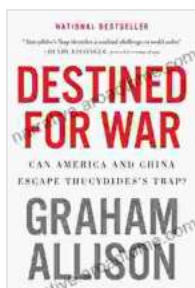


# Can America and China Escape the Thucydides Trap?

The Thucydides Trap is a theory in international relations that states that war is inevitable when a rising power challenges the status quo of a dominant power. The theory is based on the writings of the ancient Greek historian Thucydides, who observed that the Peloponnesian War between Sparta and Athens was caused by the rise of Athens and the fear that this inspired in Sparta.



## Destined For War: Can America and China Escape

Thucydides's Trap? by Graham Allison

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 4702 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
X-Ray	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 389 pages



In the modern world, the Thucydides Trap has been used to explain the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, and the current tensions between the United States and China. Some experts believe that the United States and China are on a path to war, while others believe that there are ways to avoid this outcome.

This article will explore the Thucydides Trap and its implications for the United States and China. We will examine the historical evidence for the theory, and we will consider the different ways that the United States and China could avoid war.

## **The Thucydides Trap**

The Thucydides Trap is a theory in international relations that states that war is inevitable when a rising power challenges the status quo of a dominant power. The theory is based on the writings of the ancient Greek historian Thucydides, who observed that the Peloponnesian War between Sparta and Athens was caused by the rise of Athens and the fear that this inspired in Sparta.

Thucydides argued that the Peloponnesian War was inevitable because Sparta was a declining power that was threatened by the rise of Athens. Sparta felt that its dominance in Greece was being challenged by Athens, and it was determined to prevent Athens from becoming too powerful.

The Thucydides Trap has been used to explain a number of wars in history, including the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. Some experts believe that the United States and China are on a path to war, while others believe that there are ways to avoid this outcome.

## **The Historical Evidence for the Thucydides Trap**

There is some historical evidence to support the Thucydides Trap. For example, the Peloponnesian War between Sparta and Athens was caused by the rise of Athens and the fear that this inspired in Sparta. Similarly, the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union was caused by

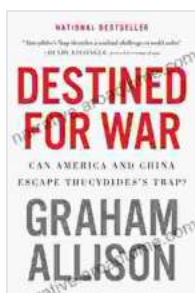
the rise of the Soviet Union and the fear that this inspired in the United States.

However, there are also examples of rising powers challenging the status quo of dominant powers without war. For example, the United States rose to power in the 19th century without causing a war with Great Britain. Similarly, China has risen to power in the 21st century without causing a war with the United States.

## **The Implications of the Thucydides Trap for the United States and China**

The Thucydides Trap has important implications for the United States and China. If the theory is correct, then the United States and China are on a path to war. However, there are a number of things that the United States and China can do to avoid this outcome.

First, the United States and China can work to build trust and understanding between each other. This can be done through diplomatic channels, educational exchanges, and cultural exchanges.



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