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Commentaries

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Asia, the Pacific, and the US Air Force's Contribution to the Future of US National Security

After a decade in which we fought two wars that cost us dearly, in blood and treasure, the United States is turning our attention to the vast potential of the Asia Pacific region.

—Pres. Barack Obama, 2011

On 17 November 2011, President Obama announced before the Australian parliament that he had made a "deliberate and strategic decision—as a Pacific nation, the United States will play a larger and long-term role in shaping this region and its future, by upholding core principles and in close partnership with our allies and friends;" that the region is a "top priority" of US security policy; and that the United States is "here to stay."[1]

That same month, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton published an article in *Foreign Policy* entitled "America's Pacific Century," in which she wrote:

> Over the last 10 years, we have allocated immense resources to those two theaters [Iraq and Afghanistan]. In the next 10 years, we need to be smart and systematic about where we invest time and energy, so that we put ourselves in the best position to sustain our leadership, secure our interests, and advance our values. One of the most important tasks of American statecraft over the next decade will therefore be to lock in a substantially increased investment—diplomatic, economic, strategic, and otherwise—in the Asia-Pacific region.[2]

Shortly after those remarks, and in concert with the president's statements recognizing the importance of the region to US national security, then–USAF chief of staff (CSAF), Gen Norton A. Schwartz, directed the Air Force Research Institute (AFRI) to undertake a year-long study focused on the role airpower will play in achieving national objectives in the Pacific region through the year 2020. In this context, *airpower* is inclusive in the sense that it is not entirely service-specific and it encompasses air, space, and cyber.

The AFRI team began its research by considering the ideas of Michèle Flournoy and Shawn Brimley, published in *Joint Force Quarterly*, on strategic planning and national security. Flournoy and Brimley asserted that the United States "lacks a comprehensive interagency process that takes into account both the character of the international security environment and its

own ability to deal with future challenges and opportunities." In proposing a structured approach to develop a comprehensive national strategy, they called for a new "Solarium Project," inspired by Pres. Dwight D. Eisenhower's discussions in the White House solarium that produced the Cold War containment policy used against the Soviet Union.[3] Since the United States has embarked on a major policy shift—as it had in 1952—AFRI considered the Eisenhower-era process proposed by Flournoy and Brimley appropriate to ensure the greatest likelihood of success.[4]

We initiated the study using a three-case approach, much like the Solarium Project in 1953: best case, worst case, and most likely case. Further, the research team used the DIME construct (diplomacy, information, military, and economic) as the framework for exploring potential solution sets. The study relied on the May 2010 *National Security Strategy*, the *National Military Strategy*, and the January 2012 White House document, *Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for US 21st Century Defense*, as conceptual documents which define enduring US national interests and assumptions.[5] This study was not about establishing a detailed prediction of the future. Rather, it was about projecting reality forward from 2012 and attempting to determine what recommendations provide the US Air Force the greatest opportunity for success. The three-case scenario creates a range of future events, realizing that what will occur most likely exists somewhere between the extremes. Consequently, the three cases—best, worst, and most likely—establish the construct for conducting an analysis and determining recommendations. The best case is a region with nations following international agreements and the rule of law. Conflict exists but falls short of direct military engagement. China, India, and Russia continue a peaceful rise, integrating more fully into the global economic order. The worst case is regional strife with economic and military conflict, where free and open access to critical lines of commutation is in jeopardy and protective tariffs restrict trade. A low probability of direct military engagement exists between the United States and one of the three rising powers, but it could also occur between one of the lesser nations. It is within this scenario that potential conflict involving US forces resides. In the most-likely case, competition for natural resources within the region is intense, and "shows of force" are used to obtain political gains—but fall short of hostile, aggressive actions leading to state-on-state warfare. International norms provide regional guidance, and acquisition of arms continues as an "arms stroll" rather than an "arms race." Each case requires that the Air Force be prepared to meet US national security

needs. The differences in each case dictate how and through what means specific capabilities are required.

The three cases and supporting documentation provided the essential elements necessary to develop an analysis and provide recommendations based upon the DIME approach. What follows is a summary of the analysis and recommendations.

The AFRI study identified several factors that stand out as having the most impact on the Asia-Pacific. The first is the economic dynamics of the region. By 2020, the six largest Asia-Pacific economies—Australia, India, Japan, the People's Republic of China (PRC), South Korea, and the United States—will comprise about 30 percent of both the world's output and input. These countries are economically integrated, have already formed a "regionalized economy," and this trend will continue through the current decade. Australia is one example of the increasingly delicate interconnectedness of security and economics. In 2010, China's share of Australia's bilateral trade was 22.5 percent. By 2020, that value is predicted to more than double, perhaps reaching 48.7 percent. Despite its economic dependence on China, Australia has been one of the United States' most dependable friends, participating as an ally in every major war since World War I.[6]

A second factor is that generally the nations in the Asia-Pacific region prefer bilateral over multilateral agreements, particularly when dealing with the United States. This is symptomatic in that these nations have and will continue to employ a hedging strategy. Whether due to recent history, geographical location, influences of an ancient past, or lack of material capability, many nations of this region choose bilateral approaches and prefer not to become involved in any future hegemonic struggles.[7]

A third factor is, despite all the dire warnings about a coming hegemonic conflict between the United States and China, *both* the PRC and the United States are playing in the same game—an economic game. China, like every other state, wants to prosper. Unlike the Cold War's conflict of ideologies reflected in the differing economic systems, the United States and China are operating within the capitalist system. Governmental constructs may differ, but the goal to achieving power is the same: acquisition of wealth reflected in gross domestic product (GDP). Thus, unlike the Cold War—where forces on each side of the Iron Curtin were united by a common ideology, economic systems, and security arrangements—today, and through 2020, the environment is much more complex.

Fortunately, we have a window of opportunity to not only help shape the Asia-Pacific region to advance US interests, but to do so in a way

that is mutually beneficial to all Asia-Pacific states. Unlike 1953 when the United States faced an openly hostile adversary, the Asia-Pacific states do not pose this immediate threat. Time exists to develop viable mechanisms to resolve potential conflict, unlike the Cold War where an approach of mutually assured destruction overshadowed every confrontation. While recognizing that states look after their own interests, we suggest the United States pursue a strategy of "Transitional Engagement," or rather, a course of action predicated upon the uncertainty caused by the tectonic shifts in international politics since the Cold War. Transitional Engagement leverages the aforementioned factors to create an international regime based upon the emerging regionalized economy.[8] This construct, in turn, can moderate state behavior. Norms, principles, and decision-making procedures follow material interest and serve to informally change behavior and relationships. This approach is in sharp contrast to the Cold War containment strategy. Because the top six economies are increasingly integrated—thereby bringing along their smaller neighbors to further integrate the region—each state has a vested interest in prospering under this same economic system. Leveraging each state's economic self-interest, the United States has an opportunity to establish certain informal contacts—as opposed to multilateral agreements—where the "objectives . . . seek to structure their relationships in stable and mutually beneficial ways."[9] The US leaders must understand that a "one-size-fits-all" strategic approach is unlikely to work. They must not rule out using formal regional and even multilateral agreements when appropriate, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).[10]

A national "grand strategy" of Transitional Engagement provides an overarching construct for the services to perform their functions of ensuring national security. Specifically, for the US Air Force this means leveraging kinetic and nonkinetic capabilities. It must maintain credible nuclear and conventional capability sufficient to protect and defend US national interests. These capabilities must be seen by allies in the region as sufficient to protect them under a deterrence umbrella. This stabilizes the region from the standpoint of nuclear proliferation or a new arms race. Further, it frees all to operate absent of the threat of impending military action. The strategy proposed by AFRI is one of engagement occurring at every level throughout the region but first and foremost predicated from a position of US national power. From a foundation of strength, other avenues become possible. As cyberspace and space capabilities—obvious USAF concerns—continue to grow in importance throughout the region, the Air Force must dedicate itself to obtaining

and maintaining superiority in these domains, much as it does in air superiority today.

Additional capabilities exist within the Air Force to support Transitional Engagement. Through building partnerships and building partnership capacity (BPC), it can play an increasingly significant role in supporting the strategy of Transitional Engagement. The Air Force defines BPC as "Airmen interacting with international airmen and other relevant actors to develop, guide, and sustain relationships for mutual benefit and security. . . . It includes both foreign partners as well as domestic partners and emphasizes collaboration with foreign governments, militaries and populations as well as US government departments, agencies, industry, and NGOs."[11] The Air Force's role in BPC, by its very definition, can take many forms and is essential for creating international regimes. Even the simplest and least expensive BPC measures can have a profound impact. Military educational exchanges, for instance, are but one aspect of engagement "whereby states come to adopt new norms and institutions" and where "over time, close social interactions promote patterns of trust and convergence of identities."[12] Significant capabilities exist within the US Air Force but lack a coherent approach. Due to numerous organizations having certain mission sets within BPC, the service sends mixed messages, such as denying an aircraft sale while at the same time attempting to obtain new basing rights.

One example of leveraging BPC is in providing and sharing intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities. ISR is critical in the region due to its vastness and the simple fact that transporting goods from and within the Asia-Pacific takes place across thousands of miles of unpredictable and often violent oceans. ISR will play a key role in ensuring that lines of communication—to include sea, air, and cyber—remain open for commerce and the free flow of ideas. Using its own capabilities, the USAF could help establish norms for using "uniformed" and professional military assets that can be viewed as a positive commitment to maintaining law and order at sea and in the other domains.[13] ISR can be equally important in providing situational awareness to ascertain intent of action. Much like in the Cold War, the greatest danger is not direct confrontation but miscalculations that could result in escalating military action. Disputes over resources, often reflected as territorial issues, could unwittingly draw the region into conflict. Situational awareness enabled by ISR can assist in defusing situations before they become too volatile.

The Air Force has a unique opportunity to support President Obama's vision for engaging with the Asia-Pacific region. However, it will involve

a combination of traditional roles and missions as well as newer ones; *both sets* will play a decisive role. To be sure, it will include such traditional roles as deterrence, along with newer but perhaps even more important roles such as building partnerships. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel recently reaffirmed the so-called pivot during his confirmation hearings: "As we emerge from this decade of war, we must also broaden our nation's focus overseas as we look at future threats and challenges. . . . [T]hat's why DOD is rebalancing its resources toward the Asia-Pacific region."[14] The US Air Force can be the vanguard of this vision. Its capabilities include global vigilance, reach, and power. It represents the best the United States has to offer. By taking the lead in creating institutions that help bring order out of the dynamic growth of the Asia-Pacific region, by seizing the mantle of a transitional leader, the US Air Force can play a key role in making this "America's Pacific Century."

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Editor's note: The complete AFRI Asia-Pacific study can be accessed online at http://www.au.af.mil/au/research/up_research.asp.

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Notes

1. The White House, "Remarks by President Obama before the Australian Parliament, 17 November 11," Office of the Press Secretary.

2. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, "America's Pacific Century," *Foreign Policy*, November 2011, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/11/americas_pacific_century.

3. Michèle A. Flournoy and Shawn W. Brimley, "Strategic Planning for National Security: A New Project Solarium," *Joint Force Quarterly* 41 (2nd Quarter 2006): 80–81.

4. The definitive account of the Solarium Project and its impact on US strategy during the Cold War is Robert R. Bowie and Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower*

Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). Robert Richardson Bowie contributed to the Solarium Project as director of policy planning, US Department of State, from 1953 to1957.

5. *National Security Strategy* (Washington: The White House, May 2010; Joint Chiefs of Staff, *National Military Strategy of the United States of America*, 8 February 2011; and *Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for US 21st Century Defense* (Washington: DoD, 5 January 2012).

6. Brooks B. Robinson, "Top Five Asia-Pacific Economies: Integration, Conflict, Vulnerability, and Crisis, 2010–2020," paper presented at the Air Force Research Institute's Asia-Pacific Conference, 6–7 December 2011, 2–3.

7. This conclusion comes from discussions with various members of Asia-Pacific think tanks and members of PACAF and PACOM.

8. The classic definition of *international regimes* comes from Stephen D. Krasner: the existence of many "sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge." As quoted in Robert O. Keohane, "The Demand of International Regimes," *International Organizations* 36, no. 2 (Spring 1982): 325.

9. Keohane, "Demand for International Regimes," 330. Keohane's works form the foundation of our argument on moving forward to 2020. See also Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, rev. ed. (1984; Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005).

10. For a positive portrait of ASEAN, see Yoram Z. Haftel, "Conflict, Regional Cooperation, and Foreign Capital: Indonesian Foreign Policy and the Formation of ASEAN," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 6 (2010): 87–106. In a recent paper, Deborah Elms suggests that the way in which US officials negotiated in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) talks—in which the participants attempted to open markets—had more to do with the lack of a deal than the actual proposal. The United States suggested the multilateral venue and then proceeded to negotiate bilaterally with some nations while insisting to negotiate multilaterally with others. Deborah Elms, "Getting from Here to There: Stitching Together Goods Agreements in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TTP) Agreement," paper presented for the International Studies Association Annual Meeting, 2 April 2012, 15–17.

11. Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) 1, *Air Force Basic Doctrine, Organization, and Command*, 14 October 2011, 53.

12. Carol Atkinson, "Constructivist Implications of Material Power: Military Engagement and the Socialization of States, 1972–2000," *International Studies Quarterly* 50, no. 3 (September 2006): 510.

13. Christian Le Miére, "Policing the Waves: Maritime Paramilitaries in the Asia-Pacific," *Survival* 53, no. 1 (February/March 2011): 134.

14. US Senate Armed Services Committee, "To Conduct a Confirmation Hearing on the Expected Nomination of: Honorable Charles T. Hagel to be Secretary of Defense," transcript, 31 January 3013, 73, http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/Transcripts/2013/01%20January/13-01%20-%201-31-13.pdf.

Assessing the US "Pivot" to Asia

There has been much commentary since President Obama's tour of the Asia-Pacific region in November 2011 of a US "return," strategic "pivot," or "rebalancing" to Asia.[1] Much of this commentary comes from Asian and European commentators—Asians have been generally welcoming, while many Europeans express fears that the new strategic emphasis will downgrade the traditional importance of transatlantic ties. Despite widespread endorsement of the strategic shift within Asia, China has been notably critical of the new policy—as virtually all Chinese strategists and pundits see the initiative as thinly veiled "containment" of China. While there has been much commentary abroad, there has been surprisingly less in US media, academic, think-tank, or government circles. Much of the domestic commentary has been critical of the use of the term *pivot* for signaling a downgrading of other regions (notably Southwest Asia, the Middle East, and Europe) in US strategic priorities—and this criticism put the Obama administration on the defensive. The administration tried to recast the new initiative as a rebalancing without "abandoning" long-standing commitments elsewhere in the world. This essay goes beyond this reactive commentary, taking stock of Washington's new strategic initiative by viewing it historically, describing its different components, and assessing the positive possibilities and potential pitfalls.

Is the Policy Really New?

The new Asia pivot is both new and not new. That is, the Asia-Pacific region has long been a high priority for the United States, but not always the *highest* priority.

On the one hand, with the new so-called pivot, the United States *has* embarked on a qualitatively new strategic prioritization by emphasizing and increasing resources devoted to diplomacy, commerce, and security in the Asia-Pacific region. The Obama administration is the first administration ever to explicitly elevate Asia to the primary global regional strategic priority. This *is new* for the United States, which has long prioritized its transatlantic ties, the Middle East, or previously, Latin America. Even at the height of the Vietnam War and the Cold War containment of China during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, Washington still maintained its overall priority on the western front—the Cold War confrontation in Europe versus the Soviet Union.[2] Since

2001, the main strategic orientation during the "war(s) on terrorism" has been Southwest Asia. The Middle East has also been a long-standing strategic priority for the United States.

On the other hand, it is important to note that what we are witnessing is a *relative* shift, not a fundamental one. This is because of the well-established involvement of the United States in Asia that dates back many decades, indeed centuries. The United States has been a Pacific power since the turn of the last century—in the wake of the Spanish-American War of 1898 and Secretary of State John Hay's "Open Door Notes" of 1899–1900. Even more than a century before, with the sailing of the clipper ship *Empress of China* in 1784 from New York to Guangzhou, China, the United States established itself as a major commercial actor in the region. Thereafter, during the nineteenth century, a US diplomatic, cultural, and religious (missionary) presence was established in East Asia. This, in turn, triggered growing Asian immigration to the United States.

Since then, the United States has long been an Asia-Pacific nation by virtue of geography, ethnicity, commerce, culture, diplomacy, and security engagements. Its post–Korean War involvement in the Asia-Pacific region has been both deep and sustained. It is anchored on five enduring bilateral alliances, a series of strong strategic partnerships, intensive bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, deep cultural ties, enormous "soft power," and a growing Asian-American population. Thus, if viewed historically, the pivot is not so new—as US ties to, and roots in, the region run deep. Consider some of these elements in a more contemporary context.

Economic Interests

Asia is the United States' most important economic partner and has been for more than three decades. The region surpassed Europe as our leading trade partner in 1977. Today the United States has more than twice as much trade with Asia as with Europe. In 2012, US trade with Asia totaled a stunning $14.2 trillion.[3] Since 2000, Asia has become our largest source of imports and second largest export market (outside North America). By 2010, Asia accounted for 32.2 percent of US total merchandise trade worldwide. US exports to Asia totaled $457.2 billion in 2012. Today, the United States trades more with South Korea than with Germany, more with Singapore than with France, and more with Japan than with the United Kingdom, Germany, and France combined. China and Japan are the second and third largest trade partners for the United States. Asia is also our most important export market—nine of

the United States' top 20 national export markets are now in Asia, and approximately one-third of all US overseas sales go to Asia. Growth in exports to China has been the fastest worldwide for the past five years. If East Asia continues to post only 5.5 percent growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), US exports to Asia are estimated to contribute 5 percent to US GDP. According to US government statistics, this translates into 4.6 million jobs domestically per annum.

The flipside of this, of course, is the huge trade *deficits* the United States accumulates with the region—particularly with China ($282 billion in 2011 alone). Overall, the United States imported $966.4 billion from Asia in 2012, leaving a whopping $509.2 billion trade deficit.[4]

US economic and commercial ties to the Asia-Pacific region are growing deeper by the day. Bilateral free trade areas (FTA) and the prospect of the multinational Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) will bind the United States even more deeply with partner economies in the region (currently, 11 nations are negotiating to bring the TPP into force).

Cultural Interests

We should also note the significant cultural impact across Asia. US culture—films, sports, authors, musicians, fashion, dance, innovation, and so forth—has long attracted Asian interest. One recent indication of US impact in Asia is the 2008 Chicago Council on Global Affairs unprecedented survey of "soft power in Asia."[5] The council developed a complex set of 70+ metrics to measure a soft power index in five categories. Many interesting findings emerged from this survey—conducted in the United States, South Korea, Japan, China, Indonesia, and Vietnam—but one of the most important concerned the overall strength of US soft power in the region (see table below).

Relative soft power in Asia (2008)

Survey Countries	United States soft power	China soft power	Japan soft power	South Korea soft power
United States	—	.47	.67	.49
China	.71	—	.62	.65
Japan	.69	.51	—	.56
South Korea	.72	.55	.65	—
Indonesia	.72	.70	.72	.63
Vietnam	.76	.74	.79	.73

Reprinted from Chicago Council on Global Affairs, ***Soft Power in Asia: Results of a 2008 Multinational Survey of Public Opinion.***

Of course, a long-standing and key element of US cultural engagement with Asia has been higher education, with US efforts spanning a century to build modern universities, medical, and other professional schools. Even more important, particularly in the post–World War II era, has been US university training of generations of Asians in a wide variety of fields, many of whom have become private and public sector leaders in their native countries. In the 2011–12 academic year, 489,970 Asian students were enrolled in US universities. The People's Republic of China led the way with 194,029, followed by 100,270 Indian students and 72,295 South Koreans.[6] US educators also fan out across Asia, teaching in a wide range of Asian universities and vocational schools. The Fulbright Program remains the flagship sponsor, sending US professors and students to Asia and bringing Asians to the United States to teach and study.[7]

One can offer many other examples of US cultural and intellectual engagement with Asia (not the least of which is film, literature, arts, and sports). But this is not to say all has been positive, as a distinct paternalism and cultural arrogance has sometimes been apparent on the part of Americans in Asia. On the whole, the United States is deeply and positively culturally engaged in Asia.

Diplomacy

Generally speaking, despite the importance of Asia to the United States, our diplomatic attention to the region has often been highly episodic, sometimes neglectful, and not always deeply engaged—particularly in Southeast Asia. US presidents have been infrequent visitors to Asia, while cabinet secretaries have been slightly more engaged but not as regularly with their counterparts as they could or should be. Before President Obama took office, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) leaders and publics complained about the relative lack of interest from Washington. But the Obama administration has made this a high priority and thus alleviated some of the sense of neglect. The administration has tried hard to reverse this perception. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was, by far, the best traveled ever in the region, having visited virtually every country across the vast Asia-Pacific. Significantly, Secretary Clinton took her first trip abroad to Asia and returned more than a dozen times in four years. This included resuming regular and symbolically important attendance by the secretary of state at the ASEAN Regional Forum Annual Meeting.

President Obama himself has made Asia *the top* US foreign policy priority. As he said in his speech unveiling the pivot to the Australian

Parliament on 17 November 2011, "I have [therefore] made a deliberate and strategic decision: as a Pacific nation, the United States will play a larger and long-term role in shaping this region and its future." President Obama has visited the region at least annually since taking office. This includes the first-ever attendance by a US president at the East Asian Summit and the ASEAN leaders meeting, hosting the 17th Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation leaders meeting, and paying individual visits to Japan, South Korea, China, Australia, Indonesia, Singapore, and India. At a more local level, US embassies and diplomats throughout the region are—after a long dormancy—beginning to display a new proactivity, even if the embassies themselves remain fortresses.

Secretary Clinton described this new diplomatic engagement as "forward deployed diplomacy." In a key *Foreign Policy* magazine article, she outlined six elements of this regional diplomacy:

- strengthening bilateral security alliances;
- deepening working relationships with emerging powers, including China;
- engaging regional multilateral institutions;
- expanding trade and investment;
- forging a broad-based military presence; and
- advancing democracy and human rights.[8]

We have seen the Obama administration work to strengthen bilateral relations with just about every country in the region since entering office. Nations long neglected by Washington—like New Zealand, Indonesia, the Philippines, and small Pacific island states—have received high-ranking US official visits. Perhaps the most noteworthy is Burma (Myanmar), where the administration has fundamentally shifted from a policy of isolation to engagement.

Regional powers India and China have also received sustained US diplomatic attention. There is literally no country in the world with which the US government and society is more deeply engaged than the People's Republic of China. Reflecting this, the United States and China maintain more than 60 annual official dialogue mechanisms, while the US Embassy in Beijing now has the largest staff in the world—1,400. Building comprehensive and deep relations with India has also become a significant priority for the United States. President Obama has described the US relationship with India as a "defining partnership of the 21st

century." Washington and New Delhi are now engaged in deepening and expanding a variety of bilateral, regional, and global interactions.

At the same time, an intensification of US engagement in multilateral diplomacy throughout the Asia-Pacific region is also apparent. By signing and acceding to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, the United States is now a full participant in the East Asian Summit, and we have witnessed a new surge of US participation in the "spaghetti bowl" of regional intergovernmental and Track II organizations. Previously, Washington was frequently (and appropriately) criticized for "not showing up" at regional multilateral and "minilateral" forums—but the Obama administration has tried to reverse this perception.

While the new thrust of US diplomacy in the region is to be welcomed, it cannot be taken for granted. It requires constant attention, diplomats knowledgeable of regional and national dynamics, and sustained allocation of resources. It also requires subtlety—something at which US diplomacy has not always excelled. Because Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, and Austral-Asia all have very different dynamics, ethnicities, subregional institutions, traditions, and relations with each other, different parts of the region require nuanced and differentiated policies.

One of the big stories of recent years in Asian international relations is the increasing *integration* across and among these five subregions. They used to act quite autonomously, but no longer. Today, they are increasingly tied together via an intricate web of interstate and substate relations.[9] Despite these increasing intraregional interactions, Asia remains remarkably diverse in all respects—politically, economically, religiously, ethnically, culturally, and militarily. To be effective in the years ahead, US diplomacy must both grasp the integrative forces—and become part of them—as well as appreciate and respect intraregional differences.

Security Engagement

Finally, let us consider the security dimension of US engagement with the region. It may seem obvious or even trite, but maintaining regional security and stability is absolutely fundamental to advancing the totality of US interests in the region—economic, cultural, and diplomatic—as well as advancing the broader public goods of regional interactions. As Joseph Nye astutely observed, the US contribution to regional security is the "oxygen" that permits the region to "breathe" and thrive. Without it, quite simply, the Asia-Pacific would very likely not have developed so dramatically over the past quarter century.

Providing security and stability has at least four dimensions:

1. preventing the rise of a regional hegemon hostile to US interests;
2. preventing major power rivalry and polarization of the region;
3. preventing internal political-socioeconomic crises from spilling outside national borders, thus causing destabilizing effects in the region; and
4. enabling working relationships with others to jointly manage an increasing range of transnational nontraditional security challenges.

In each of these areas, the United States maintains a "hub-and-spoke" regional security architecture that includes at least five levels of security:

1. A unilateral, forward-deployed military presence including approximately 325,000 military and civilian personnel in the Pacific theater. The Pacific Fleet alone includes six aircraft carrier battle groups (CVBG), approximately 180 ships and submarines, 1,500 aircraft, and 100,000 personnel. The US military stations 16,000 personnel at sea, 40,000 in Japan, 28,500 in South Korea, 500 (rotationally) in the Philippines, 4,500 in Guam (to grow to 9,000), and 250 Marines in Australia (to grow to 2,500). US forces are forward deployed in Hawaii, Guam, the Mariana Islands, Japan, South Korea, Australia, and Kyrgyzstan. Former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta stated the United States will now keep 60 percent of its naval assets in Asia.
2. Five long-standing bilateral alliances with Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, and Australia.
3. Nonallied but strong "security partnerships" with Singapore, New Zealand,[10] and India (and increasingly with Malaysia, Mongolia, and Vietnam).
4. Participation in a wide range of multilateral security arrangements, multinational exercises, intelligence sharing, and professional military education (such as IMET and the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies).
5. Bilateral security and military exchanges with countries that are neither allies nor strategic partners, such as the People's Republic of China.

Through these means, the United States contributes to a robust set of security engagements throughout the region. Moreover, the US Pacific Command (PACOM) maintains a strong forward presence and wide range of interregional cooperative programs it calls "presence with a purpose."[11] Its five specific missions are somewhat duplicative of those above and include (1) strengthening advancing alliances and partnerships, (2) maturing the US-China military relationship, (3) developing the US-India strategic partnership, (4) remaining prepared to respond to a Korean Peninsula contingency, and (5) countering transnational threats.

Meeting these challenges and fulfilling these missions will require resources and sustained effort. Although we can expect US defense spending to contract over the coming years, President Obama himself has made it clear that cuts will not come from the Asia-Pacific theatre, pointing out in his address to the Australian Parliament:

> So, here is what this region should know. As we end today's wars, I have directed my national security team to make our presence and mission in the Asia-Pacific a top priority. As a result, reductions in U.S. defense spending will not—I repeat, will not—come at the expense of the Asia-Pacific. My guidance is clear.[12]

Thus, we see a clear continued US commitment to undergird the security architecture in the region. However, it is important to emphasize that this robust and multifaceted set of security commitments should not be viewed in isolation. They are important, but they are only part of the more comprehensive economic, cultural, and diplomatic engagement the United States has with Asia.

Concluding Perspectives

The pivot—or rebalancing—is *not* a new policy; it is a deepening and broadening of previous commitments. Part of this broadening includes a geographic expansion of sorts—by including India and the Indian Ocean in the broader Asia initiative. Thus, it is not just an East Asia initiative: US-India relations are growing very robustly and positively even though the five bilateral alliances remain the bedrock of US relations in the region. Engagement of China also continues as a central element in US strategy and diplomacy.

Despite the continuation and deepening of these previous commitments, the new pivot policy nonetheless *does* illustrate a new level of commitment—and it also indicates a new level of strategy. The resources devoted to the Asia-Pacific are being increased—both absolutely and relatively vis-à-vis other regions of the world, with Southeast Asia and the

South Pacific receiving new attention. It is also very important to recognize that the new pivot policy is *not* being unilaterally thrust upon Asian nations by the United States—quite the contrary. Although the Obama administration began planning the reorientation as soon as it entered office in 2009, with an eye toward winding down the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, it was the 2009–10 "year of assertiveness" by China that triggered many Asian states to grow sharply concerned about Beijing and therefore ask Washington to increase its presence and attention to the region. Thus, to the extent China is an element of focus in the pivot strategy (and it is), Beijing's own assertive behavior is the cause.

The new strategic reorientation to the Asia-Pacific should work well as long as the United States does several things:

- Allocates sustained resources necessary to the effort;
- Maintains sustained diplomatic attention to the effort;
- Balances bilateral ties with multilateral ones;
- Does not premise the policy on countering China (although, to be sure, "balancing" China—which is different from "containing" China) and continues to engage the PRC in a comprehensive fashion. No Asian nation wishes to be drawn into an anti-China coalition or be put in the position of "choosing" between Washington and Beijing. The pivot must, therefore, be an inclusive effort that tries to involve and integrate China into the regional order. Any US regional policy premised *against* China will fail.

As long as the United States takes care of these points, it should achieve a successful strategy which will work not only to its own benefit, but also the broad stability, security, and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region.

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Notes

1. All three of these terms have been used to describe the new (re)prioritization in US foreign and national security policy.

2. See Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, ed., *The Cold War in East Asia, 1945–1991* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011).

3. "2012: U.S. Trade in Goods with Asia," http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c0016.html.

