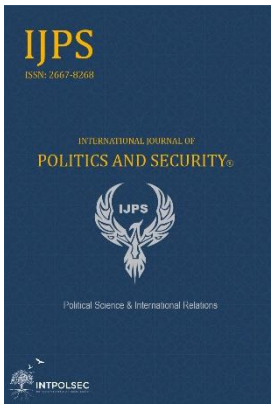
International Journal of Politics and Security (IJPS)

ISSN: 2667-8268

https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/ijps



Policy Impacts of the Department of Defense Office of Net Assessment on Sino-U.S. Soft Power Competition in Africa

Author(s) / Yazar(lar) : Matteo Garofalo

Source / Kaynak: International Journal of Politics and Security (IJPS) / Vol. 6 / No. 1 / May 2024, pp. 38-66.

DOI: 10.53451/ijps.1329448

Date of Arrival **:** 18.07.2023
Date of Acceptance **:** 12.01.2024

To cite this article:

Garofalo, Matteo. "Policy Impacts of the Department of Defense Office of Net Assessment on Sino-U.S. Soft Power Competition in Africa". *International Journal of Politics and Security (IJPS)*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 2024, pp. 38-66. DOI: 10.53451/ijps.1329448

All intellectual property rights of this article belong to the International Journal of Politics and Security (IJPS). IJPS allows the use of articles and shares by providing proper attribution (BY) without permission in advance except for commercial use (NC). But prohibited the sharing of its adaptations (ND), and should be released under the same license (SA) by mention IJPS.
The ideas stated in the article belong only to the author(s).

IJPS, 2024: 6(1):38-66

International Journal of Politics and Security, 2024: 6(1):38-66

Policy Impacts of the Department of Defense Office of Net Assessment on Sino-U.S. Soft Power Competition in Africa

Matteo Garofalo*

Abstract

The Strategic Consequences of Chinese Racism is a book-length academic research article commissioned by Andrew Marshal, director of the Department of Defense Office of Net Assessment (ONA). Owing to the significant policymaking power of ONA, Strategic Consequences indicates potential soft-power tactics in use by the Pentagon in countering Chinese influence in Africa. This paper examines Strategic Consequences' three key arguments. This paper examines the argument that Chinese society is more racist than U.S. society and finds this argument is likely correct. This paper examines the argument that Chinese racism is a stabilizing force for the Chinese government and finds this argument is likely correct. Finally, this paper examines the argument that U.S. anti-racist culture acts as a useful tool of soft-power influence in Africa, and finds this argument is likely incorrect. This paper concludes that ONA has accurately gauged the strategic value of Chinese racism for the Chinese government but overestimates the U.S. capacity to counter China in the field of soft power competition.

Keywords: *Africa, Anti-racism, China, In-group preference, Racism, Soft power competition, United States*

1. Introduction

In 1992, Francis Fukuyama published *The End of History and the Last Man*, describing the then-nascent unipolar world order in which the United States was the unchallenged single superpower. As it happens, the "end of history" ended quickly, as the current geopolitical environment has grown increasingly multipolar. The single largest point of contention in this new environment exists between the current superpower – the United States of America – and the rising superpower – the People's Republic of China. The emergence of a cold war between these two giants is of immense importance to researchers, certainly for the extent of its impact, but also for the creative means by which this soft power struggle is fought. One of the most hotly contested of these cultural battlefields is the continent of Africa, flush with resources that both powers seek to monopolize. Therefore, any information about this conflict that emerges from within the depths of either the U.S. or Chinese states is of historical and academic importance.

On February 26, 2017, a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request made by unknown parties caused the Office of the Secretary of Defense (DoD) and Joint Staff (OSD/JS) to publish

* University of Maryland, Baltimore/USA, matteo.garofalo@outlook.com, ORCID: 0000-0002-8492-9575
Date of Arrival : 18.07.2023 - **Date of Acceptance :** 12.01.2024

publicly a series of internal documents[1]. Among these documents was a research document titled *The Strategic Consequences of Chinese Racism: A Strategic Asymmetry for the United States*. Upon initial publication, this document garnered an altogether negligible amount of attention, with no more than half a dozen unique online mentions between the years of 2017 and 2022[2]. In early 2022, the document was "rediscovered" by armature sociology enthusiasts on Twitter, from where it gained a second – albeit, muted – new life. The most significant measurable reach the document has achieved comes from a Twitter post with 558 Retweets and 1,781 Likes[3].

The deafeningly quiet public reaction to this paper stands in direct, inverse proportion to the document's tremendous significance. *The Strategic Consequences of Chinese Racism* is perhaps the single most comprehensive and authoritative breakdown of United States foreign policy in the field of Sino-American soft power influence operations in developing nations. *Strategic Consequences* provides researchers an unprecedented opportunity to – in crude terms – "see how the sausage is made," to take a look behind the curtains of one of the most influential military policy-making apparatuses in the world. Such analysis is capable of providing greater context to current events and may additionally provide predictive power for the future actions of China and the United States as they compete on the world stage.

This paper aims to critically examine *The Strategic Consequences of Chinese Racism*, noting its most significant claims and applying to them a degree of scrutiny. This paper selects three arguments made by *Strategic Consequences* in support of its overarching thesis. These three arguments are examined against existing data and literature to determine the relative strength of their contentions and to invite further academic investigation on the topics involved. Given the potential geopolitical importance of *Strategic Consequences*, the degree to which it withstands critique is important for understanding the methods in which U.S. foreign policy is crafted.

[1] United States Department of Defense. (2017, February 26). *Litigation Release*. Washington Headquarters Service. https://www.esd.whs.mil/FOIA/Reading-Room/Reading-Room-List_2/Litigation_Release/

[2] Google. (2022). *Strategic Consequences of Chinese Racism*. https://www.google.com/search?q="Strategic+Consequences+of+Chinese+Racism"&tbs=cdr:1,cd_min:1/1/2017,cd_max:1/1/2022&sxsrf=ALiCzsZ6oiJW7JJ0Q2y35h_YtVtmabv7vg:1669926072933&ei=uAyJY9-7OMHY5NoP4c67wAw&start=0&sa=N&filter=0&ved=2ahUKEwjf94Kzn9n7AhVBLFkFHWHnDsg4ChDy0wN6BAgFEAQ&biw=1920&bih=962&dpr=1

[3] s_decatur. (2022, February 6). *Thread*. Twitter. https://twitter.com/s_decatur/status/1490408671779729425

2. Contextual Significance

2.1 Author Speculation

Officially, the author of *The Strategic Consequences of Chinese Racism* remains unknown, as his name has been redacted in the released document. This redaction was marked under FOIA exemption (b)(7)(c), which empowers the releasing agency to "withhold information compiled for law enforcement purposes the release of which could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy"[4]. Despite having this redaction authority, the DoD was remarkably un-thorough, as it left un-redacted a treasure trove of personal information on the "About the Author" page[5].

Using this information, it can be confidently asserted that the author of the paper is Dr. Bradley A. Thayer. Thayer's resume exactly matches the content found within the "About the Author" section, including his past professorship at Missouri State University, his fellowship at Harvard University's Belfer Center, and his employment with the RAND Corporation[6]. The clearest piece of evidence, however, is the un-redacted note that the paper was commissioned from Thayer Limited, LLC, a sole proprietorship government contractor with Bradley Thayer listed as its only employee[7]. As such, throughout this paper, *The Strategic Consequences of Chinese Racism* will be referred to as "Thayer's paper," "Thayer's research," or any variation thereof. However, because Thayer's identity as the author has not been officially confirmed, his paper will be listed in citations under "Author Unknown."

2.2 Andrew Marshall and The Office of Net Assessment

Thayer is the archetypical accomplished academic, having been employed at various prestigious universities, private sector behemoths, and academic journals. However, his identity as the author pales in significance to the identity of the man who commissioned Thayer's paper, that being the late Andrew Marshal of the Office of Net Assessment.

