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BOOK REVIEW

Book Title: Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides' Trap?

Author: Graham Allison

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Reviewed by: Saher Liaqat ¹& Abu Hurairah Abbasi²

Graham Allison is an eminent scholar at the University of Harvard . His book "Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides' Trap?" is a thought-provoking book that examines the odds of a military conflict between the United States of America and the People's Republic of China, the two global powers. This book is based on Thucydides' Trap, which asserts that when a rising power confronts an established great power, it often leads to a war between them. In his book, *Destined for war*, Allison, given his extensive foreign policy expertise, spotlights the pertinent questions of the contemporary era, will China outperform the US to turn into the world's driving superpower? Provided that this is true, will the US sit discreetly and watch? Allison contends that the response to the two questions is "no," Why

¹ Saher Liaqat is a Graduate of International Relations from the School of Politics and International Relations, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. She can be reached at saherliaqat2000@gmail.com

² Abu Hurairah Abbasi is a Graduate of International Relations from the School of Politics and International Relations, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. He can be reached at abuhurairahah@gmail.com

not? Moreover, Allison discloses how these clashing powers have maintained a harmonious relationship before and what arduous maturities both the United States and China should undertake to elude catastrophe.

The book, *Destined for War* is a historically driven examination in which the idea of "Thucydides' Trap" has been presented as a pivot for a better interpretation of twenty-first-century Sino-US relations. The book offers a comprehensive overview of the historical examples of this trap and how it has led to previous wars while also exploring the unique circumstances of the current geopolitical environment. The book unfolds by presenting a synopsis of the present operative landscape in which the United States of America has been surpassed by China in economic terms, according to the key economic indicators. It adds the critical remarks of Singapore's former head, Lee Kuan Yew, regarding the "true nature" of China and its comments on its capability as "the biggest player in the history of the world."

The book's second part analyzed US-China relations by looking into the 500 years of relationships between the two world powers. Thucydides, in his exemplary work on the Peloponnesian War in the 5th century B.C., depicted the case of an appalling clash between rising Athens and an established Sparta that made the war inevitable between them and brought Greek transcendence to a close. This idea sets that war is the most likely outcome when an emerging power portends to supersede a ruling power. Allison mentions the 16 case studies starting from the association of Spain and Portugal in the 16th century to the most recent rise of Germans, deducing that 12 out of these 16 cases resulted in war. Moreover, Allison presents the rivalry between Great Britain and pre-WWI Germany as a reference to contemporary international circumstances.

Since the US administration is faced with a similar scenario, Allison delivers key acumens on the present-day nature of the Sino-US relationship that possesses all the earmarks of being the seventeenth and latest case. Ultimately, he assesses that it is incumbent upon the United States to have profound shifts in its conduct and approach to evade the same fate. Based upon the seminal work of Samuel Huntington, Graham Allison's foresight incorporates an enriched grasp of the clash of civilizations. Most notably, Allison stresses a more overwhelming manifestation to prevent "sleepwalking" into the same 1914-like misfortune.

The author also identifies the factors driving this power struggle, such as economic competition, military capabilities, and ideological differences. He examines how these factors contribute to the rising tensions between the two nations and the potential for conflict. Allison's analysis is supported by data and research, which adds credibility to his arguments. Allison argues that the current power struggle between the United States and China puts them in this trap, making war between the two nations increasingly likely. He inspects the historical instances of Thucydides' Trap, including the Peloponnesian War, World War I, and the Cold War. He draws the inference that each conflict was fueled by a rising power defying an established power. The book also includes a chapter on possible scenarios for how a future war between the United States of America and the People's Republic of China could play out. This chapter is both sobering and informative, as it provides a detailed look at the potential consequences of a conflict between the two superpowers. Allison argues that the cost of such a war would be catastrophic, not just for the United States and China, but for the entire world.

Among the *métiers* of *Destined for War* is the author's ability to provide a nuanced analysis of the complex correlation between the United States and China. He acknowledges that both nations have made mistakes in their

policies towards each other and that both sides have valid concerns and interests that must be addressed. Allison presents a compelling argument that the United States and China should take action to prevent a war between them. He suggests that the two nations must engage in a dialogue focusing on mutual interests and cooperation rather than competition and rivalry.

Graham Allison has very well explained the complex historical events and concepts in a way accessible to a general audience. He has also added maps and charts to illustrate his points quantitatively, making the book more meshing and informative. Another strength of the book is Allison's willingness to challenge conventional wisdom. He argues that the United States and China are not destined to go to war but must take steps to avoid it. He also challenges the idea that nuclear weapons make war between great powers impossible, pointing out that the avoidance of a hot war during the Cold War was due in part to the fear of nuclear annihilation. *Destined for War* is a thought-provoking and insightful book essential for anyone interested in international relations and the future of the United States and China. Allison's analysis is well-researched, and his arguments are presented clearly and concisely. The book is accessible to experts and lay readers, making it a valuable contribution to the ongoing discussion of the US and China's relationship.

In conclusion, *Destined for War* is a timely and important book analyzing the potential conflict between the United States and China. It is essential reading for policymakers, academics, and anyone interested in understanding the complex relationship between these two superpowers. Allison's book is a call to action for both nations to engage in a dialogue that can help prevent a catastrophic war and foster a more cooperative relationship in the future.