



# The Tragedy of Great Power Politics

By John J. Mearsheimer

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"A superb book....Mearsheimer has made a significant contribution to our understanding of the behavior of great powers."—Barry R. Posen, *The National Interest*

The updated edition of this classic treatise on the behavior of great powers takes a penetrating look at the question likely to dominate international relations in the twenty-first century: Can China rise peacefully? In clear, eloquent prose, John Mearsheimer explains why the answer is no: a rising China will seek to dominate Asia, while the United States, determined to remain the world's sole regional hegemon, will go to great lengths to prevent that from happening. The tragedy of great power politics is inescapable.

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## Editorial Review

### Amazon.com Review

This hardheaded book about international relations contains no comforting bromides about "peace dividends" or "the family of nations." Instead, University of Chicago professor John J. Mearsheimer posits an almost Darwinian state of affairs: "The great powers seek to maximize their share of world power" because "having dominant power is the best means to ensure one's own survival." Mearsheimer comes from the realist school of statecraft--he calls his own brand of thinking "offensive realism"--and he warns repeatedly against putting too much faith in the goodwill of other countries. "The sad fact is that international politics has always been a ruthless and dangerous business," he writes. Much of the book is an attempt to show how the diplomatic and military history of the last two centuries supports his ideas. Toward the end of *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, he applies his theories to the current scene: "I believe that the existing power structures in Europe in Northeast Asia are not sustainable through 2020." Mearsheimer is especially critical of America's policy of engagement with China; he thinks that trying to make China wealthy and democratic will only make it a stronger rival. This is a controversial idea, but it is ably argued and difficult to ignore. --*John Miller*

### From Publishers Weekly

The central tenet of the political theory called "offensive realism" is that each state seeks to ensure its survival by maximizing its share of world power. Mearsheimer, professor of political science at the University of Chicago, sets out to explain, defend and validate offensive realism as the only theory to account for how states actually behave. He proceeds by laying out the theory and its assumptions, then extensively tests the theory against the historical record since the Age of Napoleon. He finds plenty of evidence of what the theory predicts that states seek regional dominance through military strength. Further, whenever a condition of "unbalanced multipolarity" exists (i.e., when three or more states compete in a region, and one of them has the potential to dominate the others), the likelihood of war rises dramatically. If history validates offensive realism, then the theory should yield predictions about the future of world politics and the chances of renewed global conflict. Here Mearsheimer ventures into controversial terrain. Far from seeing the end of the Cold War as ushering in an age of peace and cooperation, the author believes the next 20 years have a high potential for war. China emerges as the most destabilizing force, and the author urges the U.S. to do all it can to retard China's economic growth. Since offensive realism is an academic movement, readers will expect some jargon ("buckpassing," "hegemon"), but the terms are defined and the language is accessible. This book will appeal to all devotees of political science, and especially to partisans of the "tough-minded" (in William James's sense) approach to history. Maps.

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### From Library Journal

Mearsheimer (political science, Univ. of Chicago), an articulate spokesman for the realist school of international politics, here serves up a theory dubbed "offensive realism." Because of the anarchic structure of the international system, he contends, the great powers compete perpetually to become the "hegemon," or dominant state in the world and thus to obtain that elusive quantity called security. Theories of the "democratic peace" have no place in this gloomy world, and the internal makeup of a state has little bearing on its international behavior. Readers of an idealist bent will be distressed to discover that America's grand endeavors of the 20th century the world wars and the Cold War sprang not from altruism but from amoral calculations of power. And the future will be no different: China and the United States are fated to become

adversaries as Chinese power waxes, regardless of whether the Asian behemoth evolves in an authoritarian or a more benign direction. One of the finest works of the realist school, this belongs in all academic collections. James R. Holmes, Ph.D. candidate, Fletcher Sch. of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts Univ., Medford, MA

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### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Samuel Rascon:**

Book is actually written, printed, or illustrated for everything. You can recognize everything you want by a publication. Book has a different type. As we know that book is important issue to bring us around the world. Next to that you can your reading ability was fluently. A e-book The Tragedy of Great Power Politics will make you to always be smarter. You can feel far more confidence if you can know about everything. But some of you think in which open or reading the book make you bored. It is not make you fun. Why they may be thought like that? Have you searching for best book or suitable book with you?

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Nowadays reading books be than want or need but also get a life style. This reading addiction give you lot of advantages. The benefits you got of course the knowledge the actual information inside the book that will improve your knowledge and information. The data you get based on what kind of guide you read, if you want send more knowledge just go with training books but if you want truly feel happy read one with theme for entertaining for example comic or novel. The particular The Tragedy of Great Power Politics is kind of guide which is giving the reader unstable experience.

#### **Cora Snyder:**

The book untitled The Tragedy of Great Power Politics contain a lot of information on the idea. The writer explains the woman idea with easy method. The language is very clear and understandable all the people, so do not really worry, you can easy to read the idea. The book was written by famous author. The author gives you in the new period of time of literary works. It is possible to read this book because you can please read on your smart phone, or product, so you can read the book within anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can wide open their official web-site and order it. Have a nice go through.

#### **Wesley Mansour:**

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language styles that writer use to explain it is easy to understand. The particular writer made some exploration when he makes this book. This is why this book ideal all of you.

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