4. Ibid.

5. Chicago Council on Global Affairs, *Soft Power in Asia: Results of a 2008 Multinational Survey of Public Opinion*, http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/UserFiles/File/POS_Topline%20Reports/Asia%20Soft%20Power%202008/Chicago%20Council%20Soft%20Power%20Report-%20Final%206-11-08.pdf.

6. Institute for International Education, *Open Doors 2011–2012*, http://www.iie.org/Research-and-Publications/Open-Doors/Data/Fact-Sheets-by-Region/2012.

7. The author spent the 2009–10 academic year as a Senior Fulbright Research Scholar in China.

8. Hillary Rodham Clinton, "America's Pacific Century," *Foreign Policy*, 11 October 2011.

9. See David Shambaugh, "International Relations in Asia: The Two-Level Game," in *International Relations of Asia*, eds. Shambaugh and Michael Yahuda (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008).

10. Technically New Zealand and the United States remain members of ANZUS, but the military component of this alliance has been attenuated since 1976.

11. See http://www.pacom.mil/about-uspacom/presence-with-a-purpose/index.shtml.

12. The White House, "Remarks by President Obama to the Australian Parliament," 17 November 2011.

US Grand Strategy, the Rise of China, and US National Security Strategy for East Asia

Robert S. Ross

In the twenty-first century, the foremost US national security interest remains what it has been since 1776—to ensure a balance of power in its two transoceanic flanking regions that keeps them internally divided. US security has continually depended on this balance of power to prevent European and East Asian powers from considering expansion into the Western Hemisphere. Whereas, in the early years of the republic, the United States could count on power balancing among European and East Asian great powers, since World War II, it has had to participate directly in balance-of-power politics in both regions. During the Cold War, it faced challenges in Europe and East Asia that required simultaneous strategic engagement in both regions.

The current balance-of-power challenge for the United States is in East Asia. Unless balanced by the United States, China's rise could yield regional hegemony. None of its Asian neighbors has the resources necessary to balance China's rise. Japan's decline has been precipitous, and China's other neighbors are too small to present a challenge. A balance of power in East Asia will require direct US strategic involvement to maintain a divided region.

During the first term of the Obama administration, the United States undertook a strategic initiative to strengthen its presence in East Asia. Often called the US "pivot" toward East Asia, this policy has been characterized by development of enhanced strategic cooperation with a wide range of East Asia countries, including traditional allies and new security partners. In many ways the pivot to East Asia has redefined US

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policy there, with potential implications for great-power relations and regional stability.

The first part of this article examines the underlying and fundamental national security interests that have informed US grand strategy since the nation's founding and its implications for US national security interests in East Asia, both in the past and in the twenty-first century. The second part considers the long-term implications of the rise of China and post–Cold War objectives and policies that have sustained the regional balance of power. The third part looks at the Obama administration's pivot to East Asia and its implications for US-China cooperation and for US national security interests. The article concludes by examining implications of the pivot strategy for balancing the rise of China and the long-term prospects for US security and regional stability.

US Grand Strategy since 1776

Fundamentally, US national security interest in East Asia is no different than in Europe. Both regions are contiguous to the oceans that border US coastal regions—Europe across the Atlantic Ocean and East Asia across the Pacific. Because these two major regions flank the North American coasts, US security policy since its founding has depended on balance-of-power politics in these regions and the strategic imperative of a divided Europe and a divided East Asia, lest a regional hegemon develop the capability and the ambition to reach across the oceans and challenge US security.

President George Washington first explained this national security interest in his 1796 Farewell Address. His admonishment to avoid "interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe" and its "frequent controversies" did not imply that the United States should not involve itself in the international politics of Europe. On the contrary, he merely warned the United States from engaging in "permanent alliances" and "artificial ties," for such entanglement would constrain its flexibility to maneuver among the contending European states to maximize its security. Flexibility and detachment from European interests would enable the United States to "safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies."[1]

Washington learned the value of "temporary alliances" during his leadership of the war for independence against Great Britain, when the

Anglo-French rivalry and corresponding French assistance to US forces were critical to the military successes of the former colonies. This was especially so during the pivotal Battle of Yorktown. Not only did France contribute approximately 40 percent of the troops and much of the heavy armaments deployed in the siege of Yorktown, but it also used its navy to block the British navy from supplying critical reinforcements and aid for its troops, thus contributing to the surrender by Lt Gen Lord Cornwallis in October 1781. The Battle of Yorktown was the last major battle of the war and ultimately persuaded the British to negotiate independence.[2]

The importance of a transoceanic divided flank to the new republic was evident throughout the Napoleonic Wars of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Although the terms of the peace agreement of 1786 called for Great Britain to withdraw its forces from US territory, it continued to deploy them at posts along the Canadian border. Only in 1794, when faced with Napoleon's growing continental coalition, did Great Britain finally agree to the terms of Jay's Treaty, which required it to withdraw its forces from the frontier posts.[3] Spain agreed to US navigation rights on the Mississippi River and settled the US-Spanish boundary dispute (Pinckney's Treaty, 1796) because it feared British retribution after Madrid defected from the Anglo-Spanish alliance and signed a peace agreement with Napoleon.[4] President Thomas Jefferson's opportunity to purchase the French territory of Louisiana in 1803 resulted from the heavy cost of Napoleon's continental ambitions and his need to replenish France's treasury to finance continuation of the war.[5] The United States also benefitted from Anglo-French rivalry during the War of 1812. The young US Navy fared poorly, including in the Battle of New Orleans. Nonetheless, Napoleon's escape from exile on Elba in March 1815 forced Britain to accept a peace favorable to the United States so it could redeploy its forces against a resurgent French army and defeat Napoleon's forces on 18 June 1815 at Waterloo.[6]

The United States continued to benefit from European rivalries through the nineteenth century. Following a series of Southern military victories during the US Civil War, Napoleon III gave serious consideration to intervening on behalf of the Confederacy to alleviate the French shortage of cotton. But in 1862, he told Confederate diplomats that he was too preoccupied with conflicts in Italy and Greece to risk war with the United States. Moreover, he was concerned that if Great Britain did not also intervene in the US Civil War, it would aim to entangle France

and thus destroy French commerce.[7] Shortly thereafter, Russian rivalry following the Crimean War and preoccupation with its European security conflicts contributed to its eagerness to sell Alaska to the United States in 1867.[8]

US interests also benefitted from a divided East Asia in the late nineteenth century. In the Spanish-American War of 1898, no European power was willing to support Spain for fear it would undermine security vis-à-vis the other powers. Great Britain played a leading role in blocking European support for Spain, but Germany, France, and Russia were all reluctant to jeopardize their interests in Europe and Asia by assisting Spain.[9] The resulting isolation enabled the United States to defeat the Spanish navy not only in Cuba, but also in the Philippines, where it secured the islands as a colony and established a strategic presence in East Asia. Subsequently, US security benefitted in the early twentieth century from the multiple European countries vying for influence throughout East Asia, including Great Britain, France, Russia, and Germany, as well as Japan. The McKinley administration's "Open Door" policy regarding trade with China was premised on the unwillingness of the many great powers, especially Great Britain, to allow any single power to dominate the Chinese market.[10]

On the other hand, danger clearly emerged for the United States in the absence of balance-of-power politics in its East Asia flanking region following the 1939 battle at Nomonhon and the subsequent 1941 Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact. The Soviet Union's preoccupation with German ambitions and its corresponding vulnerability in East Asia led Joseph Stalin to secure the eastern borders by conceding Japan's superiority in Northeast Asia. The resulting absence of a great power that could balance against Japanese regional power encouraged Tokyo to extend its military occupation to all of East Asia and ultimately to send its navy across the Pacific Ocean to launch its preemptive attack on US forces at Pearl Harbor.[11]

The strategic lesson of World War II for the United States was that it could no longer rely on balance-of-power politics to maintain its security by dividing its flanking regions. Instead, it would have to directly involve itself in European and East Asian politics to maintain the balance of power and US national security. It fought World War II to resist German dominance of Europe.[12] In East Asia it acquiesced to Japanese expansion until Japan moved from occupying simply the Korean Peninsula

and China to seeking dominance throughout maritime East Asia, as well.[13] US resistance to German and Japanese expansion thus prevented the emergence of a regional hegemon across its coastal flanks.

In the aftermath of World War II, US policymakers sought the same grand strategy objectives—a balance of power that assured divided regions opposite the eastern and western US coasts. It thus balanced Soviet and Chinese power in Europe and East Asia. For US planners, the lesson of World War II was that the United States could no longer "free-ride" on other powers to assure its security. Rather, it had to assume that responsibility by participating in the balance of power in Europe and East Asia.[14]

US Grand Strategy and the Rise of China

The rise of China poses a challenge to US security in East Asia because, unless balanced, China could achieve regional hegemony. This could occur regardless of Chinese intentions and policies. Given the historical pattern of great-power politics, once China possesses the capabilities to challenge the regional order, it will presumably seek a dominant strategic position throughout East Asia. This has been the European experience, repeated many times over the past 500 years and often characterized by war. It has also been the experience in the Western Hemisphere since 1823, when the United States proclaimed its regional ambitions in the Monroe Doctrine. And it has been the recent experience in South Asia, where only Pakistan's possession of nuclear weapons has prevented India from achieving dominance throughout the subcontinent. Great powers in search of security seek a region-wide sphere of influence. Should China have similar aspirations, it would be neither good nor bad nor reflect hostility toward the United States; it would simply reflect great-power politics. On the other hand, even should China not have aspirations for regional leadership, it will emerge as the regional hegemon unless its rise is balanced by another great power. Local powers, responding to China's growing advantage in the balance of capabilities in the region, will gravitate toward it rather than risk its hostility. In the absence of balancing, the rise of China will challenge a cornerstone of US security—a divided flank across the Pacific Ocean.

The United States requires sufficient military and political presence in East Asia to balance the rise of China and to deter it from using force

to achieve regional hegemony, should it become frustrated at the pace of change. US strength will also reassure local powers that their security does not require accommodation to China's rise.[15]

The optimal US grand strategy for East Asia will secure balance-of-power objectives at the least possible cost to US blood, treasure, and honor. To do otherwise would divert scarce strategic resources from capabilities and missions that would better serve US security elsewhere and would undermine achievement of critical nonstrategic objectives, including economic development and social welfare. Balancing China's rise at the least possible cost will require continual modernization of US capabilities while managing US-China relations to avoid unnecessary yet costly conflict. The former is a military challenge; the latter is a political challenge.

US Military Presence in East Asia and Balancing China's Rise

The United States requires sufficient military capability in East Asia to deter China from using force to realize its strategic ambitions and to reassure US security partners that they can rely on the United States to provide for their security against a rising China. This is how to maintain the balance of power in East Asia.

China's long-term strategy to challenge US military presence focuses on access-denial capabilities. Rather than fund a large power-projection and sea-control naval capability dependent on large and numerous surface ships, it has developed low-cost, secure platforms that may challenge the ability of the United States to protect its war-fighting ships, especially aircraft carriers. Chinese efforts primarily focus on the use of relatively quiet and increasingly numerous diesel submarines.[16] By 2000, China's submarine force had awakened concern in the US Navy over the wartime survivability of its surface fleet, especially its carriers. More recently, Chinese research and testing of an antiship ballistic missile system and antiship cruise missiles deployed on submarines and surface ships suggest China may eventually pose an even greater challenge to the US fleet.[17] Should China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) develop an effective intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) targeting capability to inflict critical attacks on US naval assets, it may be able to deter US intervention in its hostilities with local states or create

region-wide doubts that the United States has the resolve to defend their security at the risk of war.[18] If China believes it can deter US intervention, it may be encouraged to use force against US allies.

Over the past 15 years, the United States has responded to Chinese military modernization with an ongoing effort to sustain a military presence in East Asia for power projection. Following the 1996 confrontation in the Taiwan Strait, the Clinton administration initiated the US strategic transition toward East Asia with the first redeployment from Europe to Guam of a *Los Angeles*–class submarine. Since then, the United States has deployed nearly every type of air and naval weapon system to East Asia, including its most modern ones as they come into operation. The US Navy plans to deploy six *Los Angeles*–class submarines to East Asia. It has also deployed the *Virginia*-class submarine and a converted *Ohio*-class SSGN (nuclear-powered, guided-missile-equipped submarine) to East Asia, and it has home-ported an additional aircraft carrier at San Diego for western Pacific operations. As early as 2006, the Department of Defense (DoD) *Quadrennial Defense Review* called for the US Navy to deploy 60 percent of its submarine force and six of its 11 aircraft carriers to the Pacific theater.[19] In addition to its forces based in Japan, the US Air Force has deployed F-15s, F-16s, the B-1 and B-2 bombers, and the F-22 Raptor, its most-advanced aircraft, to Guam. It has also based air-refueling aircraft on Guam and stockpiled air-launched cruise missiles there.[20]

The United States has also strengthened its forward presence in East Asia through cooperation with its regional security partners. Despite domestic political complications in Japan over Marine Corps Air Station Futenma in Okinawa, cooperation has continued to expand between the US and Japanese militaries, including exercises focused on defending Japanese-controlled islands claimed by China. The 1999 completion of the deep-draft-vessel pier at Singapore's Changi port facility provided the US Navy with a modern and comprehensive aircraft carrier facility in the South China Sea. In 2005, Singapore and the United States signed the Strategic Framework Agreement, consolidating defense and security ties and enabling greater cooperation in joint naval exercises.[21] During the George H. W. Bush administration, the United States developed greater defense cooperation with the Philippines. It expanded access for US naval ships to Philippine waters, and between 2001 and 2005, annual US military assistance to the Philippines increased from $1.9 million

to approximately $126 million, making it the largest recipient of US military assistance in East Asia.[22] The US Navy also expanded its access to Malaysia's Port Klang in the Strait of Malacca.[23] More recently, during the Obama administration, the United States further expanded US-Philippine cooperation with increased arms sales, including coastal patrol ships and the expansion of US-Philippine naval exercises, while reaching agreement for US Navy access to its former base at Subic Bay.[24] The administration has also developed improved defense cooperation with Indonesia and New Zealand and reached agreement with Australia for stationing US Marines on its military training base in Darwin.

Ongoing modernization of US defense capability has been especially important for balancing the rise of China. The development of ISR-based weapon systems, including remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) and unmanned underwater vehicles (UUV), is an effective response to China's development of antiship missile capability. These systems will reduce the vulnerability of US regional power-projection operations while contributing to its antisubmarine warfare capability vis-à-vis China's growing and advanced submarine fleet.[25] The deployment of advanced armaments in underwater platforms, including Tomahawk cruise missiles on *Ohio*-class submarines, is a similarly effective response to Chinese military modernization.

US defense modernization has sustained the ability to deter Chinese use of force to challenge the regional order. Although the PLA dominates China's land borders, its navy remains grossly inferior to the US Navy.[26] It continues to depend on small coastal administration and coast guard ships for its maritime activities in disputed waters in the South China Sea, and its antipiracy activities in the Gulf of Aden consist of unsophisticated operations conducted by very few ships. China's surface ship capability remains weak; its new aircraft carrier is undersized, lacks aircraft, and is highly vulnerable to US forces. It is primarily a prestige ship rather than a warfighting ship.[27] China has just begun construction of its next-generation guided-missile destroyer. Both the quantity and quality of these ships will be vastly inferior to US Aegis-equipped destroyers. The DoD reported that in 2011 less than 30 percent of PLA surface forces, air forces, and air defense forces were "modern" and that only 55 percent of its submarine fleet was modern.[28] The recent eagerness of US regional strategic partners to consolidate defense cooperation with the United States reflects its

continued dominance vis-à-vis China and confidence that it can provide for their security despite Chinese opposition.

The challenge for the United States in balancing China's military modernization is developing an effective response to its missile program and thus neutralizing a developing access-denial capability. The growing accuracy of China's land-based medium-range missiles increasingly challenges the long-term efficacy of US aircraft carriers.[29] US development of SSGNs, RPAs, and UUVs is an effective response to this problem. Nonetheless, continued US commitment to the aircraft carrier imposes high financial costs on its defense budget that may undermine its long-term ability to contend with Chinese defense modernization, thus undermining US security in East Asia. Although the carrier is an effective platform for maintaining a maritime "presence" in East Asia, evaluation of its financial value ultimately rests on its war-fighting capability compared to the cost and effectiveness of other platforms. Given the carrier's expense and its growing vulnerability to land-based and sea-based missiles, it may become a long-term liability rather than in asset in the effort to balance China's rise. This is especially true given the relative cost advantage of the offense versus the defense in the missile-carrier balance.

Given the growing constraints on the US defense budget, the significant domestic social welfare demands, and the likelihood of slow economic growth, continued funding of aircraft carriers may challenge the US ability to balance China's rise.[30] It will limit funding for more-capable and cost-effective platforms, including submarines, RPAs, and UUVs deployed on smaller, less vulnerable, and less costly surface ships and/or submarines. Moreover, China is better able than the United States to contend in a cost-based arms race; its annual defense budget increases will continue to be greater than annual US increases.

US Strategic Partnerships in East Asia and US-China Relations

As a geographically external power, the United States must determine with which East Asian countries it must develop strategic partnerships to enable it to deploy and operate forward-based forces and maintain the regional balance of power. This determination must reflect the geopolitical significance of the regional real estate rather than historical relationships or ideological affinity. It will thus necessarily reflect the unique geopolitical characteristics of East Asia.

Large insular countries encircle mainland East Asia from the northeast to the western reaches of the South China Sea. Together Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia possess considerable assets, including energy resources, well-situated and modern port facilities, large land masses to enable critical deployments, and sophisticated infrastructures that can support maritime operations. Further offshore from the mainland, Australia and New Zealand offer substantial and secure rear-basing facilities. This geopolitical environment enables the United States to maintain a large and defensible regional presence that can dominate maritime East Asia and thus contend with a mainland great power.

The geopolitical contrast between Europe and East Asia is instructive.[31] Following World War II, the United States determined that a significant military presence in Europe was necessary to balance the power of the Soviet Union. Great Britain did not offer sufficient land mass or the geopolitical location necessary to maintain adequate forward-deployed maritime presence to control Europe's western coastal waters should a continental hegemon emerge. On the other hand, in early 1950—as the Truman administration returned US forces to the European mainland and funded the economic recovery of Western Europe to maintain a divided continent—after the Chinese Communist Party defeated Chiang Kai-shek's Republic of China government, Secretary of State Dean Acheson declared that the United States did not have a significant national security interest in a strategic presence on mainland East Asia. His definition of the US Pacific "defense perimeter" excluded the Korean Peninsula, Taiwan, and mainland Southeast Asia, including Indochina, Burma, and Thailand. According to Acheson, the US defense perimeter only encompassed the region's insular countries, particularly Japan and the Philippines, and by extension, the South China Sea countries.[32] US military leaders concurred with Acheson's assessment, and between late 1949 and early 1950 they argued that US national security did not require a strategic presence on the Korean Peninsula or on Taiwan.[33]

Eventually the United States developed strategic alliances with South Korea, Taiwan, South Vietnam, and Thailand, but these alliances did not reflect the intrinsic importance of their geopolitical location to US security interests in a divided region. Rather, the United States intervened in Korea to establish its determination to contain Soviet-led communist military expansionism, wherever and whenever it occurred. It

fought the Korean War to defend US credibility, not to defend strategic territory critical to its security.[34] Once North Korean communist forces invaded South Korea and the United States perceived China as a hostile and expansionist country, previously secondary interests assumed greater military importance. In the aftermath of the Korean War, the United States signed alliances with South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand and extended an alliance commitment to South Vietnam. These developments tied the US reputation for resolve to defend its offshore allies, including Japan, to the defense of its mainland allies and thus drew it into wars and multiple crises, despite the secondary importance of these countries to US interest in a divided East Asia.[35]

The US post–Vietnam War retrenchment from the East Asian mainland underscores its secondary importance to US security. The greatest "tragedy" of the US involvement in Vietnam is that after 10 years of war and significant losses of American blood, treasure, and honor, the withdrawal from Indochina and the loss of military bases in Thailand had an imperceptible impact on US security. The defense relationship with Taiwan has been equally peripheral to US security. A military presence on Taiwan in the 1960s supported US operations in Vietnam. Thus, in early 1972, President Richard Nixon could easily concede to Beijing that once the Vietnam War was over, the United States would withdraw all of its military forces from Taiwan.[36] In the twenty-first century, the United States has not resisted Taiwan's political accommodation to the PRC's growing coercive capabilities and its economic absorption into the PRC economy. On the contrary, the George W. Bush administration supported Taiwan's effort to expand economic and political cooperation with the PRC.[37] The Obama administration has continued this policy. Because the PRC has relied on its growing economic and military capabilities to compel peaceful accommodation with Taiwan, it has not challenged US credibility or the US defense commitment to its maritime security partners. This has allowed the United States to disengage from the mainland China–Taiwan conflict without any measurable effect on US security.

Also during the Bush administration, the United States began to disengage from the Korean Peninsula. By 2008, as South Korea expanded political and economic cooperation with China and increasingly relied on it to manage the North Korean threat, the United States reduced its forces in South Korea by 40 percent, ended its military deployments

between Seoul and the demilitarized zone, committed to relinquishing operational control (OPCON) over the South Korean military by 2012, and significantly reduced the size and frequency of US–South Korean joint exercises. As with its disengagement from the Taiwan issue, the United States could acquiesce to peaceful South Korean accommodation of the rise of China without any evident concern for its credibility to defend its alliance commitments or for the effect on US security.

The Obama Administration and US Strategy for East Asia

The Obama administration's pivot toward East Asia reflects a significant departure from prior US efforts to balance the rise of China. Whereas prior administrations focused on strengthening security cooperation with the region's offshore states, this administration has expanded relations with mainland states on the Chinese periphery—in Indochina and on the Korean peninsula. Not only are these initiatives unnecessary to sustain the traditional US effort to maintain a divided East Asia, but they also impose potentially costly relationships on the United States that ultimately cannot contribute to balancing the rise of China.

After the US withdrawal from Indochina in 1975, successive administrations avoided security cooperation with Vietnam, despite Hanoi's apparent interest in developing relations since 1991, and US administrations all but ignored Cambodia. This changed in 2010, when, for the first time since the end of the Vietnam War, the United States pursued a strategic presence in Indochina. That year, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates visited Hanoi, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton visited the city twice. She expressed US interest in developing a "strategic partnership" with Vietnam.[38] Additionally, the United States carried out joint naval exercises with Vietnam in 2010, 2011, and 2012. In June 2012, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta visited Cam Ranh Bay, where the US Navy was based during the Vietnam War, and announced that "access for United States naval ships into this facility is a key component of this relationship [with Vietnam] and we see a tremendous potential here for the future." During the visit a senior defense department official observed that "we are making significant progress in our military relationship with

Vietnam." The United States and Vietnam have also signed a memorandum of understanding regarding civil nuclear cooperation.[39]

The United States has also strengthened security cooperation with Cambodia. Visiting Phnom Penh in 2010, Secretary Clinton encouraged Cambodian leaders to exercise greater independence from Chinese political influence. Cambodia then joined for the first time the annual US-led Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) regional naval exercises, and US Marines based in Okinawa conducted interoperability exercises and maritime exercises with the Cambodian military.[40]

The Obama administration has also reversed Bush administration policy toward South Korea. Following the 2010 North Korean sinking of the South Korean naval ship *Choenan*, the administration reasserted US strategic presence on the Korean Peninsula. It deferred relinquishing wartime OPCON of South Korean forces from 2012 to 2015 despite South Korea's significant conventional military superiority vis-à-vis North Korea and its increasing ability to contend with North Korean forces unassisted. Since the summer of 2010, the scale and number of US–South Korean joint military exercises has significantly expanded, with their largest ever that year, and the United States has increased its troop presence in South Korea. The two nations have reached four new defense agreements: the South Korea-US Integrated Defense Dialogue, the first joint South Korea–US Counter-Provocation Plan, the Extended Deterrence Policy Committee, and an agreement on military space cooperation.[41] In 2012, the Pentagon developed plans to upgrade its capabilities in South Korea, and the US Navy led the first US–Japanese–South Korean joint naval exercise, which took place in the Yellow Sea and included a US aircraft carrier. It was the largest one-day, live-fire military exercise since the Korean War.[42]

These initiatives in Indochina and South Korea cannot enhance US security. Because both regions are on China's immediate periphery, US naval power cannot effectively challenge Chinese coercive power. The coercive capability of China's contiguous ground force capability (with support from its economic power) cannot be adequately mitigated by US offshore presence. Even as a primitive fighting force in 1950, the PLA held the US military to a draw in Korea. During the Cold War, the PLA contributed to the defeat of France, the United States, and the Soviet Union in Indochina. Today, PLA ground forces are far more

capable than its neighbors along the entire Chinese periphery and the US military.[43]

From 2008 to 2012, South Korea's conservative leadership eagerly sought improved defense cooperation with the United States. But during the 2012 South Korean presidential campaign, both candidates promised to improve relations with North Korea and to restore greater balance in relations between China and the United States. In January 2013, President Park Geun-hye sent her first presidential envoy to Beijing. Chinese capabilities are far greater in Indochina today than in 1979, when the PLA suffered massive losses in its border war with Vietnam. In the twenty-first century, Chinese leverage vis-à-vis Vietnam will undermine US efforts to expand US-Vietnam defense cooperation. Unless South Korea and the Indochina countries are willing to once again host significant US ground-force deployments and extensive basing facilities—therefore once again incurring Chinese hostility—they will ultimately succumb to the rise of China by distancing themselves from the United States, thus accommodating China's national security interest in border regions secure from US strategic presence. Moreover, because China possesses superior leverage on its periphery vis-à-vis the United States, US challenges to Chinese security along its borders cannot induce cooperation with US interests.

Not only are recent US initiatives on mainland East Asia neither necessary nor effective, but they will ultimately be costly to US interests because they will destabilize US-China cooperation. Chinese leaders view US policy toward Indochina and South Korea as an effort to reestablish a strategic presence on China's periphery.[44] They view this as a challenge to Chinese national security.

Since 2010, China has significantly strengthened economic and political relations with the North Korean leadership, undermining US sanctions. It continues to provide North Korea with significant oil shipments and free food aid, which increased substantially in 2011. Chinese investment in North Korean mining, infrastructure, and manufacturing and its import of North Korean mineral resources have also significantly increased since 2009. It has also expressed little interest in cooperating with the United States in pressuring North Korea to participate in the Six-Party Talks.[45] That structure is now irrelevant to Northeast Asian security, and the United States has had to negotiate bilaterally with Pyongyang. Washington negotiated the short-lived 29 February 2012

agreement with North Korea outside of the Six-Party Talks venue. Since then, it has continued to negotiate bilaterally with North Korea. Meanwhile, North Korea continues to expand its nuclear weapons capability.

China has used coercive diplomacy to pressure local powers to rethink their cooperation with US strategic advancement on its periphery, contributing to instability in the South China Sea. Sino-Vietnamese tension over disputed waters escalated in spring 2010, with many Chinese advocating use of force against the Vietnamese navy.[46] China's prolonged maritime confrontation with the Philippines in 2012 over fishing near Scarborough Shoal, which included the presence of combat-ready Chinese naval patrols in disputed waters, similarly reflects Beijing's eroding tolerance for small-power cooperation with the United States. Before 2011, China had not detained any Philippine ships operating in disputed waters nor sent government ships within disputed waters surrounding the Spratly Islands, but since 2012, PRC ships have been operating within 12 miles of Philippine-claimed islands. While Chinese oil companies had not previously operated in disputed areas of the South China Sea, in 2012 Beijing announced that its companies would commence oil exploration there.[47] Since US intervention in the territorial dispute, there has also been greater tension within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Whereas the Obama administration has tried to promote ASEAN unity on the South China Sea territorial conflicts and had hoped to work with the ASEAN to promote US presence in Southeast Asia, China has relied on its partners within the ASEAN to resist US policy. The ASEAN is more divided today than at any time since its formation.

There is also reduced Chinese cooperation with the United States on global issues. In the 1990s, Beijing cooperated with the United States on humanitarian intervention, Indonesia, and, as recently as 2011, in Libya. It also cooperated with both US military operations against Iraq, but more recently, it has resisted cooperation over the violence in Syria. It has blocked US initiatives in the United Nations, merely informed the United States of its initiatives toward the Syrian government, and contributed to Russia's efforts to support the Syrian leadership. Regarding proliferation of nuclear weapons, China now undermines US efforts to curtail Iran's nuclear program. Whereas from 2006 to 2010 China voted for five UN Security Council resolutions imposing sanctions on Iran, in 2012 it opposed US efforts to tighten those sanctions, compelling the

United States to impose sanctions outside the UN framework. Following agreements by the United States, European countries, and Japan to sanction Iranian oil exports, China reached agreement with Tehran to purchase Iranian oil.[48] In South Asia, China has not assisted US efforts to enhance Pakistan's cooperation with the war in Afghanistan, and it has not restrained Pakistan's nuclear and missile programs.

Ongoing US strategic cooperation with the mainland states on China's periphery will not contribute to US security, but it will elicit increased Chinese suspicion of US intentions and greater Chinese resistance to US interests in East Asia and elsewhere. It will also lead to a deterioration of US-China relations, contributing to more destabilizing Chinese behavior in the South China Sea, higher Chinese defense spending, and diminished PRC cooperation on bilateral issues, including economic conflicts and military-to-military cooperation. And it will contribute to greater regional tensions and a greater likelihood of US-China conflict over insignificant maritime territorial disputes.

Conclusion

Since 1776, US grand strategy has sought a balance of power in its transoceanic flanking regions. When multiple great powers contended in Europe and East Asia, the Western Hemisphere was secure from the presence of extraregional powers, and the United States was secure from challenges from rival great powers that might threaten its survival. Only when a great power threatened to achieve hegemony in Europe and/or East Asia was the United States gravely threatened, as from Japan and Germany during World War II. Since World War II, the United States has assumed the responsibility from the regional great powers for the balance of power in the transoceanic regions, thus preventing flanking powers from threatening its homeland. During the Cold War, it kept Europe and East Asia divided, and in the twenty-first century it maintains the balance of power in East Asia.

