

China's Military Modernization and its Implications on Global Security

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Abstract

Information operations and cyberwarfare are now recognized as vital modern components of China's military modernisation. With significant ramifications for the dynamics of international security, China's quick military modernisation has been a focus of attention. This research paper offers a thorough examination of China's ongoing military modernization initiatives and their varied impacts on the wider international security environment. This research paper delves into the multifaceted landscape of China's military modernization and its far-reaching consequences for global security. The paper systematically examines the historical context, objectives, components, and implications of China's ongoing efforts to modernize its military capabilities. By analyzing the geopolitical, economic, technological, and ethical dimensions, this study provides a comprehensive overview of the challenges and opportunities posed by China's evolving military prowess.

Keywords: *Cyber warfare global security modernization war*

Introduction

The modernization of an army refers to the process of updating, upgrading, and transforming its equipment, structures, strategies, doctrines, and operational concepts to align with contemporary technological advancements, evolving security challenges, and strategic objectives. It involves making the armed forces more efficient, effective, and adaptive to changing circumstances. The modernization process is driven by various factors and serves several purposes, each of which contributes to the overall readiness and capabilities of the military. In order to incorporate the most recent developments in technology, armament, and combat concepts, a nation's armed forces must undergo a process known as "military modernization," which involves updating and upgrading its tools, tactics, plans, and organizational structures. A nation's military capabilities, effectiveness, and preparedness to respond to new security issues and threats are all to be improved through military modernisation.

The People's Liberation Army (PLA), China's military, has undergone extensive and ambitious modernization in order to transform its military capabilities, expand its strategic reach, and protect its national interests in a rapidly changing international security environment. To improve its military capabilities and position itself as a major global power, China has been engaged in a large and ongoing military modernization initiative. China's armed forces have undergone extensive modernization, including the army, navy, air force, missile capabilities, cyber capabilities, and more. Modernization frequently entails the adoption of cutting-edge technologies, cutting-edge communications, surveillance, and information systems. The armed forces can function more productively and keep a competitive edge thanks to these advances. A nation's military policy, national security goals, and assessment of prospective threats serve as the strategic compass for modernization initiatives. The military's capabilities will be brought into line with the changing security landscape. The modernisation of the Army is a broad initiative that addresses a number of issues, such as people training, equipment acquisition, organizational structure, operational tactics, and logistics. Modernization aids armies in adapting to new challenges including terrorism, hybrid warfare, cyberattacks, and unconventional tactics. It enables the military to successfully combat a variety of difficulties.

The army's entire defensive capability is the main goal of modernisation. This entails strengthening its capabilities for preparedness, mobility, firepower, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. Modernized armies serve as a deterrent to prospective enemies. Aggression can be deterred and conflicts can be avoided by giving the impression that the military is strong and technologically advanced. Through modernization, the army is better equipped to carry out missions. It enhances the capacity to carry out a variety of missions, including conventional warfare, peacekeeping, and humanitarian aid. Cutting-edge gear and technology can reduce losses by improving soldier safety and enabling accurate enemy targeting.

Modernization can increase an army's tactical and strategic reach. New strategies and tactics are developed as battle progresses. The army can react to these developments and stay one step ahead of prospective adversaries thanks to modernization. A modernized army is better able to cooperate with other nations and take part in international security initiatives, promoting regional stability and enhancing global security. An army with cutting-edge technology may improve a country's reputation and image abroad. It demonstrates a nation's dedication to defending its interests and promoting world security. In essence, an army's modernisation is a dynamic, ongoing process that attempts to maintain

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the military's readiness, adaptability, and efficiency in the face of changing security concerns. Strategic planning, resource management, and a dedication to upholding a capable strategic defence force.

