

HERTOG 2019 SUMMER COURSES CHINESE GRAND STRATEGY

Daniel Blumenthal, scholar, American Enterprise Institute

This course is a research seminar in Chinese grand strategy and foreign policy. We will explore major continuities and discontinuities in China's approach to the world from the height of the Qing Empire through 2016 (a period roughly equivalent to the existence of the United States). And we will examine how current Chinese strategy seeks to shape its future.

As the People's Republic of China rises to preeminence in world affairs, it is critical that U.S. strategists have a deeper understanding of how China's strategy and statecraft has developed over its thousands of years of history. What makes Chinese strategy unique is the fact that China is both a civilization and a nation-state—or "a civilization pretending to be a nation-state" as sinologist Lucian Pye has described it. It has a strong sense of how the world should be ordered. It is also the only country in the world that still rules most of its imperial territories.

Throughout China's strategic history, it has faced critical turning points. Given our time constraints, we will begin with an overview of China today under Xi Jinping's leadership. We will then turn to the late Qing China, when the Middle Kingdom was at the height of its power and had organized its foreign relations into what is now commonly referred to as the "Chinese world order." We will then look at the attempts of the new Chinese nation-state to "reunify" the Qing borders and to contend with a succession of tectonic shifts in world affairs (1911 to 1949). Next, we will study the period of "Maoism," during which China pursued a revolutionary, Communist foreign policy (1949 to Mao's death). Finally, we will consider the period of "reform and opening," from 1978 to the present, and discuss whether China's grand strategy faces a new turning point as the post-WWII global order is undergoing severe strain.

The main objective of this course is to develop an analytical framework to assess the merits of the current debates about China's strategy. We will answer some of the following questions:

- 1) What does China see as its place in world affairs, particularly in Asia? What is China's vision of an alternative Chinese-led world order? How is such an order similar/different from Imperial China at the height of its power?
- 2) What strategies is China implementing to advance its ends?
- 3) What are some of the constraints China faces given its embrace of significant parts of the global order and the current balance of power?
- 4) How should the U.S. respond?

Reports. In addition to completing the reading assignments, participants are expected to complete written reports, which will be distributed to and addressed by the class.

- The reports will be written in response to a prompt and are to be 1,000-1,800 words long.
- You should consult the reading assignments and supplementary materials for your report.
- They must be turned in by **8 p.m. the night before** the class in which they will be discussed.
- Copies will be distributed by email and will be part of the reading assignment. You will also receive a physical copy at the session.

Monday, July 22, 2019

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Xi Jinping & the China Dream

Readings:

- Dan Blumenthal, “The Unpredictable Rise of China,” *The Atlantic*, February 3, 2019
- Excerpt from “Xi Jinping’s Report at the 19th CPC National Congress,” Xinhua, November 3, 2017
- Peter Mattis, “The Party Congress Test: A Minimum Standard for Beijing’s Intentions,” *War on the Rocks*, January 8, 2019
- Willy Wo-Lap Lam, “The Agenda of Xi Jinping: Is the Chinese Communist Party Capable of Thorough Reforms?” *Routledge Handbook of the Chinese Communist Party*
- Christopher Ford, “Realpolitik with Chinese Characteristics: Chinese Strategic Culture and the Modern Communist Party-State,” *Strategic Asia 2016–17: Understanding Strategic Cultures in the Asia-Pacific*

Discussion Questions:

1. The “China dream”: What does it mean? What is the CCP’s grand strategic objective?
2. Does the “China dream” represent a break with past Chinese grand strategy or a continuation of it?
3. How does Xi Jinping envision China achieving its strategic objectives?
4. How has Xi’s strengthening of the CCP impacted strategy?

Noon to 2 p.m.