In 1943, Walter Lippmann wrote that "foreign policy consists in bringing into balance, with a comfortable surplus of power in reserve, the nation's commitments and the nation's power."[49] An effective great-power national security strategy requires awareness of the "Lippmann gap," and failure to maintain such a balance results in a costly squandering of resources. At times the United States has fallen victim to the

Lippmann gap, such as when it waged a costly and protracted war in Indochina while simultaneously contending with Chinese power in East Asia and Soviet power in Europe. US leaders erroneously believed that the United States possessed important security interests in Indochina.

In the twenty-first century, the United States has responsibility for maintaining the balance of power in East Asia. The cost of contemporary US policy in East Asia does not remotely approach the cost of the Lipmann gap during the Vietnam War era. Nonetheless, the US defense budget will face increasing difficulties contending with China's rise should it continue to fund twentieth-century capabilities, including aircraft carriers, even as it transitions to ISR-based twenty-first-century platforms.

Whereas post–Cold War US administrations refrained from asserting US power on mainland East Asia, the Obama administration has reversed course and is expanding US strategic presence on China's mainland periphery. The United States lacks the capabilities to sustain this effort. China's strategic advantage on mainland East Asia is greater today than at any time since 1949. It now possesses the capability to coerce its neighbors to accommodate its security. China's economic resources are also greater than ever and are increasing. On the other hand, the United States is developing an expanded presence on mainland East Asia just as constrained financial resources challenge the US military's ability to sustain its current level of spending. Moreover, the cost of US policy on mainland East Asia will grow as its challenge to Chinese national security will elicit ever greater Chinese challenges and contribute to heightened and costly tension in US-China relations.

Since the end of the Cold War, US national security policy has enabled the United States both to contend with the rise of China to sustain a divided East Asia and to manage US-China relations to contain the cost of US policy. The United States consolidated its strategic relationships with its maritime security partners and benefitted from regional stability and US-China cooperation on a wide range of regional and global issues. Moreover, this policy elicited at most minimal controversy in the United States. There were few voices calling for a more proactive US policy toward mainland East Asia. The challenge for the United States is to recognize the essential requirements for a national security strategy that secures US interests in a divided region and to avoid the

temptation to adopt policies that unnecessarily raise the cost of US national security. SSQ

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Upping the Ante

Chinese Encroachment, US Entrenchment, and Gulf Security

Dina Badie

As rentier states, the Persian Gulf monarchies rely on great powers to fulfill security imperatives, making them unlikely to abandon their partnerships with the United States. Yet, China's recent moves into the Middle East are viewed by Western political observers as a sign of looming encroachment by the rising Asian power and by the Gulf states as a welcome alternative. This article suggests that Sino-American competition over oil has led the oil-rich monarchies—Saudi Arabia in particular—to develop a hedging strategy between the United States and China. This dynamic results in short-term gains—including regime stability—at the expense of long-term risks, including overmilitarization of the region as the great powers compete to secure their allies and a decreasing likelihood of political reform, particularly in light of China's noninterference policy. These outcomes have international ramifications with dire consequences for global energy security and make US and Chinese competition over access to oil potentially counterproductive.

The academic merging of political economy issues with the study of national and international security is just beginning to take root. While new scholarship has widened the concept of security, it must delve further to achieve a better understanding of political economic considerations on matters of foreign policy and security. Jonathan Kirshner suggests that this results from the Cold War "unnaturally bifurcat[ing]" security studies and the study of political economy.[1] An integrated study of the two fields can address existential threats to economic security: the types of threats that rouse the same level of attention as internal or external aggression and prompt the formation of alliances, security arrangements,

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and the like. As Charles Ziegler points out, "surprisingly few academic studies have focused on oil in foreign policy despite the strategic nature of this commodity."[2] An opportunity to merge the fields comes easily with the integration of rentier literature that studies how great powers can contribute to regime stability by lessening the likelihood of severe disruptions to the rentier system. Global players like the United States and China have the capacity to enter into economic, political, and military relations that can impact the very survival of the oil regimes.

As rentier states that collect a majority of their government revenues from resources and use these rents for welfare distribution, the oil-rich Gulf monarchies are vulnerable to energy disruptions that can result in increased protest, diminished legitimacy, or even political change. Reliance on oil is a two-way street. In fact, the risks associated with volatility in the energy market can be existential for rentier regimes.[3] But as documented in recent literature, some effects of the "resource curse" can be mitigated through reliance on great powers for economic and political security guarantees to ensure regime stability.

Meanwhile, the rentier dynamic prohibits governments from relying too heavily on their citizens for military forces. Economic concerns related to oil, as well as more general Gulf regional volatility, dictate reliance on foreign security forces. This has prompted an auxiliary debate within the broader "cultural" versus "economic" explanations for problems in the Gulf. That is, some attribute the lack of citizen participation to religious-cultural explanations while others point to the rentier dynamic under the wider umbrella of a resource curse.[4] Still, the fact remains that the Saudi government does not rely on its citizenry for military forces, making it dependent on outside powers for traditional security. The combination of these phenomena—here assumed to be intrinsically associated with rentier states—compels reliance on great powers.

The nature of recent Gulf security relations has prompted debate over the continuation of US hegemony in the region. Some in the scholarly and policymaking communities argue that a strong US presence in the Gulf—and elsewhere—constitutes an imperial strategy of hegemonic domination that must recede on strategic and ethical grounds.[5] Others have recommended a return to an "over the horizon" presence resembling its 1980s strategy, as the United States faces increasing hostility in the Middle East.[6] Complicating the debate are concerns over China's recent moves to ensure its own energy security by cultivating better relations

with the Gulf nations, perhaps at the expense of US strategic interests. As competition mounts over acquiring and securing vital resources, the future of US energy policy is intrinsically tied to its Middle East policy. How will mutual reliance on oil and increased Sino-American competition over access to Middle East oil affect international energy security?

The argument presented here suggests that competing US and Chinese energy interests, combined with the rentier dynamic present in the Gulf, have allowed the oil-rich monarchies to capitalize on this regional competition. This article first demonstrates the effect of resource dependence on alliance formation from the perspective of host nations. Drawing on new literature linking the concepts, it illustrates that the stability of the Gulf regimes is largely dependent on the United States' making both the alliances and the dictatorships durable. With China and the United States competing for access to the most oil-abundant region, states like Saudi Arabia enjoy the benefits of regime durability in conjunction with improved economic, political, and military options. And critically, stable alliances translate into stable monarchies.

Second, waning US influence and China's growing interest in the region have led to a new hedging strategy. Rather than reaping the political and economic benefits of a single great-power partnership, the Gulf states—Saudi Arabia in particular—can leverage their position as the United States and China compete for access. Third, while these rentier states see short-term gains, future ramifications of this great-power competition in the region are varied and grave. This dynamic invites regional and international destabilization that could have significant and dire consequences on global energy supplies. The potential of overmilitarizing the region increases as both the United States and China seek to gain and maintain favor with Gulf regimes. This is particularly unsettling in light of the emerging cold war between Riyadh and Tehran. At the same time, prospects for long-term stability decrease as the prospects for liberalization diminish. Regional tensions against autocratic rulers have already begun to mount, and the prospects for political stability in the absence of some liberalization are slim. The implications for US policy are also grim. China's growing influence and its noninterference policy may compel the Saudis to turn eastward in the face of Western reformist pressures. Meanwhile, the United States continues to shoulder the bulk of the burden of protecting pipelines and shipping routes while China enjoys the economic benefits of closer ties without significant costs.

Finally, the United States must not view Gulf energy security through the prism of Sino-American competition over access, as this invites the Gulf states to leverage their position for short-term gains at the expense of significant long-term costs. Instead, US strategy toward the region should include mutual cooperation with China, as the two powers have parallel interests in securing energy flows. Given the rentier dynamic in the Gulf and the mutual US and Chinese reliance on oil, Sino-American competition may be counterproductive without important modifications to present strategy.

Resources, Alliances, and Security

This article thus relies on a combination of rentier and security literature to expound upon the triangular relationship between the United States, China, and Saudi Arabia. While traditional assumptions held by realism and strategic studies explain some elements of this relationship, these approaches often subordinate nonaggressive threats and assume that balancing behavior is a defense against only aggressive threats. This study still relies on realist assumptions, namely, the primacy of survival as the utmost state objective. But departing from traditional views of threats as primarily aggressive in nature, it brings in scholarship on rentierism to demonstrate the importance of economic threats—primarily those associated with resource dependence—on patterning decisions. In particular, it suggests that threats associated with resource dependence can be existential in nature and can force states to rely on great powers for security.

Examining the Gulf hedging strategy first requires an exploration of the links between rentierism and international security arrangements. While the rentier effect—or so-called paradox of plenty or resource curse—is a familiar phenomenon, the theoretical literature on the subject has evolved beyond structural explanations to include institutions as critical intervening variables. Theories of oil-centered rentierism generally hold that resource-dependent states with national industries create welfare distribution systems to assuage the potential for political crisis. Gregory Gause explains how economic hegemony—state control over resources, jobs, subsidies, and even the private sector—ensures that Gulf citizens' well-being is directly linked to that of the state, creating a stable domestic environment.[7] The threat of economic disruption—stemming from price fluctuation, market busts, pipeline disruptions, domestic unrest,

or terrorism—can create strain on the distributional capabilities of the state. Failure to continually prop up the rentier state can lead to catastrophic political outcomes from the perspective of resource-dependent regimes. But is oil dependence a political fait accompli?

Generally, the resource curse literature recognizes the potentially destabilizing effect of resource dependence and seeks to determine the conditions that foster stability and breed instability in rentier states. Some suggest that oil dependence is a structural phenomenon that results in universally applicable outcomes.[8] That is, rentierism inherently breeds stability or instability. Others argue that oil has no essential properties outside of the context of institutions.[9]

Scholars of the rentier state are divided on this issue. In theoretical terms, a continuum exists between those who view oil as inherently destabilizing, those who view it as stabilizing, and those who suggest that oil has no essential properties outside the institutional context. Among the structuralists, the debate centers on whether oil has a net positive or negative impact on stability. Some scholars maintain that oil wealth negatively affects all oil producers in the same ways.[10] Others suggest that oil wealth actually increases political stability by creating sturdy linkages between the ruling elite and the citizenry.[11] Still others argue that oil has no independent effect on regime stability outside of the institutional context; that in fact, outcomes differ based on resource management strategies. This new wave of literature is critical to understanding the variations between resource-dependent states in light of the stability of Gulf monarchies and in relation to their contemporary strategies vis-à-vis the United States and China.

It is worth noting at the outset that institutional explanations do not reject the *potential* for negative outcomes; rather, these scholars recognize that leaders of resource-dependent states possess some agency in decision making and operate within and alongside institutions. Certain strategies and institutions can assuage the potential for instability. By the same token, a lack of good institutions or poor coping strategies can lead to negative outcomes. That is, left to its own devices, oil may hinder political and economic development; however, varying arrangements explain the inconsistency between states. It is in this vein that Ragnar Torvik explains why resource abundance does not *lead* to instability; rather, variations exist that can be explained by economic management and differences in institutions.[12]

Varied conceptions of the link between rentierism and stability highlight the complexity of the political economy of oil and stability. Contemporary institutionalist work on rentierism provides useful insights into variations in stability and exposes differences in institutional structures and rent management and distribution schemes to explain differences in the stability of rentier states. These scholars aptly demonstrate that decisions and institutions both impact political and economic outcomes. Resource dependence alone does not determine the economic and political stability of regimes. Conceiving of resource dependence as a variable in decision making or institutional rules (rather than one that directly affects outcomes) lends greater insight into political and economic stability. That is, materialization of the resource curse is contingent on other factors.[13]

While most scholars of the resource curse study domestic factors that may mitigate it, new literature has emerged that lends credence to the idea that international-level arrangements—such as alliances with great powers—have a significant impact on the stability of oil-rich regimes. In focusing on political outcomes, scholars take particular note of the survivability of Middle Eastern and North African resource-dependent states. Their notoriety for both oil abundance and lasting autocratic rule has led to various attempts to explain regime survival and the region's resistance to democracy. Rather than viewing the region's "exceptionalism" as a product of ideological or religious factors, scholars have begun examining its political economy and linking that to the apparent stability.[14] For example, studies by Mathias Basedau and Wolfram Lacher and by Basedau and Jann Lay find that the presence of international security forces is correlated with political stability. Daniel Byman and Jerrold Green suggest that US support partially explains the Gulf states' political durability.[15] Most notably, Eva Bellin suggests that the security apparatuses in rentier states rely on both domestic financial health as well as international support.[16] The United States has maintained a unique interest in the Middle East and North Africa since the Cold War. This comports with the findings of a 1999 symposium studying the effects of oil pricing on strategy and suggests that outside powers, also dependent on oil, have a vested interest in the stability of oil regimes.[17] This is particularly true of US and Chinese interests in the Gulf, which affect the security both of the great powers and of the host nations.[18] As Bellin notes, "withdrawal of international backing triggers both an existential

and financial crisis for the regime that often devastates both its will and capacity to carry on."[19]

As rentier states collect more than 40 percent of government revenues from oil receipts, disruptions to the flow of Gulf oil can result in major shocks, inviting potentially existential consequences for the resource-dependent regimes.[20] In addition to deterring and defending against regional aggressors—the traditional security postulate—the survival of Gulf regimes is contingent both upon their ability to extract oil rents and protect pipelines and shipping routes as well as on strategies to weather "bust" periods and establish trade partnerships to offset resource reliance through a variety of diversification mechanisms. Without these safeguards, many of which require foreign guarantees, rentier states are vulnerable to disruptions to the flow of oil, fluctuations in oil prices, moves by the international community to decrease its reliance on oil, and resource depletion. Disruptions to the flow of oil can stem from servicing issues (e.g., damaged equipment or labor issues), regional conflicts, or from attacks to pipelines or facilities. As Benjamin Smith notes, oil-dependent states see spikes in protests during bust periods.[21] Energy diversification by other states also threatens to depress demand, which can produce the same effect as bust periods in the longer term. These constitute security threats that can jeopardize immediate and long-term regime survival. Disruptions to the rentier system can mean the collapse of the regime, and the recent wave of uprisings in the region further highlights the vulnerability of its long-standing autocrats.

The premise that security alliances help mitigate the effects of resource dependence and buttress the rentier state easily explains the stable alliance between the United States and the Gulf monarchies. But even more importantly, it suggests that future patterns of security policy decisions emanating from the oil-rich Gulf states will likely continue to rely on great powers, both for regional security as well as economic security, to secure the rentier system that preserves regime stability. With waning US clout and growing Chinese influence, the present and future stability of the Gulf, and Saudi Arabia in particular, requires examination.

The End of an Era

While the Gulf States—with the exception of Oman and Bahrain—would not tolerate a US presence in the 1980s, Saddam Hussein's invasion

of Kuwait changed their calculation.[22] Several proposals were advanced to deter further aggression. These included strengthening Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) ties, buttressing GCC forces with those of other regional states, and inviting the United States in through basing arrangements to serve as the guardian of the Gulf.

Led by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, the Gulf states rejected the first two proposals on political and strategic grounds. Critically, they argued that a buildup of GCC deterrent forces would still be no match against larger, hostile states. As an added obstacle, the rentier states built by the Gulf monarchies created top-down systems whereby the governments distributed benefits rather than collecting resources, which makes viable expansions of domestic militaries impossible. With regional solutions deemed politically unfeasible, the Gulf states turned to the United States. All six GCC states invited the United States to play the guardian role in Gulf security. Rather than create a GCC-wide security arrangement, each state opted to make bilateral defense agreements. Five of the six, the exception being Saudi Arabia, signed defense cooperation agreements that assured varying degrees of commitment. The Saudis invited direct US presence but considered a formal agreement too inflexible to deal with possible future realities that could make US presence a greater liability. Though each state made a separate agreement, the defense pacts generally allowed the United States to build or use basing facilities, preposition weapons, and conduct joint military exercises with local forces.

While these military guarantees were aimed at deterring further regional aggression, the partnership exposed the benefits of relying on a great power. Within a few years, political and economic relations improved as well, giving the Gulf monarchies the ability to consolidate the rentier states. The security and stability of the Gulf states during the 1990s was all but ensured by US economic, political, and military guarantees. But while the United States enjoyed a special relationship with the Gulf countries, and Saudi Arabia in particular, the strength of relations is on the decline, and the desirability of an alliance with Washington has come into question since the 9/11 attacks.

The effect of 9/11 and subsequent rhetoric, reports, and suspicions on the part of the Bush administration "dealt a sledgehammer blow" to US-Saudi relations.[23] Members of Congress and the administration suspected Saudi ties to terrorists and accused the kingdom of lackluster counterterrorism efforts. Refusal by the Bush administration to

declassify sections of the 9/11 Commission's findings—which allegedly pointed fingers at the Saudi government—further strained the relationship.

The Saudis still showed support for the US-sponsored war against the Taliban following the 9/11 attacks. Having cultivated ties with the conservative group for strategic and religious reasons, the Saudi government immediately severed relations, claiming that "the Taliban government has paid no attention to the calls and pleas of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to stop harboring, training and encouraging criminals."[24] While supportive of the first round of US retaliation in Afghanistan, the Saudis—and other regional monarchs—were less enthusiastic about the prospect of a US-led invasion of Iraq. Though Saudi Arabia had been an advocate and accomplice in US efforts to suffocate Saddam's capabilities in the 1990s, the prospect of a unilateral invasion and elimination of the historic balancer to Iran concerned Riyadh. Just prior to the invasion, Prince Saud warned that regime change could destroy Iraq and destabilize the region, cautioning that "we will suffer the consequences of any military action."[25]

Further complicating matters is the intractability of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the continual failure of the peace process. Gulf monarchies have criticized Washington's inability, or unwillingness, to place adequate pressure on Israel to halt building settlements and make concessions that could resolve the conflict. Beginning in the 1980s, the Camp David Accords were viewed as a failure, given their inability to engage the Palestinians and hence mitigate the threat of continued Arab-Israeli hostilities. This disillusionment was directed at both the United States and Egypt. As Hermann Eilts noted at the time, "it is their [Gulf states'] perception of continued shadow boxing with the critical Palestinian issue that evokes their censure."[26] While the 1990 crisis caused the Gulf countries more pressing strategic concerns, the "perception of shadow boxing" has returned as four consecutive administrations have failed to bring the conflict closer to a resolution. Sentiment in the entire Arab region has become increasingly anti-Western, in large part due to the unconditional US support for Israel posing added risks for the monarchies, which must avoid being seen as US partners or puppets.

Finally, US policy toward Egypt during the Arab Spring uprisings led Gulf monarchies to question the reliability of a Washington alliance. After 30 years of US partnering with Hosni Mubarak's government, the Obama administration shifted that policy and demanded his resignation,

resulting in a "tectonic shift" in US-Saudi relations.[27] The Saudis publicly voiced concerns over US handling of the uprising in Egypt, particularly its policy toward Mubarak. And Washington's seemingly higher-profile public stance on promoting liberal transitions heightens the allure of China's noninterference policy in the present environment.

While US-Saudi relations were never perfect, 9/11 and subsequent issues further strained the partnership. The 2003 "mutual agreement" to draw down the US presence in the kingdom was seen by many as a result of cooling interest by the Saudi government. US influence has continued to wane because of unpopular policies, chipping away at the special US-Saudi relationship. With Chinese interest in the region on the rise, the result has been a hedging strategy by Saudi Arabia to ensure great-power security guarantees.

While Riyadh is far from abandoning its partnership with Washington, it has made various moves—on economic and political fronts—to strengthen its relations with China. Meanwhile, Beijing's growing oil appetite has led to new diplomatic initiatives to improve relations with the oil-rich Gulf monarchies. This has allowed Saudi Arabia to leverage competition over strategic and energy imperatives to its advantage and enjoy guarantees from two great powers.

Saudi Arabia's Hedge

While the details of expanded Sino-Saudi relations are well documented, it is worth highlighting their importance through the prism of a Saudi balancing strategy. This section addresses the growth of Sino-Saudi ties in the economic, political, and military realms, highlighting the fact that the kingdom has begun to hedge its bets. Because the rentier dynamic compels states to seek great-power partnerships to ensure their security, Saudi Arabia continues to rely on Washington while opening wider channels with Beijing.

Economic Security

The present dynamic in the Gulf region is critical in light of China's growing influence and appetite for oil, fading US influence, and growing anti-American sentiment. China has attempted to secure access to Gulf oil by augmenting its partnerships, particularly with the Saudi kingdom, since the 1980s, but the steady growth of that partnership in the past

decade is a new development in its foreign and security policies due to becoming a net importer of oil in 1993. Its 15 percent increase in production during that period was trumped by a 90 percent increase in demand.[28]

China's turn toward the Saudis to meet its growing energy needs was met tepidly at the outset. Beijing first established relations with Oman and Yemen, followed by Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and North African producers. Because Saudi Arabia enjoyed good relations with the United States—both in political and economic terms—trade relations between the Middle and Saudi kingdoms grew modestly at first. Saudi Arabia remained reliant on the United States, particularly on the heels of the Soviet collapse and the US liberation of Kuwait. But as the decade wore on, increasing points of contention between the two nations, compounded by China's economic growth, led the Saudis to begin looking elsewhere.

This has resulted in a boon for Riyadh as the Saudis are enjoying the benefits of two great powers interested in expanding relations and preserving the kingdom's economic security. As Anthony Cordesman explains, US presence secures the regional pipelines and shipping routes in the Arabian Peninsula, the Persian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman, the Indian Ocean, and the Red Sea.[29] The United States has also provided other economic benefits to the Gulf states. In July 2003, it signed a trade investment framework agreement (TIFA) with Saudi Arabia and aided the kingdom in its application to join the WTO, which was approved in late 2005 after 12 years of negotiation.[30] These efforts have been widely credited with helping Saudi Arabia to diversify its economy.[31]

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia and China signed the 1999 Strategic Oil Cooperation Agreement, a seminal event that jump-started closer economic relations. That same year, Saudi Arabia's state-owned Aramco invested $750 million in a petrochemical complex capable of processing 8 million tons of Saudi crude oil per year.[32] While these two events were not publicly linked, there is little doubt that closer ties between Riyadh and Beijing prompted the former to invest heavily in production capacity to ensure its ability to fulfill China's growing appetite for oil. By increasing production capabilities, the Saudis could demonstrate their reliability as a serious trading partner. Saudi Arabia became China's leading supplier of oil by 2002 and accounted for 25 percent of its oil imports as of 2011.[33] In 2004, China's state oil company, Sinopec, won

a large concession from the Saudis that was later termed a "politically motivated" deal due to its ambiguous economic benefit.[34] It granted rights to explore for gas in Rub al-Khali; less than a year later, Beijing held its first formal talks with OPEC.[35]

Bilateral trade talks increased in 2006 with King Abdullah's first trip to China since 1990. Commentators hailed it as a historic shift, and more recent follow-up talks have illustrated the success of expanded trade relations. Between 1991 and 2005, trade between China and the Gulf countries jumped from $1.5 billion to $33.7 billion.[36] And in January 2010, Chinese minister of commerce Chen Deming praised the rapidity of trade expansion, noting that the two countries "have realized two years in advance the goal of US$40 billion by 2010."[37] China is also working on a free trade agreement with the Gulf Cooperation Council, which has yet to enter into force but marks another turn eastward. Saudi Arabia has also welcomed China's economic stability—particularly after the Asian economic crisis—"to help recycle some of the enormous liquidity accumulating in the kingdom from record-high oil revenues."[38]

Mutual dependence on oil, both by the Saudis as a rentier state that relies heavily on oil revenues and by China and the United States as consumers, has resulted in improved economic relations between the kingdom and the world's two largest oil importers. As such, Saudi Arabia's turn toward China marks a welcome shift for both Beijing and Riyadh. Enjoying the benefits of economic partnerships with two major powers, the Saudis have been able to capitalize on expanding energy markets in the United States and China to cultivate secure economic relations that encourage long-term energy investment, expanding trade relations, and diversification in its petrodollar investments.

The Saudis historically operate as OPEC's swing producer, ensuring price stability by managing production. While this certainly aids developed and developing economies to avoid dramatic price swings, it also helps ensure that the global demand for oil is not replaced with alternative energy sources.[39] With rising oil prices, the Saudi government recently announced more than $130 billion in new spending—approximately 30 percent of its economy—initiated by windfall profits that do not require deficit spending. This includes $66 billion for new public housing units aimed at appeasing its citizenry.[40]

Saudi Arabia's partnerships have also led to moves to ease regulatory restrictions that have made the kingdom competitive in the World

Bank's *Doing Business* rankings.[41] Combined with significant government investments in infrastructure and transportation, they invite greater foreign investment in energy and other initiatives, particularly the petrochemical sector. Diversification has become an important strategy that moves the economy away from complete reliance on oil. This strategy has been accelerated by accession into the World Trade Organization, aided by the United States.

While diversification is an important strategy, protecting energy markets remains vital. Therefore, through a combination of policies aimed at securing both the energy and other sectors—protected militarily by the United States and aided economically by both the Americans and the Chinese—the Saudi economy is on the rise. And according to the US State Department, the Saudi government seeks to align itself with healthy Western economies "which can protect the value of Saudi financial assets."[42] While this trend continues, the kingdom has begun to explore alternative options. With China's rise as a major economic player, Beijing also becomes an increasingly attractive economic option. This strategy of using great powers for economic gain further consolidates the kingdom's rentier system that relies on the endurance of international demand for oil to funnel the revenues into programs and public goods that weaken reformist tendencies.

Political and Military Security

Historically, the United States has held a special relationship with the Saudi kingdom, particularly in the political and military fields. After the 1990 Gulf crisis, the United States took on the role of securing the region, concluding defense agreements (formal and informal) with all six GCC states. As the savior of the Gulf and its oil from Iraqi aggression, the United States regained its prominent status as security guarantor of the region. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait spotlighted the need, by both the United States and the Gulf states, for greater security integration. The controversial "Defense Planning Guide" summed up the US strategy in the region:

> In the Middle East . . . our overall objective is to remain the predominant outside power in the region and to preserve US and Western access to the region's oil. We also seek to deter further aggression in the region, [and] foster regional stability. . . . As demonstrated by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, it remains fundamentally important to prevent a hegemon or alignment of powers from

> dominating the region. This pertains especially to the Arabian Peninsula. Therefore, we must continue to play a strong role through enhanced deterrence and improved cooperative security.[43]

During the 1990s, Chinese arms sales to Saudi Arabia were cut by more than half, while US arms sales increased. In May of 1993, the Saudis purchased 72 F-15S advanced fighter aircraft for $9 billion and subsequently signed $4.6 billion in arms contracts between 1994 and 2001.[44] In contrast, China supplied a modest $5 billion in military goods to Riyadh in the 1980s, surprising traditional Saudi allies; however, after the 1990 Gulf crisis and resulting establishment of a US presence in the region, arms transfers from China to Riyadh declined dramatically.[45]

King Abdullah's 2006 trip to China, a first since 1990, was hailed as a historic shift in Saudi security strategy. Rather than relying solely on the United States for security, Saudi Arabia has recently turned to China to play a supporting role. Additionally, as Harsh Pant notes, "the new economic symbiosis [between Saudi Arabia and China] is having an increasing impact on Saudi Arabia's military and political posture."[46] Diplomatic ties between Riyadh and Beijing have solidified, and as Prince Turki al-Faisal recently put it, "with China, there is less baggage."[47] China's policy of unconditional respect for sovereignty—as has become increasingly clear through its international stance on Iran, North Korea, Zimbabwe, and other nations with dubious domestic records—poses an attractive option for Saudi Arabia and other Arab governments who have grown increasingly weary of the US presence and policy in the region. China's weight, both as an economic power and as a major international political player who holds a UN Security Council veto, makes it an attractive political alternative.

But what China offers politically and economically, it continues to lack in capacity for military projection. It will remain for the foreseeable future unable to provide the type of security guarantees offered by the United States, which currently spends $40–50 billion each year protecting shipping lanes and pipelines in the Persian Gulf.[48] This, of course, is sapping precious US resources and abetting China's ability to penetrate the region through economic and political initiatives.[49] Still, China could begin transferring weaponry to the Saudis, a sector that the United States has all but monopolized.[50]

While Chinese arms transfers to the Saudis have yet to materialize, it is not for lack of effort. Just before the turn of the century, President Jiang

Zemin visited the region and proclaimed that China and Saudi Arabia enjoyed a "strategic partnership." Since then, the Asian nation has offered to sell ballistic missiles to Riyadh.[51] While the Saudis declined the offer, there has been speculation that China has recently approached the kingdom with offers to transfer sophisticated missile systems, potentially including Pakistani nuclear warheads.[52] Due to mounting tensions with Washington, the result of new overtures could be different. What will come of these offers remains unclear; however, increased economic and political integration with China could well lead to greater military cooperation in the near future.

This puts the Saudis in an enviable position as the great powers compete to provide military security and protect a most vital resource. They ensure the maintenance of the US security umbrella while keeping other options on the table. While the United States shoulders the burden of protecting Gulf oil by military means, Saudi Arabia reaps the benefits of uninterrupted flows into the global market. Although US-Saudi relations have been on the decline over the past decade, for the time being they remain stable in the military realm. While the United States drew down its presence in the kingdom, it continues to operate there on a smaller scale and has a formidable presence in the broader region to protect oil flows. It has also continued to source weapons transfers, as Riyadh recently clinched a historic $60 billion arms deal from Washington.

With tensions mounting as a result of Washington's posture toward the Arab uprisings, China may be able to capitalize on these pressures and at least begin to displace the United States as a major weapons supplier. While China continues to lag behind in its ability to militarily protect shipping lanes, a shift in the source of arms transfers would be significant. The stability of the monarchy is thus, in large part, dependent on these types of competitive guarantees that secure its government revenues and borders.

