

OBAMA'S MARITIME STRATEGY IN EAST ASIA

By Francis Hualupmomi

Central Argument: Obama's maritime strategy towards East Asia is only a continuation of Bush foreign policy and containment. Its ultimate political goal is to maintain its status quo against rising China and securing and protecting maritime commercial trade and energy security in the region. Although an economic war is possible it is not likely. To better manage this security dilemma, peace- rising China should not imitate American grand strategy as it may only construct a dangerous and unstable future. US presence should continue peace and stability in the region.

Key words: *Offensive Realism, Defensive Realism, Offensive-Defensive Realism, Grand Strategy, East Asia, Maritime Security, Continuum and Containment*

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Views expressed here are his own.

Introduction

American Grand Strategy in East Asia can best be described as an *expansionism and defensiveness* under the organizing principle of anarchy to maximize its national interest. This paper attempts to describe US strategic behavior expressed through its grand strategy with a specific focus on maritime theatre under the Obama's regime.

Although numerous strategic (military) strategists from Harts to Mahan remain the most historical influential conventional US maritime grand strategists in the 21st century, it is quite puzzling to calculate how the US under Obama regime would design and deploy its grand strategy in the 21st century given the changing pattern of geopolitics with the shift of power from the West to East, especially in East Asia with the rise of China.

In order to analyze this behavior the paper asks the key question: What is Obama's new maritime strategy in East Asia in the 21st century? This question is further supplemented by other questions:

- *What are the maritime security issues in East Asia in the 21st century?*
- *How is Obama going to deal with these emerging maritime security issues?*
- *Is economic war possible through naval power?*
- *What is the implication for Obama's maritime strategy in East Asia?*

In establishing the theoretical premise of the central argument, three central assumptions are hypothesized:

Proposition 1: Expansionism and defensive as the means of maintaining the status quo

Proposition 2: China is a potential threat to US regional hegemony

Proposition 3: Economic war will continue to dominate and shape regional maritime security landscape

These questions and propositions provide a logical framework of this paper. The paper is organized in this thematic scheme. The first part provides the theoretical premise and conceptual framework. The second part highlights the emerging maritime security landscape in East Asia. The third part describes Obama's maritime strategy in East Asia. The fourth part highlights its implications and finally, conclusion.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

American grand strategy towards East Asia appears to be a balanced *offensive-defensive realism* approach combined with Mahan's theory of sea power employing all necessary elements of state power to maximize its national interest.

To understand the American grand strategy in power politics, it is logical that we position its theoretical premise within international relations and strategic schools of thought, and how it shapes strategic interactions in East Asia maritime theatre.

Offensive realism theoretical approach is one of the variants of structural realism in international relations which was originally coined by John Mearsheimer (2001) which has since then become an influential policy tool in American grand strategy. Its central argument is that states ultimate

goal is to maximize more power and pursues hegemony when the circumstance is right to guarantee their survival in the international system¹.

According to Mearsheimer, offensive realism holds the central assumption under the framework of structural realism that the international system provides incentive for states as a rational actor to maximize power to guarantee survival and security. Culture, values and norms matter less. Since the structure of the system is anarchic in nature where there is no world government to enforce rules and punish perpetrators, there is no guarantee of security from other states. Mistrust and fear will always cause states to maneuver antagonistically because of uncertainty that some states may possess offensive weapons which have the potential to harm others. This constructs a self-help system where states will need to pursue expansionism to gain more power relative to other states².

According to this logic, for a state to guarantee its survival it must be stronger than other state. The strong state must either maximize its relative power through conquer and war or through latent force (material force).i.e., the socio-economic power expressed through by increasing size of the population or economic capacity.

In Mearsheimer's conception, regional hegemony is a rational strategic choice to maximize power because a single strong power cannot possibly have global hegemony. This holds true for US Western Europe hegemony in 19 century thereafter expanding to rest of the regions. The strong power establishes regional power in different geographical location. Its primary goal is to ensure there is no competitor and allow regional states to compete with each other eventually

¹ (Dune, 75-86: 2006)

² See also Jack Donnelly, 2000, Realism and International Relations. Cambridge University Press , UK.

weakening their relative powers to challenge the status quo. To offensive realism, balancing although is important is inefficient and opt for other strategies such as bug-passing³.