Group Lunch & Guest Speaker: Dean Cheng, senior research fellow, Heritage Foundation

Tuesday, July 23, 2019

9:00 a.m. to Noon

The Historical Legacy: The Qing Dynasty

Readings:

- Dan Blumenthal, “China: The Imperial Legacy,” *Rise of the Revisionists: Russia, China, and Iran*, ed. Gary Schmitt
- Odd Arne Westad, “Chapter 2: Imperialisms,” *Restless Empire: China and the World Since 1750*, p. 53–86
- Paul Lococo Jr., “The Qing Empire,” from David Graff, *A Military History of China*, p. 115–34

Discussion Questions & Reports:

1. What was the strategic situation of the Qing Dynasty? How did the Qing respond to that situation? What were their strategic objectives?
2. How did China understand itself in relation to its various neighbors—the Mongols, East Eurasians, Vietnam, and Korea? What policies did it pursue toward those neighbors? What was “Sinification”?
3. Why did the Qing Dynasty fall?

Noon to 1:30 p.m.

Lunch Break

1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.

The Historical Legacy: Unification & Mao

Readings:

- William C. Kirby, “The Internationalization of China: Foreign Relations at Home and Abroad in the Republican Era,” *The China Quarterly*, no. 150 (June 1997), p. 433–58
- Chen Jian, “Introduction,” *Mao’s China and the Cold War*, p. 1–16
- Christopher Ford, “Chapter 13: Mao and the Middle Kingdom,” *Mind of an Empire: China’s History and Modern Foreign Relations*, p. 189–216
- Henry Kissinger, “Chapter 4: Mao’s Continuous Revolution,” *On China*, p. 91–112
- Margaret MacMillan, “Chapter 9: The Polar Bear,” *Nixon and Mao: The Week that Changed the World*, p. 124–45

Discussion Questions & Reports:

1. What was China’s strategic situation after the collapse of the Qing Dynasty? How did it respond to that situation?
2. What would it mean to “reunify” the Qing Dynasty empire? How successful has China been in reconstituting its historical holdings?
3. Is China’s imperial mindset compatible with the Westphalian system of international relations based on “sovereign equals”?
4. How did Mao understand China’s strategic situation post-WWII? How did he respond to that situation? What were his strategic objectives? How did he use alliances to achieve his objectives?
5. Mao is a towering historical figure—part revolutionary, part Chinese emperor, part geopolitician. When it comes to geopolitics and strategy, which was the “dominant Mao”?
6. In what ways has China become a modern nation-state? In what ways is it still a premodern civilization/empire?

Wednesday, July 24, 2019

9:00 a.m. to Noon

The Historical Legacy: Mao | Deng: Reform & Opening

Readings:

- Excerpts from Ezra F. Vogel, *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China*
 - “Chapter 9: The Soviet-Vietnamese Threat, 1978–1979,” p. 266–93
- Excerpts from Henry Kissinger, *On China*
 - “Chapter 13: Touching the Tiger’s Buttocks,” p. 340–76
 - “Chapter 17: A Roller Coaster Ride Toward Another Reconciliation: The Jiang Zemin Era,” p. 447–86
- SKIM: Selections from Edward S. Steinfeld, *Playing our Game: Why China’s Rise Doesn’t Threaten the West*
 - “Chapter 3: The Quest for Modernity”
 - “Chapter 4: Taking Industry Global: China as Rising Industrial Powerhouse Versus China as Capitalist Enabler”
 - “Chapter 6: Playing to Win? China’s Advance into High-Tech Research and Development”

Discussion Questions & Reports:

1. How did Deng Xiaoping understand China's strategic situation? How did he respond to that situation? What were his strategic objectives?
2. What was "reform and opening"? What did Deng hope to achieve with this policy?
3. In what ways has China become a "post-modern," globalized nation? In what ways does it remain a modern nation-state? An empire?
4. Are Deng's changes reversible? Is it possible to de-globalize China?

Noon to 1:30 p.m.