[4] United States Department of Justice. (2022). *Freedom of Information Act Guide, May 2004*. https://www.justice.gov/archives/oip/foia-guide-2004-edition-exemption-7c
[5] Author Unknown. (2013, January 7). *The Strategic Consequences of Chinese Racism: A Strategic Asymmetry for the United States*. United States Department of Defense, Office of Net Assessment. https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/FOID/Reading%20Room/Litigation_Release/Litigation%20Release%20-%20The%20Strategic%20Consequences%20of%20Chinese%20Racism%20%20201301.pdf
[6] Encyclopedia.com. (2022). *Thayer, Bradley A.* Encyclopedia.com. https://www.encyclopedia.com/arts/educational-magazines/thayer-bradley
[7] GovTribe. (2022). *Thayer Limited, LLC*. https://govtribe.com/vendors/thayer-limited-llc-5whe5

Described by peers as "the most famous person you've never heard of," Marshall held the title of the oldest serving federal employee, having retired from the federal service at age 93[8]. Marshall spent his nearly half-decade tenure in government between 1973 and 2015 as the founder and director of the Office of Net Assessment, a personal fiefdom from which he leveraged tremendous authority within the U.S. national security establishment. Before joining the public sector, Marshall was one of the leading voices in the RAND Corporation, described alternatively as either "the world's first 'think tank,'" or as "the private sector CIA"[9]. While at RAND, Marshall was the "first among equals" within a group of researchers who would go on to make remarkable impacts on the American political landscape. Among Marshall's close colleagues and protégés were Charles Hitch - future Assistant Secretary of Defense (SecDef), Herman Kahn - founder of the Hudson Institute, Daniel Ellsberg – the man who would leak the Pentagon Papers, and James Schlesinger - future Secretary of Defense. Marshall's propensity for training protégés would continue throughout his career, with Dick Cheyney, Donald Rumsfeld, and Paul Wolfowitz counting themselves as being among his pupils[10].

It was under SecDef Schlesinger that Marshall would enter public service, founding the Office of Net Assessment (ONA) in 1973. ONA was established to serve as the DoD's internal think tank, mirroring Marshall and Schlesinger's work at RAND. As Director of ONA, Marshall was answerable only to the SecDef and assistant SecDef and was the official primary advisor to the SecDef[11]. He held this position uninterrupted for 42 years, serving under eight U.S. Presidents and 13 Secretaries of Defense. This long period of service was likely an intentional element of the ONA's organization; the office was established with the explicit goal of generating long-term strategic outlooks, rather than implementing short-term initiatives. To this end, ONA has commissioned approximately $400 million in studies and articles solicited from leading academics[12]. According to Andrew Marshall biographer and former ONA employee Andrew Krepinevich, Marshall personally read each paper commissioned and used this

[8] Krepinevich, A.. (2019, April 19). *Measures of Power: On the Lasting Value of Net Assessment*. Foreign Affairs. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2019-04-19/measures-power
[9] Krepinevich, A., & Watts, B. (2015). *The Last Warrior: Andrew Marshall and the Shaping of Modern American Defense Strategy* (1st ed.). Basic Books.
[10] Krepinevich & Watts, 2015
[11] Elliott, J. (2009, March 10). *Inside the Pentagon's Idea Factory: The Office of Net Assessment*. Talking Points Memo.https://web.archive.org/web/20130515022119/http://tpmmuckraker.talkingpointsmemo.com/2009/03/inside_the_pentagons_idea_factory_office_of_net_as.php#more
[12] Elliott, 2009

acquired knowledge in his principle advisory role to the SecDef. Allegedly, Marshall was highly secretive with the studies he commissioned, only allowing one copy to be printed and maintaining this copy in a cabinet in his office[13] (although, clearly, these alleged precautions did not protect the studies from FOIA requests).

Judging the extent to which Marshall influenced U.S. military policy over his tenure is inherently difficult. According to a research paper drafted by the National Defense University, this opacity was intentionally designed ("it seemed more important to keep Andrew Marshall's name off the final product than his thoughts out of it")[14]. However, according to the same paper, Marshall's influence was evident at all levels of DoD operations. Most crucially, his impact is said to best be seen in the post-9/11 transition of the DoD from a "threat-based force" to a "capabilities-based force." That is to say, the prevailing pre-9/11 U.S. military doctrine was to create a fighting force capable of countering the nation's known enemies (primarily the Soviet Union). The post-9/11 U.S. military doctrine (allegedly crafted by Marshall) is to create a fighting force capable of countering all threats – known and unknown – from enemies both present and future. This transformation is most evident in the DoD's significantly expanded 21st-century focus on the fields of space militarization and biotechnology, both of which Marshall believed were key to maintaining force capabilities in the medium and long-term future[15].

This focus on the future is mirrored by Marshall's views on America's two strongest great power rivals: Russia and China. According to Krepinevich, Marshall was an early advocate for the position that the Soviet Union was in a much weaker economic position than was understood by those outside of the Iron Curtain[16]. This was directly in contrast with the prevailing view in U.S. military and academic circles, which claimed that the Soviet economy was strong enough to directly compete with that of the U.S.[17]. Famously, as conventional wisdom shifted in Marshall's favor, the Ronald Reagan administration pursued a policy of attempting to bankrupt the Soviets through excessive military spending, a policy which is often

[13] Krepinevich & Watts, 2015
[14] Maddrell, D. (2003, May 3). *Quiet Transformation: The Role of the Office of Net Assessment*. National Defense University. https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA441633.pdf
[15] Maddrell, 2003
[16] Krepinevich & Watts, 2015
[17] Samuelson, P., & Nordhaus, W. (1989). *Economics* (14th edition). McGraw-Hill Inc.,US.

attributed as being an element of the USSR's eventual collapse[18]. Supposedly, this policy originated in the windowless Pentagon office from where Andrew Marshall worked his magic[19].

In contrast to the USSR - which he saw as weaker than commonly believed - Marshall was an advocate for the position that China would become the most significant great power rival of the U.S. in the 21st Century. Allegedly, Marshall was one of the key voices advocating for the Barack Obama administration's 2011 "Pivot to Asia" policy, which sought to shift American military goals away from the Middle East and towards the Far East[20]. *The Strategic Consequences of Chinese Racism* - having been drafted in 2013 – would appear to be an element of ONA's participation in the Pivot to Asia. Thayer's paper is not alone in this regard. In the same FOIA release batch are found a total of seven other papers commissioned by ONA on the topic of China, more than for any other nation or region[21].

2.3 Importance to U.S. Policy-Making

The Strategic Consequences of Chinese Racism draws its significance from having been commissioned – and potentially used in policy making – by Marshall. If his biographers are to be believed, then Marshall was one of the single most influential crafters of military doctrine in U.S. history. Even if his biographers are incorrect, and his influence is overestimated, then it must still be recognized that the Director of ONA is the principal long-term strategic advisor to the Secretary of Defense, meaning that Marshall's influence is necessarily non-negligible. Therefore, as the only publicly known ONA document on Sino-American soft power competition for developing nations, Thayer's paper is the closest thing that can be found to an official policy document on the subject. Indeed, it is orders of magnitude more significant than any publicly released statement on the subject by government officials because Thayer's paper is unmarred by the need for diplomatic language. To whatever extent a "deep state" exists, Thayer's paper is the best available window into their understanding of this particular topic.

[18] Edwards, L. (2021, December 28). *How Reagan Doctrine Brought Down the Evil Empire*. The Heritage Foundation. https://www.heritage.org/conservatism/commentary/how-reagan-doctrine-brought-down-the-evil-empire
[19] Krepinevich & Watts, 2015
[20] Krepinevich & Watts, 2015
[21] United States Department of Defense, 2017

2.4 Literature Review

In his executive summary, Thayer claims that he is "not aware of a single study that addresses this important topic," in reference to Chinese racism and its strategic implications[22]. As best as this author can determine, Thayer's claim was correct for its time, as there do not appear to be other academic studies crafted on this topic prior to 2013. Since this time, very small academic literature has developed on the subject of Chinese racial attitudes towards Africa and its potential impact on soft power relations. *Race and Racism in Contemporary Africa-China Relations Research: Approaches, Controversies and Reflections*, published in the journal Inter-Asia Cultural Studies, analyzes instances of racial violence between Chinese and Africans in recent years, and attempts to create a "multiple triangulations" methodology for understanding Afro-Sino relations independent of Afro-European relations[23]. *They've Made our Blood Ties Black: On the Burst of Online Racism Towards the African in China's Social Media*, published in the journal Critical Arts, analyzes instances of racial violence between Chinese and Africans in recent years, and attempts to create a "multiple triangulations" methodology for understanding Afro-Sino relations independent of Afro-European relations[24]. Two separate articles have provided case studies of China's largest African diaspora population, which occupies the black market African trading district of Guangzhou. These are *The Shifting Meanings of Race in China: A Case Study of the African Diaspora Communities in Guangzhou*, published in the journal City and Society[25], and *Africans in Guangzhou: Is the Ethnic Enclave Model Applicable in the Chinese Context?*, published in the journal Cities[26].

