Research Article Open Access

 $K_{\ensuremath{\mbox{\sc W}}}$  .: China; ailand; Paci c a air; ASEAN; Garden path; Rose-tinted; Spectacles

## I 3, 1 3

China and ailand have a long standing relationship. eir separate destinies date back to the  $13^{\rm th}$  century and to the time of the Sukhothai kings. A large proportion of ai people today have Chinese ancestry. My survey research also shows that there are more ai prime ministers with Chinese ancestry than there are not. e early Siamese began as migrants from Southern China as early as the 3

(also at 85/175), but behind Indonesia (107/175), Vietnam (119/175) and Cambodia (156/175). Corruption begets corruption and when it is done at the state and regional level, that is when the stakes become very high and we are talking about some real money that has now attracted American companies and the Russian ma a [8].

China continues walking into Southeast Asia like the region is their backyard. is is because there is no power in the region that can e ectively thwart Chinese interests in the South China Sea. China and the Philippines have been, as of December 2013, at loggerheads with one another over the Spratly islands. By December 2015, their diplomatic rows had escalated into Southeast Asia as a result of an overlapping series of artefacts and partially digested fragments gleaned from historical archives and perhaps ravaged by the subjectivity of Western and Chinese reports between 1949 and 2015. China's special interest in Southeast Asia is neither ancient nor modern. It rests somewhere in between. And that interest began over 600 years ago. Over six hundred years ago, it would not be a wise move to challenge the authority of the emperor. In all absolutist states, the word of the autocrat was nal. And his word was backed by an entire hierarchy of autocrats-minor who would unquestioningly implement imperial policies.

In late modernity, most Chinese military strategists believe that China intends to win any war that occurs in its immediate zone of e PRC learnt its lesson in the Straits Crisis of 1996 when in uence. it cowed against the power of the US 7th Fleet and the largest US naval otilla in the Paci c including two of the US's largest Aircra Carrier Fleets and proven long-range strike capability. e PRC intends to win any hot war by deploying carrier-destroyer drones, invisible subs, satellite and 3C jamming equipment, as well as digital warfare against foreign (i.e., American) threat. China will strike to in ict what a famous American general used against Iraq: "Shock and Awe". In other words, China will strike at American hardware and so ware long before the Americans can nish their co ee, hearty breakfast cereal and wa es. Meanwhile ailand sites uncomfortably on the sidelines for fear of losing any more Chinese investments or businesses.

It is however unlikely that China will be able to maintain a long-drawn out global war against the US military. Given its global reach, not even the Russians dare challenge American supremacy outside Georgia, the Ukraine and other former Warsaw bloc satellite states.

Yet there are increasingly worrying signs of China's disenchantment within the Far East: its long history of antagonism and hatred towards Japan, given the history of Japanese militarism since their defeat of the Russian Fleet in 1905: that made Japan the rst modern Asian state to defeat a European global power. Apart from Japan, China is morally obliged to aid or at least come to the rescue of its erstwhile, right-wing Korean ideological partner; and the perennial problem of the  $O_{\bullet}$  C  $_{\bullet}$  ,  $_{\bullet}$   $_{\bullet}$   $_{\bullet}$  policy. Taiwan will remain democratic as long as the democratic generation survives and the memories of the Kuomintang are not disrupted by their chequered history.

ere is also a surge of increasing interest in Southeast Asian energy and especially oil reserves in the so-called South China Sea and the number of foreign Chinese agents identi ed in Australia, Singapore, Malaysia, ailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines since 1989 (end of the Cold War). Recall that the Japanese sent many tourists to capture photographs of Malaya in the 1920s and 1930s before Japanese Imperial intelligence units sunk their analytical teeth into their useful returns. is was why Japanese could precisely pinpoint valuable strategic and tactical targets before attacking Pearl City and Pearl Harbor.

As long as China remains at the negotiating table with its ASEAN friends and stops bankrolling Cambodia and some prominent—ai families overseas, a potentially violent situation can be prevented from exploding. For the time being, China's plans remain on course: a Chinese ambassador to the former Soviet Union once told his Singapore counterpart that China's conceives of its traditional sphere of in uence in an area that includes the entire Pacic from Micronesia and Guam to Fiji, Vanuatu, Australia, and through Southeast Asia all the way to India's Hindu Kush.

Chinese Special Forces have to be very well trained and equipped to operate in Xinjiang Province against the Chinese Muslim Uyghur (Uighar) let alone o the Cape of Storms and the Cape of Good Hope as well as around the Horn of Africa. And China now has the wealth to go further. Should the Chinese economy falter, they might do what the Americans have been doing for decades since the 1900s. In any case, hot wars are always a good way to jump-start any military industrial complex [9].

e 2015 protests in Hong Kong are not about human rights or the political will of the people or the political nerve of the state. e protests in Hong Kong are about testing the boundaries of Chinese sovereignty. No autocrat in his right mind would allow the Balkanization of China. Beginning with Hong Kong, Macao would be the next to fall, then the individual Special Economic Zones and eventually the centre. e Chinese world is watching while Hong Kong university students protest against Beijing and a loss of face on either side will have signicant ramic cations. While it is clear that Beijing will emerge the victor, and to the victor go the spoils, it is not known what

wish to politically move him out of the way as a stumbling block to Hong Kong's democratic transition. If Admiral Zheng He were alive he might balk at the idea of Chinese questioning any imperial edit, let alone the one from the capital.

Admiral Zheng le an indelible mark on Southeast Asian modernity based on the various archaeological discoveries in modern Malaysia and Singapore. Yet the most signi cant testament to Chinese interests in Southeast Asia is a grave reminder of the past: the largest cemetery of the Chinese Diaspora in the world located at Bukit China in Malacca, Malaysia, where the Chinese Princess Hang Li-Po is buried near her spring water well. Admiral Zheng He bequeathed to modern Southeast Asians in general and the Chinese Diaspora in particular, the largest Chinese cemetery outside China at Bukit China in Malacca, Malaysia. So rather than worry about the eventual and predictable outcome of the Hong Kong protests, we should look back in wonder at the gaze of Chinese medieval history as it sheds more light on Southeast Asia's future. In his speech in 2015 to university students and sta, Singapore's Ambassador-at-large Tommy Koh reminded one and all that the Chinese had in e ect made to signi cant recent forays into Southeast Asia and therefore a ected Southeast Asian 'unity'. More recently he wrote, "China should therefore reconsider its position in order to conform to the best Asian and international practice"10. rst was in 2013 and the second time in 2014. In 22016 Chinese naval vessels and shing boats made contact with Indonesian ones prompting the Indonesian Ministries of Fisheries and Ministry of Foreign A airs

J Civil Legal Sci ISSN: 2169-0170 JCLS, an open access journal