Lunch Break

1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Guest Speaker: Derek Scissors, scholar, AEI

Thursday, July 25, 2019

9:00 a.m. to Noon

The End of Reform & China's Decline

Readings:

- Michael Pillsbury, "The Sixteen Fears: China's Strategic Psychology," *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, October–November 2012
- Dan Blumenthal and Derek Scissors, "China's Great Stagnation," *The National Interest*, October 2016
- SKIM: Joseph Fewsmith, Chs.1 and 2, *China Since Tiananmen: The Politics of Transition* (Cambridge University, 2018)
- Maochun Yu, "Marxist Ideology, Revolutionary Legacy and Their Impact on China's Security Policy," *Routledge Handbook of Chinese Security* (2015)

Discussion Questions & Reports:

1. Why did the CCP end its policy of reform and opening?
2. How do Chinese leaders today understand China's strategic situation? What internal threats do they see? What is their perception of the U.S.?
3. Is there a unique Leninist Party approach to the world? Is the CCP capable of reform which could enable it to tackle the challenges of the 21st century?

Noon to 1:30 p.m.

Lunch Break

1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Guest Speaker: Sarah Cook, senior research analyst, Freedom House

Friday, July 26, 2019

9:00 a.m. to Noon

The CCP's Strategic Approach

Readings:

- Daniel Hartnett, "The 'New Historic Missions': Reflections on Hu Jintao's Military Legacy," *Assessing the People's Liberation Army in the Hu Jintao Era*, Strategic Studies Institute and US Army War College Press, April 2014

- Samantha Hoffman, “Managing the State: Social Credit, Surveillance, and the CCP’s Plan for China,” Jamestown Foundation, August 17, 2017
- Dan Blumenthal, “A Strategy for China’s Imperial Overstretch,” *The American Interest*, March 2017
- Ashley J. Tellis, “Overview,” *Strategic Asia 2019: China’s Expanding Strategic Ambitions*, NBR, January 29, 2019

Discussion Questions & Reports:

1. How have Xi and the CCP responded to their strategic environment? What actions have they taken toward internal threats, their neighbors, and the U.S.?
2. What continuities and discontinuities do you see with China’s strategy, past and present? In what ways is it still acting as an empire? A nation-state? A globalized economy?
3. What are the strategic implications of China’s grand strategy for the U.S. and its allies?

Noon to 2:0 p.m.

Group Lunch & Guest Speaker

Suggested Background Reading

(Available electronically and in hard copy upon request)

General

- 1) Christopher Ford, "Chapter 3: Confucian Conceptions of Order," *Mind of an Empire: China's History and Modern Foreign Relations*, p. 29–38
- 2) Bruce A. Elleman, *Beijing's Power and China's Borders: Twenty Neighbors in Asia*
- 3) Arthur Waldron, "Chapter 4: Chinese Strategy from the Fourteenth to Seventeenth Centuries," in Williamson Murray, Alvin Bernstein, MacGregor Knox (eds.), *The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War*
- 4) Ashley J. Tellis and Robert D. Blackwill, *Revising U.S. Grand Strategy Toward China*, Council on Foreign Relations, April 2015

Qing Dynasty

- 1) Peter Perdue, "Chapter 16: Frontier Expansion in the Rise and Fall of the Qing," *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*, p. 547–58
- 2) Odd Arne Westad, "Chapter 4: Republic," *Restless Empire: China and the World since 1750*, p. 123–70
- 3) Margaret MacMillan, "Chapter 24: A Dagger Pointed at the Heart of China," *Paris 1919: Six Months that Changed the World*
- 4) Alain Peyrefitte, "Chapter 86: In Exchange for Tea: Opium," and "Chapter 87: Military Action," *The Immobile Empire*

Mao

- 1) Chen Jian, "Chapter 4: China's Strategies to End the Korean War, 1950–1954," *Mao's China and the Cold War*, p. 85–117
- 2) Chen Jian, "Chapter 8: China's Involvement in the Vietnam War, 1965–1969," *Mao's China and the Cold War*, p. 205–37