Much more has been written by academics on the topic of Chinese racism broadly. *Neo-Racism in China: Reasons for China's Otherwise Inexplicable Modern-Day Racism*, published in the journal Language in India, approaches the traits and expression of racism in China both through an Indian perspective and also in regard to the role of modern Chinese media in shaping

[22] Author Unknown, 2015
[23] Castillo, R. (2020). "Race" and "Racism" in Contemporary Africa-China Relations Research: Approaches, Controversies and Reflections. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, *21*(3), 310–336. https://doi.org/10.1080/14649373.2020.1796343
[24] Liu, T., & Deng, Z. (2020). "They've Made our Blood Ties Black": On the Burst of Online Racism Towards the African in China's Social Media. *Critical Arts*, *34*(2), 104–107. https://doi.org/10.1080/02560046.2020.1717567
[25] Lan, S. (2016). The Shifting Meanings of Race in China: A Case Study of the African Diaspora Communities in Guangzhou. *City and Society*, *28*(3), 298–318. https://doi.org/10.1111/ciso.12094
[26] Jin, X., Bolt, G., & Hooimeijer, P. (2021). Africans in Guangzhou: Is the Ethnic Enclave Model Applicable in the Chinese Context? *Cities*, *117*, 103320. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2021.103320

racist attitudes[27]. *Neo-Racism in China* is not alone in approaching Chinese racism through particular ethnic lenses. *On the Perils of Racialized Chineseness: Race, Nation and Entangled Racisms in China and Southeast Asia*, published in the journal Ethnic & Racial Studies, discusses racism among the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asian nations like Vietnam and Singapore[28]. *The Rise of Xenophobia and the Uyghur-China Situation*, published in the journal Social Research, discusses Chinese racism in regard to the highly contentious and ongoing Xinjiang turmoil[29]. These papers generally reinforce major arguments made by Thayer, chiefly in regard to how pervasive racism is among the Chinese population. However, the one paper in recent literature that best supports and expands upon Thayer's work is *Discourses of Race and Rising China*, published in Monash University's China Journal. *Discourses* reiterates points made by *Neo-Racism* concerning the impact of modern media on Chinese racism, but more poignantly it dedicates time to discussing historical and evolutionary explanations for Chinese racism, a topic which Thayer emphasizes heavily[30]. In short, while Thayer's arguments may be considered extreme among certain American researchers, the international academic literature provides a solid foundation for his contentions.

3. Examining Claims

While this existing academic literature is valuable, Thayer's paper still remains the only known academic work to address the implications of Sino-African racial relations in the context of Sino-American great power competition. For this alone - even outside of its context as an important DoD policy document - Thayer's work deserves discussion in research circles. However, to the best of this author's knowledge, there has not yet been an academic paper to have cited *The Strategic Consequences of Chinese Racism*. It is the intention of this author to rectify this issue by providing a critical analysis of Thayer's study. Specifically, this paper will parse out three key pieces of Thayer's thesis and apply academic scrutiny to them in order to determine the relative strength of Thayer's arguments. These three critical analyses are not intended to be fully exhaustive examinations, as doing so would require entirely separate studies

[27] Mutesa, M. (2017). *Neo-Racism in China: Reasons for China's Otherwise Inexplicable Modern Day Racism*. Language in India, 17(12), 256–262
[28] Ang, I. (2021). On the Perils of Racialized Chineseness: Race, Nation and Entangled Racisms in China and Southeast Asia. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *45*(4), 757–777. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2021.1990979
[29] Abdulla, M., & Shamseden, Z. (2021). *The Rise of Xenophobia and the Uyghur-China Situation*. Social Research, 88(4), 949–972.
[30] Carrico, K. (2022). Discourses of Race and Rising China. *China Journal*, *88*, 189–191. https://doi.org/10.1086/720197

for each claim. Rather, each analysis is designed to judge the relative strength of Thayer's argument by comparing it to available research and data. In short, this paper will provide a "sniff test" to gauge the initial viability of Thayer's thesis. Additionally – as a decade has passed since Thayer's paper was submitted to ONI - it may be possible to see indicators of how extensively the DoD has applied Thayer's principles.

3.1 Paper Overview

The Strategic Consequences of Chinese Racism is divided into four chapters across 238 pages. Chapter One provides an evolutionary history and biological explanation for the existence of human racism. Chapter two provides a history of Chinese racism specifically, including the cultural/religious factors that have impacted its development, as well as the racist belief structures of major Chinese historical figures. Chapter three delves into the modern effects of Chinese racism and how it impacts the nation's behavior in the geopolitical arena. Included in this chapter are discussions on the ways in which racism serves as a unifying strategic asset for the Chinese state. Chapter four concerns the ways in which Chinese racism should be used geo-strategically by the United States. Included in this chapter are discussions on how the U.S.'s anti-racist society provides it with an advantage in establishing soft power influence in Africa[31]

This article has selected three key arguments from Thayer's study for critical analysis. The first is Thayer's claim that Chinese society is more racist than U.S. society. The second is that Chinese racism acts as a stabilizing force for the Chinese government. The third is that current U.S. racial policies benefit the perception of the U.S. in Africa. To whatever extent Thayer is factually accurate in these claims, then the DoD ONA has been provided valuable information with which to shape U.S. military policy. To whatever extent Thayer is incorrect, U.S. military policy is at risk of making strategic mistakes.

3.2 Is Chinese Society More Racist than U.S. Society?

The fundamental core that underpins Thayer's work is that Chinese society is racist, both in absolute terms and in relative terms when compared to the U.S. In his words, "Racism remains a key component of how the Chinese see the world, their central place in it, and the

[31] Author Unknown, 2015

world's other, inferior inhabitants."[32] Additionally, his introduction states, "This chapter concludes with the recognition that China has been and remains a racist state, where racists and eugenicist beliefs inform the Chinese worldview."[33] In isolation, this is already a damning indictment, but Thayer goes further, claiming that China is both more racist than the U.S. and that "China must be seen as one of the few racist states in international politics today."[34]

It is important at this point to ensure that definitions are clear between the writer and the audience, especially in the face of such aggressive critiques of the largest ethnic group on Earth. For Thayer's purposes, racism is defined as "the belief or doctrine that race is the primary determinant of human abilities and capabilities, of an individual or group, and, second, that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race."[35] Thayer's conception of racism can be classified as hereditarian. That is to say, Thayer claims that racism and its variations are evolutionarily developed cognitive defense mechanisms that were useful for the survival of the early human species. Therefore, racism is an inherent element of human nature that is passed down through genes. Thayer laments this fact by noting:

> *"The fundamental reason why it is so difficult to erase such behavior is because the trait, found in all humans across all cultures, is rooted in human evolution. The trait of racism is an unfortunate consequence of living in a hostile and dangerous world, where resources were scarce and the need to identify family members, whether close or more distantly related, was essential for survival."*[36]

While Thayer defines racism as biologically innate, he defines anti-racism as exclusively cultural. That is to say, humans are inborn with racism and the only means of mitigating or removing this cognitive trait is through "great efforts (which) must be maintained by governmental and economic actors, twinned with those in civil society and popular culture."[37] Therefore, modern U.S. society is anti-racist because it has been molded to be this way through the intentional and continued work of powerful public and private bodies ("For the American student today, anti-racism and minority history months are as much a part of his primary and secondary education as instruction in mathematics, government, or physical education")[38]. In this conception, Chinese society remains racist because the Chinese

[32] Author Unknown, 2015
[33] Author Unknown, 2015
[34] Author Unknown, 2015
[35] Author Unknown, 2015
[36] Author Unknown, 2015
[37] Author Unknown, 2015
[38] Author Unknown, 2015

government and private sector actors have not taken any steps to instill anti-racism into Chinese culture and have instead allowed or encouraged the inherent biological racism of the Chinese people.

While this author does not dispute Thayer's definition of racism, it must be said that with such a definition it is difficult to prove or disprove the existence of broad, nation-level racism. Thayer's definition is determined by internal beliefs held by individuals, which are simple to mask, rather than observable actions, which are more suitable to academic research. Thankfully, Thayer inadvertently provides the solution to this riddle by discussing the concept of "groupishness," which he considers to be "close, but not identical" to racism[39]. Groupishness, as defined by Thayer, is "the human ability to create in-groups and out-groups" and in so doing to favor the in-group[40]. Groupishness (alternatively known as "in-group bias") is a known, quantifiable element of cognitive science, and not only can be measured empirically but has been for decades. Thus, even though Thayer's definition of racism is not exactly identical to groupishness, the latter can be used as a metric to provide some form of objective proof to his contention of Chinese racism.

Guo et. al., 2022 provide a uniquely excellent dataset for this question. In the study, researchers recruited both Chinese nationals in one sample and U.S./British nationals in another sample (referred to as the "Western" sample). Participants were placed in-game tests where they were responsible for the allocation of money to various individuals, with the key differentiating factor being the ethno-racial identity of the individual (Chinese or Western). The researchers added one additional variable to the study, which is the length of time that the subjects had in order to make their decision. The two lengths of time used were classified as either reflexive (very short) or reflective (moderately long) and were designed to gauge if a participant's instinctual reaction would be different than if they had time to ruminate on their choice[41]. In effect, Guo et. al. simultaneously tested both Thayer's contention that Chinese citizens are more racist than U.S. citizens, as well as his contention that racism is instinctual and is therefore only mitigated through environmental factors.