We can also apply offensive realism in this context to explain American behavior expressed through its grand strategy in East Asia. The United States according to this theory is the regional hegemon in East Asia and any rise of new contenders will be an imminent threat to its status quo. China's peaceful rise will definitely be calculated by US as a revisionist state and a challenger, similar to the rise of Imperial Japan and Russia in the early and mid 20 century.

Hence, the US will employ all necessary means of state power to contain the rise of China to ensure it does not possess the wherewithal to challenge the status quo. One can assume that declining US may use force if necessary while it is still enjoying its power before it's too late – war is possible but is not likely.

In contrary, defensive realism posit that states who maximize more power to guarantee its security will find itself losing the game. Waltz (1970) argues that it would be irrational for states to gain more power as it will only lead to self-destruction. Having appropriate power is absolutely necessary to avoid competition and conflict. In defensive realism lens, the hegemonic power maintains status quo when it no longer needs to maximize more power. However, the status quo may only defend its hegemony if there is a rising power (revisionist) which threatens its leadership. Such was the case in Japan's miscalculation in WWII which led to its demise⁴.

By balancing offensive-defensive realism, defensive realism often appears to be the best strategy. What it implies is that the use of force is peaceful in maintaining order and stability. It is obvious

³ (Toft, 2003:4)

⁴ (Taliaferro, 2000-2001: 1-3) see also Dune, 2006 and Liu Feng and Zhang Ruizhuang, 2007. The Typologies of Realism (Department of International Relations, Nankai University)

in US grand strategy that US did offensive strategy by assisting Philippines in defeating Spain in Spanish war in Philippines and successfully conquered Hawaii and established its regional hegemony. In WWII, the US showcase its regional power by defeating the Imperial Japan quest for more power whilst in Cold War era, saw US unilaterally intervene in Vietnam War and Korean War to defend its hegemonic leadership.

Perhaps, it would be more interesting to see how US will perpetuate its grand strategy in East Asia to contain the rise of China. Most analysts agree that current regime under Obama has deployed a balance between offensive-defensive realism approach in pursuing its grand strategy in the region.

Conceptualization:

Grand Strategy

In conceptualizing the theme, it is also necessary that the concept of grand strategy is defined. There are ample definitions of grand strategy proposed by scholars and policy analysts⁵. One US naval officer, Colonel Joe Bassani, defined it as

“Grand strategy is an overarching concept that guides how nations employ all of the instruments of national power to shape world events and achieve specific national security objectives. Grand strategy provides the linkage between national goals and actions by establishing a deliberately ambiguous vision of the world as we would like it to be (ends) and the methods (ways) and resources (means) we will employ in pursuit of that vision. Effective grand strategies provide a unifying purpose and direction to national

⁵ See Paul Bracken, 2006. Maritime Strategy and Grand Strategy. IDSS COMMENTARIES (103/2006)

leaders, public policy makers, allies and influential citizens in the furtherance of mutual interests”⁶.

The problem though rest with the fact that these analysts fail to mark a clear distinction between strategy and grand strategy. Tracing the historical trends in military strategic thinking, Tsen Su, “On the Art of War” provides a tactical strategy of war. Similarly, Carl von Clausewitz defines it as a tactical strategy for combat at policy level as a political tool to wage war. Sir Basil Henry Liddell Hart later amplified and extended the meaning as “...to co-ordinate and direct all the resources of a nation, or band of nations, towards the attainment of the political object of the war” (Hart, p.322). Former Senator Gary Hart further well defines grand strategy as “the application of power and resources to achieve large national purposes” (Hart, p.3)⁷.

Although these definitions provide a coherent definition, grand strategy is best defined in simple terms as the way in which a state design and deploy all necessary means of state power to maximize its national interest under a given condition. This implies that grand strategy is an art and science in itself which involves combing resources (political, economical, diplomatic, military, social and technological) as a means and smart ways to achieve a desired goal – the ultimate goal of any state to survive is power as a means to an end. Maritime strategy is derived from the comprehensive grand strategy with an aim to protect and secure commercial and military movements⁸.

⁶ (2007:01).

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Frühling, 81: 2008)

Grand strategy is ambiguous in a sense that it is a conceptualization of possible future scenario which may not necessarily hold true. It changes under different conditions consistent with the strategic choice of state's national interest.

It is also important that we clearly distinguish between grand strategy, strategy and tactic. Grand strategy is general and comprehensive whilst Strategy applies only to specific ways or plans to achieve a goal. It is mostly applied to military movements. And tactic is a specific plan in combat to achieve a defined mission⁹.