Deng

- 1) Ezra F. Vogel, "Chapter 23: Deng's Finale: The Southern Journey," *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China*, p. 664–90

China Today

1) Christopher Ford, "Chapter 16: China Imagines Its World...and Its Future," *Mind of an Empire: China's History and Modern Foreign Relations*, p. 249–82

2) Henry Kissinger, "Chapter 6: Toward an Asian Order: Confrontation or Partnership?," *World Order*, p. 212–34

4) Nadege Rolland, "A Vision for China as a Risen Power," *China's Eurasian Century? Political and Strategic Implications of the Belt and Road Initiative*, NBR, May 2017

5) Ian Johnson, "Chapter 2: Ritual: The Lost Middle," *Souls of China*

6) Dan Blumenthal, "China, the United States, and the Geopolitics of Energy," *Too Much Energy? Asia at 2030*, AEI, February 2015

Instructor and Speaker Bios

Instructor



Daniel Blumenthal is the director of Asian Studies at the American Enterprise Institute, where he focuses on East Asian security issues and Sino-American relations. Mr. Blumenthal has both served in and advised the U.S. government on China issues for over a decade. From 2001 to 2004, he served as senior director for China, Taiwan, and Mongolia at the Department of Defense. Additionally, he served as a commissioner on the congressionally-mandated U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission from 2006-2012. Mr. Blumenthal is the co-author of *An Awkward Embrace: The United States and China in the 21st Century*.

Speakers



Dean Cheng is a senior research fellow at the Heritage Foundation. Cheng has written extensively on China's military doctrine, technological implications of its space program and “dual use” issues associated with the industrial and scientific infrastructure. He previously worked for 13 years as a senior analyst, first with Science Applications International Corp. and then with the Center for Naval Analyses. Before entering the private sector, Cheng studied China's defense-industrial complex for a congressional agency, the Office of Technology Assessment, as an analyst in the International Security and Space Program.



Sarah Cook is a senior research analyst for East Asia at Freedom House. She directs the *China Media Bulletin*, a monthly digest in English and Chinese providing news and analysis on media freedom developments related to China. Cook is also the author of several Asian country reports for Freedom House's annual publications, as well as three special reports about China: *The Battle for China's Spirit* (2017), *The Politburo's Predicament* (2015), and *The Long Shadow of Chinese Censorship* (2013). Her comments and writings have appeared on CNN, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Foreign Policy*, and the U.S. Congressional-Executive Commission on China.



Derek Scissors is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), where he focuses on the Chinese and Indian economies and on U.S. economic relations with Asia. He is chief economist of the *China Beige Book* and author of the *China Global Investment Tracker*. He previously worked as a senior research fellow in the Asian Studies Center at the Heritage Foundation and as an adjunct professor of economics at George Washington University. He has worked for London-based Intelligence Research Ltd., taught economics at Lingnan University in Hong Kong, and served as an action officer in international economics and energy for the U.S. Department of Defense.

Imperial China



Empire of the Great Qing

25th Year of the Jiaqing Emperor (A.D. 1820)