[39] Author Unknown, 2015
[40] Author Unknown, 2015
[41] Guo, Z., Guo, R., Xu, C., & Wu, Z. (2022). Reflexive or Reflective? Group Bias in Third-Party Punishment in Chinese and Western Cultures. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *100*, 104284. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2022.104284

As it so happens, the results of Guo et. al.'s study are exactly in line with Thayer's contentions. Chinese participants demonstrated a greater level of in-group bias during the reflexive test and a lower level of bias during the reflective test. However, during both tests, Chinese participants still demonstrated notably high levels of in-group bias. Western participants demonstrated a degree of in-group bias during the reflexive test. However, during the reflective test, this bias shrank to statistical insignificance[42]. In both the reflective and reflexive tests, Chinese participants demonstrated greater in-group bias than Western participants. The results of the Western tests strengthen Thayer's contention that U.S. citizens are biologically compelled to racism - as they will demonstrate in-group bias when not given time to think – but that U.S. society pushes its citizens towards anti-racism – as the participants demonstrated very little in-group preference when given time to think through the social implications of their actions. The results of the Chinese tests strengthen Thayer's contention that Chinese society is more racist than U.S. society across the board. The only element of the Guo et. al. study which does not immediately support Thayer's claims is the evidence of in-group bias reduction (though not elimination) for Chinese participants in the reflective test. Within Thayer's conception of racism, this might be explained by saying that Chinese society has some small - though ultimately unsubstantial – dampening effect on the inherent racism of Chinese citizens.

These outcomes are corroborated and expanded upon by data from the non-partisan research firm American National Election Studies. The ANES Pilot Study was carried out in the immediate aftermath of the 2018 U.S. midterm elections and included questions designed to measure in-group racial preference among different categories, with the assumption that this data would be valuable to election analysts[43]. Most germane to this paper is the ANES data on in-group preference based on respondent race. While the data does not sample Chinese nationals, it does sample Asian Americans, a category composed of 22.4% ethnic Chinese Han people[44]. Thus, while data specific to ethnic Chinese individuals cannot be perfectly extracted,

[42] Guo et. al., 2022
[43] American National Elections Studies. (2019). *2018 Pilot Study*. https://electionstudies.org/data-center/2018-pilot-study
[44] United States Census Bureau. (2020). *ASIAN ALONE OR IN COMBINATION WITH ONE OR MORE OTHER RACES, AND WITH ONE OR MORE ASIAN CATEGORIES FOR SELECTED GROUPS Universe: Total Asian categories tallied and people with no specific Asian category reported*. https://archive.ph/20200212213039/http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml#selection-263.0-269.92

this dataset can be used to estimate the relative difference in in-group bias between Americans broadly and those of Chinese descent.

The ANES study calculated in-group preference by asking participants their degree of favorability to their racial group and subtracting their degree of favorability to other racial groups, thus leaving respondents' net in-group racial favorability on a 0-100 scale. White American respondents averaged a net in-group bias of 3.59, mirroring the near-zero results of Guo et. al. Asian Americans reported a net in-group bias of 13.94, Hispanic Americans reported 12.83, and African Americans reported 15.58. Perhaps most strikingly, White Americans who self-identified as liberal were the only racial-political group to demonstrate out-group favorability, i.e. a preference for races that are not their own. The in-group bias among white liberals averaged -13.17, with the negative value reflecting a negative relative bias towards one's own race[45].

The ANES data supports Thayer's contentions on the hereditary nature of racism and on Chinese racism specifically. Thayer claims that racism is inborn and can only be mitigated by the sustained effort of societal institutions like the government and media. White American liberals - whose socio-political orientation most closely matches the broad positions of U.S. government and media – demonstrated more than simple non-racism, but instead demonstrated an anti-racist out-group bias. By contrast, Asian Americans demonstrated the second-highest in-group preference among the four primary American racial groups. Under Thayer's conception of the topic, this could be explained as Asian Americans (specifically Chinese Americans) maintaining the racist cultural traditions that continue in China today. This theory is bolstered by the relatively high in-group preference of Hispanic Americans, many of whom are recent arrivals to the U.S. and have thus been less exposed to the anti-racist elements of U.S. society.

3.3 Does Chinese Racism Provide Greater Stability to the Chinese Government?

While the central thrust of Thayer's paper concerns the ways in which the U.S. can strategically benefit from China's racism, the paper also investigates the ways in which societal racism actually provides advantages to the Chinese state. In Thayer's words: "Chinese racism also is a strategic asset that makes (China) a formidable adversary." In order to function, even

[45] American National Elections Studies, 2019

the most authoritarian of governments require a certain degree of support (or, failing this, acquiescence) from the general population. Thayer claims that the Chinese state draws popular support by "making appeals based on racism and ethnocentrism for purposes of unity, identity, sense of self, and identification."[46]

> *"The government educates the people to be proud of being Han and of China. In turn, the Chinese people are proud and fiercely patriotic as well as ethnocentric, racist, and xenophobic. This aids the government and permits them to maintain high levels of popular support."*[47]

Inbuilt loyalty to the government is an unmistakable advantage in geostrategic terms (if not in terms of societal well-being). As evidenced by the Cold War of the 20th Century, great power conflicts can be ended in dramatic fashion by the failure of one state to maintain the support of its own population. The belief that the current Chinese state will outlast the current U.S. state actually forms a key element of Chinese foreign policy. To quote Hu Xijin, the former editor-in-chief of the major state-owned newspaper *The Global Times*, "I bet the Communist Party of China will definitely outlive the United States of America."[48]

There exists some evidence to support Thayer's contention (and Hu's hope) concerning Chinese racial unity and the stability of the state. Although modern China can hardly be considered communist in economic terms, it still proclaims itself officially as a communist state and has remained so for 73 years. History's largest communist state – the Soviet Union – collapsed after 74 years. Other communist states tend not to last very long, be they East Germany (40 years), the Somali Democratic Republic (22 years), Cambodia (22 years), or the Kurdish Republic of Mahabad (less than one year). In 2022, there exist only four other nominally communist states: Cuba, Laos, North Korea, and Vietnam. Of these four, three have populations that can be considered genetically proximate to the Han Chinese. This trend provides circumstantial evidence for the claim that Chinese culture creates inherent loyalty to the state.

If Thayer is correct, then this loyalty is driven at least in part by racism and racial solidarity. Circumstantial evidence in favor of this theory can be found in the ways in which

[46] Author Unknown, 2015
[47] Author Unknown, 2015
[48] Feng, J. (2021, November 11). *Chinese Communist Party Will Outlive United States: State Media Editor*. Newsweek. https://www.newsweek.com/chinese-communist-party-outlive-united-states-global-times-media-editor-1653231

China approaches international intelligence operations. A key tactic used by Chinese agencies that has sparked alarm among U.S. institutions is the "thousand grains of sand" approach. Under this model, ethnic Han Chinese émigrés in all corners of the world are recruited to serve as intelligence assets within their current country of residence[49]. These freshly minted spies rarely have strong ties to the Chinese military intelligence apparatus, but their shared racial/cultural background makes them easier to recruit. Thus, while many non-Han have been convicted for spying on the U.S. on behalf of the Chinese government, a disproportionately large number of cases involve ethnic Chinese spies. This disproportionality in high-level espionage is likely due in part to the disproportionate representation of ethnic Chinese individuals in high-ranking industry and government positions (as exemplified by Asian Americans being the highest-earning racial group in the U.S.)[50]. However, this disproportionality also lends credence to Thayer's contention that there exists an innate racial solidarity between the Han Chinese people and the Chinese government.

Ultimately, though, if the goal is to demonstrate intrinsic loyalty to the state, the simplest method to do so is to gather data on general favorability towards the government. This metric is not a direct answer to the question of racial-state solidarity, but it can serve as a loose proxy. Given the censorious nature of the Chinese state, it is difficult to trust figures produced by the CCP. Thankfully, a longitudinal study conducted by researchers at Harvard University's Kennedy School provides data on Chinese citizens' favorability towards the Chinese state as measured by Western researchers and using Western techniques[51]. This not only minimizes the impact of CCP interference in the study but also allows for closer "apples-to-apples" comparisons with Western government favorability studies. This data is shown in Figure 1, below, prepared by the author.

