



America vs. the West: Can the Liberal World Order Be Preserved?

By Kori Schake

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Reviewed by Brittany Bounds

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. The photo from the 2018 G7 summit on the cover of Kori Schake's *America vs. the West: Can the Liberal World Order Be Preserved?* sets the tone for the scathing review to follow. Schake is well known in the fields of national and strategic studies and is currently the Deputy Director General of the International Institute of Strategic Studies after spending time at the conservative Hoover Institute of War and Peace at Stanford University. Most tellingly, however, is that she is a "serenely unrepentant signatory of the Never Trump letters," as her short biography lauds in the introduction. Schake's background and tenuous relationship with President Donald Trump

are wise to keep in mind while evaluating her arguments, which are strong. In this book, Schake does not sugarcoat her opinions about the negative direction in which Trump has taken U.S. foreign policy.

Schake sets out to answer the question about President Trump's threat to the liberal international order and what could replace it should it collapse. She defines three elements of the order that the United States constructed at the end of World War II: security relationships, economic prosperity, and liberal political values. Because all of these are inextricably linked, Schake is pessimistic about the current role of the United States in the international order: "Donald Trump is destroying the presumption of an engaged America as the rule-setter and enforcer of the liberal international order." Yet Schake makes three important admissions: the United States has always had an uncomfortable acceptance with holding the role of the global hegemon; the liberal international order is more durable than the contingencies that the country has endured over the last 70 years; and Trump (or at least his rhetoric) represents some important continuities in U.S. foreign policy. In fact, she states that U.S. policy toward Russia is even better than under the Barack Obama administration, and Trump's policy has been "better than anticipated" on China.

Schake gives an efficient summation of the great power competition with China and Russia, two rising authoritarian capitalist countries. She conveys little concern about Russia's ability to dominate or reshape the global order in its image due to its low economic growth rates, overreliance on oil, lack of innovation, weak military strength, and widespread corruption both at home and abroad. China, however, poses more of a threat to the international order; it opted into the liberal order without liberalizing, which challenges the Western belief that as countries grow more prosperous, they become more liberal. One facet of this risk concerns China's willingness to replace dollar dominance with the yuan, which would weaken the U.S. economic foreign policy tool of sanctions. Yet she

shows how China is a long way from achieving global dominance with its low per capita gross domestic product, dependence on foreign markets, and beligerence toward its regional neighbors.

In the shortest chapter, Schake explains her perspective on the rise of populism in the United States and Western countries. Its growth is precisely a result of the success of the liberal international order, which has allowed for security and ultimately complacency. It is not yet clear if the current political illiberalism is generated by economic stagnation or cultural malaise—nor do we know if this is a permanent political realignment or part of the cyclical revitalizations the United States has experienced before. Schake's fear is that a second Trump term without alterations in policy approach would provide the time to set new patterns, prompting allies to find ways around the United States and giving adversaries a window to take advantage of the lack of unity.

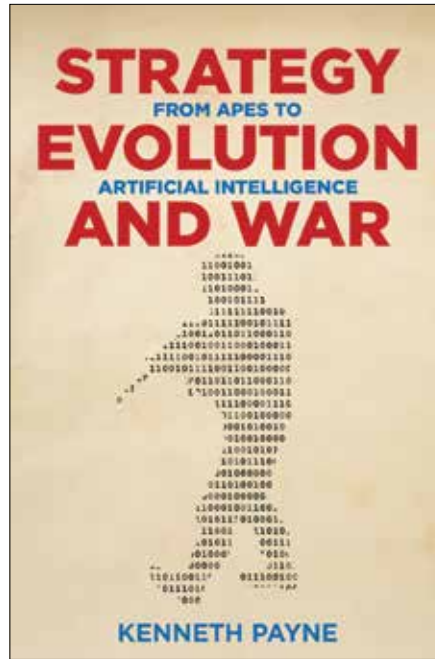
In the book's conclusion, Schake works out several possible scenarios for an alternative to the liberal international order if the United States continues to disengage. This serves not as a warning to the United States but as a caution mostly to other countries—the Western middle powers—for the next 10 to 15 years as China tests its authoritarian capitalism. One model for other countries is constructive engagement, whether through personal relationships with the Trump family (as prime ministers Emmanuel Macron, Shinzo Abe, and Theresa May have tried) or quiet, practical cooperation, as seen through Sweden and Finland's new defense agreements with the Department of Defense without White House involvement. Yet these approaches have been problematic in the past, as they have been unable to influence Trump's choices and, in some cases, Trump has vetoed decisions made around him, such as at the 2018 North Atlantic Treaty Organization summit.