China 1911: The Road to a Nation-State



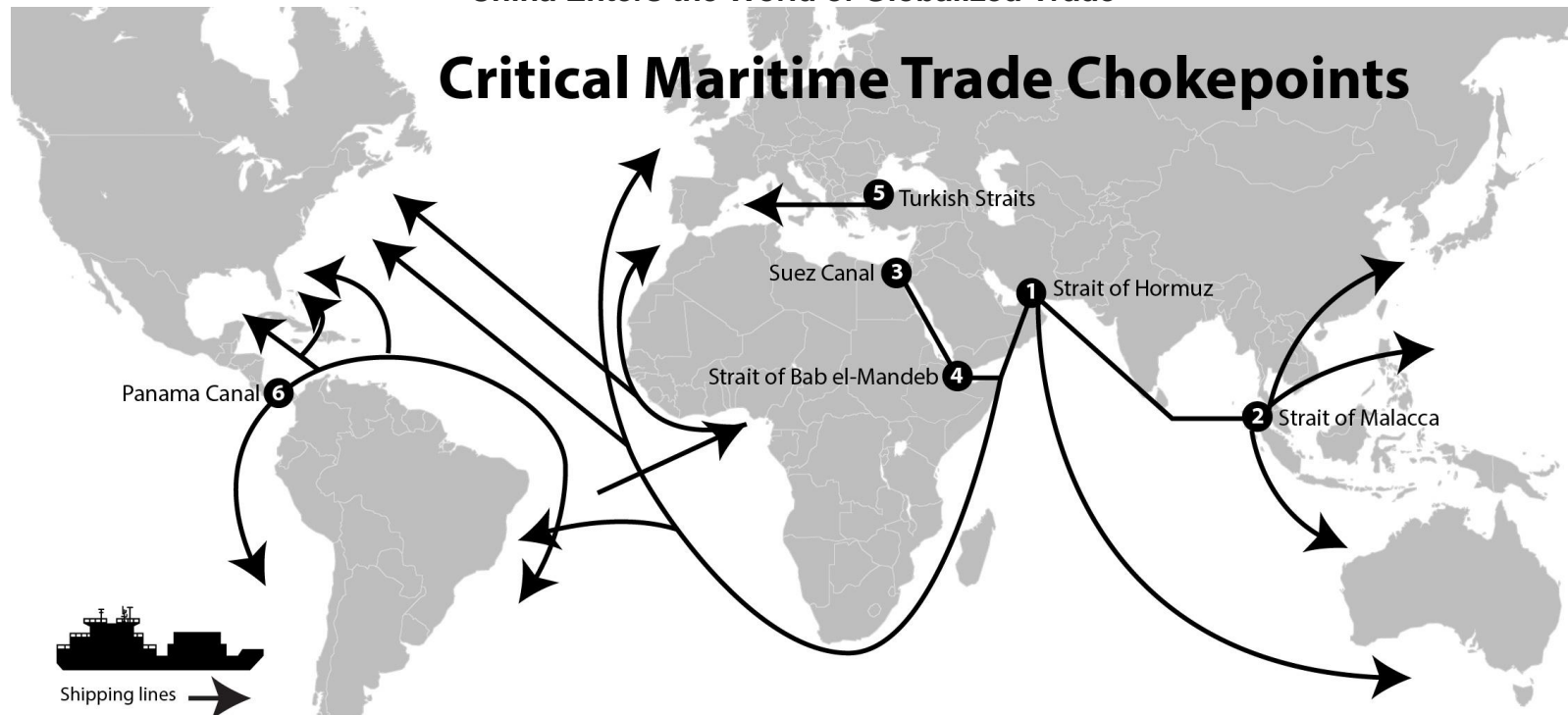
People's Republic of China





China Enters the World of Globalized Trade

Critical Maritime Trade Chokepoints



1 The Strait of Hormuz

The strait connects the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman leading to the Arabian Sea. Close to 15.5 million barrels of oil pass through it each day. China has 40-year management rights at a nearby port in Gwadar, Pakistan.

2 The Strait of Malacca

Located between Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. It links the Indian Ocean to the South China Sea and Pacific Ocean. Close to 13.6 million barrels of oil flow through it each day. China's push to control the South China Sea would give it control over shipments in this region.

3 The Suez Canal

A major transit route from the Persian Gulf to Mediterranean countries and North America. Close to 1.8 million barrels of oil flow through it each day. China is trying to establish a military base in Djibouti, which would allow it to maintain warships nearby.

4 The Strait of Bab el-Mandeb

Traffic from Persian Gulf to the Suez Canal and the SUMED pipeline must go through this strait. Close to 3.2 million barrels of oil pass through it each day. The planned Chinese military base in Djibouti would give it some influence over shipments pass through.