A rich tapestry of tactics, plans, innovations, and battles have been used in China's long history of armed struggle. The military history of China is intricately entwined with its political, social, and technological advancements. It has seen both periods of strength and weakness, illuminating the intricate growth of Chinese society and its connections with regional neighbors and international superpowers. A well-known ancient Chinese work on military strategy and tactics is "The Art of War" by Sun Tzu. This famous work, which was written during the Spring and Autumn Period more than 2,500 years ago, has had a significant and enduring impact on the disciplines of strategy, leadership, and dispute resolution. Sun Tzu emphasizes the use of strategic deception to confuse and mislead the adversary, obtaining an edge by taking advantage of their uncertainty. "All warfare is based on deception." Sun Tzu emphasizes the idea of attaining victory by diplomacy, psychological tactics, and tactical maneuvering before turning to direct confrontation. He says, "The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting. The importance of understanding one's own strengths and limitations as well as those of the enemy is emphasized by Sun Tzu in his famous quote, "Know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles, you will never be defeated." The foundation for a successful strategy is this understanding. The maxim "Appear weak when you are strong, and strong when you are weak." emphasizes the need of hiding one's true self.

Sun Tzu advises concentrating efforts on exploiting the enemy's vulnerabilities and avoiding their strengths in his saying, "In war, the way is to avoid what is strong and to strike at what is weak." The soldier calculates his victory in relation to the enemy he is confronting, just as water forms its course according to the character of the ground over which it flows. This metaphor highlights the need of flexibility and the requirement to adapt solutions to the particulars of the scenario. Sun Tzu emphasizes that effective leadership is characterized by establishing a good example, winning the trust and allegiance of one's troops, and upholding discipline without relying only on coercion. "A leader leads by example, not by force."

Sun Tzu says, "Opportunities multiply as they are seized." This statement implies that taking advantage of opportunities as they arise can result in additional benefits and successes. "Supreme excellence does not consist in fighting and winning all your battles; supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting.": Sun Tzu emphasizes the need of employing good strategy and psychological warfare to achieve goals with the fewest possible casualties. Overall, "The Art of War" provides timeless insights into the nature of conflict, leadership, and strategy. Its principles are being researched and used in a wide range of contexts outside of traditional military conflict.

Imperial China: The Han Dynasty, which lasted from 206 BCE to 220 CE, placed a great emphasis on governmental control of the military. To stave off the Xiongnu nomads, the Great Wall was widened. The Wei, Shu, and Wu kingdoms engaged in a power war during the Three Kingdoms Period (220–280 CE). It witnessed the deployment of a variety of military alliances, strategies, and naval warfare.

Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE): The Tang Dynasty incorporated numerous ethnic groups into its military system as it expanded its realm and military influence along the Silk Road.

The Khitan, Jurchen, and Mongol forces posed threats to the Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE). During this time, innovations like gunpowder weapons were created.

Yuan Dynasty (1271–1368): During the Mongol Empire's control, China integrated a variety of military strategies and technologies from various Mongol Empire provinces. The Great Wall was still being built during the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), and Admiral Zheng He led exploration and trade missions for the Ming navy.

Contemporary and Modern Period: The Opium Wars and the Taiping Rebellion, which occurred under the Qing Dynasty (1644–1912), tested the Qing military's technological and strategic capabilities.

20th Century: The Chinese Civil War, the formation of the Chinese Communist Party, and the founding of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in 1927 all contributed to significant military changes in China during this time. Chinese resistance to Japanese assault during World War II was essential. China's contemporary military history has been greatly influenced by the Second Sino-Japanese War. Both sides suffered numerous casualties as a result of the conflict; estimates place the number of Chinese civilian and military fatalities in the millions. Due to the brutality of the Japanese occupation and the suffering experienced by the Chinese population, the conflict has left a lasting scar on Chinese society and memory. The Chinese Communist Party rose to power as a result of the war and was well-liked for its role in putting up a fight against the Japanese invaders. Sino-Japanese relations are still impacted by the war's legacy, with historical and geographical conflicts continuing having an impact on diplomatic relations today.

Following the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, China embarked on a series of military modernization and reform initiatives that resulted in the creation of a nuclear arsenal and improvements in conventional capabilities. China's military modernization in the contemporary era has concentrated on the creation of cutting-edge technology, the modernisation of its air force, navy, and missile capabilities, and the expansion of its global influence.

The military history of China is intricately entwined with its political, social, and technological advancements. It has experienced both periods of strength and weakness, illuminating the intricate growth of Chinese culture and its interactions with surrounding states.

From Tradition to Technological Powerhouse: The Development of Chinese Military Modernization The fascinating story of China's military development shows how it went from being a primarily rural and isolated country to a powerful technological superpower on the world arena. This process, which has spanned several decades, has been marked by

strategic reforms, investments in state-of-the-art technology, and an increasing focus on innovation, transforming the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) into a cutting-edge and effective combat force.