Alfred Thayer Mahan Theory of Sea Power:

The American grand strategy in East Asia has been greatly influenced by American naval geostrategist and historian, Alfred Thayer Mahan. His concept of sea power was reflected in "The Influence of Sea Power upon History 1660-1873 (1890). Deduced from naval historical experiences he argued that for America to have global power it must by all means have control over maritime theaters as a strategic choice. He articulated that economic power maximized through naval power to achieve hegemony is the ultimate goal¹⁰. His concept, for instance, greatly influenced the US gun boat diplomacy in Japan in 19th century.

Mahan's idea conceptualized in American Strategy in East Asia saw US having control over maritime theaters in Asia-Pacific with its naval power established in Philippines and Pearl

⁹ (Zhang, 2011, Lecture Notes on American Grand Strategy in East Asia)

¹⁰ See Knight, Roger (2000) *The Foundations of Naval History: John Knox Laughton, the Royal Navy and the Historical Profession*, Review of book by Professor Andrew Lambert in the Institute for Historical Research's *Reviews in History* series. (London: Institute for Historical Research) <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/paper/knight.html> and Apt, Benjamin. "Mahan's Forebears: The Debate over Maritime Strategy, 1868–1883." *Naval War College Review* (Summer 1997). Online. Naval War College. September 24, 2004

Harbor, later extended to, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore, Thailand and late recently Guam. In 20th century American strategy in East Asia was deployed against containing Imperial Japan, Russia and China in the 21st century.

Regional Security Landscape in the 21st Century

The regional maritime security architecture in the 21st century is characterized by increasingly new emerging complex issues with a phenomenal recent shift of power from the West to East, especially with the peaceful rise of China. Two pivotal questions are sought: *How important is maritime geography in regional strategic interaction/power politics? What is Obama's maritime strategy in East Asia?*

Geopolitics of Maritime security in East Asia

Historically, East Asia maritime is an important geostrategic and geoeconomic theatre which plays a key role in shaping power politics since the European imperialism in about the 18-19 century.

East Asia is a sub-region of Asia which covers about 12,000,000 km² (4,600,000 sq mi), or about 28 percent of the Asian continent, about 15 percent bigger than the area of Europe. It constitutes China, Japan, South Korea, North Korea, and Mongolia which has about more than 1.5 billion people, twice Europe's population¹¹.

¹¹ (Dick, 2: 2008)



Source¹²:

In strategic terms under Mackinder's conception, East Asia is the inner arc wherein America strategically positions itself as a major regional power through its blue water navy in pursuit of its expansionism and defensive foreign policy. The central emphasis here should be placed on South China Sea (*Nanhai*), a semi-closed sea covering 3.5 square kilometers, which is

¹² Maaik Heijmans, 2002:22. Netherlands Institute for International Relations 'Clingendael' in The Hague

strategically located between the Pacific Ocean and Indian Ocean where commercial and economic trade links Africa, Pacific, Middle East and Europe¹³.

The South China Sea is not only the second biggest and busiest international transit shipping point of oil (crude oil and oil products) but also harbors contestable deposits of rich natural resources such as oil, gas and fisheries. Its geostrategic position has historically led to interstate economic wars and conflicts in the region, for instance, World War II and China-Vietnam territorial disputes¹⁴.

In retrospect, the naval history reveals that economic wars were fought between Imperial Japan and western powers and China in the region over access to resources to project power from gun boat diplomacy to war to economic sanctions. In WWII, Imperial Japan with an intent to construct a regional power called East Asian Co-prosperity sphere irrationally miscalculate its attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 which led to its demise.

Prior to that Japan continued its imperialism by extending it to China, Taiwan and South Korea. Moreover, it also fought Russia in the early and late mid 19 century over its territorial right once mistakenly demarcated by the western colonial powers¹⁵.

Emerging Maritime Security Issues in 21st C

In contemporary international relations, territorial disputes over South China seas with China, Japan, Vietnam, Philippines, Burma, Malaysia, South Korea and Taiwan led to interstate

¹³ (Desker, 1: 2005)

¹⁴ (Yeiwei, 2006:108).

¹⁵ (Lach, and Van Kley, 72:1998).

conflicts. More over, the proliferation of nuclear weapons by North Korea has landed US to blend her as a rogue state. Interestingly phenomenal is the rise of China in the region, especially its military and naval modernization fueled by its economic power and reemerging Russia and potential rise of India¹⁶.

