

## World Dominance

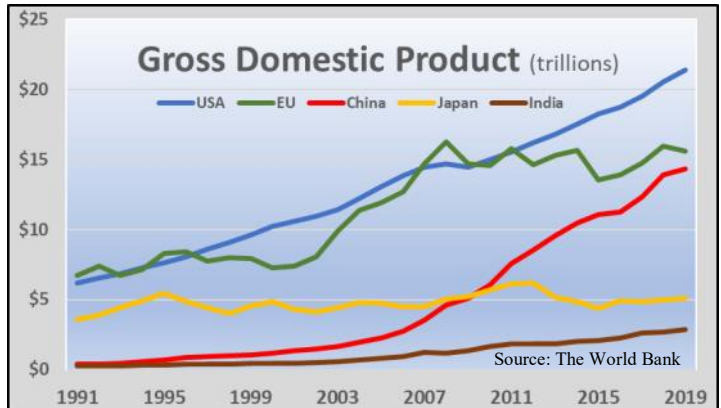
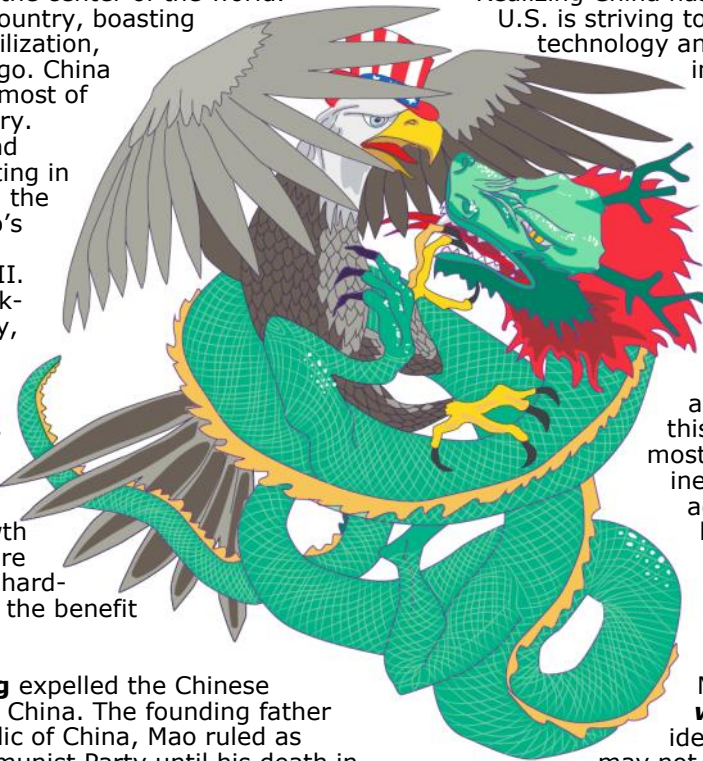
Again this year, US News ranked the United States as "the world's most dominant economic and military power" and noted that its "cultural imprint spans the world." Americans are a free, independent, democratic people accustomed to number one status. In November 1989, the fall of the **Berlin Wall** ended the **Cold War** effectively eradicating communism in Central and Eastern Europe, validating democratic supremacy. But the rise of communist China has yet again created **an epic struggle for world dominance**. Sounds like a video game, but it's reality and it is here and now.

With the collapse of the USSR in 1991, communist ideology appeared to have lost its appeal. As China has grown richer, while exploiting capitalist ideas to amplify its growth, the Western World expected political and civil freedoms would follow. Now an economic superpower, the opposite has happened. China's Communist Party is tightening its grip. Mass surveillance by video cameras and monitors score Chinese citizens. Loyalty is rewarded, objections punished. To understand why the Chinese people faithfully follow the Party programs, look to their history.

China considers itself the center of the world.

The most populated country, boasting the planet's oldest civilization, formed 5,000 years ago. China has been isolated for most of recorded human history. Foreigners invaded and occupied China, resulting in deep-rooted distrust - the Mongols in Marco Polo's days and Japan in the years just before WWII. Historically a hardworking agricultural society, the Chinese believe that "the Heavens reward diligent people" and their legends extol the virtues of hard work with strong determination. Many attribute China's growth to the Confucian culture that praises enduring hardships and sacrifice for the benefit of family and society.

In 1949, **Mao Zedong** expelled the Chinese Nationalist Party from China. The founding father of the People's Republic of China, Mao ruled as Chairman of the Communist Party until his death in 1976. Mao was elevated to cult, even divine, status by mass media and propaganda. Mao's face appeared on the front page of the People's Daily and on over 1.2 billion posters, more numerous than its population. The *Little Red Book*, a symbol of Mao Zedong Thought, was presented to every citizen to carry at all times. Mao was revered by his people but purged the remnants of capitalism, killing as many as 20 million.



**Xi Jinping**, China's President, who likens himself to Mao, was raised to the same exalted status and was made supreme ruler of China for life by the Communist Party. Xi Jinping Thought conveys his doctrine of a "great rejuvenation" to restore China to its ancient prominence and glory. Xi's Communist Party is in full control, tightening its grip on business, news media, internet, culture and education all while expanding its reach around the world.

Realizing China has been an unfair trading partner, the U.S. is striving to rein in the proliferation of Chinese technology and influence. The American ideals of independence and personal freedoms are in direct opposition to the dutiful, loyalty demanded of the Chinese people. Xi can control his people, but no one could stifle the individuality of the American people.

Globalization is not new but accelerated after the end of the Cold War as countries opened their doors to global trade. The internet and wireless communication brought the world closer. Today nationalism and isolationist policies seek to reverse this trend. However, China, America and most of the world's economies are now inextricably linked. The Chinese are an admirable, hardworking people; however they must exist under a repressive communist system. On the other hand, America is the "the land of the free" inspiring individual, independence and ingenuity.

Many believe that the **struggle for world dominance** is a battle of ideologies. However, political systems may not decide the outcome. Rather, it may rely on the power of their peoples' culture. American personal freedoms and influence in music, movies and television, combined with our strong economy, bodes well for retaining the lead.