Early Modernization Efforts (1949–1970s): Phase 1

The People's Republic of China was established in 1949, and soon after that the PLA began a number of extensive military reforms. China concentrated on constructing a sizable conventional army, principally intended for territorial defense, taking influence from the Soviet model. However, due to budget constraints and technology lag, these early efforts were hindered, which led to a relatively slow modernisation trajectory throughout this time.

Building the Foundation: China's Military's Early Modernization Efforts (1949–1970s)

The first stage of China's military modernisation initiatives took place between 1949 and the 1970s. As it worked to transition its armed forces from a mostly agricultural and revolutionary army into a more structured, disciplined, and technologically advanced military, the newly founded People's Republic of China (PRC) encountered several difficulties during this time. This stage laid the foundation for China's later advancements in military development.

Revolutionary Legacy and Early Challenges: The People's Liberation Army (PLA) inherited a revolutionary army that had prevailed in battle against the Nationalist forces following the Chinese Communist Party's triumph in 1949. However, this army had inadequate equipment, outdated weapons, and organizational issues. The separation of China and the West further limited its access to advanced and well equipped weapons.

Soviet Influence and Early Reforms: In order to modernize its military, the PRC looked to the Soviet Union in the 1950s. China implemented a number of measures under Soviet direction to improve its military prowess. A more centralized command structure was established, military units were reorganized, and new training techniques were implemented as part of these reforms. In addition, the PLA incorporated Soviet-made weapons and strategies, which aided in its early modernisation efforts.

Korean War and Lessons Learned: China's military modernisation plan was significantly shaped by the Korean War (1950–1953). The conflict highlighted the PLA's weaknesses in terms of logistics, air support, and artillery. China's participation in the fight highlighted the need for technological breakthroughs and gave vital military experience.

Limited Technological Progress: Despite early attempts, China's technological development during this phase was constrained by issues such as a lack of resources, the nation's concentration on internal stability and economic development, and the deterioration of Sino-Soviet ties in the late 1950s. Military modernization was neglected throughout the Great Leap Forward (1958–1962) and the turbulent Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) that followed.

Nuclear ambitious deterrence: China's development of its own nuclear capabilities was an important accomplishment during this time in terms of its nuclear ambitions and deterrence. China successfully conducted its first nuclear test in 1964, moving up to the position of fifth nuclear-armed state in the world. Having nuclear weapons during the Cold War improved China's deterrence capabilities and affected its military stance.

The groundwork for China's military modernisation journey was established between 1949 and the 1970s. The PLA achieved improvements in organizational change, training, and some limited technology developments, but overall advancement was hindered by a number of internal and external causes. The lessons learned by China during this phase of modernization would pave the way for the upcoming, more ambitious, more technologically intensive phases, which would finally transform the PLA into a more capable and advanced military force on the international scene.

Title: Phase 2: Technological Leap and Modernization Acceleration of China's Military (1980s-2000s)

The years between the 1980s and the 2000s were a pivotal time in China's military modernisation process. China increased its efforts to close the technology gap with major military countries by building on the foundations set in earlier decades. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) reached new heights of capability and influence during this phase as a result of substantial developments in a variety of fields.

Increased Defense Budget and Economic Reforms: Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms in China brought in fresh funding for the effort to modernize the armed forces. The Chinese government raised its budgetary allotment for defense, allowing for greater investments in R&D and the purchase of cutting-edge technologies.

Development of the Indigenous Defense Industry in China: During this period, China's dedication to the development of the indigenous was remarkable. the PLA started making the switch from importing foreign weapons to developing its own weaponry. This change was motivated by the need to build a self-sufficient military sector and lessen vulnerabilities resulting from foreign dependence.

Modernisation of Conventional Forces: Developments in China's conventional forces during this time period were a defining feature of its military modernisation. The PLA made investments in the creation and procurement of cutting-edge armored vehicles, artillery, infantry weaponry, and tanks. The Chinese navy and air force also received major improvements, adding more modern ships, planes, and missile systems.