Although less important in power politics, is the rise of non-state actors perpetuating transnational crimes such as terrorism, piracy, which are securitized as an imminent threat to energy security in the region¹⁷ⁱ.

Obama's Maritime Strategy in East Asia: *Reshaping or Maintaining the Status Quo?*

It appears that the Obama's maritime strategy is a continuum of Bush foreign policy and containment of rising pacifist China. This can be argued that it is nevertheless an operative terminology under the framework of expansionism and defensive.

An overview of American Grand Strategy in East Asia

The beginning of American Grand Strategy in East Asia can be traced back to late 18 to early 19 century when US pursued an "Open Door Policy" providing public good for the region under the Washington Systemⁱⁱ.

¹⁶ (Schriver and Stokes, 2:2009)

¹⁷ (Yoshihara, 59–88:2010).

The American grand strategy traditionally is “expansion and defending” with an objective to keep a balance between military and economic power. The entire purpose of US is to disintegrate regional powers. The main target is Japan and European powers which have historical control over many resource-rich states in the region.

The US first began its expansion strategy by expanding from Eurasia to East Asia to Australasia controlling Hawaii in the Pacific and Philippines in Asia (South East).

According to Mackinder's geographical power conception, US is strategically situated in the outer crescent and in order for it to have complete continental control it must control the heartland first then expand beyond borders. Mahan then proposed sea power as an alternative strategic choice for US hegemonic power. He proposed that US should build a fleet to control world maritime. To achieve this goal he suggested two strategic options: *Direct and Indirect (smart strategy) strategy*, with smart strategy as the best approach for US, i.e. avoid direct contact at all cost¹⁸.

Under this strategic logic, the US reshaped the regional maritime security architecture by controlling key points, constructing bases and continued strategic expansion in Asia-Pacific maritime sphere. To control East Asia, the US geo-strategically calculates Philippines as a base and Hawaii as a buffer zone or backwater to maximize absolute power to construct a regional hegemony¹⁹. As one scholar puts clearly,

“From the U.S. perspective, if it could establish its hegemonic status in this region, it would then be able to go beyond the Taiwan Strait to the Japan Sea to the northeast, thus

¹⁸ (Zhang, 2011). Lecture Notes on American Grand Strategy in East Asia

¹⁹ (Green, 2010:1)

strengthening the coastal defense of the Japan Sea. To the south, the U.S. would be able to cover the South Pacific Region and strengthen the South Pacific Region's alliance with Australia. To the west, it could reach past the Strait of Malacca to enhance the U.S. interests in the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf region. To the north, it would be able to directly contain China's expansion efforts toward the south. Therefore, the South China Sea issue has been viewed as the third most important potential hot point in the Asia Pacific Region, after the Korean Peninsula and the Taiwan Strait, and it is considered another important opportunity and challenge for the U.S. to establish its security order in the Asia Pacific Region²⁰

The second most important American grand strategy is the Defending strategy. Since US has expanded its hegemony through wars and gain economic wealth it must protect itself from any preponderant threats in the region. Hence both offensive and defensive strategies were rationally optimized to gain the highest possible outcome.

One could argue that the rise and fall of East Asian states were perceived by US as a preponderant threat to its hegemonic leadership in the region. In this strategic calculus, the rise of new powers such as China, reemerging Russia and potential India is a threat to US national interest and the stability of the region. The US specific strategy before the Cold War was a buffer/backwater. In this strategy, the US used lesser or small states to act as the buffer or backwater against any preponderant power which have the wherewithal to inflict harm. For instance, the US successfully used Japan as a backwater between rising Russia and China during Cold War period.

²⁰ (Yeawei, 2006:111)

The post Cold War to post 9/11 era in this view, the American grand strategy towards East Asia from Bush senior to Clinton to Bush Junior is still dominated by the traditional real-politic conception of expansionism and defensiveness but has taken shape over a given period of time with changes in the international system.

The 21st Century: Continuum and Containment strategy

Given the magnitude of emerging maritime issues in East Asia, it is argued that the Obama's maritime strategy is characterized as both a *Continuum and Containment*. This is the strategy of engaging China while hedging against it or encirclement. Many scholars²¹ and policy think tanks²² believe that the current Obama's grand strategy in East Asia is a continuation of Bush administration and containment in particular encirclement with the rise of China in the region.

