d. $900 million

4. Some days later, China claimed that U.S. accusations of what were "groundless"?

a. An overseas Chinese police presence

b. The mass detention and so-called reeducation of Muslim Uyghurs

c. A secret deal to supply weapons to Russia

d. A plan to expand its nuclear arsenal

5. Which Fox News television host was unceremoniously removed from their position on April 24?



a. Tucker Carlson



b. Sean Hannity



c. Jesse Watters



d. Laura Ingraham

6. Also in April, Argentina announced that it would begin paying for certain imports in which currency, in a switch away from the U.S. dollar?

a. Argentine peso b. Chinese yuan

c. Brazilian real d. Russian ruble

7. Which of the following artists performed at King Charles III's May 7 coronation concert?

a. Gwen Stefani b. Katy Perry

c. Justin Timberlake d. Paul McCartney



8. Where was former Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan arrested two days later?

a. At his residence in Lahore

b. In a security line at Islamabad International Airport

c. On the streets of Karachi, eating an ice cream cone

d. On the premises of the Islamabad High Court



9. That same week, the U.S. ambassador to South Africa accused the country of doing what?

a. Providing weapons to Russia

b. Signing a secretive oil agreement with Iran

c. Covering up abuses in its emerald mines

d. Trying to get Elon Musk to renounce his U.S. citizenship

10. This quarter, scientists discovered evidence of ancient humans using psychoactive drugs at which burial site?

a. Mount of Olives, Israel

b. Es Càrritx, Spain

c. Kerameikos, Greece

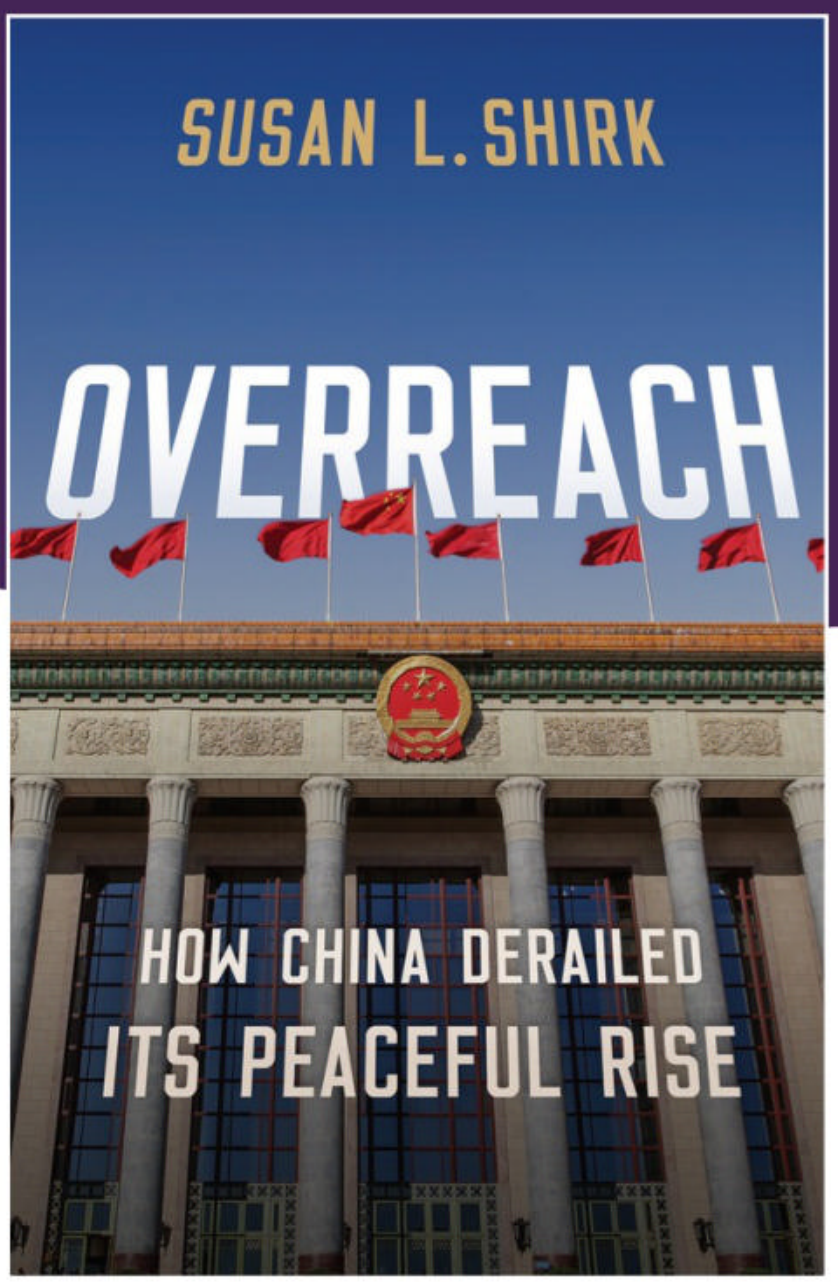
d. Levant Caves in the Mediterranean Levant

ANSWERS: 1. d; 2. b; 3. c; 4. a; 5. a; 6. b; 7. b; 8. d; 9. a; 10. b

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Susan L. Shirk

Oxford University Press



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