Development of missiles :With the deployment of ballistic and cruise missile systems capable of hitting ships and aircraft carriers, China's development of missiles made a significant advancement. This signaled the start of China's A2/AD policy, which aims to prevent or delay enemy forces from gaining access to specific locations, especially in the Western Pacific.China seeks to obtain foreign technologies through a variety of channels, including joint ventures, legitimate cooperation, and occasionally illegal measures. Russian fighter jets and naval ships were purchased by China, which made a substantial contribution to its modernisation efforts.

Space and Cyber Capabilities: China's first successful manned spaceflight in 2003 and the creation of its own satellite navigation system, BeiDou, were two examples of the country's advances in space technology. China also made investments in its cyberspace capabilities, realizing the significance of information warfare in contemporary wars.

China's military modernisation efforts significantly accelerated throughout the period from the 1980s to the 2000s. China built the foundation for its later development as a powerful military power by concentrating on the development of domestic defense technology, modernizing conventional troops, improving missile capabilities, and foraying into space and the cyberspace. China would continue to make strides as the twenty-first century went on, paving the way for additional changes in the military dynamics of the world.

Title: Phase 3: 21st Century Technological Revolution of China's Military (2010s-Present)

China's military modernisation efforts have undergone a tremendous technical revolution in the twenty-first century. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) was propelled into the realm of cutting-edge military innovation and global impact during this time as China used its expanding economic and scientific capabilities to accomplish unparalleled achievements across a wide variety of fields.

Strategic Reforms and modernisation Agenda: At the start of this phase, President Xi Jinping unveiled a broad range of reforms targeted at boosting the combat potency, joint operations, and general modernisation of the PLA. These changes included streamlining the command and control system, merging services, and rearranging military commands.

Information Warfare and Cyber Operations Capabilities: China has considerably improved its information warfare and cyber operations capacities. The PLA made investments in offensive and defensive cyber capabilities after realizing the value of maintaining control over the information domain, paving the way for activities like network attacks, cyber espionage, and psychological warfare.

Advanced Naval and Air Assets: China continued to strengthen its naval and aviation capabilities with the deployment of aircraft carriers built domestically and cutting-edge fighter jets like the J-20 stealth fighter. These resources improved China's ability to project power and strengthened its maritime presence. China made advances in hypersonic technology and missile development, creating hypersonic glide vehicles that could evade missile defense systems while navigating at high speeds. Global military strategists are concerned about these developments because they have the potential to change traditional deterrence dynamics.

Space Dominance and Quantum Technologies: With the development of a space station, successful lunar missions, satellite launches, and quantum technologies, China's space program has advanced to new heights. The advancement of quantum communication technology also demonstrated China's commitment to dominating the most advanced scientific fields.

Unmanned Systems and Artificial Intelligence (AI): China has adopted AI for military uses, such as autonomous drones, robots, and data analysis for tactical decision-making. Processes for command and control, intelligence gathering, and battlefield management all incorporated AI-powered technologies.

Belt and Road Initiative and Global Military Engagement: China increased its involvement in international military drills, peacekeeping operations, and humanitarian aid missions. Strategic ports and facilities were built as part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to assist PLA operations outside of China's boundaries. The Asia-Pacific region's power dynamics and global security dynamics were both significantly affected by China's fast military modernisation. China's accomplishments were keenly watched by the United States and its allies, who then modified their own policies in response.

In conclusion, China's military modernisation made a significant step forward in the twenty-first century, as evidenced by improvements in information warfare, cyber capabilities, naval and air assets, missile technology, space domination, and AI integration. China's emergence as a military titan of the twenty-first century highlighted its expanding impact on the world arena, posing both opportunities and difficulties for global security and stability. China's influence on determining the course of future global geopolitics is becoming more and more obvious as it continues to innovate and strengthen its military capabilities.

Global concerns of military modernization

Impact of China's military modernization on global security is a complex and multifaceted issue that spans political, economic, and strategic dimensions. China's growing military capabilities and assertive posture have implications that extend beyond its borders and influence global security dynamics in several ways:

Regional Power Projection: China's enhanced military capabilities, particularly in naval and air domains, have allowed it to project power more effectively in the Asia-Pacific region. This has raised concerns among neighboring countries and contributed to shifts in regional power dynamics, potentially leading to increased tensions and competition.