[49] Mattis, P. (2011, October 31). *China's Misunderstood Spies*. The Diplomat. https://thediplomat.com/2011/10/chinas-misunderstood-spies/
[50] United States Department of Labor. (2021). *Median Annual Earnings by Sex, Race and Hispanic Ethnicity*. https://www.dol.gov/agencies/wb/data/earnings/median-annual-sex-race-hispanic-ethnicity
[51] Cunningham, E., Saich, T., & Turiel, J. (2020, July). *Understanding CCP Resilience: Surveying Chinese Public Opinion Through Time*. Harvard Kennedy School, Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation. https://ash.harvard.edu/files/ash/files/final_policy_brief_7.6.2020.pdf

Figure 1. China's Overal Satisfaction with the National Government

The data provided by the Harvard study is incomplete, as the researchers were unable to record data from the years 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2013, and 2014. In Figure 1, these gaps are filled by maintaining the satisfaction rate of the most recent year recorded. Despite these gaps, two key conclusions can be clearly drawn from the data. First, the rate of satisfaction felt by Chinese citizens towards their government is remarkably high, averaging 89% at the federal (central government) level. This result is in line with Thayer's contention of racism and ethnocentrism strengthening Chinese faith in their government. Second, the rate of government satisfaction has a positive growth trend. While there are many potential explanations for this effect, Thayer's theory would likely attribute this trend to either increasingly racist government messaging or to a rise in domestic ethnocentrism commensurate to China's growing presence in the world state. As China becomes increasingly powerful in international affairs, one may speculate that Chinese nationalism will grow accordingly.

By contrast, data for U.S. government favorability is much more robust, but also systematically scores much lower. For several decades, the Pew Research Center has regularly

polled U.S. citizens to determine what percentage of the population held trust in the American government[52]. This data is shown in Figure 2, below.

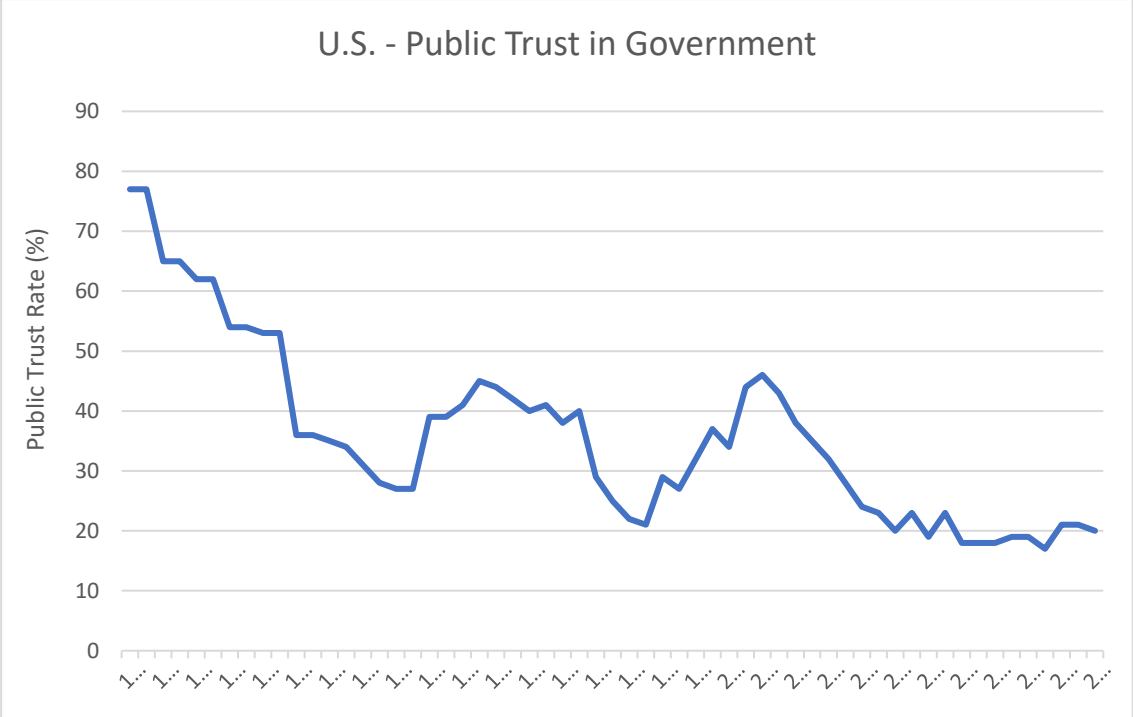


Figure 2. U.S. – Public Trust in Government

As seen in Figure 2, two trends are visible in the data, and they are directly inverse to the trends seen in the Chinese data. First, U.S. trust in government is extremely low, an entire 75 percentage points lower than the Chinese data as of 2016. Second, trust in government has decreased precipitously both since Pew began collecting U.S. data (1964) and since the Harvard study began tracking Chinese data (2003). While U.S. government trust has seen occasional spikes during periods of economic growth (mid-1980s) or heavy nationalism (post-9/11), the overall trend is unmistakably downward.

This data supports Thayer's claim that Chinese racism provides the CCP government with a strategic advantage by encouraging ethnic loyalty. If Chinese society is indeed more racist than U.S. society – and if racism strengthens support for government – then we would expect to see exactly these results in the data: Chinese government support is expected to be high, and U.S. government support is expected to be low. Moreover, this data supports the belief

[52] Pew Research Center. (2022, June 6). *Public Trust in Government: 1958-2022*. https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2022/06/06/public-trust-in-government-1958-2022/

that U.S. society has become less racist/more anti-racist with time. A significant body of academic literature has demonstrated an inverse correlation between societal trust and ethnic diversity[53][54][55][56]. Therefore, as the U.S. has become more diverse and anti-racist with time, we should expect that trust in government (alongside other forms of societal trust) would decrease. The Pew data could therefore be seen as supporting evidence for Thayer's claim that U.S. society has become less racist with time.

3.4 Do Current U.S. Racial Policies Benefit Perceptions in Africa?

Crucially, as Thayer contends that Chinese society has become increasingly racist, he also contends that U.S. society has become increasingly anti-racist. In his words, "The days of a Don Rickles performance, long on ethnic jokes, are at least a generation past in the West."[57] However, this change did not come easily. Further emphasizing his contention that anti-racism can only be created through intensive and intentional social efforts, Thayer outlines some of the steps taken to bring the U.S. to this point:

"The news media are particularly sensitive to racism in corporations, governmental policies, or even individuals… Anti-racist messages are common in film and television, while positive images of racial minorities are heavily emphasized. Hollywood and television take their monitoring and policing of the public sphere seriously and work to identify violators, and punish them through ridicule or expulsion from the community and acceptable company… The primary and secondary educational system has been completely remade since the 1970s to emphasize the contributions of racial minorities and the dangers of racism. The students receive instruction about the evils of prejudice and bigotry from K-12, while positive education about minorities is heavily emphasized. For the American student today, anti-racism and minority

[53] Kokkonen, A., Esaiasson, P., & Gilljam, M. (2014). Migration-based Ethnic Diversity and Social Trust: A Multilevel Analysis of How Country, Neighbourhood and Workplace Diversity Affects Social Trust in 22 Countries. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, *37*(3), 263–300. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9477.12027
[54] Beugelsdijk, S., & Klasing, M. (2016). Diversity and Trust: The Role of Shared Values. *Journal of Comparative Economics*, *44*(3), 522–540. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jce.2015.10.014
[55] Ziller, C. (2014). Ethnic Diversity, Economic and Cultural Contexts, and Social Trust: Cross-Sectional and Longitudinal Evidence from European Regions, 2002–2010. *Social Forces*, *93*(3), 1211–1240. https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/sou088
[56] Dinesen, P., Schaeffer, M., & Sønderskov, K. (2020). Ethnic Diversity and Social Trust: A Narrative and Meta-Analytical Review. *Annual Review of Political Science*, *23*. https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.20314.70081
[57] Author Unknown, 2015

history months are as much a part of his primary and secondary education as instruction in mathematics, government, or physical education."[58]

While Thayer has stressed the advantages of racism for China, a greater portion of his paper is focused on extolling the virtues of American anti-racism, and particularly the ways in which it should be leveraged to aid the United States in matters of geo-strategic dominance. Thayer's primary contention is that American anti-racism provides the U.S. government with an inherent advantage when cultivating soft-power influence in developing regions, especially Africa. Whereas – Thayer argues - China is a racist state that will treat Africa with contempt, the U.S. is an anti-racist state that will treat Africa with respect. Therefore, it is in the strategic best interest of African states to draw near to the occident and far from the Orient.

"The combination of the two messages, 'China is racist with no culture of anti-racism, and their business practices are destructive for the locals,' would be most effective in making appeals to the Third World… The Chinese are hypocrites when it comes to race and racial equality. For all of their rhetoric on Africa and their "African brothers," the cold facts of Chinese racism triumph paeans to Third World solidarity… The message of the United States should be: We are better than the Chinese for the development of Africa. We will assist you with economic aid to offset what you receive from China. Culturally, socially, and politically, we are better, we are equal, recognize racial equality and civil rights."[59]

The most central thesis of Thayer's paper is reliant on the belief that African citizens and African governments will respond negatively to Chinese racism and favorably to U.S. anti-racism. The military/governmental strategy that Andrew Marshall commissioned Thayer to academically support is a soft power push by the U.S. into the African continent under the initial salvo of racial equality and civil rights. Therefore, while this paper has thus far supported Thayer's contentions on Chinese racism and Chinese government strength through racial unity if Thayer's primary contention on U.S.-Africa policy falters, then Thayer's work represents a liability to the U.S. Department of Defense. Unfortunately for all parties involved, existing evidence suggests that Thayer's contention may be incorrect.