A second method to get around the Trump administration is estrangement, by which Schake means the European Union (EU) stepping in for the United States: a "rise of the rest." For some,

this would be ideal, for it would signal the sturdiness of the international rules and norms that no longer rely on U.S. politics. But she repudiates this proposal of a concert of nations with a list of complications around the fallacy of liberalism. In her pessimism about Trump, she does not include the option that the President will alter his behavior or his approach to foreign relations, stating that it would be “unlikely in the extreme.” Her final suggestion is a passive one: wait. Buying time may allow the United States to “come to its senses,” China to stumble, Russia to envision a better country, and the EU to strengthen. In the meantime, she advocates for educating our societies on the value of international norms and institutions. Ultimately, Schake is optimistic that the liberal order will be sustained, even though it will have to be fought for and rejuvenated by either the United States or a concert of nations.

Schake weaves other themes through the narrative as well—democratizing technologies, globalization, partnerships, Hegelian liberalism, economics, and almost every region of the world. This short read is a perfect way to join the conversation on the great power competition and the future of the international order. JFQ

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Strategy, Evolution, and War: From Apes to Artificial Intelligence

By Kenneth Payne
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269 pp. \$32.95
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Reviewed by Ryan Shaffer

One of the major issues facing the future of technology and defense is how artificial intelligence will reshape military strategy. Though artificial intelligence is not a new concept, advances in technology are rapidly expanding artificial intelligence’s potential capabilities. Exploring prospects for the future of war and strategy, Kenneth Payne examines the development of military strategy with two revolutions he identifies as early human cognitive transformation from 100,000 years ago, and the present changes in cognition from artificial intelligence. Payne concludes that strategy will be transformed in the future because machines are going to make key decisions for war without human cognition. Describing how strategy is a psychological activity shaped by human biology and development, he admits the speculative nature

of his argument and notes that it draws from other authors on evolutionary psychology. Payne warns that one significant change for military strategy caused by artificial intelligence is that machines will make decisions based on principles that are not exclusively human.

In the first of the book’s three parts, Payne explores human strategy’s origins in evolutionary history. He describes how human evolution has a significant role in understanding strategic interests, such as the need to belong to a group rather than just to dominate physically. Warfare is a significant part of human evolution, and thus we have developed psychologically for the challenge. As for behaviors imbedded in human psychology, Payne explains conscious and unconscious biases and notes that decisionmaking processes are not always rational because emotion shapes strategies, which are justified afterward.

In the second part, Payne looks at culture’s relationship with war and technology to understand the effects they have on human strategic behavior. Discussing case studies from ancient Greece with attention to the hoplite panoply (a weapons system of infantrymen with body armor, shields, and spears), Payne concludes that strategy maintains a deep-seated psychological basis throughout history, across countries and cultures. Even with revolutionary technological advances from the Napoleonic to the nuclear eras, Payne also finds that technology does not alter strategy’s innate psychological foundation.

The final part focuses on artificial intelligence’s potential influence on military strategy. Payne explores what is feasible with tactical artificial intelligence, citing examples such as combat flight simulators and machine learning, and argues that artificial intelligence will shift the balance in conflict to favor the attacker and accelerate the initial steps to war. He believes these changes will affect strategic thinking by reshaping attitudes about risk and leaving decisionmakers removed from some decisions. Looking to the future, Payne offers three aspects of a hypothetical artificial general intelligence—a more