Strategic Implications

This dynamic also creates longer-term risks that could have significant regional and international impacts. This section addresses these impending ramifications for the region—particularly its overmilitarization and the longer-term impact of great-power partnerships on the diminishing likelihood of political liberalization—and for US policy. While the

United States and China compete for access to oil to ensure their energy security and the unimpeded flow of oil into the global market, a competitive environment that allows rentier states to leverage their position between the two great powers may ultimately be counterproductive. Both the United States and China have an interest in ensuring that oil continues to flow, but a continuation of Riyadh's hedging strategy brings with it an increased likelihood of regional and international implications that threaten global energy supplies.

Regional Implications

A critical point to consider is that competition between the United States and China to transfer arms to Saudi Arabia as its primary guarantor of security puts the monarchy in a good negotiating position and strengthens the Saud regime in the short term. As a rentier state that must ensure strong strategic security alliances with great powers, it is given a choice that, at this juncture, does not require an exclusive partnership with one power over another. In recent years, the monarchy has begun hedging its bet—ensuring it maintains solid relations with critical international players without abandoning old allies. This helps to ensure its economic, political, and military security imperatives are met as the United States and China compete to secure the kingdom in the interest of securing their own economic needs.

China's emerging role as both an economic and political powerhouse that respects the sovereignty of its partners gives Saudi Arabia comfort. In an environment of great authoritarian vulnerability in the region, it is worth noting that revolts took down resource-poor Hosni Mubarak, Ben Ali, and Muammar Gadhafi. And at the time of this writing, Syrian president Bashir al-Assad remains in dire straits. While Libya has abundant energy reserves, it does not have the same good working relationship with the great powers that Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries enjoy. The Gulf monarchies emerged from the Arab Spring relatively unscathed, as their secure rentier systems allowed Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to dole out checks and expand public services to appease their populations.

This dynamic is well documented within the resource curse literature, particularly with reference to the stability of the oil-rich Arab monarchies.[53] It is not the mere abundance of oil that makes democratic transition unlikely; great-power intervention boosts the stability of autocrats.[54] In the present environment, where Saudi Arabia has two great powers

competing for its attention with promises of security guarantees, talk of democratization in the kingdom is all but a moot point. Of course, the corollary to a lack of democratic transition is regime stability; in the short-term this aids the Saudi monarchy, but in the longer term, it could pose significant political risks.

Given democratic sentiments in the region, Saudi Arabia's hedging strategy could backfire as it continues to primarily rely on the United States for military security guarantees. To be sure, it has distanced itself from Washington in significant ways; however, the regime's legitimacy is still in question domestically due to its resistance against real political reform and its alliance with the United States. A decade ago, most shows of violence in the Gulf were targeted at Americans and oil facilities rather than at the regime itself, but this dynamic has begun to change.[55] Protests in Bahrain led the Saudi kingdom to send troops to help quell demands for political liberalization. While the Saud regime safely emerged from this most recent round, it may find itself facing greater political opposition over its lack of reform and continued reliance on US security guarantees. Although King Abdullah remains in good health, his age has raised unresolved questions about his successor. In a reformist environment, these types of ambiguities could have dire consequences for the kingdom, particularly in the event of an economic bust period.

The future of the region could also be at risk if Sino-Saudi political and economic relations evolve to include arms transfers. To be fair, the militarization of the region is nothing new; however, the exponential growth in quality and quantity of weapons transfers is already unprecedented, and the addition of Chinese weaponry could further exacerbate regional arms races. The recent $60 billion arms transfer from the United States to Saudi Arabia raised eyebrows over the prudence of this strategy, particularly in light of the emerging cold war between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

A Council on Foreign Relations forum on this topic left its contributors split. The majority agreed that this type of weapons sale has obvious benefits for US economic and strategic interests and that declining it would only invite Saudi Arabia to turn elsewhere. For Cordesman, Iraqi weakness leaves Saudi Arabia as the region's only counterbalancing power to Iran, so in addition to economic benefits of strengthening US-Saudi ties, continued arms supplies relieve pressure on the US military to provide security. But William Hartung struck a cautionary note, claiming that the risks of escalating a race between Saudi Arabia and Iran are grave and any attempt "to

create a balance at higher and higher levels of weaponry is both dangerous and unnecessary."[56]

Thus far, the results of the arms deal seem to lend credence to its skeptics. Iran's actions and rhetoric with respect to its nuclear program have continued and even escalated. Ideas have been floated by the Saudis, including financially "squeezing" Iran's ambitions by supplanting Iranian oil exports, and in the summer of 2011, Prince Turki al-Faisal pronounced that an Iranian nuclear program would compel the Saudis to follow suit.[57] The danger associated with a nuclear arms race in the region cannot be overstated. Given Western suspicions of Iran's intentions, the United States is unlikely to abate arms transfers to the Saudis if faced with the prospect of a mounting Saudi-Iranian arms race, particularly as it increasingly ventures into nuclear territory. And in the event that the United States halts or tempers its weapons supply, as various commentators have noted, China may step in to replace US weaponry.

International Implications

The consequences arising from great-power competition and the emergence of a hedging strategy in one of the world's most critical energy resource regions have obvious international implications for both traditional and energy security. Recent reports concerning Iran's unrelenting pursuit of nuclear power and China's partnership with Tehran could complicate efforts at assuaging the impending arms race. Meanwhile, continuity of the autocratic status quo could result in great regional instability that can affect global energy supplies, particularly if Saudi Arabia catches the democratic contagion spreading across the region.

Concerns over a regional arms race must be contextualized within present-day realities of Iran's dubious nuclear program and the region's historic volatility. Because the United States still cannot fully rely on China to isolate Iran, the probability of an arms race is quite high. That is, China may decide to sell arms to Iran since it has not indicated a full willingness to isolate the country. This scenario could have significant consequences that develop from a bona fide arms race between the Saudis and Iran as proxies of the United States and China, respectively. As various scholars have noted, China's foreign policy strategy is largely driven by domestic objectives, and until Beijing feels secure in its energy procurement capacity, it is unlikely to abandon Iran.[58] Although Iran has become all but an international pariah state, thanks in part to rigorous

US-led efforts at isolating the regime, its ability to continue pursuing nuclear technology is driven in large part by its ability to secure the flow of oil rents. And China's enabling role is clear. Meanwhile, some reports have emerged indicating that Riyadh has begun mulling over its next move, which could involve partnering with Pakistan to acquire nuclear technology to compete with Iran.[59]

The prospects then for a dangerous regional arms competition are mounting, given the very real possibility that a nuclear arms race will emerge in the near future. The consequences of this arms race may not be as dire as some predict (i.e., involving nuclear weapons), but it could further destabilize the regional balance. First, both Western and Saudi policymakers have expressed concerns over Iran's influence in Iraq. Tehran and Riyadh support different candidates and groups there, and they continue to compete over influence of their historically critical neighbor. An arms race between the two could result in an escalation of tensions in Iraq and, as the United States draws down its presence, lead to fighting through surrogates. The same is true of Yemen, where the Saudis and Iranians have already fought by proxy and exchanged harsh rhetoric over involvement and undue interference. At the least, an emergent arms race could lead to more regional conflict—likely proxy fighting rather than a direct exchange between Riyadh and Tehran. In a vital oil-rich region, the international implications of increased conflict, even in a small scale, could be significant.

The impact of enduring authoritarian tendencies could also have dire consequences for the global oil market. While the Saud regime remains firmly in power, resentment against lack of representation and the regime's Western partnerships has grown. It is true that protests in the kingdom during the Arab Spring were isolated, small, and easily suppressed, but without tangible concessions, these pockets of resistance are unlikely to disappear, regardless of the generosity of the Saudi rentier system. The kingdom's hedging strategy is certainly buying time for the regime, but due to the regional reformist environment and growing anti-Western sentiments, its long-term stability is not a given.

If resistance movements—whether liberal democratic or conservative anti-Western—escalate and pose a real challenge to the Saud regime, the effects on the global oil market would be dire. As the OPEC swing producer, the Saudis have historically sought to stabilize oil prices through their enormous production capacity. A disruption to the Saudi political

or economic structure could easily result in exponential increases in oil prices, supply shortages, and a more general widespread panic. Because other oil-producing nations do not have the type of abundance or capacity to compensate for Saudi oil, a global energy shock would be all but certain.

Strategy Modifications

US policymakers face a mounting dilemma. Continued competition with China and efforts to push the Chinese away from the Saudis to protect US strategic interests could bode poorly for the situation with Iran. On the other hand, isolating Iran with China's help could eventually displace US strategic interests in Saudi Arabia. While it is unlikely that China will altogether replace US hegemony in the region in the near future, the current hedging strategy employed by Riyadh may be enough to hinder US interests abroad. Because reliance on oil and the rentier dynamic in the Gulf compels states like Saudi Arabia to seek security assurances from the great powers, Washington must tread carefully, and diplomatically, to avoid risking the stability of the region in exchange for short-term economic interests.

China: Friend or Foe?

The trajectory of US-Chinese relations has been debated for more than a decade, with scholars and policymakers weighing in on points of mutual and divergent interests.[60] As Aaron Friedberg explains, "the most common manifestation of the debate over the future of U.S.-China relations is the disagreement between liberal optimists and realist pessimists."[61] But setting it up as an "all-or-nothing" debate over Sino-American relations misses the details. The two powers are not bound to coexist in pure harmony through the maintenance of institutions, democratization processes, and economic integration. Nor are they on track for a collision course due to expansionism, insurmountable uncertainties, suspicions, or an inevitable security dilemma. There is no doubt that the future of Sino-American relations remains uncertain, but it is important to disentangle all the potentialities to ascertain the likelihood of cooperation on *particular* issues.

Concerning the issue at hand, the two powers agree on such questions as the importance of securing energy flows, maintaining stable pricing,

and preserving stability in oil-rich regions. At the same time, they diverge on significant matters, including intervention, pressure, and partnerships with competing or "rogue" states.[62] Given the significance of potential regional implications associated with Riyadh's hedging strategy and US-Chinese competition over the region's oil, one must account for these particular points of mutual interest and contention when assessing the possibility for mitigating the foregoing effects and modifying US policy on this issue.

Toward a Balanced, Long-Term Strategy

An important point of leverage for Washington is the tension between Riyadh and Tehran. China has consistently demonstrated that it is more interested in securing its energy needs than concerning itself with implications for the Gulf region. As such, it has become one of Iran's most important strategic and economic partners. From Beijing's perspective, it has access to oil from a reliable partner. From Tehran's perspective, China—unlike the United States—is willing to purchase oil unconditionally and also provides a counterbalance against US pressure. This alliance could eventually sour relations with the Saudi kingdom if it progresses to the military field.

As Steve Yetiv points out, deepening Sino-Saudi relations could be used to US advantage to help contain Iran.[63] Yet unwilling to heavily sanction Iran, China's posture could change in light of its growing interest in improving relations with Saudi Arabia. Rather than pressuring Beijing itself, the United States should leverage the Saudis' mutual concern over Iran's weapons program to pressure Riyadh to supplant China's oil imports from Iran. Reducing China's dependence on Iran may not lead Beijing to agree to more aggressive action against Tehran, but it would impair Iran's ability to pursue its ongoing nuclear strategy.

An equally important point of contention involves China's direct arms sales abroad.[64] While it has yet to really penetrate the Gulf in a meaningful way, unbridled arms sales—particularly to states like Iran—could be particularly dangerous. According to a 2003 statement by Assistant Secretary of State Paula DeSutter, while China publicly recognizes its commitments to nonproliferation, US officials see "problems in the proliferant behavior of certain Chinese entities and remain deeply concerned about the Chinese government's often narrow interpretation of nonproliferation commitments and lack of enforcement of nonproliferation regulations."[65]

While Beijing denies continued arms sales to Iran, the United States continues to suspect weapons transfers.[66] Meanwhile, China has also been accused of evading or circumventing sanctions against Iran.[67] This only contributes to the arms race that has begun in the region, while the lack of transparency over weapons transfers to Iran fuels suspicions of both parties' intentions.

This issue, while in some ways tied to China's reliance on Iran for oil, may be more difficult to handle. If its strategy of replacing Iranian oil with Saudi oil works, China will likely be more willing to scale back its military relations with Iran. Yet, from Beijing's point of view, Washington's arms sales to Taiwan complicate the issue. For example, a 2010 US-Taiwan package prompted an immediate reaction from China, chiding the United States for "endangering China's national security and . . . peaceful reunification efforts."[68] The United States withdrew F-16s from the package, allegedly to calm tensions. While a resolution to competing arms sales may never be fully resolved, at the very least the United States can press for greater transparency on a bilateral basis or through a broader institutional arrangement.

Because China continues to lag far behind the United States in its ability to militarily secure its strategic partners, now may be Washington's last best chance to press for political reforms in Saudi Arabia. While this type of strategy may precipitate closer ties between the kingdom and the PRC, the Saudis cannot yet stray far. Given the nature of their political-economic system, the rentier dynamic prevents them from self-reliance in the military realm and will continue to require reliance on the United States for the foreseeable future. Additionally, the region's present tumultuous environment gives an added sense of urgency that, with steady pressure, could result in a gradual pace of political reforms. If Washington waits too long to exert diplomatic pressure, China may catch up in its ability to secure the Gulf, or the Saudi kingdom may face mounting domestic pressures that can no longer be mitigated with token concessions.[69]

Meanwhile, the United States must begin to address its broader Middle East policies that have led to growing resentment of its regional influence and presence. Most notably, Washington must find a way to reverse its paralysis on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Most Arab governments lament the futility of the peace process, and a lack of tangible change will only further impede US–Middle East relations. It is true that the

oil-rich monarchies need to rely on the United States for security, but to secure long-term US strategic interests, Washington must make the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict a top national security priority lest the monarchies turn elsewhere as soon as an opportunity presents itself.[70]

Finally, given the US and Chinese mutual interest in securing the flow of oil into the global market, there is little use in operating competitively. As Yetiv notes, it may be in Washington's interest to press China to contribute more heavily in the security realm rather than allowing it to continue penetrating the area politically and economically under the US security umbrella.[71] While the United States spends tens of billions on naval power to protect these vital shipping routes, China and the Gulf countries reap the benefits of uninterrupted access. Chinese investments in its naval capabilities have been met with some trepidation in Washington over allegations that it intends to exert pressure and influence in the South China Sea; however, some pressure could help to channel those investments toward protecting access to the energy that it so vitally needs while relieving some pressure on US military capabilities.[72] This would allow greater burden-sharing on a point of mutual interest, lay the groundwork for future cooperation on matters of national and international security between the two powers, and begin to address criticisms against US militarization of the region.

In short, while questions remain about the future of cooperation between the United States and China, Washington should not operate under the assumption that the two powers must compete over the Gulf at this time. Publicized competition between the two nations will only play into Saudi Arabia's hedging strategy, allowing it to achieve concessions that could harm regional and international long-term interests. Competing over access to oil and fueling the emerging Gulf hedging strategy may be counterproductive, as competition to secure US and Chinese energy needs could ultimately result in widespread disruptions. Instead, Washington must work directly with China, as well as its regional partners, to address points of contention and find ways to relieve the pressures that could impede US interests down the road. SSQ

Notes

1. Jonathan Kirshner, "Political Economy in Security Studies after the Cold War," *Review of International Political Economy* 5, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 65.

2. Charles Ziegler, "The Energy Factor in China's Foreign Policy," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 11 no. 1 (Spring 2006): 2.

3. According to the US State Department, oil accounted for 75 percent of Bahrain's government revenue in 2007, 95 percent of government revenue in Kuwait, 75 percent in Saudi Arabia, 45 percent in Oman, 60 percent in Qatar (more than 70 percent when natural gas is included), and 40 percent in the UAE.

4. For more on this debate, see Michael Ross, "Oil, Islam, and Women," *American Political Science Review* 102, no. 1 (2008): 107; Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris, *Rising Tide* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Stephen M. Fish, "Islam and Authoritarianism," *World Politics* 55 (October 2002): 4–37; Alfred Stepan and Graeme B. Robertson, "An 'Arab' More than 'Muslim' Electoral Gap," *Journal of Democracy* 14, no. 3 (July 2003): 30–44; and Terry Lynn Karl, "The Perils of the Petro-State: Reflections on the Paradox of Plenty," *Journal of International Affairs* 53, no. 1 (1999): 30–44.

5. Rashid Khalidi, *Sowing Crisis: The Cold War and American Dominance in the Middle East* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2009); and Johnson Chalmers, *The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2004).

6. Kenneth Pollack, "Securing the Gulf," *Foreign Affairs* 82, no. 4 (July/August 2003): 2–16; and Shilbey Telhami, "The Persian Gulf: Understanding America's Oil Strategy," Brookings Institute, Spring 2002, http://www.brookings.edu/research/articles/2002/03/spring-global environment-telhami.

7. Gregory Gause, *Oil Monarchies* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1994), 42–49.

8. Scholars who view rentierism as a structural phenomenon that necessarily leads to specific political and economic outcomes are divided. For example, Jeffrey D. Sachs and Andrew M. Warner, "Natural Resource Abundance and Economic Growth," National Bureau of Economic Research working paper, December 1995; Terry Lynn Karl, *Paradox of Plenty: Oil Booms and Petro-States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Karl, "Perils of the Petro-State"; and Moises Naim, "The Devil's Excrement: Can Oil-Rich Countries Avoid the Resource Curse?" *Foreign Policy* 174 (2009): 160–62, all suggest that the resource curse is a phenomenon that plagues all rentier states equally. However, Benjamin Smith, "Oil Wealth and Regime Survival in the Developing World 1960–1999," *American Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 2 (2004): 232–46; Gause, *Oil Monarchies*; and Kevin M. Morrison, "Oil, Non-Tax Revenue, and the Redistributional Foundations of Regime Stability," *International Organization* 63 (2008): 107–38, counter that resource-dependent states are actually quite stable. Still, both sides utilize resource dependence as a structural explanation for (in)stability.

9. For conceptions on how rentier states differ and explanations for varying degrees of economic and political stability, see Matthias Basedau and Wolfram Lacher, "Paradox of Plenty? Rent Distribution and Political Stability in Oil States," GIGA (German Institute of Global and Area) Studies working paper: *Dynamics of Violence and Security Cooperation*, Hamburg, Germany, 2006; Basedau and Jann Lay, "Resource Curse or Rentier Peace? The Ambiguous Effects of Oil Wealth and Oil Dependence on Violent Conflict," *Journal of Peace Research* 46 (2009): 757–76; Eva Bellin, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective," *Comparative Politics* 36, no. 2 (2004): 139–57; A. D. Boschini, J. Pettersson, and J. Roine, "Resource Curse or Not: A Question of Appropriability," *Scandinavian Journal of Economics* 109 (2007): 593–617; P. Collier and A. Hoeffler, "Democracy and Resource Rents," Department of Economics, University of Oxford, 2005; C. Leite and M. Weidmann, "Does Mother Nature Corrupt? Natural Resources, Corruption and Economic Growth," IMF working paper WP/99/85, Washington, DC, 1999; P. Jones Luong and Erika Weinthal, "Rethinking the Resource Curse: Ownership Structure, Institutional Capacity, and Domestic Constraints," *Annual Review of Political Science* 9 (2006): 241–63; H. Mehlum, K. Moene, and R. Torvik, "Institutions and the Resource Curse," *Economic Journal*

116 (2006): 1–20; Gwenn Oruhlik, "Rentier Wealth, Unruly Law, and the Rise of Opposition: The Political Economy of Rentier States," *Comparative Politics*, 1999; J. Robinson, T. Verdier, and R. Torvik, "Political Foundations of the Resource Curse," *Journal of Development Economics* 79 (2006): 447–68; Torvik, "Why Do Some Resource Abundant Countries Succeed While Others Do Not?" *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* 25, no. 2 (2009): 241–25; and Jany Ulfelder, "Natural Resource Wealth and the Survival of Autocracies," *Comparative Political Studies* 40, no. 8 (2007): 995–1018.

10. Sachs and Warner, "Natural Resource Abundance and Economic Growth"; Karl, *Paradox of Plenty*; and Naim, "Devil's Excrement."

11. Gause, *Oil Monarchies*; Smith, "Oil Wealth and Regime Survival in the Developing World"; and Morrison, "Oil, Non-Tax Revenue, and the Redistributional Foundations of Regime Stability."

12. Torvik, "Why Do Some Resource Abundant Countries Succeed While Others Do Not?"

13. See Michael Alexeev and Robert Conrad, "The Natural Resource Curse and Economic Transition," Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy working papers series SAN09-04, 27 May 2009; Boschini et al., "Resource Curse or Not"; Sambit Bhattacharyya and Roland Hodler, "Natural Resources, Democracy and Corruption," OxCarre research paper no. 2009-20, Oxford Centre for the Analysis of Resource Rich Economies; Luong and Weinthal, "Rethinking the Resource Curse"; and Leite and Weidmann "Does Mother Nature Corrupt?"

14. Bellin, "Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East"; and Daniel L. Byman and Jerrold D. Green, "The Enigma of Political Stability in the Persian Gulf Monarchies," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 3, no. 3 (1999): 20–37.

15. Byman and Green, "Enigma of Political Stability in the Persian Gulf Monarchies."

16. Bellin, "Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East."

17. Robert R. Copaken et al., "Symposium: Policy Implications of the Price of Oil," *Middle East Journal* 6, no. 4 (1994): 34–58.

18. Because of its reliance on oil, the United States has a vested interest in ensuring the stability and survival of friendly, pro-Western oil monarchies. Eva Bellin makes the point that after the Cold War, US international interests in the Gulf remained stable because of oil, while interests in other areas—namely Latin America—waned. Despite the continued interest in oil, some have argued that the United States gains little from its Gulf presence. See also Telhami, "Persian Gulf."

19. Bellin, "Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East," 144.

20. According to the US State Department, Bahrain collects 76 percent of its government revenues from the sale of oil and natural gas; the figure is 95 percent for Kuwait and 62 percent for Qatar. World Bank statistics indicate that Saudi Arabia collects 74 percent of government revenue from the sale of oil. Oil accounts for 68 percent of Oman's government revenue according to a report on its 2011 budget (Joice Mathew, Santhosh Balakrishnan, and Tariq Mustafa Salman, "Oman Budget 2011 & 8th Five Year Plan 2011–15: Key Analysis and Review," http://usoman.com.om/UploadFiles/129627953931718750Budget%20and%20 8th%20Five%20year%20Plan%20Review_18_jan%20_2010.pdf). The IMF reports the UAE collects just over 50 percent of its revenue from oil (Ugo Fasano and Zubair Iqbal, "GCC Countries: From Oil Dependence to Diversification," *International Monetary Fund*, http://www.imf .org/external/pubs/ft/med/2003/eng/fasano/index.htm).

21. Smith, "Oil Wealth and Regime Survival in the Developing World."

22. After the Iranian Revolution and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, the Carter and Reagan administrations attempted to gain direct access to the Gulf states, and Saudi Arabia in particular. With the exception of Oman, all declined due to growing fear of spreading Iranian revolutionary fervor as well as the US inability to assuage the Arab-Israeli

conflict that had begun to spill over into the Gulf region. Still, despite a lack of direct presence, the Gulf states were aligned with the United States.

23. Josh Pollack, "Saudi Arabia and the United States, 1931–2002," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 6, no. 3 (2002), http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/2002/issue3/jv6n3a7.html.

24. Quoted in Greg Bruno, "Saudi Arabia and the Future of Afghanistan," *Council on Foreign Relations*, 11 December 2008, http://www.cfr.org/afghanistan/saudi-arabia-future-afghanistan/p17964.

25. "Saudis Warn US over Iraq War," *BBC News*, 17 February 2003, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/2773759.stm.

26. Hermann F. Eilts, "Security Considerations in the Persian Gulf," *International Security* 5, no. 2 (1980): 87.

27. Nawaf Obaid, "Amid the Arab Spring, a US-Saudi Split," *Washington Post*, 15 May 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/amid-the-arab-spring-a-us-saudi-split/2011/05/13/AFMy8Q4G_story.html.

28. Flynt Leverett and Jeffrey Bader, "Managing China-US Energy Competition in the Middle East," *Washington Quarterly* 29 (Winter 2005/2006): 188–89.

29. Anthony H. Cordesman and Khalid R. Al-Rodhan, *Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric Wars* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2007).

30. See Peter Sutherland, "Transforming Nations: How the WTO Boosts Economies and Opens Societies," *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 2 (March/April 2008). Trade investment framework agreements (TIFA) are generally seen as precursors to full free trade agreements (FTA).

31. These efforts also extend beyond Saudi Arabia. In Kuwait, the United States supports "Project Kuwait," which would allow foreign investment to develop its northern oil field. This would generate an extra 500,000 barrels-per-day of oil production. The United States and Kuwait also signed a TIFA to engender greater trade relations between the two countries. Going even further, it signed a full FTA with Oman, which Kenneth Katzman considers "pivotal in helping Oman diversify its economy to compensate for its relatively small reserves of crude oil." Katzman, *Oman: Reform, Security and US Policy* (Washington: CRS, 30 August 2012), 2, http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RS21534.pdf. The United States also helped bring the UAE into the WTO and in 2004 signed a FTA with Bahrain.

32. Harsh V. Pant, "Saudi Arabia Woos China and India," *Middle East Quarterly* 13, no. 4 (2006): 45.

33. See Leverett and Bader, "Managing China-US Energy Competition in the Middle East," 191; and Steve Yetiv, "China, Saudi Arabia Broaden Ties under U.S. Security Umbrella," *World Politics Review*, 9 September 2011, http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/8428/china-saudi-arabia-broaden-ties-under-u-s-security-umbrella. Iran has also seen a marked spike in its oil exports to China. And for Tehran, given its tensions with the West over its nuclear program and the Arab-Israeli conflict, a close partnership with a counterbalancing power is particularly welcome.

34. Borzou Daragahi, "China Goes beyond Oil in Forging Ties to Persian Gulf," *New York Times,* 13 January 2005, C-8. While Chinese oil companies traditionally seek equity stakes—returns given as shares of the oil produced—this is prohibited in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, other arrangements were made that were less favorable financially.

35. Pant, "Saudi Arabia Woos China and India," 45.

36. Yetiv and Lu, "China, Global Energy, and the Middle East," 199–218.

37. "China, Saudi Arabia Convene on Economy, Trade," *China Daily*, 11 January 2010, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-01/11/content_9297021.htm.

38. Leverett and Bader "Managing China-US Energy Competition in the Middle East," 195–96.

39. See Copaken et al., "Symposium."

40. Jeffrey Towson, "Saudi Arabia's Economy is Experiencing its Largest Boom in Years," *Business Insider*, 23 March 2011, http://www.businessinsider.com/wow-saudi-arabias-economy-booms-2011-3.

41. "Saudi Arabia," *Export Development Canada*, August 2011, http://www.edc.ca/english/docs/gsaudiarabia_e.pdf.

42. "Background Note: Saudi Arabia," State Department Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, 6 May 2011, http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3584.htm#econ.

43. Paul Wolfowitz, "Defense Planning Guide, 1994–1999," 10. The document was leaked to the *New York Times* in 1992, causing a firestorm that led the Bush administration to revise and dilute the document. The controversy arose from various scholars, policymakers, and pundits criticizing a US strategy that sought to dominate the Middle East by preventing the emergence of any regional power. See the digital "National Security Archive" at George Washington University, http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb245/index.htm.

44. Alfred B. Prados, *Saudi Arabia: Current Issues and U.S. Relations*, CRS issue brief for Congress (Washington: CRS, 15 September 2003), 13, http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/IB93113.pdf.

45. On Chinese arms supplies to the region during the 1980s, see Anthony H. Cordesman, *Saudi Arabia: Guarding the Desert Kingdom* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 108–10.

46. Pant, "Saudi Arabia Woos China and India," 46.

47. Henry Meyer, "China and Saudi Arabia Form Stronger Trade Ties," *New York Times*, 20 April 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/21/business/global/21energy.html.

48. Yetiv, "China, Saudi Arabia Broaden Ties under U.S. Security Umbrella."

49. Some argue that China is comfortable "free-riding" on the "American security blanket" while others note that it seeks to expand its military capabilities to ensure its energy security in the region. For a discussion on this issue, see Yetiv and Lu, "China, Global Energy, and the Middle East."

50. The Saudis have purchased arms from other nations, including Britain, France, and China, but the United States has remained the kingdom's predominant arms supplier and guarantor of military security.

51. Gal Luft, "Fueling the Dragon: China's Race into the Oil Market," Institute for the Analysis of Global Security, 2003, http://www.iags.org/china.htm.

52. Simon Henderson, "Chinese-Saudi Cooperation: Oil but also Missiles," *PolicyWatch* no. 1095, 21 April 2006, http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/chinese-saudi-cooperation-oil-but-also-missiles.

53. See Morrison, "Oil, Non-Tax Revenue, and the Redistributional Foundations of Regime Stability"; Smith, "Oil Wealth and Regime Survival in the Developing World"; Byman and Green, "Enigma of Political Stability in the Persian Gulf Monarchies"; and Ulfelder, "Natural Resource Wealth and the Survival of Autocracies."

54. Bellin, "Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East"; and Byman and Green, "Enigma of Political Stability in the Persian Gulf Monarchies."

55. Gerd Nonneman, "Security and Inclusion: Regime Responses to Domestic Challenges in the Gulf," *Whitehall Papers* 51, no. 1 (2000): 107–15. This 1990s study demonstrated that most violence was a show of resistance against oil and US facilities rather than the regime itself.

56. Four prominent authors offered varying takes on the prudence of such an arms sale, though most recognized it was inevitable. See Anthony H. Cordesman, William Hartung, Loren Thompson, and F. Gregory Gause III, "Is Big Saudi Arms Sale a Good Idea?" *Council on Foreign Relations Expert Roundup*, 27 September 2010, http://www.cfr.org/defensehomeland-security/big-saudi-arms-sale-good-idea/p23019.