[58] Author Unknown, 2015
[59] Author Unknown, 2015

Among available open-source datasets, the one that most closely matches the needs of Thayer's contention is the Pew Research Center's U.S. Favorability Index, which tracks the percentage of respondents from various countries who have a favorable view of the U.S. in general terms[60]. This data is modeled in Figure 3, below.

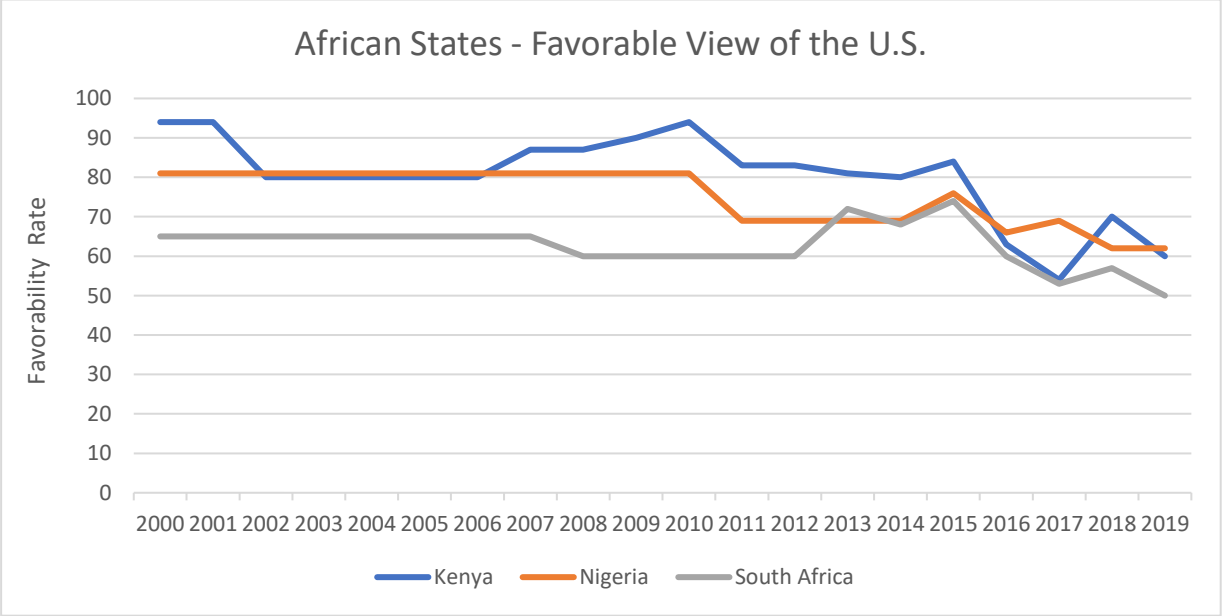


Figure 3. African States – Favorable View of the U.S.

This dataset is somewhat limited, as it only tracks three of the continent's largest nations. Additionally, several years feature incomplete data for one or more nations. In Figure 3, these gaps are filled by maintaining the favorability rate of the most recent year recorded. Despite these limitations, a clear trend can be viewed, with all three nations demonstrating decreased favorability towards the U.S. over the course of the 21st Century. If we grant Thayer's contention that the U.S. is an increasingly anti-racist country, then anti-racism is inversely correlated with favorable views of African nations to the U.S. This inverse correlation is obviously absent any of the thousands of other, unrelated factors that drive African favorability. If nothing else, though, this dataset casts doubt on the claim that anti-racism increases African favorability.

[60] Pew Research Center. (2020, January 8). *U.S. Image Generally Favorable Around the World, but Mixed in Some Countries*. https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2020/01/08/u-s-image-generally-favorable-around-the-world-but-mixed-in-some-countries/#:~:text=Across%20the%20three%20sub-Saharan%20African%20countries%20surveyed%2C%20views,60%25%20respectively%29%20say%20they%20view%20the%20U.S.%20positively

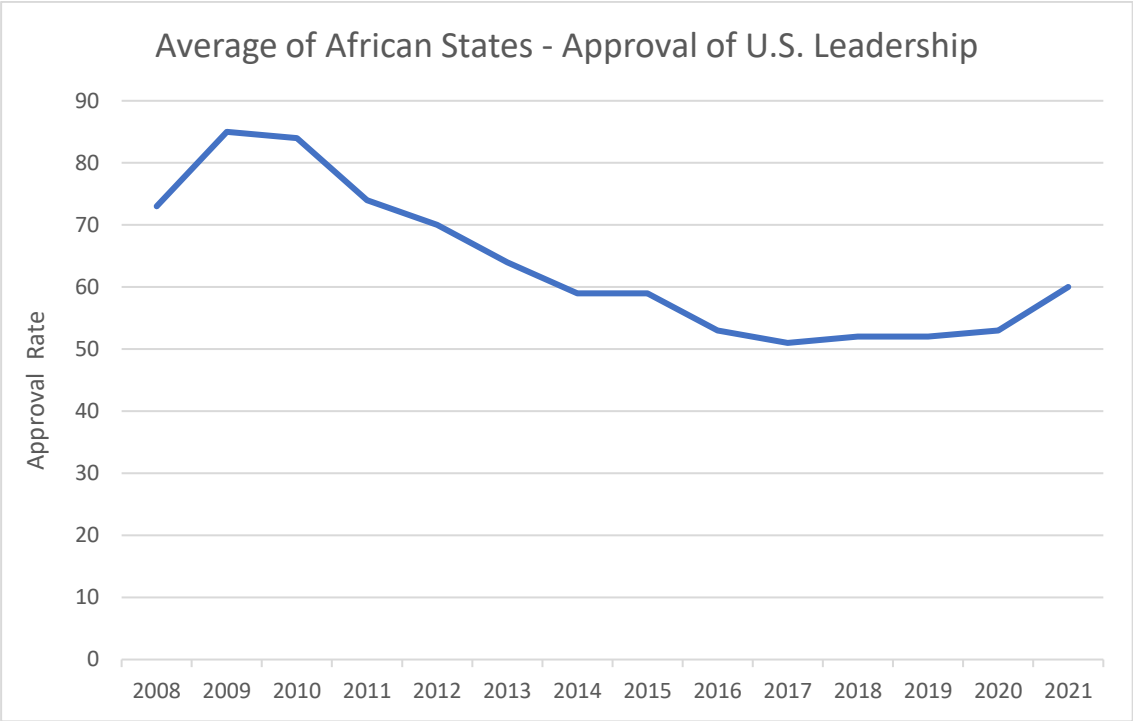


Figure 4. Average of African States – Approval of U.S. Leadership

Figure 4 documents the findings of the Gallup Rating World Leaders study. This dataset is much more complete than the Pew dataset, as it features scores from 27 African states and features complete yearly data since 2008[61]. It should be noted that this dataset is not a direct measure of African favorability towards the U.S., but rather a measure of African sentiments towards U.S. leadership specifically. As such, any of a myriad number of factors are liable to serve as key drivers of this data. Nonetheless, the Gallup dataset demonstrates a similar trend to the Pew dataset, that being a general downward slope. Under Thayer's contention that U.S. anti-racism increases with time, anti-racism is therefore inversely correlated with positive views of Africans towards U.S. leadership.

Thayer's contention faces additional scrutiny when accounting for specific nations. For instance, Thayer claims that one of the practical ways in which U.S. anti-racism directly benefits citizens of developing nations is through affirmative action policies.

[61] Gallup. (2020). *Rating World Leaders*. https://www.gallup.com/analytics/355787/gallup-rating-world-leaders-report.aspx?thank-you-report-form=1

"When compared with China, it is easy to convey to the rest of the world the message that the United States is open and inclusive… The United States seeks the best from around the world, and will permit them to come to the country so that they may prosper… It has in place Affirmative Action policies as a matter of state policy that benefits immigrants from racial minorities."[62]

Assuming that Thayer is correct in his claim that affirmative action policies endear African nationals to the U.S., one would expect the data to demonstrate this relationship. Among African nationals accepted to U.S. universities, Nigerians are the most common. In fact, among all black students at U.S. universities (African native and African American), Nigerians are noticeably overrepresented[63]. If we grant Thayer's contention that affirmative action benefits racial minority immigrants in university admissions, then it can be said that Nigerians are the largest beneficiary of U.S. affirmative action among African groups. Therefore, one would expect Nigeria to have the highest favorability towards the U.S. among African countries. Unfortunately for Thayer, this is not the case. Rather, in both the Pew and Gallup datasets, Nigeria places squarely in the middle of U.S. favorability (13 out of 27 in the Gallup dataset)[64].