5 The Turkish Straits

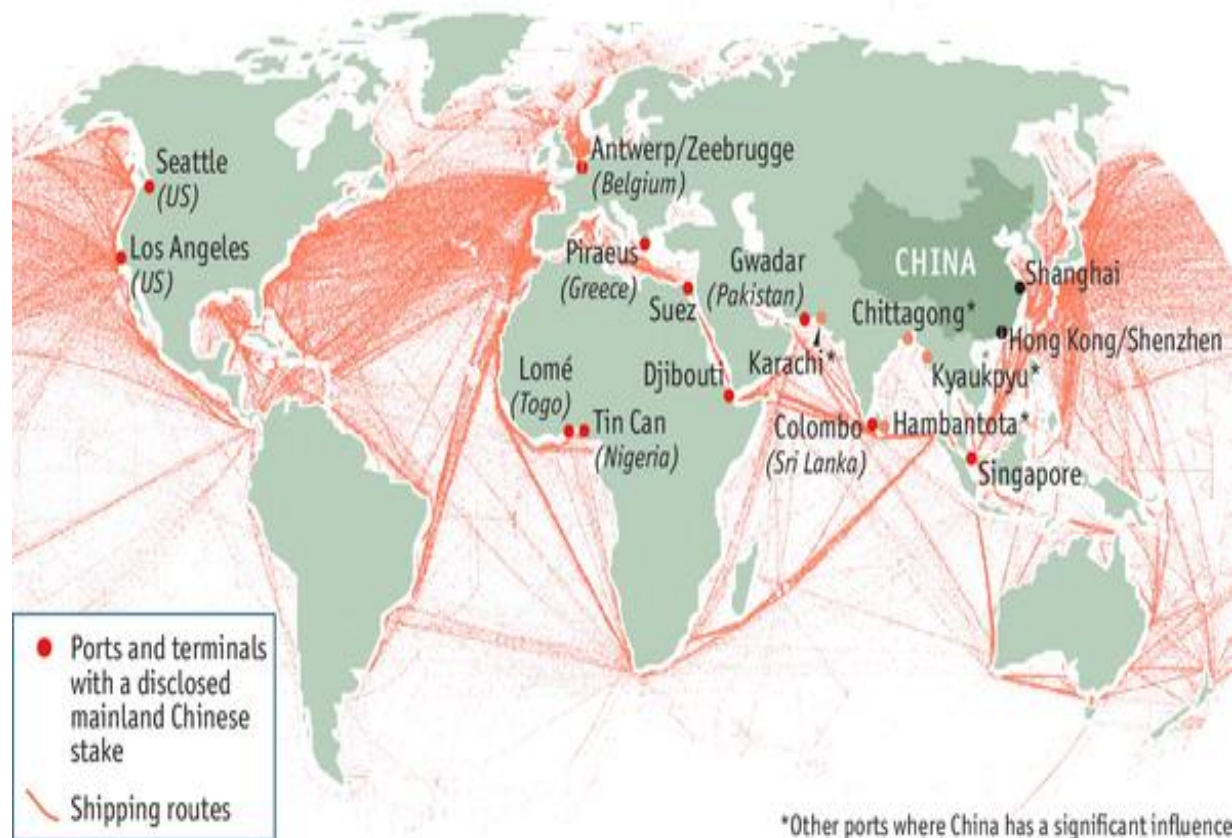
These straits connect the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara. Close to 2.9 million barrels of oil pass through them each day. China is trying to strike deals around this chokepoint with its "Belt and Road" or "new Silk Road" program.