57. Jay Solomon, "Saudi Suggests 'Squeezing' Iran over Nuclear Ambitions," *Wall Street Journal*, 22 June 2011, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304887904576400083811644642.html.

58. For varying discussions of the role of domestic considerations on China's foreign policy, see Elizabeth C. Economy, "The Game Changer," *Foreign Affairs* 89, no. 6 (November/December 2010); and Ziegler, "Energy Factor in China's Foreign Policy."

59. Because Pakistan is not an NPT signatory, legal prohibition against sharing its nuclear technology is more ambiguous.

60. For a mere sampling of these debates, see Joseph S. Nye, "The Future of American Power: Dominance and Decline in Perspective," *Foreign Affairs* 89, no 6 (November/December 2010): 2–12; Aaron L. Friedberg, "The Future of U.S.-China Relations: Is Conflict Inevitable?" *International Security* 30, no. 2 (2005): 7–45; Alastair Iain Johnston, "Is China a Status Quo Power?" *International Security* 27, no. 4 (2003): 5–56; Gerald Segal, "Does China Matter?" *Foreign Affairs,* 78, no. 5 (September/October 1999): 24–36; and Elizabeth C. Economy and Adam Segal, "The G-2 Mirage," *Foreign Affairs* 88, no. 3 (May/June 2009).

61. Friedberg, "Future of U.S.-China Relations," 10.

62. For a discussion of Beijing's perception of Washington's aggressive liberal foreign policy, see Lanxin Xiang, "Washington's Misguided China Policy," *Survival* 43, no. 3 (2001): 7–23.

63. Yetiv, "China, Saudi Arabia Broaden Ties under U.S. Security Umbrella."

64. Evan S. Medeiros and Bates Gill, *Chinese Arms Exports: Policy, Players, and Process* (Washington: Strategic Studies Institute, 2000).

65. Paula DeSutter, "China Should Tighten Missile Controls," remarks by assistant secretary of state before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 24 July 2003, http://www.nti.org/db/china/engdocs/desutter_0724.htm.

66. Richard F. Grimmett, *Conventional Arms Transfers to Developing Nations, 2002–2009* (Washington: CRS, September 2010), 66, http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/weapons/R41403.pdf.

67. John Pomfret, "Chinese Firms Bypass Sanctions on Iran, U.S. Says," *Washington Post*, 18 October 2010, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/17/AR2010101703723.html.

68. Helene Cooper, "U.S. Approval of Taiwan arms Sales Angers China." *New York Times*, 29 January 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/30/world/asia/30arms.html.

69. The same was true of Hosni Mubarak's reign. Once the reformist movement reached a critical mass, no amount of concessions could appease the population.

70. Of course the United States and the Saudis have enjoyed close relations despite the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the relationship has even deepened. During the 1970s and 1980s, the Saudis (and Kuwaitis) refused to host a US presence, citing sensitivities surrounding US policy toward Israel and the lack of a solution to the conflict. The tune however changed in the early 1990s as Saddam Hussein came to be seen as a threat at the same time that Arab-Israeli tensions seemed to temporarily take a backseat within the broader regional context. Still, increased domestic pressure against the Saud regime to distance itself from US policy vis-à-vis the conflict could gradually chip away at US-Saudi relations. This does not suggest that an end to the special relationship is imminent; rather, it points to a potential source of disagreement that has, in the past, proven to be an obstacle to relations.

71. Yetiv, "China, Saudi Arabia Broaden Ties under U.S. Security Umbrella."

72. Robert Kaplan, "The Geography of Chinese Power," *Foreign Affairs* 89, no. 3 (May/June 2010).

The Rise of China and Varying Sentiments in Southeast Asia toward Great Powers

Il Hyun Cho and Seo-Hyun Park

For the countries in Southeast Asia, the rise of China is a mixed blessing. While they have benefitted greatly from its economic ties, they are increasingly alarmed about a more assertive China in their neighborhood. The continuing tension over territorial rights in the South China Sea is the latest dilemma. Given its potential for energy resources and unique strategic location, the South China Sea is particularly crucial in regional geopolitical dynamics. Since 2010, China has taken a more assertive approach to the issue by including it in what the Chinese call "core national interests." Responses from Southeast Asian states were varied, but regional concerns about China increased rapidly. Despite the much-improved relationship between China and Southeast Asian states over the past two decades, regional attitudes toward China quickly turned negative. This suggests lingering effects of latent fears rooted in historical experiences with China and the continuing relevance of anti-great-power sentiments in Southeast Asia.

The rise of China has not been the only "great-power problem" in the region. In fact, dealing with great powers has been an enduring foreign policy—and indeed, domestic political—concern. Southeast Asian relations with China are not developing anew due to the latter's rise. Present-day anti-Chinese views are neither unique nor "newly" emerging due to its

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rise, but can be explained as part of larger historical patterns of anti-great-power sentiments—for example, vis-à-vis Japan.

In this article, we highlight the historical nature and context of anti-Chinese sentiments in Southeast Asia. Moreover, while facing similar structural realities,[1] these nations have historically shown varying degrees of antagonism toward regional great powers, such as Japan in the early twentieth century and China in the twenty-first century.[2] An in-depth analysis of the region's historical experiences with—and the nature of domestic politicization of—such great-power relations finds important but previously underexamined variations in the type of anti-great-power sentiments and the degree to which they are politically salient among Southeast Asia nations. We argue that there is greater continuity than change in existing relations with China and suggest that China's rise does not constitute a fundamental structural change from a longer historical perspective. Perhaps more importantly, our survey of Southeast Asian perceptions of the great powers in both historical and contemporary contexts indicates that despite the dominant role played by regional great powers—including colonial Japan and a reemerging China—there are significant variations in the level of antagonism toward China and Japan.

The question is: what explains the variations in anti-great-power attitudes in Southeast Asia? Why do we see more or less politicization of anti-Chinese or anti-Japanese sentiments? We find that stances both for and against Japan or China are not obvious, nor are they driven solely by current strategic and economic circumstances. They are influenced by the trajectory of historical experiences, by prior framing of the colonial period, and by the Cold War era. Examining anti-Japanese and anti-Chinese sentiment in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region in the past several decades, we show that the varying degrees of intensity in oppositional sentiments are determined by two dimensions: the nature of the great-power-dependent historical experience and the degree to which it has been politicized in the postwar period.[3]

Explaining Anti-Great-Power Sentiments in Southeast Asia

While scholars agree on the crucial role of external great powers in interstate relations in Southeast Asia, they differ markedly in their assessments of the region's attitudes and policy behavior toward the relevant

great powers.[4] Various accounts have highlighted the regional structural dimension as a key factor shaping state behavior in response to the rise of China in Southeast Asia, predicting balancing, hedging, or bandwagoning by the ASEAN states. Two accounts in particular provide useful analytical frameworks: one centered on contemporary balance-of-power dynamics and the other emphasizing historically rooted, issue-specific regional patterns of interaction.

In the first model, many scholars expect that in the face of China's growing power, Southeast Asian nations would seek an external balancer, such as the United States. John Lee's study of Malaysia shows that in a major departure from former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's anti-American rhetoric and policies, Malaysian leaders in recent years have tried to maintain close security relations with the United States amid growing suspicion of China's intentions in the region.[5] Richard Weitz similarly argues that because of a more assertive China, the United States has been able to improve military ties with the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand, while enhancing security relations with Malaysia, Indonesia, and Vietnam.[6]

It is worth noting, however, that major structural changes have not always corresponded to shifts in state behavior in the region.[7] In the 1990s, for instance, neither the demise of Cold War tensions nor China's less assertive approach toward the South China Sea caused Indonesia's Suharto regime to change its views and behavior toward China. The "New Order" government's prior domestic legitimation strategy of anti-Chinese sentiment prevented it from adopting a dramatically new course of action, even in the face of different strategic realities. Only after the fall of Suharto in 1998 did Indonesian policy toward China begin to change. In other words, a key factor in accounting for policy and perceptual shifts vis-à-vis the region's great powers is the nature of domestic politicization of anti-great-power sentiments.

Regional sentiments of China then do not predictably respond to changes in the international environment; rather, they are shaped in large part by "China's contribution to their own domestic political and economic interests."[8] For example, some leaders may find it useful to drum up anti-foreign sentiments under conditions of political weakness, while others may eschew politicizing relations with China due to historical and current sensitivities. A focus on short-term behavioral shifts also tends to overlook other important domestic political considerations

such as the widespread desire for greater foreign policy autonomy and concerns about enduring structural dependency on great powers. In a recent study of Southeast Asia's grand strategy since 1975, John Ciorciari argues that smaller states also tend to pursue a policy of limited alignment instead of formal alliance relations, partly because the latter may entail compromised autonomy and fears of dependency, abandonment, or entrapment.[9]

A second set of explanations point to Southeast Asia's historical ties to China as a factor shaping sentiments toward its rise. Using this linear projection of long-standing and familiar relationships based on cultural similarities, one would expect a policy of accommodation by these nations toward the resurgent great power. David Kang, for example, has argued that Southeast Asian nations' cultural and ethnical ties with China, "combined with a long history of stable relations," help shape their perceptions and allow a largely accommodating strategy.[10]

While paying due attention to salient region-specific historical legacies, the China bandwagon account tends to give too much analytical weight to the role of cultural or historical underpinnings of interstate relations. As a result, it may overlook the underlying conditions in which unique historical experiences can get (de)politicized under different domestic and regional contexts. In fact, while bandwagoning with China may yield more economic benefits, it can be "politically undesirable and strategically risky since it is likely to limit the smaller states' freedom of action."[11]

What existing sentiments neglect to take into account then is a complex interplay between internal and external dynamics. These opposing sentiments are shaped internally through domestic political contestation and externally by historical experiences with outside powers. The overall attitude toward the outside power is established by the nature of the historical experience and is more concrete. However, internal dynamics may be more fluid, depending upon the nature of contemporary domestic politics. Rather than assuming deep structural or contingent effects of opposing sentiments a priori, we investigate whether anti-Chinese or anti-Japanese sentiments in Southeast Asia vary on a spectrum of attitudes that may result from the combination of historical path dependence and more recent processes of domestic politicization.

Existing discussions of Southeast Asian fears of a resurgent Japanese military fail to note variations in different legacies and attitudes. One author

argues that "the region is not yet ready for Japan to play an independent security role, particularly if it invites a reaction from China."[12] But regional hierarchy and the influence of great powers was not and is not experienced the same way in Asia. There are important differences between Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia as well as variations within Southeast Asia based on different historical legacies and postwar political contexts.

We make two claims here. First, negative attitudes toward China's growing power and influence are not uniformly expressed across the region, nor are they uniquely directed against a particular type of Chinese leadership. As a region, Southeast Asia has dealt with numerous great powers and has a long history of anti-great-power sentiments and attitudes vis-à-vis former European colonial powers, Japan, and the United States.[13] Anti-Chinese sentiments as an expression of desire for autonomy are not new.

Our second claim is that the politicization of anti-great-power sentiments has varied in terms of strength and salience according to specific domestic political contexts. Negative attitudes directed against Japan and China have been politicized and contested at different periods as part of elite attempts to bolster their weak or weakening legitimacy. Thus, it is neither insignificant nor unexpected that the colonial past and wartime victimization were made into "national" rather than regional or pan-Asian experiences. As aptly argued by Kuik Cheng-Chwee, "a small state's strategy towards a rising power is driven not so much by the growth of the great power's relative capabilities per se; rather, it is motivated more by an internal process of regime legitimation in which the ruling elite evaluate—and then utilize—the opportunities and challenges of the rising power for their ultimate goal of consolidating their authority to govern at home."[14] For example, Sukarno's postcolonial political platform of economic nationalism in Indonesia translated into anti-Dutch and anti-Japanese policies. His successor, Suharto, turned to anti-China sentiments to garner political support, referencing the sizeable ethnic Chinese population in Indonesia and widespread fears of communist expansionism. Mobilization of anti-great-power sentiments has come from nongovernmental sources as well. The early 1970s witnessed the growth of anti-Japan protests and student movements in Indonesia and Thailand. When public antagonism toward China heightened in Indonesia in response to the Chinese government's criticism of "ethnic persecution" in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis,

President Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie actually sought to downplay the role of anti-Chinese sentiments.

In sum, anti-Japanese and anti-Chinese sentiments have been mobilized in response to a variety of evolving trends—not only external but also domestic—such as decolonization, the Cold War and spread (both perceived and real) of communism in the region, trade imbalances, ethnic divisions, regime change, and democratization. Throughout both Northeast and Southeast Asia, different historical legacies and trajectories have impacted each country's domestic legitimacy politics and its proclivity to use anti-Chinese or anti-Japanese sentiments. Pro- versus anti-Japanese sentiments were useful for various nationalist and anticolonial projects in Southeast Asia, but less so in the postwar period due to Cold War politics at the international level and interethnic tensions and the prioritization of economic development at the domestic level. Anti-Chinese and anti-communist sentiments were also used for nation-building during the Cold War but in different degrees and during different time periods.

Such variability in the use of anti-great-power sentiments suggests that they are not so deeply held that they constitute widespread bias. Yet they are not so malleable that they do not pose constraints for political leaders. For example, it would be difficult for Malaysian leaders to suddenly adopt anti-Japanese stances as part of their economic nationalist rhetoric. Vietnamese leaders are unlikely to bandwagon with China. Similar to other oppositional attitudes then, anti-great-power sentiments in Southeast Asia tend to lie somewhere between irreversible "prejudice" and malleable "opinion."[15]

In the following, we examine the varieties of anti-great-power sentiments and strategies for dealing with great powers, measured in terms of both the degree of domestic mobilization and perceptions of threat as indicated in domestic security debates or policy behavior. We observe different responses to structural shifts (such as decolonization, the deepening of the Cold War and the threat of communism in Asia, and the end of the Cold War and subsequent rise of China) based on existing relations with various great powers and domestic legitimacy politics.

Anti-Japanese Sentiments in Southeast Asia

Although Japan's imperial expansion into Southeast Asia left an indelible mark on nationalist struggles in the region, it is important to

note that it was not the first or only colonial occupier. In fact, Japanese occupation helped to accelerate the process of independence in countries such as Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam. As Mark Beeson observes, "For all the self-serving rhetoric that accompanied Japan's proposed 'Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere,' it did mark the beginnings of the sort of pan-Asianism that continues to play a part in contemporary political practices across the region."[16]

Varying Legacies of Japanese Imperialism in Postcolonial Domestic Politics

In effect, Japan's wartime rule was compared to that of other colonial powers. Some of the most negative reactions to Japanese imperialism were displayed in the Philippines, where US rule was favored over occupation by the Japanese, who were considered aggressors. The US-centric view of the Philippine elites is seen in the remarks of President Manuel Quezon in August 1941: "We owe loyalty to America, and we are bound to her by bonds of everlasting gratitude. Should the United States enter the war, the Philippines will follow her and fight by her side, placing at her disposal all our manpower and material resources to help her achieve victory, and for this reason America's fight is our own fight."[17]

There are also examples of indigenous nationalist movements that collaborated with the Japanese against Western colonial powers. For example, the Burmese elite admired Japan's successful modernization in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the nationalist Thakin Party "hoped for Japanese military assistance in their struggle to be free of Britain and provided assistance to the Japanese Minami Group, which was directly controlled by the Japanese army." Accordingly, Burma was the first occupied country to be granted "independence" (in January 1943), and Burmese leader Ba Maw "met Japan's top leadership five times . . . between March 1943 and 15 August 1945; no other leader in the Southern Co-Prosperity Sphere had such close contact with top Japanese officials."[18] Similarly, the Indonesian nationalist leaders' involvement with the Japanese in their anti-Dutch, pro-independence struggle made anti-Japanese mobilizations less credible and less likely in the postwar period. Compared to other countries in East Asia, especially China or Korea, colonial rule under Japan was not a collective experience or memory—either at the national or regional level.

Another reason why anti-Japanese mobilizations subsided after 1945 was that resistance to Japanese rule had been led by the socialist Left and the region's communist parties, which in some cases worked with Allied militaries against Tokyo.[19] Even in the Philippines, anti-Japanese sentiments became less salient with the return of the United States and the onset of the Cold War, but also because the core of the resistance movement had been the local communists and the People's Anti-Japanese Army, the Hukbalahap, who were marginalized after World War II.[20]

It is also important to note that residual anti-Japanese sentiments were generally strongest among the ethnic Chinese populations within the region. Views of the Japanese military occupation differed considerably among the native Malays and the ethnic Chinese in Malaysia, for example. "Postwar criticism of the sultans and members of the aristocracy who opted, or were forced, to cooperate with Japan came mainly from Chinese rather than the Malays." With the introduction of the Bumiputera policy in May 1969, which sought to assert Malay dominance by favoring Malays as "sons of the soil," the negative experiences and perceptions of the ethnic Chinese population were depoliticized, and the government moved toward improving relations with Japan.[21] Similarly, the role and influence of ethnic Chinese nationalists in Indonesia subsided after the aborted coup of 1965.[22]

Cold War Politics and Economic Ties with Japan

The Cold War provided important structural constraints and divided Southeast Asia into communist versus anti-communist countries. In general, maritime Southeast Asia and Thailand adopted a pro-Western/anti-communist stance in their domestic and foreign policies. Despite reservations and some protest, especially from the Philippines, the United States intervened to help Japan "reenter" the region. Kishi Nobusuke was the first Japanese prime minister to visit Southeast Asia in 1957. He proposed a "Southeast Asian Development Fund," through which a total of more than $1 billion in damages and $737 million in loans would be paid as part of a reparation settlement.[23] The first agreement was signed with Burma in 1954 (with a supplementary agreement in 1963), followed by the Philippines, Indonesia, South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia between 1956 and 1959 and agreements with Malaysia and Singapore in 1967 after their independence from Britain.[24]

While responses and receptivity to the reparations negotiations varied across the region, the Cold War environment and the urgent task of postwar/postcolonial rebuilding triumphed over lingering antagonism toward the Japanese, particularly at the elite level. For example, by 1957 "the Indonesian state had embraced a heightened economic nationalism that involved increased state intervention to restructure the economy and the takeover of a great deal of Dutch-owned property."[25] After Suharto took power in 1967, he inaugurated the "New Order" which emphasized "a very different form of nationalist expression" from the previous Sukarno era. "A romantic autarchic nationalism was set aside and replaced by a concentration on economic development through an engagement with the international capitalist economy."[26] Suharto was eager to draw in foreign investment from the United States and Japan and placed the Indonesian economy under the guidance of a group of US-trained technocrats known as the Berkeley Mafia.[27]

By the 1970s, however, a growing fear of Japan's economic domination in several Southeast Asian countries led to criticisms of Tokyo's aggressive resource diplomacy and resentment against Japanese businesses, exemplified by Thailand's boycott of Japanese goods in 1972. Chronic trade deficits and the "shallow" nature of Japanese foreign direct investment (FDI) contributed to growing anti-Japanese frustrations. In early November 1972, student representatives of 10 major universities in Thailand adopted a resolution designating 10 days of that month as "Boycott Japanese Products Period" in protest of "Japanese economic imperialism in Thailand." Throughout November, the students organized demonstrations, marches, and meetings in many parts of the country. The Thai government, fearing potential damage to Thai-Japanese relations by the sudden spurt of anti-Japanese activities, demanded that the students refrain from violence. Nevertheless, students concentrated on boycott activities at various retail centers, where minor violent incidents took place.[28]

In January 1974, when Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei visited Southeast Asia, unprecedented anti-Japanese demonstrations escalated into violent riots in Bangkok and Jakarta.[29] As in Thailand, they reflected the frustrations of increasing economic dependence on Japan. It was widely believed that the reparations settlement had benefited Japan more than the recipient nations, as the bulk of the payments were commodity and service grants, allowing Japan to increase its production and develop

markets for its exports. In fact, the United States had helped Japan pursue economic interests in Southeast Asia, such as securing markets (to replace the "loss" of China) and raw materials, and allowed the Japanese to tie in the war reparations issue to postwar rebuilding.[30]

To counter widespread perceptions of arrogance as well as fast-paced economic penetration on the part of Japan, Tokyo has given sizeable official development assistance (ODA) to the region. Its policy toward Southeast Asia became more comprehensive and institutionalized with the announcement of the Fukuda Doctrine in 1977, whereby Prime Minister Fukuda Takeo promised to promote "heart-to-heart" contact with the governments and people of Southeast Asia and provide more than $1 billion in aid to ASEAN states.[31] Thus, Tokyo sought both redemption from its wartime past by renouncing the pursuit of military power and gaining the trust of ASEAN states through economic aid.[32] By the 1980s, Japan became "Southeast Asia's largest investor, largest exporter, largest foreign aid donor, largest buyer of raw materials such as oil, natural gas, and timber, and largest source of tourism."[33] Moreover, by this period, its economic expansion into the region did not face the strong anti-Japanese sentiment that had existed in the "first wave" of investments in the 1970s.[34]

Changing ASEAN Perceptions in the Post–Cold War Era?

In the post–Cold War period, Southeast Asian countries have undergone reconsiderations of Japan's political and security role. While Japan had been seen primarily as a source of financial and technical assistance toward economic development in the past, Tokyo began to pursue closer political relations with the ASEAN since the 1980s. The Japanese government was also careful to balance relations among various actors by

> keeping in step with the United States and the West while insisting on its distinctive "Asian" ties with the countries of South-East Asia; siding with ASEAN while keeping the doors open for economic relations with Vietnam; making sure that ASEAN is not neglected while pursuing a forward economic policy in China; [and] supporting the Chinese position over the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia while trying to restrain China's punitive policies against Vietnam.[35]

Faced with increasing competition from China for political influence since the mid 1990s, Japan has emphasized soft-power diplomacy in Southeast Asia, using foreign aid, economic networking, and people-to-people contact via social and cultural exchanges as its core strategies.

According to some observers, "Tokyo's economic and political contributions toward ASEAN institutionalization and integration have bettered its image among Southeast Asian nations and their people."[36] Such a development stands in contrast to the rise of nationalist expressions in the form of anti-US protests in the Philippines in the early 1990s. In fact, when the financial crisis hit Thailand and spread through other parts of Asia in 1997, Japanese leadership was expected and indeed, for the most part, welcomed.

ASEAN members have sought to manage the twin challenge of a rising China and tension-filled Sino-Japanese relations by engaging both countries into their regional framework. While the original motivation for the formation of the ASEAN was driven by the uncertainties of the Cold War, it could also be argued that the "ability of ASEAN to 'reinvent' itself and to be seen as the driver behind the ASEAN+3 process was in part due to the lack of reconciliation between Japan and China."[37] In other words, an unchanging element of Southeast Asian foreign policy appears to be the "problem of how to pursue their national interests within the constraints of the dynamics of the great powers' presence in the region."[38]

Anti-Chinese Sentiments in Southeast Asia

Prior to the arrival of European powers in the early nineteenth century, China was the undisputed regional hegemon for most of its history. Many Southeast Asian states maintained asymmetric relations with various Chinese dynasties. For instance, the tributary system centered on the Middle Kingdom affected Thailand ever since the Kingdom of Sukhothai, which later became Siam and paid tribute to the Yuan dynasty. Successive Thai kingdoms maintained that relationship into the late nineteenth century.[39] For Vietnam as well, the combined effects of a thousand years of coexistence and centuries of Chinese interference and the more recent ideological tension during the Cold War period made its leaders "[blend] pragmatism with a core of deep nationalism."[40]

Historical Linkages and Postwar Experiences with China

In the early-to-mid twentieth century, Southeast Asian relations with China became strained. Even before the communist victory in the Chinese Civil War, ties between a number of nations in Southeast Asia and China

had started to deteriorate due to growing nationalism in the region. In the early 1900s, Sino-Thai relations were difficult to manage in the midst of "the rising nationalism among the Thais and Chinese, the large number of ethnic Chinese who had settled in Thailand, Thai government policies that discriminated against the ethnic Chinese, and sporadic attempts by the Chinese governments to protect their cousins in Thailand."[41]

With the emergence of the People's Republic of China (PRC), regional relationships with China took a decisive turn toward antagonism. A key factor behind this dynamic was the negative effects of looming Chinese power and influence on domestic political stability and regime legitimacy. Thai prime minister Phibun Songkhram, alarmed by China's expansionist potential, adopted domestic policies aimed at leftists and ethnic Chinese and strengthened Thailand's military and economic relations with the United States by joining the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) in 1954.[42] Particularly troubling for the government in Bangkok was China's interference in Thai domestic politics by supporting the Communist Party of Thailand's insurgency in the 1960s and its sponsorship of two revolutionary movements, the Patriotic Front of Thailand and the Thailand Independent Movement.[43]

Malaysia experienced similar dynamics. In the face of China's continued support for the insurgent Communist Party of Malaya (CPM), Kuala Lumpur viewed the PRC as a "principal source in the context of a residual insurgency which drew primary support from an ethnic-Chinese constituency."[44] During this early Cold War period, anti-Chinese sentiments in the region were such that even Myanmar, which had maintained strong economic and military ties with China—commonly referred to as *paukwaw* (brotherly love)—was swamped with anti-Chinese rioting during the Chinese Cultural Revolution in the 1960s, a continuing source of tension even today due to a growing ethnic Chinese population in the porous northern region of Myanmar.[45]

Anti-Chinese sentiments were particularly strong in Indonesia where the *pribumi*, or indigenous people, resented ethnic Chinese and their close ties to the authoritarian Suharto regime.[46] Along with the "historical memory of the precolonial era [and] the role of the ethnic Chinese in dominating the country's economic life," China's suspected help for the failed coup against the Sukarno regime in 1965 was the final blow to already troubled relations.[47] The Indonesian government's official explanation of the abortive coup had linked its indigenous communist

party (PKI) specifically to the PRC by accusing the former of getting support from the latter. In 1967, Indonesia formally severed diplomatic ties with China.[48] The Suharto-led New Order government used the triple threat—the People's Republic of China, the domestic ethnic Chinese population, and the Indonesian communists—as the basis for bolstering its political legitimacy by portraying the regime as "the savior of the Indonesian state from a Communist takeover."[49]

The Cold War and Varying Anti-Chinese Sentiments

The regional views toward China began to vary more widely in the early 1970s. The détente between the United States and China provided Chinese leaders strategic breathing space, and China's previous strategy of spreading its ideology by helping communist insurgency in the Third World subsided. Amid this change, in May 1974, Malaysia became the first country in Southeast Asia to normalize diplomatic ties with China.[50] A year later, a new civilian government in Thailand, led by Prime Minister M. R. Kukrit Pramoj, also announced diplomatic relations with the PRC. The expansion of North Vietnamese influence over neighboring Laos, Cambodia, and South Vietnam and the US withdrawal from Vietnam also allowed for diplomatic opening with China.[51]

Thailand's bilateral ties with China improved substantially after Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia in 1978.[52] During the Cambodian conflict, the PRC provided various support for Vietnam's smaller neighbors, especially Thailand.[53] Overall, China's relations with Southeast Asian nations, especially in Indochina, improved markedly in the latter part of the Cold War, thereby enhancing its positive image in the region. These shifts in perception toward China in Indochina were due in large part to its contribution to domestic political stability and regime legitimacy. In an interesting turn of events, China's previous support for local insurgencies, a principal source of regime instability throughout the region, was replaced with its timely political support and military assistance during Vietnam's regional expansion.[54] As a result, anti-Chinese feelings were substantially reduced.