This article does not – and does not seek to – prove the existence of an inverse correlation between U.S. anti-racism and African favorability towards the U.S. Rather, this paper only seeks to demonstrate the lack of a positive relationship between these two variables, and in so doing, cast doubt on Thayer's contention that U.S. anti-racism is a useful foreign policy tool in soft power competition with China. With that said, an inverse correlation is one possibility that is softly supported by the data. If such an inverse relationship exists, it is worthwhile to briefly explore why that may be. In light of Occam's Razor, the simplest explanation is that U.S. anti-racist culture is not in line with existing African cultures. While, obviously, there is no one African culture – and various cultures from various parts of the continent are aligned with U.S. culture to greater or lesser degrees – existing data suggests that Africans broadly hold racial views more closely aligned with Chinese culture.

[62] Author Unknown, 2015
[63] Hsleh, E. (2011, May 11). *Following Obama, Students Define "Black" on Ivy League Campuses*. The Huffington Post. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/barack-obama-has-broken-r_b_217965
[64] Gallup, 2020

As discussed previously, the ANES dataset provides an objective methodology for measuring in-group bias and, by proxy, racism. African Americans demonstrated the highest rate of in-group preference at 15.58, Asian Americans a slightly lower rate at 13.94, and White Americans the lowest rate at 3.59[65]. The gulf between African American and Asian American scores is much smaller than that between African American and White American scores. This finding was replicated in *Ingroup Preference and Homogeneity Among African American and Chinese American Students*, published in the Journal of Social Psychology. Data from this study demonstrates similar degrees of in-group bias between African Americans and Chinese Americans, with African Americans scoring somewhat higher on average[66]. To be clear, neither of these studies is sufficient to demonstrate racial attitudes in continental African culture, seeing as how they only study ethnic Africans and Asians/Chinese who are U.S. citizens, rather than measuring the in-group bias of Africa and China respectively. However – to whatever extent African and Chinese racial attitudes persist among émigrés and their descendants living in the U.S. – these studies imply that existing African racial attitudes are more closely aligned with Chinese racial attitudes than they are with U.S. anti-racist culture.

Thayer contends that culture is a valuable tool for soft power projection in international relations. Most scholars would likely agree with this sentiment. However, where the data suggests Thayer is incorrect is in his belief that any culture will have positive effects on international favorability so long as it is beneficial to the target. Thayer provides a case for how U.S. anti-racist culture is beneficial to Africans in practical terms, and this paper does not disagree with his assumption. With that said, if U.S. anti-racist culture is too significantly different from existing African culture, then it may simply be rejected outright. In geostrategic terms, cultural proximity may prove more valuable than a culture of anti-racism.

It is difficult to tell if or to what extent Thayer's contention of anti-racism as a soft power tool has been applied by the DoD in Africa since the paper's completion. Undoubtedly, the Pentagon's focus on anti-racism has dramatically escalated since 2013. In this past decade, the DoD has taken steps to significantly increase the proportion of people of color in hiring and

[65] American National Elections Studies, 2019
[66] Lee, Y. (1993). Ingroup Preference and Homogeneity Among African American and Chinese American Students. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, *133*(2), 225–235. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224545.1993.9712140

promotion decisions[67], target for removal of employees expressing racist views[68], and actively promote anti-racism in its official publications[69]. Mass media recruitment material reflects this with advertisements targeting communities of color and emphasizing anti-racist messages[70].

However, it would be much too presumptuous to assume that Thayer's report has been a driving influence in this policy shift. A great many factors have likely influenced the DoD's increased focus on anti-racism, likely none more significant than the general shift towards anti-racism within the broader U.S. government and culture during the same period. Moreover, there appear to be few, if any, cases of the DoD actively marketing anti-racism programs in continental Africa. Of course, one could argue that this is not the form that soft power would take; any form of anti-racist messaging put out by the DoD in any part of the world serves as a soft power signal to all parties globally. However, the lack of Africa-specific focus in these programs leaves unanswered the question of how fruitfully the policies of *Strategic Consequences* have been put into practice.

4. Conclusions

The Strategic Consequences of Chinese Racism provides a trove of valuable information for scholars of international relations and foreign policy. This article examines *Strategic Consequences*, but it does not serve as an exhaustive study of every argument Thayer has made. Rather, this article is meant as an opening salvo in what will hopefully be a fruitful, years-long examination of Thayer's work and that of others from the Department of Defense's Office of Net Assessment. The very existence of *Strategic Consequences* tells us a great deal about how the U.S. national security apparatus operates. We know that powerful factions within the U.S. government have been concerned about the growing power of China well before it became a topic of common conversation. We know that these factions have been crafting strategies for competition between the great powers, not only in military terms but also in soft power terms.

[67] Miller, C. (2020, December 17). *Memorandum for Senior Pentagon Leadership*. U.S. Department of Defense. https://media.defense.gov/2020/Dec/18/2002554854/-1/-1/0/ACTIONS-TO-IMPROVE-RACIAL-AND-ETHNIC-DIVERSITY-AND-INCLUSION-IN-THE-U.S.-MILITARY.PDF

[68] Austin, L. (2021, December 20). *Report on Countering Extremist Activity Within the Department of Defense*. U.S. Department of Defense. https://media.defense.gov/2021/Dec/20/2002912573/-1/-1/0/REPORT-ON-COUNTERING-EXTREMIST-ACTIVITY-WITHIN-THE-DEPARTMENT-OF-DEFENSE.PDF

[69] Garamore, J. (2020, July 9). *No Place for Racism, Discrimination in U.S. Military, Milley Says*. U.S. Department of Defense. https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/2269438/no-place-for-racism-discrimination-in-us-military-milley-says/

[70] GoArmy. (2021, May 4). *RICKIE | THE CALLING | GOARMY* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWo5-pFrjNg

We know that these factions are willing to engage in unorthodox methodologies such as examining enemy culture for vulnerabilities to be exploited.

Still, just because these factions engage in strategic research in coordination with respected academics does not mean that the conclusions they draw are absolute and unquestionable. Indeed, by analyzing their works, it is possible to determine the areas in which U.S. foreign policy is backed by sound judgment, as well as the areas in which it falters due to incomplete analysis. This paper breaks out three primary arguments that fundamentally underpin Thayer's article. While these contentions do not compose the entirety of *Strategic Consequences*, they do represent the three most important points made by Thayer: the foundational nature of Chinese racism, the strategic advantages it provides China and the strategic opportunities it provides the United States.

This paper first analyzes Thayer's argument that Chinese society is not only racist but is significantly more racist than U.S. society. Based on existing in-group bias studies, this paper concludes that Thayer is likely correct in his analysis. This paper also supports Thayer's sub-contention that racism is primarily driven by evolutionary instinct and that anti-racism is primarily driven by social/political institutions.

This paper second analyzes Thayer's argument that Chinese racism provides a strategic advantage to the Chinese state by fostering stability through ethnic loyalty. Based upon Western-generated data on Chinese government satisfaction, this paper concludes that Thayer is likely correct in his analysis. Moreover, this conclusion is strengthened by U.S. government trust data which indicates an inverse trend to that of China, with government support waning during a period in which U.S. society has become less racist.

This paper finally analyzes Thayer's argument that American anti-racist culture can serve as a tool for extending U.S. soft power in Africa and reducing Chinese soft power in the region. Based upon longitudinal Africa-U.S. favorability data, this paper concludes that Thayer is likely incorrect in his analysis. Moreover, this paper speculates that the failure thus far of U.S. anti-racist culture in cultivating favor in Africa is possibly the result of inherent divergence between existing African cultures and modern U.S. anti-racist culture.

In conclusion, this paper substantiates the theory that Thayer – and by extension, the Department of Defense as a whole – has accurately gauged the strategic advantage that Chinese

racism provides for the Chinese state. However, this paper also concludes that Thayer and the Department of Defense have overestimated the advantage that Chinese racism provides the United States in countering Chinese soft-power ambitions.

While it is understandable that the DoD would commission *The Strategic Consequences of Chinese Racism* in secret, the danger of hiding away valuable academic literature is that it takes away the ability of the public to critique such works. Absent this critique, U.S. military and foreign policy are more susceptible to poor decision-making. Thayer's work provided Andrew Marshal and the ONA with both some valuable truths and some concerning flaws. In the years since the article's commissioning, we have seen some of these recommendations implemented by the U.S. state apparatus. This paper hopes that future U.S. administrations will take from Thayer's work the most valuable elements and think critically about the article's weaker elements.

Bibliography

Abdulla, M., & Shamseden, Z. (2021). *The Rise of Xenophobia and the Uyghur-China Situation*. Social Research, 88(4), 949–972.

