

GEOECONOMICS AND TECHNOLOGY AT THE CORE OF THE EMERGING COMMERCIAL TECHNO-WARS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Environmental analysis is a key area of strategic Marketing. The new global environment is changing their nature during the last decades, emerging new concepts such as the digital revolution and the geoeconomics' challenges. The nature of international conflicts is changing, shifting from the diplomatic and military arena to the technological and economic one. Nowadays, telecommunications warfare is standing up strong as the protagonist of the current scenario. Superpowers are competing on who will be playing that role on the international scene. The fifth generation of telecommunications (5G) is pushing China and USA in a geoeconomic conflict. Both countries are fighting to set up their best strategies of propagating their geoeconomic influence and attaining their strategic goals, preserving their digital sovereignty from any kind of abuse and violation.

This paper focuses on the geoeconomic characteristics of the 5G warfare, sheds lights on its manifestations in the recent emerging events on the international scene, explains the way in which China and USA are dealing with it through displaying methods of cyber diplomacy implemented by these powers to achieve their aims, and illustrates the prerequisites of that techno-war at the politico-economic level, and most importantly at the level of individuals' health and their immune system.

Introduction

A non-armed war is occurring nowadays all over the planet: which country will be the leader of the 5G innovation in the internet and telecommunication technology? A Napoleonic remark uttered more than 200 years ago stated: "Let China Sleep, for when she wakes, she will shake up the world", and it seems that 5G has waken China up, and the world started to shake.

The first generation of mobile telecommunications allowed us to make wireless phone calls; 2G was the tech that enabled texting options; 3G brought web browsing; and 4G made the video-streaming come true, and insured a constant connection with GPS satellites, which has permitted the rise of many companies like Uber (Bremmer, 2019).

The current phase we are living in, is the transitional one, and here comes the chaos. USA is against the Chinese integration in their infrastructures and network through – the largest provider of telecom equipment in the world – Huawei's equipment and hardware. Main arguments are:

- For fear of China's spying the American companies' database because they will be streamed through their own hardware;
- Using Huawei equipment could leave the US susceptible to China's infrastructure attack, if they ever went into war (Bremmer, 2019).

Thus, the American administration applied political and economic tension between its European allies, to limit Huawei's participation in building 5G networks, and to remove all its equipment from their markets.

Does this 5G constitute a real threat to the cyber sovereignty of the USA? Is that the main goal behind this emerging war between China and USA? Breaching each other's cyber sovereignty? In the 2020 Annual Report to Congress of the U.S. – China ESRC, it was clearly stated, that China is consistently working on a new model and standards for the global order: "The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) seeks to revise the international order to be more amenable to its own interests and authoritarian governance system. It desires for other countries not only to acquiesce to its prerogatives, but also to acknowledge what it perceives as China's rightful place at the top of a new hierarchical world order" (U.S. – China ESRC, 2020, p. 80).

Furthermore "The Chinese government views technical standards as a policy tool to advance its economic and geopolitical interests" (U.S. – China ESRC, 2020, p. 81).

After all, it seems that 5G is the new bait, to attract and catch the global market, and Huawei is the most competitor bait-maker.

Data and methods

This paper addresses the 5G from two main perspectives: the politico-economic and the technological. Qualitative approaches fit research in political science (McNabb, 2015). In-depth interviews are an accepted method to research in emerging topics of the political area. This method allows to gain a deep understanding of key ideas (Rathbun, 2008). Based on the narrative and analytical methodologies, as such, it can deeply treat the subject. The data chosen are two types of core value statements: Interviews, in addition to readings of accredited publications from global and valuable think tanks.

Results and discussion

Ex-President of the United States, Donald Trump has expressed many times his worries towards the escalating economic capabilities of China... And herein, Biden came to thoughts... But as Michael Mcloughlin (2020) stated: "Biden's victory doesn't look like it will mean much change on the US side". But the world's attention is now focused on the way in which Joe Biden will manage this "revolution".

As far as tech industry is concerned, Google has finished its relationship with Huawei after Trump's veto and so this has left Huawei's devices without the mobile services and apps customized by Google. However, due to the huge difference in costs of other brands devices compared to Huawei's ones, market sales have suffered, and phone shipment orders have globally decreased around 24% (Mcloughlin, 2020). That is why dealers are obliged to neglect the decision of banning Huawei's devices in their countries, for their own benefit, and that of the customers.

In addition: "Now, according to Financial Times, tough U.S. sanctions this year against Huawei could be less threatening to its overall business than previously thought. And according to analysts, the company's important smartphone arm might have a chance to recover. Less threatening to Huawei means more threatening to Google and its lock on the worldwide Android ecosystem" (Doffman, 2020).

In terms of healthcare, recent observations have raised concerns regarding the 5G effect on the human health, especially after the mystery of Covid-19. Many debates are arguing on either it is really

dangerous, or does not have any negative repercussion on human health. This study does not settle the debate but represents a comparison between the pros and cons of 5G evolution on the healthcare system, in this period.

Thus, 5G has succeeded in creating a vision to turning out healthcare system to SMART one. And according to an article shared by Oxford Academic, one month before the first Chinese infection of Covid-19 had been identified: “5G will reconstruct the healthcare system by intelligently improving the quality of medical service, balancing the distribution of medical resources between urban and rural areas, and reducing the burden of healthcare costs” (Li, 2019).

Conclusion

This paper shows that the gradual rise of 5G and its innovations coincided with slowing down productivity and the Gross Domestic Product growth in developed countries. Indeed, one analysis mentions that “the US economy loses \$ 1tn each year due to too much information and interruption” (Konzept, 2019, p. 7). So guess its losses during the 5G phase!

Technologically speaking, 5G is considered as a revolution of a new kind: “this new technology will be the backbone that enables advances such as smart cities, driverless cars, remote controlled operating theatres, automated farms and more besides” (Cooper, 2018).

In terms of healthcare, this study agrees that “there is no concrete evidence of health damage due to 5G electromagnetic waves, although it is not scientific and illogical to prove the non-existence of negative effects” as Prof Dr. Alexander Lerchl told Euronews (Beswick, 2019).

But this study realizes that, the fear of 5G network, is more linked to politico-economic balances between nations than to health-Notice that USA has taken a banning decision against Huawei, but never against its main alternatives Nokia or Ericsson. “The risk is not the same with European manufacturers as with non-European ones” said Macron's team (Mcloughlin, 2020).

However, and regardless of superpowers interests, it is better for every individual to be cautious from their blind race for influence.

KEYWORDS: 5G, Cyber Diplomacy, Digital Sovereignty, Geoeconomics, Techno-war.

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