In the early 1990s, however, a new challenge emerged. While economic engagement with China continued to benefit regimes in the region, China's political and military involvements in Indochina decreased. Along with the resolution of the Cambodian conflict, the demise of the Cold War led to the withdrawal of Soviet forces from the region and

the closing of US bases in the Philippines. The external changes rekindled "new anxieties about Chinese designs in the region," as China's rapprochement with Russia and Vietnam suggested that the political constraints on its options to use force in support of strategic objectives in maritime Southeast Asia have been somewhat lessened."[55] Long set aside during the Cambodian conflict, disputes over the Spratly Islands resurfaced,[56] creating a fissure between members of the ASEAN and China.[57]

Since the mid 1990s, Beijing began to make concerted efforts to improve ties with its southern neighbors. Its new approach was part of a larger strategy to enhance relations with countries along its border, and results were particularly effective in Southeast Asia.[58] A crucial driver behind the more positive relations between China and the ASEAN states was the economic gains that reaped political benefits for regimes across the region. China's relationship with Singapore, for instance, benefited both nations due to the island-state's role as "a key economic partner in a joint venture to create a satellite city in Suzhou, near Shanghai, modeled on its own successful experience of urban development." Similarly, Malaysia's prime minister Mahathir declared that "it is high time for us to stop seeing China through the lenses of threat and to fully view China as the enormous opportunity that it is."[59]

Over time, countries in the region showed signs of appreciating China's multifaceted contributions to their domestic political stability and regime legitimacy. Examples include China's decision not to devalue the yuan during the Asian financial crisis of 1997–98, its free trade agreement with the ASEAN, "a joint declaration on a code of conduct in the South China Sea, cooperation with ASEAN to combat the SARS outbreak in early 2003, and Beijing's decision to accede to ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia."[60] At the same time, however, apprehensions about China's potential to become a main economic rival and a dominant regional force prompted Southeast Asian states to take a multilateral approach via the ASEAN in their dealings with China.[61]

Perceptions of China in Southeast Asia have varied significantly, depending on the nature of each country's historical experiences and domestic legitimacy strategies. For instance, due to its strategic cooperation with China during the Cambodian conflict, Phnom Penh "has staunchly supported Beijing's 'One China' policy, banned the Falun Gong, and blocked a visit by the Dalai Lama," while endorsing China's position on the Spratly Islands dispute.[62] Similarly, Malaysia's relations

with China flourished as their political and economic interests converged on various issues.[63] Along with the end of the Communist Party of Malaysia in 1989, "the growing salience of economic performance as a source of legitimacy for the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition" and Prime Minister Mahathir's anti-US foreign policy approach were largely congruent with China's regional vision. The combination of compatible foreign policy priorities and economic benefits enabled political leaders in Kuala Lumpur "*to downplay, if not overcome, their earlier apprehensions about the potential security ramifications* of a powerful neighbor" (emphasis in original).[64]

Thailand also maintained its positive relationship with China, playing the role of mediator between China and regional organizations. In contrast to other ASEAN states, it lacks territorial disputes with China and has "an ethnic Chinese minority thoroughly integrated into Thai society." As a result, the two countries strengthened their ties such that then Chinese prime minister Zhu Rongji called his trip to Thailand a "family visit to a relative," while Thai prime minister Thaksin Sinawatra declared that Thailand was China's "closest" and "most sincere" friend."[65] In 2005, Thailand even invited the first Chinese observer group to the Cobra Gold exercise, a multilateral military exercise involving Thai, US, and Singaporean forces.[66]

Despite similar historical and cultural ties, neighboring Singapore has shown a more cautious attitude, suggesting the differing effects of domestic legitimacy strategies involving China. Since its independence as a multiethnic state, with 76 percent of its population ethnic Chinese, the city-state has endeavored to dispel the image of the "third China," placing a "self-imposed limit" on its ties with China that has continued during the post–Cold War period.[67] Due to the importance of maritime trade in its economy and regime stability, Singapore has not only called for ensuring freedom of navigation at sea but also expressed particular anxiety over the Spratly Islands and the Taiwan Strait.[68] Consequently, it has taken a multifaceted regional strategy centered upon its reliance on the US strategic role and engagement of China through the ASEAN and other regional institutional mechanisms.[69]

Anti-Chinese Sentiments in Twenty-First-Century Southeast Asia

An interesting regional division has emerged among Southeast Asian attitudes toward China reflecting different historical experiences and

varying levels of salience of Chinese influence in domestic legitimacy politics. However, historical links and experiences have not singularly or decisively determined the nature of regional perceptions toward and relations with China. A rising China is increasingly a contested topic in domestic debates throughout the region. In the 1990s, Indochinese states turned to the ASEAN as a means to ensure political autonomy against its rising influence. Regionally isolated and weakened after the Cambodian conflict, Vietnam sought ASEAN membership for "critical resources for political and diplomatic rehabilitation, and access to regional and international markets and investment."[70] Tension between China and Indochinese states arises from China's hydropower and other projects upstream on the Mekong River which may result in "potentially serious ecological, economic and human impacts downstream," with attendant domestic political consequences for regimes in the Mekong region.[71]

In maritime Southeast Asia as well, attitudes toward China have recently undergone change according to shifts in domestic political factors. Despite decades-long antagonism during most of the Cold War period, Indonesia's anti-Chinese sentiments were substantially reduced after the demise of the authoritarian New Order government and subsequent democratization in the late 1990s. Echoing Malaysian prime minister Mahathir, Indonesian president Abdurrahman Wahid's efforts to work closely with China stemmed from "domestic requirements at a time that made it necessary for the government to display a degree of independence in dealing with the outside world (the West) on the one hand, and to induce a sense of dignity and pride on the other."[72]

At the same time, however, latent sources of friction with China continue. These include "resentment over the structure of trade, with Indonesia providing raw materials while Chinese companies compete with domestic Indonesian manufacturers" and Indonesia's "long history of resenting the economic role of the country's ethnic Chinese minority."[73] Despite the lingering potential for antagonism toward China, it is equally important to note that Indonesia has exercised a remarkable degree of caution. For instance, during anti-Chinese riots in 1998, President Habibie chose not to respond to China's "limited diplomatic intervention" for persecuted ethnic Chinese in Indonesia, a political decision made to calm anti-Chinese sentiments which "would almost certainly have aggravated domestic disorder and impeded the Republic's economic recovery."[74] As Indonesia's economy improves, however, political elites "will be alert to signs that China is

ignoring Southeast Asia's interests, trying to impose its will in the region, or insufficiently accommodating Indonesia's 'natural leadership' in Southeast Asia."[75]

Similar ambivalence characterizes the Philippine perception of China. On the one hand, China's booming economy and growing trade benefit the island nation's economy and political stability tremendously. Its trade surplus with China and investment from Chinese businesses serve as "lifelines" for its troubled economy. On the other hand, the military in the Philippines continues to harbor suspicion, maintaining that China's relatively moderate stance on the South China Sea since signing the Declaration on the Conduct of the Parties in the South China Sea in 1992 may be "tactical and temporary."[76] More importantly, that suspicion is shared by the general public. In most surveys, Filipinos tend to show greater affinity for the United States than any other country in the region, a trend reinforced by their historical experiences and strong cultural ties between the two Pacific states.[77] As a result, Philippine officials maintain that "the country wields a powerful card in dealing with China through its military alliance with the U.S."[78]

In sum, Southeast Asian views toward China remain ambivalent due in large part to the enduring dilemma about dependency on great powers and a yearning for regional autonomy. Although economic opportunities derived from China's rapid growth "can offset an over-dependence on the U.S. economy, ASEAN states also fear over-dependence on the Chinese economy and that Beijing might in the future use that dependence to pressure the region."[79] Overall, there exists a regionwide consensus that Southeast Asian countries "need to have a strong foundation in ASEAN to deal with China over time."[80] More importantly, the use of the multilateral approach through the institutional network of the ASEAN helps allay a sense of dependency on great powers and provides a regional mechanism to cope with various strategic challenges.[81]

Conclusion

As China's rise coincides with the perceived decline of US influence, the East Asian regional order appears to be in great flux. Pundits and scholars have characterized the state of affairs in various ways. Some predict that either balancing or bandwagoning behavior will prevail in the region, but before assuming a particular policy behavior on the part of

the region's small states, one must investigate how they understand and grapple with the challenges associated with confronting great powers. Our historical and cross-country comparative study of sentiments toward Japan and China found that the nature of historical experiences and the domestic politicization of great-power relations have influenced the strength and salience of anti-great-power sentiments in Southeast Asia.

Recent dynamics concerning the South China Sea provide a unique window into the challenge of navigating between the different regional powers, including China, Japan, and the United States. As China's activities around the area took on a more aggressive pattern, some of the regional countries expressed concerns and even reached out to other great powers, such as the United States, Russia, and Japan.[82] After the South China Sea dispute, Japanese leaders also attempted to capitalize on this new regional development. In November 2011, for instance, Prime Minister Noda Yoshihiko agreed with Philippine president Benigno Aquino III "to forge closer maritime security ties to resolve disputes with China in the South China Sea."[83] For the Obama administration, which has been seeking to rejuvenate US regional influence, the tension between China and its Southeast Asian neighbors also became "an opportunity to reassert itself."[84] In September 2010, the United States hosted an unprecedented summit in New York with all 10 leaders of the ASEAN nations and discussed the South China Sea dispute.[85]

More broadly, in January 2012 the Obama administration issued the strategic defense guidance document which formally announced the US shift in strategic focus to Asia.[86] Echoing Southeast Asian sentiments toward a rising China, however, the impact of the US pivot has not been uniform in the region. For instance, relations with Vietnam have improved markedly, as manifested in Hillary Clinton's three visits as secretary of state and the two-way annual trade volume of more than $22 billion.[87] That Vietnam is one of the claimants disputing China's ownership of the Spratly Islands adds momentum in the US-Vietnam rapprochement, a dynamic mirrored in the Philippines' growing ties with the United States.

However, owing largely to its historically close strategic ties with Beijing and the absence of domestic politicization, Phnom Penh has been more pro-China in its orientation, rejecting "the Philippines' and Vietnam's attempts to include its South China Sea grievances against China in a joint ASEAN communiqué."[88] Even in the Philippines, where defense

cooperation with the United States has recently been pronounced, the US pivot intensifies domestic political contestation. For political elites in Manila, including President Aquino, the United States is favorably viewed as a strategic partner, providing military assistance in establishing a "minimum credible defense posture." For others, "the prospect of an American 'pivot' reads as a warning against an expansive military presence" in the context of "a legacy of human-rights violations and the perception that U.S. soldiers are above Philippine law."[89] As a result of such deeply divided political opinion, many protests against the United States and its military forces erupted in 2012.

In other words, there are significant variations among several Southeast Asian claimants in the South China Sea in terms of their domestic politicization of the issue and policy responses. Instead of balancing with the United States against China in a straightforward manner, most countries in the region have thus far shown a remarkable degree of strategic ambivalence, reflecting their long and varied historical interactions with China and different degrees of politicization of anti-great-power sentiments. In this regard, Southeast Asian countries have made conscientious efforts to avoid appearing to side with the United States, as that would increase a sense of dependency on the United States—a political move that might be unpopular in some countries. As a result, the joint statement issued after the first US-ASEAN summit did not include the term *South China Sea* that the United States had initially inserted in the draft. A high-ranking Southeast Asian official explained that leaders in the region "did not want to give the impression that we were willing to do whatever the United States said. By deleting 'South China Sea,' we saved the face of both China and the United States."[90]

After 2010 ended with friction and growing regional concerns about its assertiveness, China has sought to reassure neighbors in Southeast Asia. In July 2011, Chinese foreign minister Yang and his ASEAN counterparts "formally endorsed a set of guidelines to lay the framework for a potential code of conduct in the South China Sea."[91] China also made a series of proposals on cooperation, including "the convening of a symposium on free navigation in the South China Sea, and the establishment of three special committees on marine scientific research and environmental protection, navigation safety and search and rescue operations, and combating transnational crimes on the sea."[92]

How Southeast Asian nations will respond to China's diplomatic charm offensive in the coming years is not entirely clear at the time of this writing. If the findings of the present study are any guide, however, the type and nature of those responses will hinge crucially on the nature of interactions with the Chinese and how anti-Chinese sentiments are politicized domestically. We also believe that a better understanding of anti-great-power sentiments in the region is critical not only to managing the South China Sea dispute, but to gauging the future stability of the East Asian regional order. SSQ

Notes

1. By *structure*, we are referring primarily to international systemic conditions—specifically, the asymmetry of power (both material and ideational dimensions) between great powers and smaller states in Southeast Asia.

2. While recognizing that the United States has also been a key "great power" in the region, we do not specifically examine anti-US sentiments in this article primarily for both pragmatic and theoretical reasons. Because we were interested in comprehensively examining the intraregional variations in anti-great-power sentiments during specific moments of structural change, we limited our analytical scope to anti-Chinese and anti-Japanese sentiments in the early twentieth century and early 2000s respectively. The United States creates additional layers of complexity for comparability of cases. The role of the United States, in terms of its political-military as well as social influence, was not established or experienced as a similar structural constraint in Southeast Asia. The Philippines and Vietnam emerge as important outliers, while other Southeast Asian nations forged (or reforged) relations with the United States after 1945. For a systematic survey of anti-US sentiment in various parts of the world, see Peter J. Katzenstein and Robert O. Keohane, eds., *Anti-US in World Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007). For analyses of anti-US sentiments in Asia, see Matthew Carlson and Travis Nelson, "Anti-Americanism in Asia? Factors Shaping International Perceptions of American Influence," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 8, no. 3 (2008): 303–24; and Mark Beeson, "U.S. hegemony and Southeast Asia: The Impact of, and Limit to, U.S. Power and Influence," *Critical Asian Studies*, 36, no. 3 (2004): 445–62.

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Taiwan Public Opinion on Cross-Strait Security Issues

Implications for US Foreign Policy

Yuan-kang Wang

The Taiwan issue is one of the most intractable challenges for international security, as it has the potential to trigger a great-power war between the United States and the People's Republic of China (PRC). For decades, the United States has adopted a policy of strategic ambiguity toward the Taiwan Strait. By not specifying a clear course of action if war breaks out, Washington hopes to use uncertainty about US intervention both to deter China from attacking Taiwan and also to deter Taiwan from taking actions that might provoke China. Uncertainty about the US response is expected to induce caution and discourage provocative behavior across the strait, thus having a deterrent effect.

The policy was put to a test from 1995 to 2008 when, despite growing economic ties between Taiwan and China, cross-strait relations deteriorated. Beijing feared Taiwan was moving away from its goal of unification, whereas Taipei feared its freedom of action was increasingly constrained by China's rising power and growing international clout. China built up its military capabilities across the strait and took actions to isolate Taiwan diplomatically, while Taiwan reasserted its sovereignty and struggled to break free of China's diplomatic isolation. Cross-strait tensions erupted into a crisis in 1995–96 when China launched missiles off Taiwan's coast and conducted amphibious military exercises. In response, the United States dispatched two aircraft carrier groups to the region, the largest display of US naval power since the Vietnam War.[1] Against the background of strategic ambiguity, both Beijing and Washington tested each other's resolve. Although the crisis tapered off

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after Taiwan's presidential election, the 1995–96 Taiwan Strait crisis remained a sober reminder of the danger of miscalculations. In the aftermath of the crisis, Washington resorted to a proactive approach of "dual deterrence," issuing both warnings and reassurance to Taipei and Beijing. With the election of Taiwan president Ma Ying-jeou in 2008, cross-strait tensions eased. Washington was able to deemphasize dual deterrence and to foster a positive environment for cross-strait dialogue.[2]

The policy of strategic ambiguity is considered a better option than strategic clarity in preserving peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.[3] Yet, an understudied dimension of strategic ambiguity is Taiwan's public opinion regarding the strength of US commitments to the island. Before Taiwan's democratization, leaders in the three capitals of Washington, Beijing, and Taipei were the main players in the triangular relationship. With democratization, the Taiwanese voters emerged as a crucial factor influencing cross-strait security. As Chu Yun-han and Andrew Nathan point out, Taiwanese voters are now the "fourth player" in the US-Taiwan-China strategic triangle, holding "effective veto power" over any cross-strait agreement.[4] If Taiwanese voters have strong confidence in US defense of the island, Washington's deliberate ambiguity may not deter them from choosing risky policies. Since Taiwan is a democracy, the public's belief regarding US support can influence how its elected leaders make policy decisions about China. It is thus imperative to study Taiwan's public opinion on cross-strait security issues.

This article analyzes four issues vis-à-vis Taiwanese public opinion on cross-strait security: (1) confidence in US support, (2) US arms sales to Taiwan, (3) cross-strait economic ties, and (4) a potential peace agreement. The 2011 Taiwan National Security Survey conducted by the Election Study Center of the National Chengchi University in Taipei is the basis for this research.[5] It reveals vast differences among the Taiwanese public across party lines on these four issues which will impact US foreign policy. Before analyzing the survey, it is necessary to provide a brief historical overview of the trilateral relationship.

The Past: Taiwan, the United States, and China

In 1949, having lost the civil war to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the Kuomintang (KMT) government led by Chiang Kai-shek retreated to the offshore island of Formosa (Taiwan), which the United

States recognized as the Republic of China (ROC). The victorious communists quickly planned an amphibious invasion, but Taiwan was saved by an unexpected turn of events. The outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 forced the CCP to shelve the invasion plan and move the bulk of its troops to China's northeast border with Korea. The United States, seeing the Korean War as part of a global communist expansion, intervened with military force under the auspices of the United Nations. To avoid a second war front beyond the Korean Peninsula, Washington dispatched the Seventh Fleet to the Taiwan Strait to prevent either the CCP or the KMT from attacking each other. The unexpected Korean War also prompted US leaders, who were prepared to abandon Taiwan, to elevate the strategic value of the island in Washington's global strategy of containment. Taiwan became a US ally in the Cold War.

Because the KMT was severely weakened in the Chinese civil war, the United States became the security guarantor of Taiwan. US economic and military assistance was crucial to the survival of the government in Taipei. Taiwan relied on the United States to balance the power of the PRC. This strategy of balancing resulted in the US-ROC Mutual Defense Treaty, concluded in the midst of the first Taiwan Strait crisis of 1954–55. The subsequent influx of US economic and military aid helped revitalize Taiwan's economy and strengthen the island's defenses. Taipei turned Jinmen (Quemoy) and Mazu (Matsu), offshore islands in close proximity to the Chinese mainland, into heavily fortified strongholds, stationing as many as 100,000 soldiers. It cooperated with the United States on joint intelligence gathering and flew aerial reconnaissance missions over the mainland.

Taiwan's formal alliance with the United States came to an end in 1979 when Washington switched diplomatic recognition to the PRC. In response, Congress passed the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), a US domestic law. Two key elements in the TRA are crucial to Taiwan's security: strategic ambiguity and arms sales. First, the law enshrines the policy of strategic ambiguity. It states explicitly that any effort to settle the Taiwan issue by nonpeaceful means will be considered "a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States." It authorizes the president, in consultation with Congress, to take "appropriate action" should conflict arise in the Taiwan Strait. Since what constitutes "appropriate" response to a PRC attack on Taiwan is open to interpretation, this policy was ultimately one of "strategic

ambiguity."[6] Embedded in strategic ambiguity is the uncertainty of US involvement if conflict breaks out in the Taiwan Strait. A clear commitment to Taiwan would be politically provocative to Beijing, thus jeopardizing US-China relations, and might embolden Taipei into taking an intransigent stance vis-à-vis Beijing, thus destabilizing the strait. On the other hand, a clear noncommitment to Taiwan might embolden Beijing to use military means against the island, creating a situation Washington wishes to avoid. In Washington's calculation, strategic ambiguity gives the United States maximal policy flexibility and capacity to preserve peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.[7]

The second key element in the TRA pertains to US arms sales. The law stipulates that Washington shall supply "arms of a defensive character" to Taiwan. The arms sales ameliorate some of the power asymmetry between Taiwan and the much larger China, but more importantly, they signal the level of US political support of Taiwan. Needless to say, Beijing has repeatedly tried to limit the extent of the arms sales, most notably in the 17 August 1982 US-China communiqué. To reassure Taiwan, President Ronald Reagan pledged six assurances, including not to set a date for ending US arms sales and not to hold prior consultations with China.[8] As China modernizes its military power, US arms sales help Taiwan maintain some level of self-defense, strengthen its bargaining position vis-à-vis China, and boost confidence on the island. In a way, the formal alliance between Taiwan and the United States prior to 1979 was replaced by an informal, quasi-alliance relationship.

Subsequently, Taiwan experienced a series of political reforms that culminated in the island's democratization in the 1990s. The same period also witnessed the rise of Taiwanese identity as well as growing aspirations for international recognition. The process of democratization created opportunities for politicians to win elections by using the issue of Taiwanese nationalism to mobilize voters.[9] For its part, Beijing saw Taiwan's identity politics as deviating from the "One-China principle," and it interpreted the actions of Taiwanese leaders as implicit moves toward creeping independence. In 1996, Taiwan held its first direct presidential election amidst missile threats from China. President Lee Teng-hui won a landslide victory. To Beijing's chagrin, he declared in 1999 that cross-strait relations were akin to "special state-to-state relations." In 2000 the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) replaced the KMT as the ruling party. President Chen Shui-bian took a

step further and declared in 2002 that there was "one country on each side of the Taiwan Strait." Beijing sharply criticized these statements, viewing a series of Taiwan's "de-Sinification" programs as moves toward independence. In 2005, China passed the Anti-Secession Law, giving it a domestic legal basis to use force if Taiwan declares independence.

During the same period, US-Taiwan relations were at a historic low, thanks to President Chen Shui-bian's unilateral moves on cross-strait issues and lack of prior consultation with Washington. Preoccupied with wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Bush administration saw Taipei's actions as "rocking the boat." Washington expressed its opposition to any unilateral moves to alter the status quo, as defined by the United States, in the Taiwan Strait.[10] For its part, Beijing adroitly portrayed Taiwan as the troublemaker, a view that was widely accepted in the world. Few attributed the tensions to Beijing's rigid One-China position and military buildup across the strait. Instead, Taiwan's aspiration for sovereignty and international recognition was seen as overly provocative to China, and the island was blamed for destabilizing the delicate cross-strait balance.[11]

The dynamics of Taiwan's domestic politics began to change as economic downturns overshadowed identity aspirations. Voters became increasingly concerned with rising unemployment and other economic problems that threatened their livelihood. Many Taiwanese preferred to see cross-strait tensions reduced and to take advantage of the economic opportunities presented by China. With voters disillusioned and fed up with corruption, the ruling DPP began losing seats in local and national elections, including in the Legislative Yuan. In 2008, KMT presidential candidate Ma Ying-jeou won a landslide victory. The new administration adopted the "1992 Consensus"—a cross-strait verbal agreement to disagree on what "one China" means—and proceeded to negotiate with Beijing on direct flights and a host of economic issues. Cross-strait relations began to thaw. As a validation of his policy, President Ma won reelection in January 2012.

As noted earlier, Taiwanese voters have become a crucial player in cross- strait issues. Through ballots, they can potentially affect the policy Taiwan's democratically elected leaders choose vis-à-vis China. In the context of China's rise, how does the Taiwanese public view the US security commitment and arms sales, cross-strait economic cooperation, and a potential peace agreement with China?

Confidence in US Commitment

The US policy of strategic ambiguity rests on the assumption that uncertainty about US action in the event of a PRC attack on Taiwan will induce caution. For Beijing, the prospect of US military intervention serves as a constraint on the use of force against Taiwan. For Taipei, the possibility of US nonintervention and abandonment works to constrain its leaders from taking unilateral moves that might provoke Beijing. Although leaders on both sides of the strait would prefer more clarity from Washington, they seem to understand the logic of strategic ambiguity. But how does Taiwan's public view the strength of US commitment to its defense?

A key result from the 2011 Taiwan National Security Survey shows a surprisingly high level of confidence in US support, despite Washington's deliberate ambiguity. In the event of a cross-strait war, most Taiwanese people are confident Washington would send troops to the island—even if China's attack were caused by a formal declaration of Taiwan independence. When queried about a situation where China attacked Taiwan because it declared formal independence, 56.4 percent of respondents said the United States would defend Taiwan. This confidence grows even stronger (73.5 percent) if the attack is unprovoked (i.e., Taiwan maintains the status quo and does not declare independence). Previous surveys also find the percentages of those confident of unconditional US support are greater than those who are doubtful (table 1).[12]

Table 1. If Mainland China attacks Taiwan because it declared independence, do you think the United States will send troops to help Taiwan?

Date	Yes	No
2003	47.5%	32.9%
2005	52.8%	28.2%
2008	46.6%	44.1%
2011	56.4%	27.4%

Adapted from Emerson Niou, "The Taiwan National Security Survey." Data were collected by the Election Study Center, National Chengchi University in Taiwan, in various years.

These findings are puzzling. The uncertainty of US support is expected to deter Taiwan from formally declaring independence, but a majority of its voters are confident Washington would militarily intervene, even if Taiwan declared independence. Such a high level of public confidence in

US support may complicate extended deterrence. Given the dynamics of Taiwan's fickle domestic politics, the public's high confidence in US support might increase the risk of miscalculation in cross-strait relations. Misperception of US resolve to defend Taiwan increases the probability of war in the Taiwan Strait.[13]

Cross-tabulations reveal the public's perception of US support is contingent on party identification. Those who identify with the pan-Greens (the DPP and Taiwan Solidarity Union) tend to have more confidence in US support than those who identify with the pan-Blues (the KMT, New Party, and People First Party). When asked about a scenario where China attacked because Taiwan declared independence, 85.7 percent of Green supporters believed that the United States would help defend Taiwan, compared with 55.6 percent Blue supporters (table 2). If the attack were unprovoked, 91.3 percent of Green and 76.4 percent of Blue supporters believed that the US would defend Taiwan (table 3).

Table 2: If mainland China attacks Taiwan because it declared independence, do you think the United States will send troops to help Taiwan?

		Party Identification:			
		Blue	*Independent*	*Green*	*Row Total*
US Support	No	44.4%	33.3%	14.3%	32.5%
	Yes	55.6%	66.7%	85.7%	67.5%
Column		45.0%	24.4%	30.6%	100%
		Pearson Chi-square=68.5, df=2, p<0.001, N=911			

Note: Entries are column percentages. Source: The 2011 Taiwan National Security Survey

Table 3: If Taiwan maintains the status quo and does not declare independence but mainland China attacks anyway, do you think the United States will send troops to help Taiwan?

		Party Identification:			
		Blue	*Independent*	*Green*	*Row Total*
US Support	No	23.6%	16.7%	8.7%	17.3%
	Yes	76.4%	83.3%	91.3%	82.7%
Column		44.0%	25.2%	30.8%	100%
		Pearson Chi-square=27.4, df=2, p<0.001, N=972			

Note: Entries are column percentages. Source: The 2011 Taiwan National Security Survey

It is widely believed that China's threat to use force restrains Taiwan from moving toward formal independence.[14] The 2011 survey supports this view; 65.7 percent of respondents opposed independence if it would cause a war with China. Without China's threat of war, however, independence enjoys

widespread support among Taiwan's public. The same survey showed that 80.2 percent would support declaring independence if it would not trigger a cross-strait military conflict. Further analysis reveals that the deterrent effect of China's military threat is dependent on the respondents' party identification. The threat of war deters Blue but not Green supporters from favoring independence. A majority of Green partisans (64.7 percent) would still favor a formal declaration of independence, even if it meant war with China, while 86.3 percent of Blue partisans oppose declaring independence if it would cause war (table 4). Conversely, if a formal declaration of independence would not cause war, a great majority of Taiwanese voters (92.6 percent of Green and 70 percent of Blue supporters) would favor independence (table 5). The 2011 survey suggests that China's threat to use force works insofar as the Blues, but not the Greens, are concerned.

Table 4: If a declaration of independence by Taiwan would cause mainland China to attack Taiwan, do you favor or not favor Taiwan independence?

		Party Identification:			
		Blue	*Independent*	*Green*	*Row Total*
Independence even if war with China	Not Favor	86.3%	65.0%	35.3%	65.7%
	Favor	13.7%	35.0%	64.7%	34.3%
Column		45.4%	24.5%	30.1%	100%
		Pearson Chi-square=204.6, df=2, p<0.001, N=979			

Note: Entries are column percentages. Source: The 2011 Taiwan National Security Survey

Table 5: If a declaration of independence by Taiwan would not cause mainland China to attack Taiwan, do you favor or not favor Taiwan independence?

		Party Identification:			
		Blue	*Independent*	*Green*	*Row Total*
Independence if no war	Not Favor	30.0%	17.7%	7.4%	19.8%
	Favor	70.0%	82.3%	92.6%	80.2%
Column		42.6%	26.2%	31.1%	100%
		Pearson Chi-square=58.4, df=2, p<0.001, N=992			

Note: Entries are column percentages. Source: The 2011 Taiwan National Security Survey

Party identification is thus correlated with confidence in US support and with perception of China's threat to use force. Green partisans tend to be more confident of US support and tend to disregard the threat of war with China. This brings forth a puzzle: Why do people still support

independence, even if it means war with China? As the United States is Taiwan's security guarantor, we can hypothesize that unconditional support of independence is contingent on confidence in US support; that is, those who support unconditional independence do so because they believe that the United States would defend Taiwan. Cross-tabulation lends credence to this hypothesis, showing that 81.4 percent of respondents who favor independence believe the United States would again defend Taiwan even if China's attack were caused by a formal declaration of independence (table 6). The unconditional support of independence is correlated with confidence in US intervention. The US factor is thus a crucial consideration in the Taiwanese voters' preference for independence.

Table 6: Support of unconditional independence and belief in US intervention

		Independence even if war with China		
		Not Favor	*Favor*	*Row Total*
Would the US defend Taiwan if the war were caused by a declaration of independence?	No	40.5%	18.6%	33.1%
	Yes	59.5%	81.4%	66.9%
Column		66.1%	33.9%	100%
		Pearson Chi-square=41.8, df=1, p<0.001, N=859		

Note: Entries are column percentages. Source: The 2011 Taiwan National Security Survey

US Arms Sales

The Taiwan Relations Act stipulates that the United States will supply defensive weapons to Taiwan. The power asymmetry between China and Taiwan means that Taiwan must seek an external ally to counterbalance China's power. For decades, US arms sales have been critical to Taiwan's self-defense capabilities. As China rises, the cross-strait military balance, however, puts Taiwan at an increasing disadvantage. The Pentagon's 2011 annual report on China's military power points out that the balance of military forces in the Taiwan Strait continues to shift in China's favor.[15] China has deployed between 1,000 and 1,200 short-range ballistic missiles across the strait. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) navy now boasts the largest force of principal combatants, submarines, and amphibious warships in Asia, and it is developing aircraft carriers to project power overseas. In light of the growing military disparity, the Obama administration approved in early 2010 a $6.4 billion

arms sale to Taiwan, including UH-60 Blackhawk utility helicopters, Patriot PAC-3 air and missile defense systems, and minesweeping ships. In September 2011, the administration authorized another $5.85 billion arms sale package that includes upgrades to Taiwan's aging F-16 A/B fighters, F-16 pilot training in the United States, and an advanced radar system to detect stealth aircraft like the J-20.

Despite the arms purchase, most of the people on Taiwan have doubts about the island's self-defense capabilities. In the 2011 survey, 80 percent of respondents do not think Taiwan has sufficient military capability to defend against a Chinese attack. When asked whether Taiwan should strengthen its military power or adopt a more moderate policy in the face of China's military threat, 68.4 percent of the people favored more moderate policies, while only 23.7 percent favored strengthening Taiwan's military power. For most of the respondents, moderate policies were considered more effective in reducing cross-strait tensions than building up self-defense capabilities.

Nonetheless, a key rationale justifying continued arms purchases is that Taiwan should at least have the capabilities to withstand an initial attack from China until the United States has sufficient time to respond. A robust defense also makes Taiwan less vulnerable to China's military coercion and enables the island to bargain from a position of strength in cross-strait negotiations. From Beijing's standpoint, however, a Taiwan that is militarily weak would be more likely to accept Beijing's conditions of unification. To further tilt the cross-strait military balance of power in its favor, Beijing has continued to strengthen its military power opposite Taiwan, including the deployment of more than 1,000 ballistic and cruise missiles.