American National Elections Studies. (2019). *2018 Pilot Study*. https://electionstudies.org/data-center/2018-pilot-study/

Ang, I. (2021). On the Perils of Racialized Chineseness: Race, Nation and Entangled Racisms in China and Southeast Asia. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *45*(4), 757–777. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2021.1990979

Author Unknown. (2013, January 7). *The Strategic Consequences of Chinese Racism: A Strategic Asymmetry for the United States*. United States Department of Defense, Office of Net Assessment. https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/FOID/Reading%20Room/Litigation_Release/Litigation%20Release%20-%20The%20Strategic%20Consequences%20of%20Chinese%20Racism%20%20201301.pdf

Austin, L. (2021, December 20). *Report on Countering Extremist Activity Within the Department of Defense*. U.S. Department of Defense. https://media.defense.gov/2021/Dec/20/2002912573/-1/-1/0/REPORT-ON-COUNTERING-EXTREMIST-ACTIVITY-WITHIN-THE-DEPARTMENT-OF-DEFENSE.PDF

Beugelsdijk, S., & Klasing, M. (2016). Diversity and Trust: The Role of Shared Values. *Journal of Comparative Economics*, *44*(3), 522–540. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jce.2015.10.014

Carrico, K. (2022). Discourses of Race and Rising China. *China Journal*, *88*, 189–191. https://doi.org/10.1086/720197

Castillo, R. (2020). "Race" and "Racism" in Contemporary Africa-China Relations Research: Approaches, Controversies and Reflections. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, *21*(3), 310–336. https://doi.org/10.1080/14649373.2020.1796343

Cunningham, E., Saich, T., & Turiel, J. (2020, July). *Understanding CCP Resilience: Surveying Chinese Public Opinion Through Time*. Harvard Kennedy School, Ash Center for Democratic

Governance and Innovation. https://ash.harvard.edu/files/ash/files/final_policy_brief_7.6.2020.pdf

Dinesen, P., Schaeffer, M., & Sønderskov, K. (2020). Ethnic Diversity and Social Trust: A Narrative and Meta-Analytical Review. *Annual Review of Political Science, 23*. https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.20314.70081

Edwards, L. (2021, December 28). *How Reagan Doctrine Brought Down the Evil Empire*. The Heritage Foundation. https://www.heritage.org/conservatism/commentary/how-reagan-doctrine-brought-down-the-evil-empire

Elliott, J. (2009, March 10). *Inside the Pentagon's Idea Factory: The Office of Net Assessment*. Talking Points Memo. https://web.archive.org/web/20130515022119/http://tpmmuckraker.talkingpointsmemo.com/2009/03/inside_the_pentagons_idea_factory_office_of_net_as.php#more

Encyclopedia.com. (2022). *Thayer, Bradley A.* Encyclopedia.com. https://www.encyclopedia.com/arts/educational-magazines/thayer-bradley

Feng, J. (2021, November 11). *Chinese Communist Party Will Outlive United States: State Media Editor*. Newsweek. https://www.newsweek.com/chinese-communist-party-outlive-united-states-global-times-media-editor-1653231

Gallup. (2020). *Rating World Leaders*. https://www.gallup.com/analytics/355787/gallup-rating-world-leaders-report.aspx?thank-you-report-form=1

Garamore, J. (2020, July 9). *No Place for Racism, Discrimination in U.S. Military, Milley Says*. U.S. Department of Defense. https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/2269438/no-place-for-racism-discrimination-in-us-military-milley-says/

GoArmy. (2021, May 4). *RICKIE | THE CALLING | GOARMY* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWo5-pFrjNg

Google. (2022). *Strategic Consequences of Chinese Racism*. https://www.google.com/search?q="Strategic+Consequences+of+Chinese+Racism"&tbs=cdr:1,cd_min:1/1/2017,cd_max:1/1/2022&sxsrf=ALiCzsZ6oiJW7JJ0Q2y35h_YtVtmabv7vg:1669926072933&ei=uAyJY9-7OMHY5NoP4c67wAw&start=0&sa=N&filter=0&ved=2ahUKEwjf94Kzn9n7AhVBLFkFHWHnDsg4ChDy0wN6BAgFEAQ&biw=1920&bih=962&dpr=1

GovTribe. (2022). *Thayer Limited, LLC*. https://govtribe.com/vendors/thayer-limited-llc-5whe5

Guo, Z., Guo, R., Xu, C., & Wu, Z. (2022). Reflexive or Reflective? Group Bias in Third-Party Punishment in Chinese and Western Cultures. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 100*, 104284. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2022.104284

Hsleh, E. (2011, May 11). *Following Obama, Students Define "Black" on Ivy League Campuses*. The Huffington Post. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/barack-obama-has-broken-r_b_217965

Jin, X., Bolt, G., & Hooimeijer, P. (2021). Africans in Guangzhou: Is the Ethnic Enclave Model Applicable in the Chinese Context? *Cities, 117*, 103320. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2021.103320

Kokkonen, A., Esaiasson, P., & Gilljam, M. (2014). Migration-based Ethnic Diversity and Social Trust: A Multilevel Analysis of How Country, Neighbourhood and Workplace Diversity Affects Social Trust in 22 Countries. *Scandinavian Political Studies, 37*(3), 263–300. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9477.12027

Krepinevich, A., & Watts, B. (2015). *The Last Warrior: Andrew Marshall and the Shaping of Modern American Defense Strategy* (1st ed.). Basic Books.

Krepinevich, A.. (2019, April 19). *Measures of Power: On the Lasting Value of Net Assessment*. Foreign Affairs. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2019-04-19/measures-power

Lan, S. (2016). The Shifting Meanings of Race in China: A Case Study of the African Diaspora Communities in Guangzhou. *City and Society*, *28*(3), 298–318. https://doi.org/10.1111/ciso.12094

Lee, Y. (1993). Ingroup Preference and Homogeneity Among African American and Chinese American Students. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, *133*(2), 225–235. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224545.1993.9712140

Liu, T., & Deng, Z. (2020). "They've Made our Blood Ties Black": On the Burst of Online Racism Towards the African in China's Social Media. *Critical Arts*, *34*(2), 104–107. https://doi.org/10.1080/02560046.2020.1717567

Maddrell, D. (2003, May 3). *Quiet Transformation: The Role of the Office of Net Assessment*. National Defense University. https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA441633.pdf

Mattis, P. (2011, October 31). *China's Misunderstood Spies*. The Diplomat. https://thediplomat.com/2011/10/chinas-misunderstood-spies/

Miller, C. (2020, December 17). *Memorandum for Senior Pentagon Leadership*. U.S. Department of Defense. https://media.defense.gov/2020/Dec/18/2002554854/-1/-1/0/ACTIONS-TO-IMPROVE-RACIAL-AND-ETHNIC-DIVERSITY-AND-INCLUSION-IN-THE-U.S.-MILITARY.PDF

Mutesa, M. (2017). *Neo-Racism in China: Reasons for China's Otherwise Inexplicable Modern-Day Racism*. Language in India, 17(12), 256–262

Pew Research Center. (2020, January 8). *U.S. Image Generally Favorable Around the World, but Mixed in Some Countries*. https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2020/01/08/u-s-image-generally-favorable-around-the-world-but-mixed-in-some-countries/#:~:text=Across%20the%20three%20sub-Saharan%20African%20countries%20surveyed%2C%20views,60%25%20respectively%29%20say%20they%20view%20the%20U.S.%20positively

Pew Research Center. (2022, June 6). *Public Trust in Government: 1958-2022*. https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2022/06/06/public-trust-in-government-1958-2022/

s_decatur. (2022, February 6). *Thread*. Twitter. https://twitter.com/s_decatur/status/1490408671779729425

Samuelson, P., & Nordhaus, W. (1989). *Economics* (14th edition). McGraw-Hill Inc., US.

United States Census Bureau. (2020). Asian Alone or in Combination with One or More Races, and with One or More Asian Categories for Selected Groups. *Universe: Total Asian categories tallied and people with no specific Asian category reported*. https://archive.ph/20200212213039/http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml#selection-263.0-269.92

United States Department of Defense. (2017, February 26). *Litigation Release*. Washington Headquarters Service. https://www.esd.whs.mil/FOIA/Reading-Room/Reading-Room-List_2/Litigation_Release/

United States Department of Justice. (2022). *Freedom of Information Act Guide, May 2004*. https://www.justice.gov/archives/oip/foia-guide-2004-edition-exemption-7c

United States Department of Labor. (2021). *Median Annual Earnings by Sex, Race and Hispanic Ethnicity*. https://www.dol.gov/agencies/wb/data/earnings/median-annual-sex-race-hispanic-ethnicity

Ziller, C. (2014). Ethnic Diversity, Economic and Cultural Contexts, and Social Trust: Cross-Sectional and Longitudinal Evidence from European Regions, 2002–2010. *Social Forces*, *93*(3), 1211–1240. https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/sou088