6 The Panama Canal

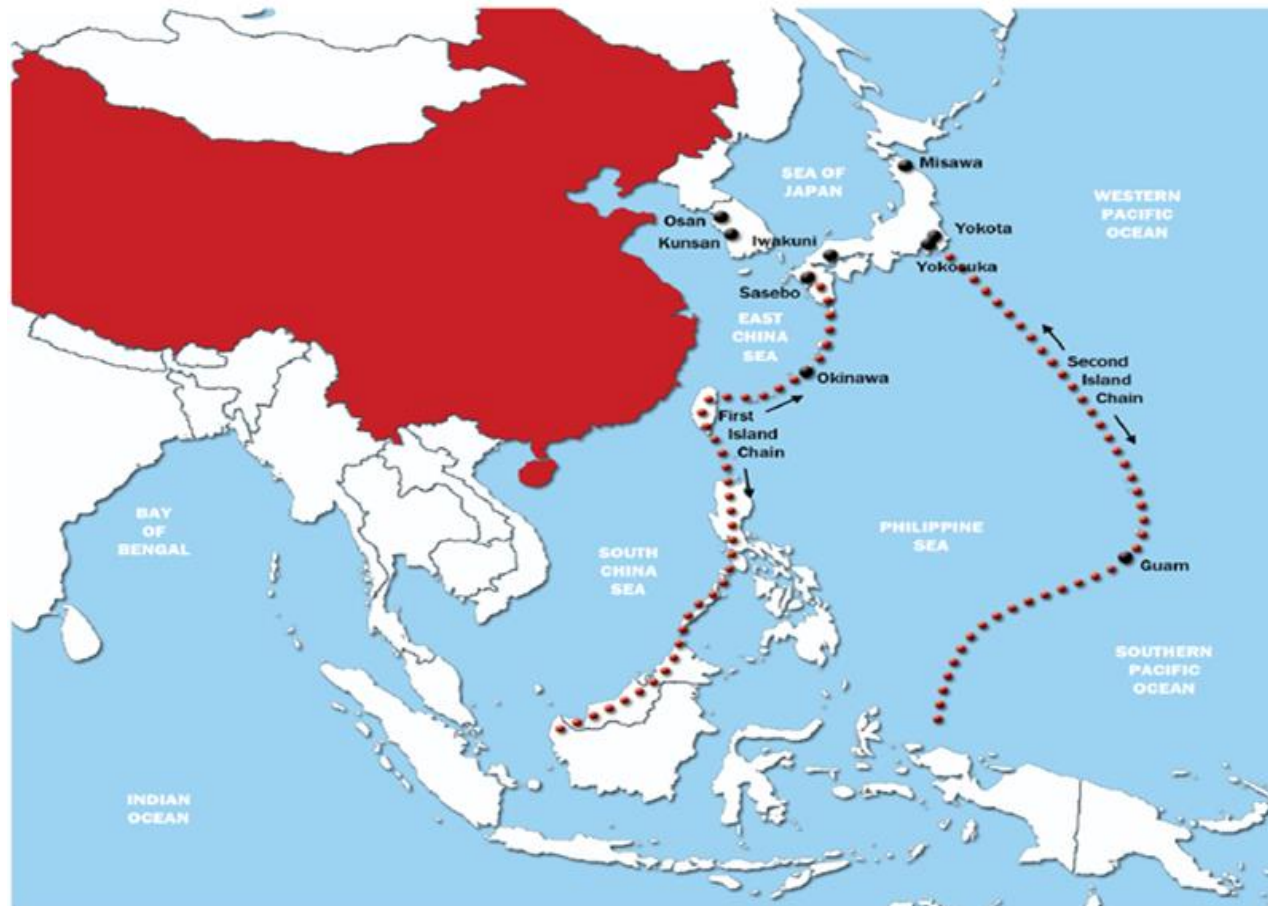
Connects the Pacific Ocean with the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean. Close to 0.8 million barrels of oil pass through it each day. China's state-run China Harbor Engineering Company is trying to build a new set of locks in the Panama Canal.