In his 2002 visit to the United States, China's president Jiang Zemin floated the idea of withdrawing missiles opposite Taiwan in exchange for a reduction in US arms sales to the island.[16] His proposal received lukewarm response from Washington, as it contradicted the TRA and Reagan's six assurances barring negotiation with Beijing on Taiwan arms sales. Taiwan's leaders were also dismissive of the proposal. In contrast, its electorate is more receptive to the "missiles for arms sales" proposal. Many consider US arms purchases a futile attempt to confront China's military power, benefiting mainly arms brokers and defense contractors. In 2011, a majority (52.4 percent) of respondents favored a reduction in arms purchases from the United States in exchange for a withdrawal of

China's missiles opposite Taiwan, compared with 37.8 percent who opposed the deal. Cross-tabulation with party identification reveals that 68 percent of Blue supporters favored such a trade, while 53.4 percent of Green supporters were opposed to the deal (table 7).

Table 7: If China withdraws its missiles from along the southeast coast, do you favor a reduction in arms purchases from the United States?

		Party Identification:			
		Blue	*Independent*	*Green*	*Row Total*
Missiles for Arms Sales	Not Favor	32.0%	45.2%	53.4%	41.8%
	Favor	68.0%	54.8%	46.6%	58.2%
Column		44.1%	26.3%	29.6%	100%
		Pearson Chi-square=34.5, df=2, p<0.001, N=985			

Note: Entries are column percentages. Source: The 2011 Taiwan National Security Survey

Trade and Security

China's economic rise presents both opportunities and threats to Taiwan. Trade with China promotes Taiwan's economic growth, whereas economic dependence on China risks Taiwan's security. In the 1990s, President Lee Teng-hui attempted to limit Taiwanese investment on the mainland through his "patience over haste" policy, but Taiwanese entrepreneurs were able to bypass government restrictions through intermediaries in Hong Kong, Singapore, and elsewhere. Economic exchanges between Taiwan and China continued to flourish under the Chen Shui-bian administration. As it turns out, despite government efforts to control it, cross-strait economic engagement is "a bottom-up phenomenon" that neither government can control.[17] Taiwanese entrepreneurs, attracted by China's enormous economic potential, managed to devise ingenious ways to circumvent government regulations.

As Taiwan's economy faced rising employment and sluggish growth in much of the first decade of the twenty-first century, the economic opportunity presented by China had a magnetic effect on the island. Exports to China have soared since 2000. China is now Taiwan's largest export market, accounting for 27.24 percent of its total exports in 2011. China became Taiwan's largest trading partner in 2005, surpassing Japan. Cross-strait trade volume reached $128 billion in 2011, accounting for 21.63 percent of Taiwan's total foreign trade.[18] Taiwanese businesses have invested heavily in China, and more than half a million

Taiwanese people now live there permanently. On 29 June 2010, Taiwan and China signed a landmark trade agreement, the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA). Eager to tie Taiwan's economy closer to the mainland, Beijing made substantial trade concessions. The "early harvest" list of tariff concessions covered 539 Taiwanese products, valued at $13.8 billion, compared to 267 mainland Chinese products, valued at $2.9 billion.

With growing trade, however, come concerns about economic dependence. Taiwan's reliance on China's market may make the island vulnerable to economic coercion. China's rising economic capabilities give it leverage in its dealings with other countries. The 2010 flare-up over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands, where a Chinese fishing trawler collided with a Japanese patrol boat, is a case in point. Beijing reacted angrily to the arrest of the Chinese captain, issuing a series of official denunciations. More importantly, China suspended shipment of rare earth minerals to Japan. Even when the Japanese government appeared to back down and released the captain, Beijing upped the ante by demanding an apology. These hardball tactics are a reminder of the risk of economic dependence on China.

In general, Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party views cross-strait economic ties with suspicion, worrying that increasing economic integration will push Taiwan into China's orbit and make the island vulnerable to economic coercion. The KMT party, in contrast, is more favorable of cross-strait economic ties, arguing that trade and investment agreements will help revitalize Taiwan's sluggish economy and prevent the country from being marginalized in the growing economic integration of East Asia. Taiwan's electorates are evenly split on this issue of trade versus security. Of the 1,104 respondents in the 2011 survey, 42.2 percent favored strengthening economic relations with China, and 42 percent were opposed. When we consider party identification, however, the differences in opinion on China trade become apparent. An overwhelming majority of Green supporters (82.8 percent) were opposed to strengthening trade relations with China, whereas 75.9 percent of Blue supporters were in favor (table 8).

Table 8: Do you favor strengthening trade with China so that Taiwan can earn more money or do you favor reducing trade with China so that Taiwan's national security will not be affected by the economic dependence?

		Party Identification:			
		Blue	*Independent*	*Green*	*Row Total*
Strengthening trade with China	Not Favor	24.1%	54.5%	82.8%	49.9%
	Favor	75.9%	45.5%	17.2%	50.1%
Column		43.9%	25.1%	31%	100%
		Pearson Chi-square=233.0, df=2, p<0.001, N=919			

Note: Entries are column percentages. Source: The 2011 Taiwan National Security Survey

Cross-Strait Peace Agreement

Regarding the choice between independence and unification with China, various surveys over the years have consistently shown that the majority of Taiwanese support the current state of affairs, the "status quo," in the Taiwan Strait. Only 1.6 percent of respondents in the 2011 survey favored immediate unification, and 5 percent were for immediate independence. The majority (90.7 percent) favored some form of the status quo, either indefinitely or for a certain period. Among the status quo supporters were voters who based their preferences on the perceived costs of independence and unification; that is, some status quo supporters would favor independence if it could be done peacefully or support unification if there is not much difference in the political, economic, and social conditions between Taiwan and China.[19]

That Taiwanese voter's change their preferences based on cross-strait conditions has not been lost on Beijing. In its attempt to move Taiwan toward unification, the Hu Jintao leadership in Beijing showed remarkable skill in dealing with Taiwan. Hu and other officials realized that the hardball tactics and harsh rhetoric of the past had driven Taiwan further away. To remedy this, they embarked upon a "hearts and minds" strategy aiming to win over Taiwanese voters. The focus of this new strategy is on preventing Taiwan from drifting toward independence. Beijing's strategy for engaging Taiwan's leaders is to start with the supposedly easier area of economic issues, hoping that the benefits of economic linkages will lead to political negotiation on the future status of Taiwan. As Shelley Rigger writes, "Beijing's strategy is to prevent Taiwan from moving farther away toward formal independence while allowing the forces

of economic integration and political amity to pull Taiwan more deeply into the PRC's orbit."[20] Beijing muted the unpopular "one country, two systems" formula for unification and avoided reminding Taiwan that the use of force to deter independence or compel unification was still an option. To bring the island closer, Chinese leaders promised the benefits of closer economic, cultural, educational, and other ties for the Taiwanese people. For instance, Beijing opened the mainland market to agricultural products from southern Taiwan, an area traditionally unfriendly toward China; mainland universities meted out preferential treatment to Taiwanese students; academic scholars from both sides regularly held joint conferences; Taiwanese businesses received low-cost loans for investing on the mainland; daily direct cross-strait flights helped revitalize Taiwan's ailing airline industry and airports; and the influx of mainland tourists provided tangible gains to Taiwan's domestic economy.

Differences between political systems, economic development, and the social environment have kept Taiwan and China separated over the years. Previous surveys showed that the Taiwanese public would support unification if these cross-strait differences were narrowed. Recent efforts to narrow the differences, such as closer economic and people-to-people interactions, however, have not increased the proportion of Taiwan's public who favor unification. The 2011 survey shows that if the political, economic, and social conditions across the strait became roughly similar, only 34.4 percent of respondents would support unification, but 57.4 percent would still oppose it. On the other hand, if there are significant cross-strait differences, an overwhelming majority (73.7 percent) would oppose unification with China, compared with only 16.5 percent who would support it. This finding contradicts the expectation that increasing cross-strait ties would lead to political reconciliation. Cross-strait convergence in political, economic, and social conditions is expected to create incentives for unification, but an overwhelming majority of Taiwan's public opposes unification, even under favorable circumstances. If anything, longitudinal data reveal a decline in public support of unification. Figure 1 shows that the percentages who support unification under favorable conditions are steadily declining, whereas those opposing unification are gradually rising.

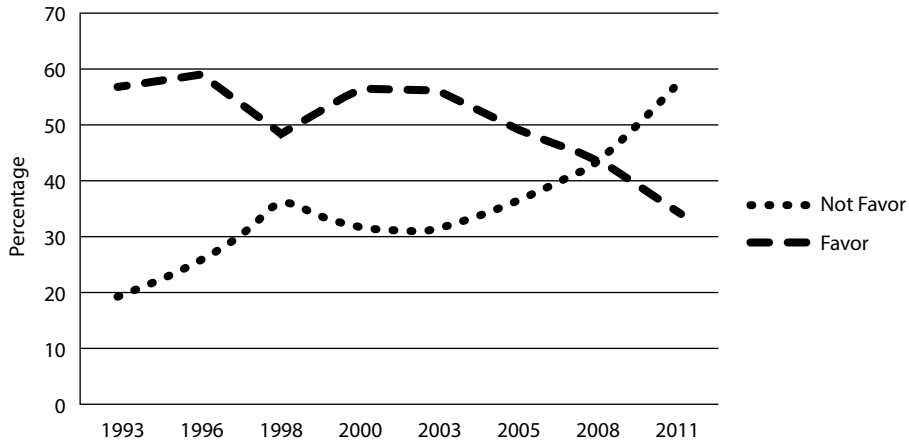

Figure 1. If China and Taiwan become politically, economically, and socially compatible, do you favor unification?

(*Adapted from* Brett V. Benson and Emerson M. S. Niou, "Public Opinion, Foreign Policy, and the Security Balance in the Taiwan Strait," *Security Studies* 14, no. 2 (April–June 2005): 279, and Niou, "Taiwan National Security Surveys" [various years 2003–11].)

Although the proportion of those on Taiwan who favor unification is declining, a great majority (74.5 percent) supports some kind of peace agreement in which China pledges not to attack Taiwan and Taiwan pledges not to declare independence. Cross-tabulation with party identification shows that the proposed peace agreement enjoys widespread support among both Blue (90.5 percent) and Green (64.3 percent) supporters (table 9). Despite this high level of support revealed by the survey, public opinion on the peace agreement can be malleable, depending on factors such as the exact details of the agreement and competition between domestic political forces. For instance, in his reelection campaign in late 2011, President Ma Ying-jeou broached the prospect of signing a cross-strait peace agreement, but after being criticized for moving too soon, he quickly abandoned the idea.

Table 9: If Taiwan and mainland China sign an agreement in which the mainland pledges not to attack Taiwan and Taiwan pledges not to declare independence, do you favor this kind of agreement?

		Party Identification:			
		Blue	*Independent*	*Green*	*Row Total*
Peace Agreement	Not Favor	9.5%	23.4%	35.7%	20.9%
	Favor	90.5%	76.6%	64.3%	79.1%
Column		44.3%	25.9%	29.8%	100%
		Pearson Chi-square=77.5, df=2, p<0.001, N=1,024			

Note: Entries are column percentages. Source: The 2011 Taiwan National Security Survey

Implications for US Foreign Policy

The Taiwanese public's high confidence in US support does not necessarily suggest that the policy of strategic ambiguity has failed to achieve its objective. After all, China has not used military force against Taiwan, even after the termination of the US-Taiwan mutual defense treaty in 1980. While leaders in Beijing and Taiwan understand the logic of strategic ambiguity, the public stance differs. As confident as Taiwan's public is about US support, we should keep in mind that public opinion is malleable and constantly shifting; it is one of many factors leaders consider in making decisions. Nevertheless, the volatile mix of Taiwan's domestic politics and public misperception of US resolve can create destabilizing conditions across the Taiwan Strait. To minimize the risk of miscalculation, Taiwan's elected leaders need to emphasize that US support is not ironclad but rather ambiguous and contingent. The Taiwan public needs to be disabused of the idea that Washington will defend the island no matter what.

The US security commitment to Taiwan, however, is being questioned as China rises in power. Historically, power transitions generated instability and often resulted in war.[21] A number of commentators, seeing the increased probability of a US-China conflict, recently began to call for Washington to back away from its security commitment to Taiwan and to reduce arms sales.[22] They believe that once the thorny issue of Taiwan is removed, both the United States and China can engage in cooperative activities and build mutual trust, thus reducing the likelihood of war. Although the "abandon Taiwan" argument has been around since the Cold War,[23] it seems to have gained more traction now that China is poised to overtake the United States as the world's largest economy in the decades, if not years, to come.

Nevertheless, it would be misguided to scale down the US commitment or reduce arms sales in the face of a rising China. First and foremost, giving up Taiwan would not eliminate the root cause of US-China security competition. The reason the United States and China are engaged in a competitive relationship is international anarchy, not Taiwan. In an anarchic system with no central authority to enforce order, states will pursue more power relative to others to be secure. The intentions of other states are difficult to know, and even if known, they are changeable over time. States cannot rest their security on the goodwill of others. This is the structural cause of great-power rivalry.[24] Hence, the US-China

security competition exists independently of Taiwan. Even without Taiwan, other issues—such as the Korean peninsula, the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands, the South China Sea, or even a trade dispute—could still erupt into a full-scale conflict. Recall that the only war between the United States and China was not fought over Taiwan but over Korea. Conceding Taiwan to China would not remove the structural cause of US-China security competition.

Second, appeasing China by giving up Taiwan will increase Beijing's foreign policy ambitions, not restrain them. Beijing is likely to see such a concession as a sign of growing US weakness and as a vindication of China's successful pursuit of power. US concession on Taiwan would also likely fuel Chinese nationalism.[25] It is dangerous to expect that, once Washington abandons Taiwan, Beijing would restrain its foreign policy ambitions or turn into a status quo power. On the contrary, China's capabilities to project power would be substantially enhanced should Taiwan fall into its orbit. Rather than limiting its aims, Beijing would likely push for more concessions on other issues. As international relations theorist John Mearsheimer argues, "appeasement is likely to make a dangerous rival more, not less, dangerous."[26]

Third, Taiwan is a strategic asset for the United States and its allies. The island is strategically located along the crucial sea lines of communication from Japan to Southeast Asia. During the Cold War, GEN Douglas MacArthur famously referred to Taiwan as an "unsinkable aircraft carrier." Today, China's strategic planners see the island as an integral part of its future naval power, as a way to break out of the encirclement of the "first island chain." Acquisition of Taiwan would enhance China's naval capabilities and give the PLA navy greater strategic depth. It would adversely affect Japan's maritime security, making it more difficult for the United States to defend its ally. Taiwan's close location to the Philippine Sea and the Luzon Strait would also provide the PLA navy easy access to the South China Sea, an area fraught with territorial disputes.

Hence, walking away from Taiwan would not make for a more cooperative relationship between the United States and China. It would not remove the root cause of US-China security competition which stems from international anarchy. Appeasing China by giving up Taiwan would increase, not reduce, China's foreign policy ambitions and at the same time would enhance the PLA's naval posture and power projection. These strategic considerations are consistent with US ideological values;

abandoning a democracy to an authoritarian government would undercut Washington's stated interests in supporting democracy and freedom around the world. It is risky to assume that China's foreign policy is guided by limited aims and will remain unchanged as its power rises. Rising states tend to expand,[27] and we have no reason to expect China to behave otherwise.

Instead of abandoning Taiwan, the US policy of strategic ambiguity remains "safer and smarter" in light of the complex situation in the Taiwan Strait.[28] As stated earlier, a clear withdrawal of US commitment to Taiwan would embolden China to take military action to resolve the Taiwan issue. Strategic ambiguity also avoids the moral hazard problem: A clear security commitment to Taiwan would encourage the island to take risky moves vis-à-vis China, knowing that Washington would come to its rescue. Either a clear commitment or a clear noncommitment would create exactly the destabilizing situation that the United States wishes to avoid.[29] Strategic ambiguity, on the other hand, avoids the problem and gives Washington policy flexibility in deterring both Beijing and Taipei from destabilizing the Taiwan Strait.

Another advantage of strategic ambiguity is its distinct usefulness in dual deterrence. As Andrew Nathan points out, in a single-deterrence situation, the deterring state seeks to create enough certainty so the other side will not challenge the status quo while not so much that it knows how far it can push the envelope before triggering a response. The problem becomes more challenging in a dual-deterrence situation in which the deterring state tries to prevent two actors with opposing interests from taking destabilizing actions. By not specifying a clear course of action, strategic ambiguity helps the deterring state to find a balance in setting the level of threat against the two opposing actors. There is, however, a pitfall. In dual deterrence, actions that reassure one side will deassure the other, thus creating destabilizing effects. For instance, when President Clinton reassured China in 1998 by articulating the Three Noes (no support of Taiwan independence; no support of "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan"; and no support of Taiwan's membership in any organization that requires statehood), it caused anxiety in Taipei. Taiwan president Lee Teng-hui countered this "intentional tilt toward Beijing" by declaring that cross-strait relations were a kind of "special state-to-state relationship." The result was significantly heightened tensions.[30] By

the same logic, although backing away from Taiwan would reassure Beijing, it would confound Taipei and thus create destabilizing effects.

Conclusions

This article offers a glimpse of survey data collected in early 2011 revealing the partisan divide of Taiwan's public opinion on national security. Although Washington's policy in the event of a cross-strait military conflict is deliberately ambiguous, most Taiwanese people have high confidence the United States would defend the island. This public confidence in US support is divided along party lines: Green partisans are more confident of US support and more dismissive of China's threat to use force than are Blue supporters. This high level of confidence in US support hardened a large number of respondents' determination to support Taiwan independence, even if it were to mean war with China. When it comes to reducing cross-strait tensions, a majority favors moderate policies toward China instead of military self-strengthening. Most favor reducing US arms purchases in exchange for China's withdrawal of missiles across the Taiwan Strait. Green partisans are more concerned about the security implications of growing trade ties with China than are Blue supporters. During the last decade, in spite of increasing cross-strait economic and social interactions, Taiwanese public support of unification under favorable conditions has steadily declined. Although unification receives lukewarm support, the survey shows that a cross-strait peace agreement, in general, enjoys widespread support among Taiwanese voters, although more disagreement may arise over its details.

The impact of China's rise on Taiwan is profound and far-reaching. The China factor has become the most salient issue in Taiwan's national elections and will continue to be so in the future. Maintaining political autonomy as China's power and leverage continue to rise will become increasingly challenging for Taiwan. As China gains influence, its rising power may also reduce the willingness of the United States to help defend Taiwan.[31] Walking away from Taiwan, however, will not solve the structural cause of US-China security competition; neither will it make for a more cooperative bilateral relationship. Strategic ambiguity has served the region well, and there is no good reason to change course at the moment. SSQ

Notes

1. James Mann, *About Face: A History of America's Curious Relationship with China from Nixon to Clinton* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), 337.

2. Richard C. Bush, "Taiwan and East Asian Security," *Orbis* 55, no. 2 (Spring 2011): 274–89.

3. Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, "Strategic Ambiguity or Strategic Clarity?" in *Dangerous Strait: The U.S.-Taiwan-China Crisis*, ed. Tucker (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005). For a game theory assessment of strategic ambiguity as an optimal policy in the Taiwan Strait, see Brett Benson and Emerson Niou, "A Theory of Dual Deterrence: Credibility, Conditional Deterrence, and Strategic Ambiguity," paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, 12 April 2007.

4. Yun-han Chu and Andrew J. Nathan, "Seizing the Opportunity for Change in the Taiwan Strait," *Washington Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (Winter 2007/08): 77–91.

5. The survey was conducted in February 2011, with a sample size of 1,104. I thank Prof. Emerson Niou for providing the data.

6. Strategic ambiguity can be traced to the first Taiwan Strait crisis of 1954–55 when the Eisenhower administration deliberately adopted an ambiguous policy with regard to the defense of Jinmen (Quemoy) and Mazu (Matsu). In a meeting with congressional leaders on 20 January 1955, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles explained the administration's policy: "Up to the present time we have been covering this situation [in the offshore area] by hoping the communists would be deterred by uncertainty." Quoted in Gordon H. Chang and He Di's, "The Absence of War in the U.S.-China Confrontation over Quemoy and Matsu in 1954–1955: Contingency, Luck, Deterrence?" *American Historical Review* 98, no. 5 (December 1993): 1511, n. 21.

7. Yuan-kang Wang, "Preserving Peace in the Taiwan Strait," *Chinese Political Science Review* 33 (June 2002): 149–74; and Benson and Niou, "Theory of Dual Deterrence."

8. Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *Strait Talk: United States-Taiwan Relations and the Crisis with China* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2009), 148.

9. Yuan-kang Wang, "Taiwan's Democratization and Cross-Strait Security," *Orbis* 48, no. 2 (Spring 2004): 293–304.

10. Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly stated before the House International Relations Committee on 21 April 2004 that "the U.S. does not support independence for Taiwan or unilateral moves that would change the status quo as we define it."

11. Edward Friedman, ed., *China's Rise, Taiwan's Dilemmas and International Peace* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

12. Among the four surveys, 2008 is the only year when the two responses are tied within the sampling margin of error.

13. Benson and Niou, "Theory of Dual Deterrence."

14. Brett V. Benson and Emerson M. S. Niou, "Public Opinion, Forei (April–June 2005): 286.

15. DoD, *Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Development Involving the People's Republic of China, 2011* (Washington: DoD, 2011), http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/2011_CMPR_Final.pdf. The point about the shifting military balance in favor of China has been in the Pentagon report since 2005.

16. Tucker, *Strait Talk*, 266.

17. Shelley Rigger, *Why Taiwan Matters: Small Island, Global Powerhouse* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011), 122.

18. Trade Statistics, Bureau of Foreign Trade, Republic of China (Taiwan), http://cus93.trade.gov.tw/ENGLISH/FSCE/.

19. John Fuh-sheng Hsieh and Emerson M. S. Niou, "Measuring Taiwan Public Opinion on Taiwanese Independence," *China Quarterly* 181, no. 1 (March 2005): 158–68.

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21. Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981); and A. F. K. Organski and Jacek Kugler, *The War Ledger* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982).

22. Bill Owens, "America Must Start Treating China as a Friend," *Financial Times*, 17 November 2009; Bruce Gilley, "Not So Dire Straits: How the Finlandization of Taiwan Benefits U.S. Security," *Foreign Affairs* 89, no. 1 (January/February 2010): 44–60; and Charles Glaser, "Will China's Rise Lead to War? Why Realism Does Not Mean Pessimism," *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 2 (March/April 2011): 80–91.

23. For an informative review of earlier but similar arguments about whether Taiwan presents a "threat" to a cooperative US-China relationship, see Andrew D. Marble, "The 'Taiwan Threat' Hypothesis: Ideas, Values, and Foreign Policy Preferences in the United States," *Issues & Studies* 38, no. 1 (March 2002): 165–99.

24. John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001).

25. Nancy Bernkopf Tucker and Bonnie Glaser, "Should the United States Abandon Taiwan?" *Washington Quarterly* 24, no. 4 (Fall 2011): 25; and Shelley Rigger, "Why Giving up Taiwan Will not Help Us with China," *AEI Asian Outlook*, no. 3 (November 2011), http://www.aei.org/outlook/foreign-and-defense-policy/regional/asia/why-giving-up-taiwan-will-not-help-us-with-china/.

26. Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 164.

27. Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998); and Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*.

28. Tucker, "Strategic Ambiguity or Strategic Clarity?" 205.

29. Benson and Niou, "Theory of Dual Deterrence."

30. Andrew J. Nathan, "What's Wrong with American Taiwan Policy?" *Washington Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (Spring 2000): 93–106.

31. Robert Sutter, "Taiwan's Future: Narrowing Strait," *NBR Analysis* (May 2011): 3–22; and Tucker and Glaser, "Should the United States Abandon Taiwan?"

Shaping Air and Sea Power for the "Asia Pivot"

Military Planning to Support Limited Geopolitical Objectives

Michael Kraig
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For roughly two decades, the US Department of Defense has been focused on creating weapons platforms and plans for "effect-based" operations with the assumption that they can be readily mixed and matched to achieve the desired strategic purpose. As Clausewitz famously argued, however, it is risky for military planners to decontextualize the notion of effects-based weaponry from the most likely political goals politicians will be seeking in the threat and use of force when confronting a peer competitor. Ultimately, everything depends on the level of political stakes or, in Clausewitz's terms, the nature of the "political object."[1]

In East Asia, a rising China confronts the United States with a classic security dilemma in which new Chinese military capabilities could support both a commonsense and legitimate wish to secure its own interests *and* a more expansive vision for regional leadership that might harbor an aggressive geopolitical agenda. Thus, a wary United States finds it prudent to maintain an operational military advantage over China's rapidly improving military capability. Yet, how the United States addresses that security dilemma via military procurement and the development of operational concepts could either detract from or enhance crisis stability when Chinese and US interests come into conflict. With this delicate balancing act in mind, we offer a conceptual framework for how the

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United States should prepare to use military power during peacetime deterrence, protracted crises, and war to resolve conflicting interests with another powerful state, such as China, when both powers also have substantial interconnected interests.

The international system has changed markedly, despite the continuance of traditional US bilateral alliances with South Korea and Japan. What is particularly unprecedented is the simultaneous growth or "rise" of South Korea, Japan, and China *together*, based firmly on economic rather than military power—that is, on manufacturing and financial rather than territorial gains. This is radically different from historical patterns of domination of both the Korean Peninsula and also Southeast Asian nations by either an imperial China or an imperial Japan.[2]

Based on these systemic changes in Asian relations, we argue that, as the US Navy and Air Force further develop the Air-Sea Battle concept, they need to even more deeply rethink their allegiance to what one may call "total battle doctrines" that see their strategic role as providing quick, total, overwhelming offensive victory against absolutely opposed adversaries.[3] Specifically, the services should examine if and how certain force acquisitions and employment strategies for the Asia-Pacific could either exacerbate or mitigate the propensity for conflict escalation during any future crises. The historical literature has argued strenuously that capabilities and plans for winning a full-scale war (should one break out) do not necessarily make for peaceful deterrence in a non-crisis environment or for open diplomatic exchanges during a crisis atmosphere. This is because of the simple fact that latent or even fully fielded capabilities for major offensive strikes can signal a *policy intent* for upsetting a balance of power and interests to one's own unilateral advantage, even if such intent and interest do not in fact exist on the part of the side with such escalatory capacities.

We thus agree with the founding lead of the Air-Sea Battle concept development group at Headquarters Air Force that the United States will need "fresh theories and concepts . . . less tethered to its traditions of annihilation warfare" to manage future crisis in anti-access and area denial (A2/AD) environments effectively.[4] But despite such initial analytic forays in policy and military journals, the question still left underexamined in US security debates and planning is whether it is better to "overcome the enemy's will" by thwarting its efforts to consolidate any gains in the operational battlespace or via incapacitating its ability to

field forces via deep strategic strikes on the adversary's homeland. The latter, for instance, has historically been advocated and even utilized to incapacitate leadership circles, annihilate deep military bases, or even hit dual-use value targets such as water, electricity, transport, and key industries.[5] All of the latter was done, for instance, against Iraq in 1991.[6]

We contend that, given the shared interests of all current rising powers in retaining the global trade and manufacturing system currently in place, the military denial of enemy gains, if persistently achieved *without* strategic interdiction strikes, would more likely lead to crisis stability, conflict management, and deescalation of crises. It is also in sync with one of the central strategic observations of the *US National Military Strategy* of February, 2011, published under Secretary of Defense Robert Gates: "Denying an aggressor the benefits of achieving its objectives can be just as effective as in altering its strategic calculus through the threat of retaliation. The most effective deterrence approaches make use of both techniques, while also providing potential adversaries acceptable alternative courses of action."[7]

In short, when faced with a capable and determined adversary who nonetheless shares some core interests with the United States in the globalized socioeconomic order, we argue that the capabilities and plans needed to achieve the goal of *strategic denial* will more readily serve the policy needs of civilian leaders than escalatory deep strike options targeting leadership and infrastructural centers in an adversary's homeland. Any such strategic denial military options would need to exist within and be integrated across US air, sea, space, and cyberspace forces. In turn, this requires that weapons platforms and their support systems be designed and equipped to support maximum diplomatic bargaining and conflict management during crises involving a complex array of common and competing interests between great powers.

The Global and Regional Strategic Operating Environment

Military threats and force application must be suited to the emerging globalized age of "pragmatic multipolarity"—a loose system of network interactions based on tactical cooperation between states to bolster their domestic identities and further their shared international interests, rather than a system of competing, well-defined blocs based upon utterly

hostile ideological worldviews. The reality of unprecedented interstate socioeconomic networks in creating an internationalized form of national wealth makes rising powers on all continents fear the societal costs of upsetting financial and trade flows.[8] Even many realist scholars acknowledge that the emerging international system is making traditional forms of conquest increasingly irrational.[9]

Consequently, Asian powers seek stable and gradual adjustments in the regional balance of power and interests rather than the Cold War norm of arms racing to remain superior in military and economic terms to dominate a much-feared ideological rival with a contending, aggressive value system.[10] The US triumph over communism facilitated this pragmatic rather than ideological pursuit of power by generating a seemingly ingrained and durable transnational socioeconomic class with a common capitalist "culture" and a desire for the material benefits of capitalism.[11] This global elite speaks the same professional language of business and high finance and can translate between global market demands and domestic cultural idioms—which include the rise of "new wealth barons" in China as well as other powers.[12] Ultimately, elites in India, China, and Russia—as well as "middle rank" rising powers such as the core ASEAN members of Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Singapore, and Malaysia—generally seek whatever pragmatic financial, military, trade, and cultural relationships that will help them provide a better living for their own people.[13] Power gain in terms of internal growth is inextricably linked to these countries' rejection of foreign policies that would base their external relations primarily on ideology or cultural values.[14]

This said, the goal of pursuing a political, military, and economic balance does not preclude all conflict. Rising powers in Asia all harbor some level of nationalist-based territorial claims based on legacy disputes in which the identity of peoples overlaps with swaths of disputed territory.[15] Consequently, although the value of territorial conquest in economic terms has become almost nil due to the transnational and international nature of capital, labor, and manufacturing assets, the relative value of territory in nationalist terms (i.e., domestic identity) has skyrocketed.[16]

As a result, the international "friendships" and "alliances" of middle-rising and great-rising powers can vary depending on the situation, depending on both "material" interests (such as energy resource acquisition

and transportation) *and* on nationalist impulses relating to questions of self-determination and sovereign identity.[17] Thus, for instance, the USAF Center for Strategy and Technology (CSAT) views Russia, India, and Japan more as China's competitors than its partners despite close cooperation in counterterrorism, transnational drug interdiction efforts, and energy deals in Central Asia via the multilateral Shanghai Cooperation Organization.[18]

Such a dynamic international system tends to be more familiar to, and accepted by, states in the larger Asian region than by the United States itself.[19] As one former US diplomat to Southeast and Northeast Asia has argued, the United States retains a residual and enduring Cold War inclination to view countries as either "with us or against us" across the full spectrum of interests and issues.[20] However, in today's globalized East Asia, issues overlap and compete in complex ways, with no one party viewing itself as a complete and total "ally" with any other party,[21] despite the relatively tight bilateral defense pacts between the United States and Japan and South Korea. There simply is no Asian equivalent of the Berlin Wall or the "Iron Curtain."

