

INTRODUCTION TO THE HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE EDITION

Perhaps the most important question of our time is not when the United States will find its challenger – as China has clearly grown up to this role over the past decade – but rather how the rivalry between these two giants will develop. Over the past twenty years, China has grown economically strong in an unparalleled way, on par with the United States in many respects, and is rapidly developing militarily and expanding regionally. In addition, it could also enter the hitherto exclusive Soviet–American and later Russian–American strategic nuclear competition in the near future, as it is making major developments in this field, too.

The rules of the international order, which have been effectively set by the United States since the end of the Cold War, are apparently changing. However, it is far from inevitable that China will overtake the United States. As a nuclear superpower, the U.S. still dominates, and although its leadership – and the unquestionability of the ‘liberal world order’ it promotes – is increasingly being challenged, it still has the greatest innovative and ‘soft’ power. It has many more allies than China, and it also has considerable background expertise and experience in the international power game.

This book aims to give the reader an insight into the rivalry between the two giants. What driving forces could turn the rivalry between China and the United States into a fight? What can influence the outcome of such a competition? These are complex questions calling for complex answers. Therefore, the rivalry, or the complex system of relations between the two great powers, has been broken down in this book into somewhat separable themes. We are looking for the sets of criteria that underlie the collision courses of these great powers, and we are trying to draw conclusions from these that will also help to define the room for manoeuvre available for Hungarian foreign policy.

In Tamás Fellegi's foreword, experience meets systemic thinking, and we get a complex but transparent answer to the question of why it is important for Budapest to interpret the rules of the U.S.–China great power competition correctly. Balázs Mártonffy's paper provides a theoretical overview of the movement of international systems and outlines the limits of the three dilemmas essential for defining the Hungarian room for manoeuvre through a realist lens.

Three further papers explore this topic: Gábor Csizmazia and Klementina Kozma analyse Hungarian responses to U.S. foreign policy priorities, Tamás Matura examines the impact of Chinese policy on our region and Hungary, while Tamás Baranyi attempts to determine Hungary's place in the renewed great power rivalry and identify the near and distant points of alignment for Budapest.

The next major thematic unit of the book examines certain aspects of the legal, domestic political, and ideological relations of the United States and their possible impact on Hungary. The study by István Stumpf and Boglárka Borbély examines the rule of law and the behaviour of the courts and specifically traces the reform of the U.S. Supreme Court and its impact on the system. Tamás Magyarics analyses the changing mindsets and ideologies in the United States and their Hungarian aspects in the context of Trump's conservatism, while Tibor Mándi examines the present and future of American liberalism.

The studies in the concluding chapter deal in detail with the transnational issues of our times, including the global economic processes in the analysis of László Örlős, the business world and human rights in the paper of Lénárd Sándor, the struggle in cyberspace and the ambitions of great powers in the study of Csaba Krasznay, while Csaba Gondola discusses the responsibility of social media, American and international regulation and the Hungarian implications of these issues.

The editors