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# Cyber Great Game and Two Heartlands

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## 1. 20th-Century Great Game

The intelligence battle between Imperial Russia and the British Empire over Central Asia in the early 20th century is sometimes called the "great game." The novel *Kim* by Rudyard Kipling impressed people on that matter. Kim, an orphaned son of a British soldier, grew up in India, and eventually traveled with a Buddhist monk and got involved in the great game.

One of the readers of this novel was John Philby, an administrative official of the British Empire's Indian colony. John Philby, who was known as an eccentric, gave his son Harold Philby a nickname, Kim. He was later known as Kim Philby, a member of the Soviet spy group Cambridge Five. Kim Philby, who worked for an intelligence agency of the British government and worked closely with the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), was actually a Soviet spy and took refuge in the Soviet Union just before it was exposed.

The intelligence war between Russia and the British Empire in the early 20th century was replaced by the great game between the Soviet Union and the United States in the second half of the 20th century where Kim Philby was active. The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1978 and had stayed there until 1989, where the end of the Cold War began to appear.

In geopolitics by Halford Mackinder et al., the central part of the Eurasian continent is called the Heartland. The people who control the Heartland are considered to dominate the world island (Eurasian and African continents), and the people who control the world island are considered to control the world. Nicholas Spykman took it a step further, and thought that the battle between the Eurasian continental states and the maritime states surrounding Eurasia occurs in the Rimland, the strip of coastal land that encircles Eurasia.

In fact, the Cold War ran into a serious situation in East and West Germany, the Middle East, India and Pakistan, Vietnam, China and Taiwan, and the Korean Peninsula, as well as Afghanistan, and the Rimland became a place of a conflict between the Soviet Union, a land power, and the United States, a sea power.

## 2. Cyber Great Game

How will the 21st-century great game turn out? Cyberattacks are a problem in modern security.

China, Russia, North Korea, and Iran are often the sources of cyberattacks recent year. They are located in the center of Eurasia or the Rimland.

China has intensified trade and technical friction with the U.S. Donald Trump administration. Huawei, a company that was caught in the crossfire of the friction, was not only removed from the U.S. market, but also effectively banned from trading with the United States and its allies and friendly nations. In December 2018, Meng Wanzhou, the company's CFO and the daughter of Huawei's founder Ren Zhengfei, was arrested in Canada for circumventing sanctions against Iran. While Chinese products and services are becoming more prevalent in the global information technology (IT) market, there are growing concerns on China's spying, which is starting to be called a supply chain risk.

What about Russia? Russia is believed to have directly intervened in the 2016 U.S. presidential election to help Trump secure a victory. It cannot be proven how much information disclosure and false news dissemination swayed U.S. voters. It should be viewed that Russia's purpose was not to help Trump win; it achieved its goal by making people suspicious about democracy and elections—something the United States places its highest value on.

Iran's intervention in the U.S. presidential election in 2020 was more prominent than Russia's. Information that ridiculed the elderly candidate of the Democratic Party, Joe Biden, was transmitted, and political messages were sent from Twitter's fake accounts. However, U.S. Cyber Command who notified of the intervention in advance were able to prevent it from generating a significant effect, using the "defend forward" strategy.

Trump complained about his defeat in the election and claimed that it was a scam, but eventually Biden's victory was acknowledged. On January 6, 2021, however, Trump supporters stormed the Capitol which resulted in five casualties. Although the election itself was defended, it was questionable whether democracy was protected.

### 3. Heartland of the Cyber Great Game

The Internet is sometimes referred to as a cloud, but in fact it is a physical connection of telecommunication devices, telecommunication channels (wired and wireless), and storage devices (servers and data centers). Because they are things that physically exist, cyberspace is vulnerable to damage from hardware destruction, not to mention damage from hacking, unauthorized access, and software system destruction.

Digitalized data is the first heartland of the cyber great game conducted through such telecommunication methods. Digitalized financial assets are important in such data. Modern financial assets are no longer stored in the form of paper money and coins. They are stored in computers as digital bit signals. The possibility of such digital money being stolen or lost must be prevented. Collection and storage of sensitive personal information is also important. The physical location of a

data center is an important policy choice. This is why countries are seeking data localization policies.

The second heartland is cognitive space for us to recognize, interpret, and transmit information. Election intervention is the most prominent example, and forces that try to intervene in elections confuse people's perception of what is true and what is right, causing them to lose their normal judgment. In other words, foreign forces are now able to stir people's minds.

While cyberspace is something that physically exists, it is our wealth and thoughts that can be manipulated by it. This is the big difference between the 20th-century great game and the 21st-century great game.

#### 4. New Cyber Alliance

What can we do in the age of the 21st-century cyber great game? Cyberattacks originate from countries in Eurasia and cyberspace consists of physical devices and equipment, so there may be a strategy to contain Eurasia again.

The collaboration between the British Empire countries from the last period of World War II to the Cold War period is called the "Five Eyes". The United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand joined the collaboration. In the age of the 21st-century cyber great game, however, is it possible to form a new cyber alliance that could be called JAIBU (Japan-Australia-India-Britain-US) by adding the United Kingdom to the Quad, a collaboration of four countries including Japan, the United States, Australia, and India to counter Eurasian countries?

It is, of course, best to aim for international peace while linking military, diplomacy and economy, so that the cybersecurity cold war does not turn into a hot war. Simply repeating a slogan will not achieve peace. Japan should contribute to the stability of cyberspace and the international community by enhancing its cyber capacity and actively participating in international collaboration.

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