The East Asia maritime theater will continue to dominate American national interest for the next coming decades although there is a declining economic power and military forward base in Asia. Some Asian states, especially free riders fear this may construct a power vacuum should the US withdraw from the region. As Obama promised to withdraw US forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, the presence of US in the region still remains a contentious issue.

Despite fear and animosity in the region, it is unlikely that US will withdraw from the region. With the relative declining economic power of US, it would be irrational in US foreign policy to exit the region. East Asia's maritime is one of US geoeconomic and geostrategic spheres in

²¹ (for instance, Eiichi Katahara, 2009:1-3)

²² (The East Asia Institute, 2009:1-2)

maintaining its regional hegemonic leadership²³. The US navy will be the political tool in pursuing this strategy. Andrew argues that,

“The United States unquestionably remains the country with the largest stake in the security of the oceans. It must safeguard its 8.8 million square kilometers of exclusive economic zone (EEZ) – more than any other nation in the world (Timiraos, Nick, “Arctic Thaw Defrosts a Sea Treaty,” Wall Street Journal, Nov. 3-4, 2007, p.) – and nearly 21,000 kilometers of coastline.³ Most importantly, the United States still operates the world’s most advanced maritime forces and largest economy– one deeply dependent on overseas commerce in a world where a staggering nine-tenths of all trade and two-thirds of all petroleum is transported by sea”²⁴.

The fundamental national interest of US revolves around the rise of China, Safeguarding larger commercial and maritime interests²⁵. A great concern for US is an ongoing lack of transparency, both in terms of capabilities and intentions, rapid increases in defense spending and wide-ranging military modernization of China in the 21st century. Hence, the US Maritime strategy could be divided into Political and Economical (commercial – maritime commerce and energy security).

First concern for US is the rise of imperial Japan before WWII followed by Russia in Cold War, Japan in Post Cold war and in 21st Century is the rise of China. In strict realist terms, the rising of a new preponderant power is calculated by US as an imminent threat to its national interest, peace and stability in the region. The US under offensive strategy will not allow China to challenge its status quo. This security dilemma will create the propensity for antagonistic

²³ (Fravel and Samuels, 2005:3)

²⁴ (2007:40-61)

²⁵ (Twiddy, 2008: 105)

competition in the region. The US will employ all its available resources to weaken and displace China in the regional power contest. This strategic interaction is highly dangerous which can lead to economic war – a repeat of WWII is possible but not likelyⁱⁱⁱ.

China's peaceful rise and influence in the region (extending to Pacific theatre) is already calculated by US as a threat. As China peacefully expands into traditional spheres of great powers, US presence will be shaken. For instance, in about the end of 2010, US secretary of State, Hillary Clinton visited Pacific region after Obama's visit to Indonesia to strike an alliance with intent to contain China. Many Australian and Pacific Island scholars and policy makers were a bit pessimistic of China's presence in the region, which to some extent leaving Australia in an awkward position in its traditional alliance partner, US, whilst others on the other hand perceive China as an important strategic and economic partner in the region²⁶.

The U.S. will continue to maintain its military presence with 100,000 troops in Asia-Pacific region through its naval bases in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Hawaii, Guam and Philippines and strengthen its umbrella alliance with Australia, Japan and South Korea in a strategy called "twin-anchor strategy," where it will intervene from North and South when necessary²⁷.

The Obama administration has also continued to maintain the Bush strategy of "preemptive strike," after September 11 under the banner of anti-terrorism in Indonesia and Philippines to

²⁶ (Frühling, 2008: 86) see also Francis Hualupmomi, Sino-US Summit Diplomacy, 2011, Keith's PNG Attitude Blog.

²⁷ (Rahawestri, 2010: 109-120)

continue having hegemonic control over East Asia. Obama will continue to engage China in the fight terrorism in Asia set by Bush administration after 9/11²⁸.

Another important stalemate in East Asia which continues to affect US foreign policy and grand strategy in East Asia is the issue of North Korea nuclear proliferation program. The US will continue to maintain its close tie to South Korea to prevent any strike from North Korea. In the event that North Korea unites South Korea through nuclear threat or war it may possibly increase the size of China's wherewithal to displace US in the region as perceived by US strategists.