Statistics: U.S. Energy Information Administration
Cargo ship: Askold Romanov/istock photos

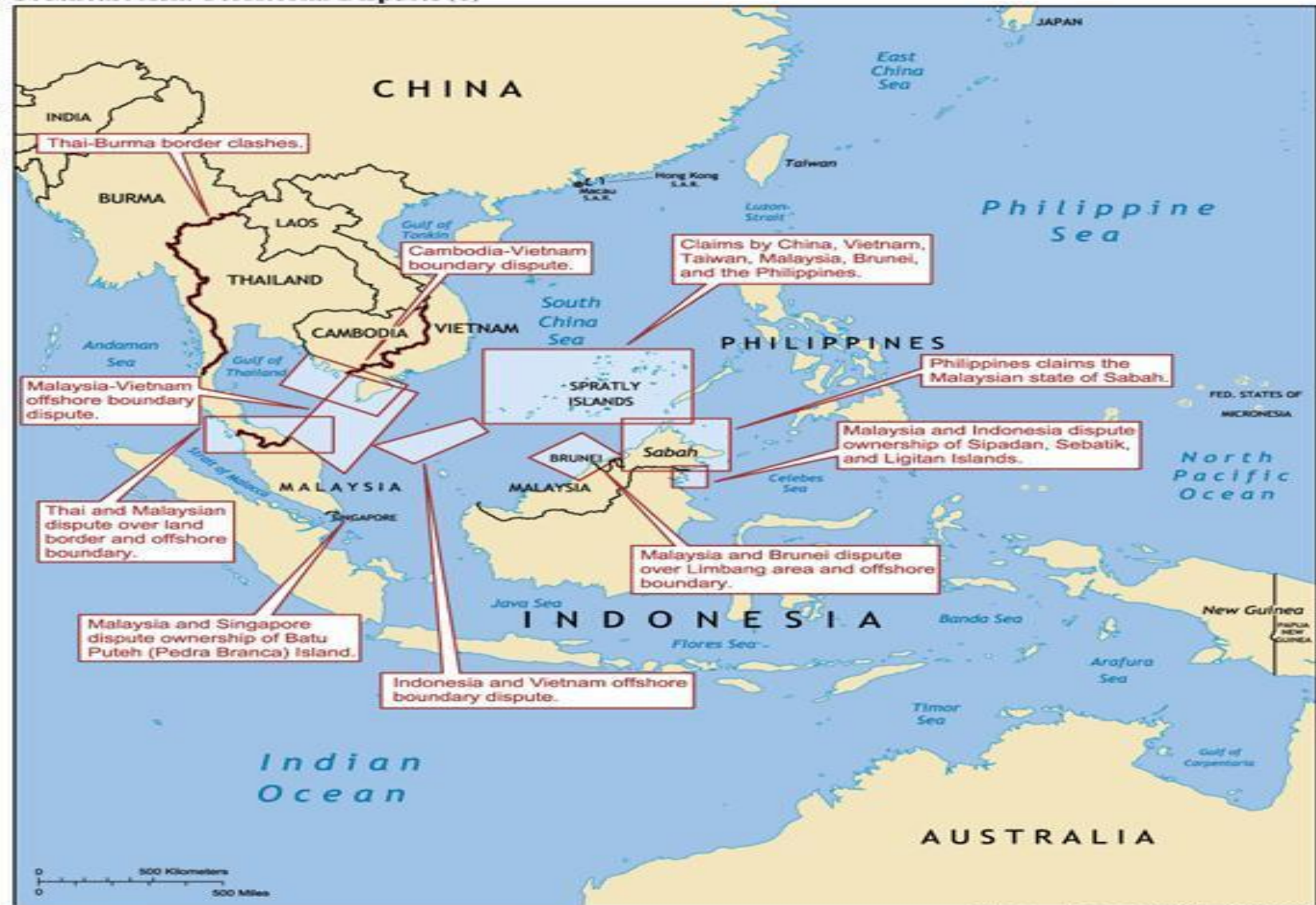
String of Chinese pearls



Maritime Southeast Asia



Southeast Asia Territorial Disputes (U)



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South China Sea



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GREAT POWER COMPETITION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