Territorial Disputes: China's assertive territorial claims in the South China Sea and other regions have fueled disputes with neighboring countries, leading to potential flashpoints that could escalate into conflicts. These disputes have the potential to disrupt regional stability and international trade routes.

Impact on U.S. Alliances: China's military modernization has prompted the United States to reevaluate its security commitments and military posture in the Asia-Pacific. U.S. allies in the region have sought closer security cooperation and increased defense spending in response to China's growing influence.

Technological and Cybersecurity Concerns: China's advancements in cyber capabilities and technology raise concerns about potential cyberattacks, intellectual property theft, and espionage. This has implications for global cybersecurity and economic stability, as well as for the protection of sensitive military and civilian technologies.

Arms Race and Deterrence Dynamics: China's development of advanced missile systems, hypersonic technology, and other military capabilities has contributed to an arms race and prompted other nations to invest in their own defense systems. This can lead to heightened deterrence dynamics and increased military expenditures globally.

United Nations Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Missions: China's increasing military capabilities have enabled it to play a more active role in United Nations peacekeeping missions and humanitarian operations. While this can contribute positively to global security and stability, it also raises questions about China's motivations and potential influence over these missions.

Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Implications: China's military modernization is intertwined with its BRI, which involves infrastructure projects across various regions. The establishment of military facilities and strategic ports as part of the BRI has raised concerns about potential geopolitical leverage and power projection in partner countries.

Non-Traditional Security Challenges: China's military modernization also has implications for non-traditional security challenges such as climate change, natural disasters, and pandemics. The PLA's capabilities in disaster relief and humanitarian assistance could be instrumental in addressing these challenges on a global scale.

In summary, China's military modernization has significant implications for global security, ranging from regional power shifts and territorial disputes to technological concerns and influence over international organizations. As China continues to assert itself on the global stage, its military capabilities will continue to shape the evolving landscape of international security and influence the strategic calculations of other nations.

, the military modernization of China stands as a multifaceted and dynamic process that has evolved over several phases, leaving a profound impact on domestic defense capabilities, regional power dynamics, and global security considerations. The journey from its early revolutionary army to becoming a 21st-century technological powerhouse has been characterized by strategic shifts, innovative endeavors, and advancements across various domains.

Throughout its modernization journey, China has demonstrated a remarkable ability to adapt and transform its armed forces. The early phase, marked by Soviet influence and limited resources, laid the groundwork for subsequent advancements. The technological leap and acceleration phase saw China making significant strides in indigenous defense technology development, while also acquiring foreign expertise to bolster its capabilities. It was during this period that China's conventional forces underwent a notable transformation, and its missile development capabilities gained prominence.

The 21st-century technological revolution phase has seen China's military modernization reach unprecedented heights. With an unwavering commitment to information warfare, cyber capabilities, advanced naval and air assets, missile technology, and emerging domains like space and quantum technologies, China has emerged as a global leader in cutting-edge military innovation. This phase has also seen China's growing engagement in global military activities, including peacekeeping missions and humanitarian operations, indicating its increasing role in shaping global security dynamics.

The ramifications of China's military modernization are far-reaching. Its rise as a regional and global power has prompted neighboring countries to reassess their security strategies, while major powers have recalibrated their military postures in response. The evolving balance of power, especially in the Asia-Pacific region, has generated both opportunities and challenges for maintaining stability and peace. However, the trajectory of China's military modernization is not devoid of concerns. As China's military capabilities expand, questions arise about the intent behind its advancements, the transparency of its military posture, and its adherence to international norms and agreements. The potential for miscalculations, misunderstandings, and conflicts remains a crucial consideration in the realm of global security.

In this context, the military modernization of China underscores the importance of effective communication, cooperation, and diplomacy among nations. As China continues to solidify its role as a major player on the global stage, collaborative efforts to manage potential risks and promote stability become imperative. Balancing legitimate security interests with the imperative of avoiding unnecessary confrontations requires a nuanced and multidimensional approach.

In the ever-evolving landscape of international security, the trajectory of China's military modernization will undoubtedly continue to shape global dynamics and influence the strategic calculations of nations. As we move forward, it is crucial for policymakers, scholars, and practitioners to engage in constructive dialogue and cooperation, striving to ensure that China's military modernization contributes to a secure and stable world order for the benefit of all.

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