The Taiwan issue is another controversial issue in East Asia between China and US over sovereignty issue, although Taiwan is China's internal issue. Through the lens of strategic calculus, the US may not possibly allow China to unite Taiwan. The unification of Taiwan with the mother land will be a strategic loss to US hegemonic leadership in the region. US thus is feeling uncomfortable with China having control over the region through the Asia-pacific link.

The territorial disputes are also in the national interest of US in the region. Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Japan and Russia still have disputes over who should have sovereign control over territorial waters within the 200 nautical miles or Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) defined by the Law of the Sea. The continental shelf in South China Sea from Malacca Strait to Indian Ocean constitutes some of the world's most rich deposits of natural resources –oil and gas – which are core national interests of any of these states.

The theatre also is the busiest trade link in international trade where US has the biggest share. Given this economic interest, US will not hesitate to use force to safeguard its national interest.

²⁸ (Katahara, 2009:1-2)

Energy security and trade are the lifeblood of US economic power and military power. Economic war is the function of US power projection.

China has reclaimed several of these islands by right, especially Paracel Islands, and Spratly Islands whilst Senkaku with Japan is still controversial. In US calculus, China's rise in naval power and its potential to have control over East Asia maritime is a threat to US regional hegemonic power. Hence it can be argued that the US will continue to contain China through its naval presence and strategic alliance in the region.

In assessing Obama's maritime strategy the US will use both soft and hard power to expand and defend its hegemony in the region. For instance, the US in recent times has used soft power to convince China to facilitate the Six Party Talks on North Korea's nuclear weapons. In 2009-2010, the US also employed hard power to sanction China on economic war of currency. In 2010 US demonstrated its hard power with its traditional allies, Japan and South Korea in a strategic maneuvering war-like game in the height of North Attack on one of South Korea's naval ship and late recently in 2011, the US with Philippines in the height of territorial disputes between Philippines and China in the South China sea.

Implications of Obama's Maritime Strategy

The Obama's maritime strategy in East Asia will face an extreme conundrum given the changing pattern of power shift in geopolitics from the West to East with the peaceful rise of China. A containment strategy through naval maneuvering and strategic alliances as a strategy launched by US to contain China will only complicate the issue. China does not intend to pursue an

expansionist or hegemonic policy in the region rather a peaceful approach under its “*Five Principles of Coexistence*”^{iv} to construct a harmonious world society. The Chinese PLAN (People's Liberation Army and Navy) modernization should be understood by US in the broader context of safeguarding its external sovereignty and energy security²⁹.

China has relied much on US blue water navy for protection of its sea communication lanes and transportation of oil and gas via the strategic maritime theatres³⁰. In the age of complex globalization and interdependence, international commerce and trade will extremely require more cooperative fashion to avoid economic competition and war.

The US must understand Chinese strategic culture and diplomacy – mutual strategic signaling is highly necessary between the two powers. Contingency misperception by US is highly dangerous. This is the greatest conundrum in US offensive approach where war is possible but not likely. US must perceive China as a strategic partner rather than a strategic competitor in the region.

On the other hand, China should not imitate American grand strategy. Future Elites play an important role in shaping foreign policy and military strategies. As such, it would be unwise for China to be obsessed with Americanism. If China pursues an offensive strategy it would not possibly attain its great power status. As long as China follows US trajectory it would construct the propensity for antagonistic competition which may escalate into economic warfare.

Conclusion

²⁹ (LI, 2007:II)

³⁰ (Yoshihara, 2010L59-61)

It can be concluded that the East Asia sub-region, especially the maritime theatre is US core national interest in expanding and defending its regional hegemony. Hence in assessing Obama's grand strategy in East Asia, the US will continue Bush foreign policy and containment strategy. Given the rise of China in the region, economic war is possible but not likely in the future. It is also predicted that the US will continue to use naval power maneuvering to pursue its hegemonic leadership in the region. US presence should continue peace and stability in the region.

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ⁱ In strict realist sense, transnational security issues are not considered, therefore, this paper will give more emphasis on real-politic.

ⁱⁱ The Washington system under Franklin Roosevelt regime facilitated the rise of Japan, other Asian countries and recently China

ⁱⁱⁱ Military intervention is not the only means US will use to maintain status quo. It can also use latent force to maximize its power. More precisely it would be an economic cost for US to engage in military intervention.

^{iv} China's Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence is a framework that governs its interstate relations. The principles are:

1. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty,
2. Mutual non-aggression,
3. Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs,
4. Equality and mutual benefit, and
5. Peaceful co-existence