Thus far, Chinese military goals align with these very mixed geopolitical realities. Even the most wary analysts concerned with Chinese military advances are not assuming or arguing that China is seeking to straddle the globe with air, sea, and land forces. Despite ongoing buildups—including new surface and subsurface naval platforms—Chinese power projection is generally described as being thoroughly regional in character. As recently noted by CSAT, "significant Chinese force projection beyond Southeast Asia will be difficult," even though "China's military will be sufficient to deter and even repel almost any attempt at preemptive action against its mainland or territories or in its immediate vicinity." Instead of true "global reach" as defined by the United States, the USAF research team concluded that "China's military capability will be greatest from the mainland out to the 'second island chain'—the region extending south and east from Japan to Guam in the Western Pacific." In terms of actual operational military patterns, the research team concluded that "as a regional air and naval power, China will routinely cruise these waters with its carrier strike groups." The ultimate political strategic goal of the People's Republic of China (PRC) would then not be "policing the global commons," but rather policing the *regional* commons: "China will seek to assume the role of guarantor of the sea lines of

communication in the region, including the strategic Straits of Malacca. They will also be capable of selectively impeding [regional] commerce if they choose."[22]

Again, however, this brings to the fore the question of nationalism as China continues to experience formidable domestic socioeconomic turbulence due to mass migrations within and between its many large regions, including continued rapid urbanization, industrialization, and the formation of new working and middle classes with growing personal stakes in where China is and where it might be going.[23] For example, the Chinese government in the 1990s "needed nationalism for national integrity, leadership consolidation, and legitimacy, and prevention of what they saw as negative Western influence upon the minds of the people."[24] As a direct result, "China's rise has imbued the public with self-confidence, which interacts with China's remaining sense of inferiority and is expressed in the form of aggressive nationalism. The economic rise of China has provided the basis on which a sentiment of love for and pride in the Chinese nation has grown notably since the mid-1990s."[25] Indeed, twenty-first-century Chinese leadership

> has stepped up "patriotic education" since 1994 by distributing "Guidelines for Implementing Patriotic Education" to reinforce "the power of national integrity" by "uniting people of all ethnicities." Since the late 1990s, in short, the domestic political and developmental goal of Chinese leaders has been "The Great Revival of the Chinese Nation" . . . to "prevent the rise of the worship of the West" . . . by creating a social atmosphere in which "people can be infected and permeated with patriotic thought and spirit any time, any place, in all aspects of daily life."[26]

With such domestic social trends in mind, it is prudent for the United States to be prepared to deter strategic expansion of Chinese political interests and military capabilities in ways that could undermine South Korean, Japanese, and Southeast Asian nations' sovereign economic and political security. Despite unease with China's "muscle flexing," the populations of important East Asian powers are, in essence, "sitting on a fence." Their economies have become so interlinked with China's that one Japanese international relations scholar has noted that "in 2004, China became the largest trading partner of not only Japan, but also South Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam. . . . According to a March 2004 survey conducted by the *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, 70 percent of Japanese business leaders wanted a trilateral free trade agreement with China and South Korea."[27] Additionally, Japan's recent imperial past often seems to

cause South Korean leaders and citizens to fear the strategic intentions of Japan more than they do mainland China.[28]

Given these interconnected as well as conflicting interests, it is no surprise that a comprehensive RAND study of South Korean, Southeast Asian, and Japanese security perceptions vis-à-vis the United States and China showed that neither the populations nor their associated elite politicians want their country to "buck" the status quo by becoming entangled in disputes between the PRC and its neighbors or the PRC and the United States. Also, none wishes to jeopardize its prosperity by undertaking a more explicit and expanded East Asian military role. The same RAND analysis showed that the popular viewpoints on foreign policy issues among the populations and leadership circles of both countries could "swing" if tension, pressures, or threats escalate in any one direction, including if the PRC were perceived as becoming more bellicose and assertive.[29]

The Impact of the New Asian Geopolitics on Military Planning

All of the above points to one simple fact: although a total conventional war or even nuclear war could theoretically erupt between two nuclear-armed super powers who mismanage a crisis, the United States does not face in the foreseeable future a near-peer power that threatens it existentially as during much of the Cold War. The current international system is one of strictly bounded competition, with both overlapping and divergent policy priorities between all major powers—including even US friends and allies. Therefore, the United States has the luxury of preparing not to prevent the destruction of its homeland and its way of life, but of preparing to deny any opponent from making substantial coercive shifts in the balance of power.

Given this grand strategic political and economic reality, it behooves us to ask whether certain aspects of traditional notions of offensive strategic interdiction would serve the United States well in future disputes with this rising Asian power. As Clausewitz pointed out 180 years ago, the political aims of limited war require a different application of force than wars of unconditional capitulation. One crucial question, therefore, is which strategic US military developments may be stabilizing (or

potentially destabilizing) in deterring the PRC in geopolitically disputed areas such as Taiwan and the South China Sea.

Indeed, recent literature by Air Force and Navy officers has begun to define and argue for a range of capabilities that flexibly threatens not only greater or lesser military costs, but also lesser or greater policy stakes. For instance, evolving concepts focused on countering anti-access and area denial (A2/AD) strategies—such as the Air-Sea Battle—rightly argue that the United States should seek to maintain "escalation agility" and to "manage" escalation "to avoid relying on . . . capabilities that existentially threaten another nation or its leadership."[30]

Traditionally, the notion of an "existential threat" has been tied firmly to nuclear forces and nuclear strikes. This article, however, proposes that even escalation with certain *conventional* deep-strike capabilities may be viewed by some competitors as approaching an existential threat, given the geopolitical realities of a globalized East Asian operating environment. Thus, we further emphasize the point raised briefly by Vincent Alcazar in this same journal that an important element of escalation agility[31]—especially when dealing with an adversary that holds some major interests in common with the United States—is the capability to thwart without escalation the enemy's ability to consolidate its objectives.

That is, under the umbrella concept of *strategic denial* at the level of military strategy and campaign planning, we further propose and define the operational, battle-level concept of *persistent denial*: the ability to apply sustainable pressure at a given escalation threshold to raise the adversary's perceived cost of an anti–status quo action both prior to and during a militarized crisis. By avoiding escalation that would immediately threaten core defense interests of a sovereign competitor—which could quickly escalate the political stakes involved, possibly leading to an escalation spiral—lower-level military capacities and plans might give added credibility to US deterrent threats in a tense environment, reducing the likelihood that the United States be confronted with either "backing down" or committing to actions that raise the prospect of full-scale warfare. In sum: the ability to credibly and capably impose negative costs without dramatically escalating the political stakes involved would facilitate the eventual resumption of a stable and at least partially cooperative peace.

In this regard, the question when considering different employment and procurement policies in East Asia is whether leaders in Beijing could

distinguish between limited versus extensive US policy intentions based on the threat and possible use of such force. Limited US policy intentions may be especially hard to signal in future operational applications of weapon systems that may possess the ability to strike hundreds and perhaps thousands of targets deep in sovereign Chinese territory with relative impunity. That is, due to the deep-strike, precision, speed, and stealth of some new conventional missile and bomber forces being called for under the generic banner of both conventional prompt global strike (CPGS) and Air-Sea Battle, a rising China may in a crisis over limited geopolitical claims be hard-pressed to assess the scope of immediate US intentions, given the innately strategic effects of such platforms in terms of their ability to "decapitate" leadership or cause widespread "societal disruption."[32]

To the extent that the US Department of Defense is pursuing the latter specific goal in particular, it is courting the danger of making too little of a distinction between the universal, timeless need for decisive combat at the tactical level and the far rarer need to win an all-out war with a competitor at a truly strategic level of policy objectives. We infer these troubling consequences based on the core military characteristic often attributed to CPGS or global strike forces: to create "strategic level" military effects on deep Chinese target sets, a military operational and tactical goal that implicitly encompasses all-out political and/or military strategic objectives.

For instance, the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA), a leading, highly influential defense think tank with myriad Pentagon contracts and personal military connections,[33] has fretted that "the Air Force's current bomber force lacks the capabilities and capacity needed to penetrate contested airspace to strike thousands of targets in future air campaigns." In answer to this perceived deficit in the US deterrent and war-fighting posture, the CSBA has called for "one hundred new optionally manned penetrating bombers with all-aspect, broadband stealth, a payload capacity of approximately 20,000 pounds, and a range of 4,000–5,000 nautical miles. The bomber should have on-board surveillance and self-defense capabilities to permit independent operations against fixed and mobile targets in degraded C4ISR environments."[34]

This policy argument strongly resembles the traditional US Air Force focus on "strategic offensive interdiction," broadly defined as the capability to deliver a strategic form of paralysis that literally disarms the

enemy without having to repeatedly fight its frontline forces. The latter has generally been achieved (or at least attempted) by applying pressure against more indirect political, industrial, infrastructural, and other military-supporting as well as societal targets, which in turn has been meant to undermine overall enemy political will and decision-making coherence. The latter exercise is generally what is meant by the term *offensive strategic interdiction*, whether advocated by theorists such as Giulio Douhet and B. H. Liddell Hart, or by the Air Corps Tactical School in the form of the "Industrial Web Theory," or more recently, in the planning documents and writings of Col John Warden III.[35]

Although the historical and intellectual pedigree of such ideas is undeniable, what is often missed in the debates is that this traditional approach to strategic airpower would have the simultaneous effect of destroying or seriously degrading PRC sovereign defense capacities overall, meaning that it would confront Beijing with not just degraded power projection but even a severely degraded ability to defend its own homeland. And given the PRC's historical focus on the sanctity of its current borders—as shown in both its intervention in the Korean War and later in bruising battles with both the Soviet Union and Vietnam in the 1970s, costing tens of thousands of casualties[36]—degrading Beijing's ability to ensure its own sovereign defense is likely to escalate any hostilities rather than lead to a stable crisis resolution. Indeed, such threats would almost certainly run afoul of the innate nationalist impulses implicit in the millennia-long existence of collective Confucian culture in China,[37] and especially its felt "victim status" as a result of the "century of humiliation" visited upon it by external colonial powers from 1839 to 1945.[38]

One might argue that the capability to win such a large war decisively would inherently deter an opponent from escalating to that point. However, in the security studies literature, the concept and empirical reality of diplomatically destabilizing weapons capabilities has been thoroughly analyzed and described under the rubric of "offensive dominance," as opposed to "defense" or "deterrence dominance." Large dataset statistical testing, together with in-depth case studies covering the great-power periods of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, have together shown across different methodologies that when major powers harbor weapons at an operational level that can easily preempt the other side's forces quickly, this exacerbates the grand strategy–level condition known as "international

anarchy." The decision calculus can quickly veer toward preventive war or preemptive strikes because decision makers are tempted through both opportunity and genuine fear to "strike first" to keep a rival from gaining a decisive operational, and hence, strategic edge.[39]

Thus, a US approach to force procurement and employment that is overly focused on offensive strategic interdiction in order to secure victory—even of a nonnuclear variety—could easily have a deleterious strategic political effect during both periods of "general deterrence" in peacetime and during a diplomatic-military crisis. In essence, Bernard Brodie's 1959 assessment of nuclear deterrence strategies is generally applicable here: "[A] plan and policy which offers a good promise of *deterring* war is . . . better in every way than one which depreciates the objectives of deterrence in order to improve somewhat the chances of winning" (emphasis added).[40]

In sum: as currently defined, the evolving CPGS and Air-Sea Battle concepts, based at least partially on the traditional airpower culture of the strategic offensive, may well fail to provide future US presidents with credible and politically viable options for limiting and deescalating the limited-stakes conflicts the United States would most likely encounter in the Asian Pacific theater. While it is of course easier in principle to "defeat the enemy" by destroying decisively its capacity to sustain frontline forces, this approach assumes that strategic defeat of the adversary (i.e., total victory) is what US decision makers would in fact be seeking in a crisis against most great-power competitors in most contexts. But as already described above, it is extraordinarily unlikely that US policymakers will in fact harbor such "total" goals or "policy objects" toward a rising China in the contemporary international system. And striking a wide array of deep target sets would likely be viewed by the PRC as a serious escalation of policy stakes, therefore inviting a dramatic PRC counterescalation (whether via cyber or space warfare) that would inflict costs on the United States incommensurate with the level of policy stakes involved.

An Alternative Vision for Force Development and Employment in the East Asia Theater

While strategic deep-strike conventional options, alongside traditional nuclear strike options, are both likely to be part of a twenty-first-century

US force structure, we argue that the main goal of the US military should be to possess the capability necessary to deter and prevent small conflicts from escalating into large-scale or even total war. It ought to be prepared for limited wars in which the denial of enemy aims can be achieved without the types of significant offensive strikes on enemy territory that would pose a much greater risk of escalation. This requires force types, levels, and doctrine that allow political decision makers not only to manipulate the threat of further escalation, but also to manipulate the expected benefits and costs of different settlements in a mutually defined bargaining space.

With this in mind, future conventional global-strategic-strike procurements, deployments, and strategy should be carefully evaluated in terms of their potential to contribute to undesired conflict escalation as well as their influence on PRC perceptions of US peacetime deterrent threats. The United States should not get rid of the threat of escalation to levels at which the it can impose high costs on the enemy, but equally, it should not want to create a reality wherein the only two states of strategic relations are either the status quo peace or the strong risk of escalation to total, absolute wars of strategic paralysis. That is, despite the utility of proposed strategic, conventional, deep strike capabilities—given that they might be more credible than nuclear threats because they have a lower barrier to use—they should still be held in reserve and very cautiously signaled, activated, and deployed due to the adversary's perception of the severity of their consequences.

Based on this assessment—which in turn is based upon the geopolitical realities of the globalized East Asian operating environment summarized above—we conclude that the US defense community should consider acquiring more intermediate-range, smaller-payload solutions for selective offensive interdiction against purely military targets around the circumference of China (and particularly in the Asian "battlespace" beyond Chinese borders). This military procurement and employment goal would be far less destabilizing in times of both peace and crisis than the procurement and employment of weapons meant to range deep and wide across Chinese territory, threatening the obliteration of hundreds and perhaps thousands of dual-use civilian and military targets to completely "paralyze" the Chinese military machine or decapitate its leadership.[41] This latter argument, in turn, is largely in line with Robert Pape's famous focus on the effectiveness of offensive strikes at an operational level against the adversary's direct military machine

and supply points (i.e., degradation of adversary *capabilities* via "battlefield interdiction").[42]

In short: capabilities for "deep strike" or "strategic offensive interdiction," even if they do exist, should be deemphasized both symbolically and in operational capacity to ensure continued management of mixed interests with a rising China. Instead, the United States should enhance its ability to persevere in denying enemy objectives via highly effective, reliable, and sustained operational engagements within a strategically defensive employment posture. Deterrence in peacetime thus means explicitly preparing for limited wars or crises in which the United States will want a clear offensive advantage in individual engagements but will *not* be interested in significant strategic disruption to great powers' capacities to defend their own territory.

This basic conclusion brings to the fore the in-depth work of historical analysts and political science theorists writing on "crisis management" during the height of the 1980s Cold War. According to this literature, any two parties to a dispute are unlikely to reach a negotiated settlement on limited, partial policy objectives unless they also restrain the *means* utilized in the militarized dispute. Limitations of military options, in their view (based on thorough empirical survey of great-power diplomacy from 1648 onwards) should encompass the following requirements: "Maintain top-level civilian control of military options," including "the selection and timing of military actions," which "may extend even to control over specific tactical maneuvers and operations that might lead to an undesired clash with the opponent's forces." Further, the military means used must allow decision makers to "create pauses in the tempo of military actions," in which "the momentum of military movements may have to be deliberately slowed down in order to provide enough time for the two sides to exchange diplomatic signals and communications, and to give each side adequate time to assess the situation, make decisions, and respond to proposals." Therefore, there must be close political and military cooperation in advance of crises to design weapons platforms, doctrine, and training for their use; otherwise, "military forces may have been designed and structured in ways that rob them of the flexibility needed in a crisis. Military doctrine governing use of forces may, as in the events leading to the outbreak of World War I . . . deprive governments of the kinds of limited mobilization and deployment options required for careful management."[43]

During a militarized crisis or even a limited war with the PRC, US political leadership will want Chinese leaders to receive US signals of intent so that crisis bargaining can continue in the background. They will therefore not want US joint forces to undermine the PRC leaderships' ability to continue leading their country throughout the crisis or war. This includes leaders in Beijing keeping in touch with frontline developments among their armed forces at all levels, from tactical to operational, while still conducting a coherent strategic defense of their own mainland territory.

Thus, the United States should be wary of planning to hit targets—and seriously funding and fielding platforms that can hit targets—that would be seen by the Chinese as simultaneously denuding their ability to carry on offensive-defensive campaigns in East Asia and their capabilities for homeland, sovereign defense at a more strategic level. The United States may, in a limited war, want to eventually denude Chinese capacities for power projection in its near abroad, but it is highly unlikely US decision makers will want to treat China as it did Japan during World War II—or Saddam Hussein in 2003 or Milosevic in 1999—by forcing China to retreat from positions on its own internationally recognized sovereign territory. Instead, statesmen would likely want to feel their way forward during a crisis, testing the opponent's response to limited offensive strikes and robust defensive parries, then reformulating military intentions and plans along the way, with the political object in sight at each tit-for-tat iteration during hostilities.

In particular, contemporary social science research indicates that during crisis bargaining or limited wars involving limited political goals, adversaries should ideally have both political time and physical geographic space to learn the facts of the matter in regards to the adversary's immediate intentions as well as their long-term strategic intent in grand political terms.[44] Correctly assessing these factors—on both sides—ideally allows the creation of new policy options on both sides that may not have existed before the crisis, especially ones that do the psychologically difficult chore of sensitive, practical value tradeoffs between competing ends,[45] that is, what international mediators call "congruent bargaining," where new package options allow for mutual gain on limited issues despite continued competition at a strategic level.[46]

In other words, the limited but decisive use of force at the tactical or campaign level can reveal very important information to an adversary

about the likely outcome of any escalatory step it might take.[47] This includes "updated information" about probable diplomatic pushes to demand more political benefits at the bargaining table.[48]

Consequently, during militarized crises between major powers with interests held in common as well as in conflict, time itself becomes a strategic commodity of great worth. The question then becomes: have the US Navy and US Air Force devised platforms, doctrines, employment strategies, and campaign plans at an operational level that give their political leaders the strategic asset of decision-making time in a potential faceoff with China over issues that are short of total war*?*

Operational Coercion to Support Strategic Accommodation

> *[Weapons] have to be produced and tested before war begins; they suit the nature of the fighting, which in turn determines their design.*
>
> *That, however, does not imply that the political aim is a tyrant. It must adapt itself to its chosen means, a process which can radically change it.*
>
> —Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*

To be clear about the limits of our bounded critique of airpower theory, we accept that US forces need to be prepared to deliver strategic "decision through major battles" if the adversary is intent on escalating.[49] Nonetheless, we still contend that US forces must also be postured to provide political leaders with decision-making time and the flexibility *not* to escalate via persistent denial. If US military preparations to address the Chinese security dilemma proceed inartfully along traditional lines of emphasis, US political leaders may find their military ill-equipped to provide the strategic thought, doctrine, and weapons platforms needed to conduct effective and flexible coercive diplomacy during crises and limited wars.

The key to a revamped Air Force–Navy joint force posture is the recognition that, at their core, crises and limited wars are both political processes, and as such, incorporate *both* military coercion *and* strategic political accommodation. Therefore, any future military tools and doctrine

for deployment and force application in a crisis must have as a latent goal the ability to support accommodation at a strategic political level while still bringing about decisive defeats in combat at an operational level of wartime decision making. This new joint force posture might be labeled "Shaping Joint Forces to Allow Strategic Political Accommodation during Protracted Crises over Limited Geopolitical Goals."

There are three key, strongly linked concepts in this strategic and doctrinal statement: *strategic political accommodation*, *protracted crises*, and *limited geopolitical goals*. These seemingly simple terms have huge strategic import and implications for weapons systems in the tens or hundreds of billions of dollars.

The first term clearly connotes that it is not the overarching, grand-strategy policy goal of the United States to enact regime change, invasion, occupation, paralysis, widespread infrastructure destruction, or even destruction of all armed forces upon the adversary, despite the fact that it is a major power with at least some issues in contention with US interests. Secondly, *protracted crises* connotes that, despite common interests, there are issues in dispute over which we may not be able to prevent escalation to periods of overt hostility and the much-heightened threat of force over a lengthy period of political tensions. Again, repeated crises since 1947 over the Taiwan Straits, including one in 1995 that involved Chinese "bracketing" of Taiwan with medium-range missile launches and the dispatch of two US aircraft carriers, would seem to show the relevance of this phenomenon.[50] Finally, *limited geopolitical goals* implies that US interests are not served by the complete defeat and incapacitation of even our sovereign competitors in a twenty-first-century global order defined by "complex interdependence" and common efforts to battle transnational scourges such as illicit trafficking in humans, drugs, money, and small arms.[51] It also suggests that although the United States has significant interests in East Asia, far fewer interests there are truly "vital" than commonly, and casually, assumed.[52]

It is in this specific doctrinal and strategic context that we should evaluate US congressional and US Air Force pursuit of new "post-boost hyper-glide" missiles with conventional munitions alongside calls for a long-loiter, stealth, unmanned, intercontinental bomber with conventional munitions for taking out whole target sets over a major power's sovereign territory. Namely, such weapons might have effects on the

adversary's strategic political assumptions of US intent that are genuinely unwanted by the United States.

Ideally, the United States should acquire an intermediary strike capability and doctrine/concept that can still effectively contest anti-access and area denial efforts by the PRC and others but without threatening immediate strategic defeat. This suggests that there is a definite advantage of having a "nick the archer, kill the arrows" military capability. It would persistently deny enemy objectives over a protracted period to give decision makers on both sides the opportunity to "learn" at relatively low cost, such that nationalism and internal politics do not override central decision makers' wishes to de-escalate. Such uses of the military instrument also create time for top elites to "tame" possibly recalcitrant bureaucratic actors, who inevitably will need guidance via strong leadership within a cabinet-level setting.[53] Simply put, limited tactical engagements that demonstrate to the adversary the US ability to persevere for protracted periods via pure "denial" of objectives could be very useful in ending a militarized crisis far short of intensive strategic interdiction of key enemy military assets behind the front lines.

Such an operating environment may seem daunting to US Air Force and US Navy planners. However, potential solutions to the above dilemmas exist and should be funded and prioritized relative to capabilities that have a deep-strike mission. This brings the analysis down to the lowest level of policy detail: the desired, broad operating characteristics for weapons platforms.

Although the Air-Sea Battle concept purports to "produce forces that are more likely to have a stabilizing effect," existing declassified discussions of "integrated attacks-in-depth to disrupt, destroy and defeat an adversary's A2/AD capabilities" may imply a more offensive stance than advocated herein.[54] Given that the dictates of escalation control and crisis bargaining with the PRC will prevent US politicians from striking missile, command and control, or air bases on Chinese soil as a first step (or even a second step), the USAF and US Navy should pursue the ability to achieve air superiority over limited, well-defined domains that together disallow a unilateral Chinese invasion of Taiwan as well as undisputed Chinese control of "sea lines of communication" (e.g., shipping lanes for resupply of Kadena, Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea with weapons, trade, food, etc.). This, in turn, may require large numbers of

platforms for continuous sorties to dispute control of the air and the sea for protracted periods.

In this environment, joint military actions may need to tolerate the difficult position of accepting some additional cost and risk of less-than-decisive tactical- and operational-level engagements to better preserve the likelihood of achieving the grand strategic objective. All of this may then require naval ships, submarines, and airplanes that are highly mobile and hard to track, fix, locate, and target, to protect convoys, break any PRC blockades if necessary during a crisis to resupply front-tier locations, and back up the US Air Force in creating air superiority. This, in turn, will require naval weapons work together as a network to establish limited, temporary, but firm control over moving geographic domains, or what classic naval theorist Julian Corbett has called "elastic cohesion."[55]

If the PRC or other rising power should misread US resolve over an issue and launch a military action, it is essential the United States possess the capability and, importantly, the plans, concepts, procedures, and doctrine that will allow it to successfully mount persistent denial campaigns that do not involve significant penetrating strategic strikes so as to provide as much diplomatic space and time to achieve crisis resolution without escalation. Indeed, a credible persistent denial capability forces the decision to escalate upon the enemy, which in the current international environment gives a strong "moral" advantage to the United States in any such conflict.[56]

Finally, if crisis escalation should be needed because the above steps prove too passive of a shield or too symbolically light for success in crisis bargaining, we advocate the ability to fly long-range, stealthy, penetrating missions into Chinese airspace or territory (or launch munitions from outside the surface-to-air missile (SAM) bubble surrounding Chinese territory) to degrade frontline military targets alone. This would encompass air bases close to China's coastal areas, ammunition and fuel supply depots, long-range artillery pieces, medium-range ballistic missile units, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities. However, during such strikes, there would be signaling by every reasonable means in advance of and during the conflict that the United States will do all it can to avoid massive degradation strikes against any dual-use, civilian-military infrastructure (as well as even deeper strikes on other military targets).

What this all boils down to is a massive reconstitution and sustainment capacity for either short- or long-range forces for offensive tactical engagements in service of a denial campaign. The latter would exist alongside a quite numerous, but limited, capability to do limited escalations that may also be needed to supplement short-range forces to actually, fully achieve crisis denial of enemy aims. All of this then translates into a requirement for intermediate-range bombers or standoff missiles that have a greater range than fighter-bombers but still have limited payloads, or in other words, a high-precision bombing capacity that could not easily degrade and destroy entire infrastructure networks in an unlimited war—the latter of which constitutes a wartime goal best left to the background threats of strategic conventional and nuclear forces. The passed-over concept of an "FB-22" intermediate-range and smaller-payload bomber that might replace the old F-111 Aardvark, for instance, might fill this capability niche.[57]

In conclusion, we recommend that the United States broadly seek to *deny* without innately and immediately threatening strategic levels of destruction, and to hit countermilitary or counterforce targets in incremental, piece-by-piece ways during crisis bargaining without simultaneously hitting or seriously threatening countervalue targets. The above descriptions alone could be used to guide thousands of pages in micro-level, detailed policy and engineering studies by the US Air Force and US Navy. We will leave that to those with more intimate knowledge of combat planning and operations. SSQ

Notes

1. Carl von Clausewitz, On War, ed. and trans. by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 80–81.

2. See for instance William H. Overholt, *Asia, America, and the Transformation of Geopolitics* (Cambridge, UK, and Santa Monica, CA: Cambridge University Press and RAND, 2008), 16–31, 103–22, 154–85.

3. On the historical evolution of the offensive concept of battles of annihilation in the West (both Europe and America) from roughly 1815 onwards, see Beatrice Heuser, *The Evolution of Strategy: Thinking War from Antiquity to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 137–76 for nineteenth century segueing to World War I, and 253, 266–67, 300–45 for US applications to naval and especially air operations.

4. Col Vincent Alcazar, USAF, "Crisis Management and the Anti-Access/Area Denial Problem," *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 6, no. 4 (Winter 2012), 44.

5. See Heuser, *Evolution of Strategy*, 313–45, especially the sections on "Strategic or City Bombing," "Decapitation," and "Panacea Targeting."

6. Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*, 2nd ed. (New York: Basic Books/HarperCollins, 1992), xi–xxi.

7. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America, 2011: Redefining America's Military Leadership* (Washington: Government Printing Office, February 2011), 8.

8. Overholt, *Asia, America, and the Transformation of Geopolitics*, 16–29, 51–58.

9. Robert Art, "The United States and the Rise of China: Implications for the Long Haul," in *China's Ascent: Power, Security, and the Future of International Politics*, eds. Robert S. Ross and Zhu Feng (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 264–73, 281–82; and Stephen Van Evera, "Primed for Peace: Europe after the Cold War," in *The Cold War and After: Prospects for Peace*, eds. Sean M. Lynn-Jones and Steven E. Miller (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993), 200–2. Van Evera in particular has opined that Europe has become "primed for peace" because nationalism, self-determination, and modern transnational "just in time" manufacturing, trade, and financial networks make traditional interstate war beside the point. Because of these remarkable changes in the international system since World War II, senior historian John Mueller (not known for either hyperbole or for pacifism) has argued that with the final fall of the Berlin Wall, nuclear weapons themselves are virtually irrelevant to major-power peace, due to these very dynamics alongside the hugely destructive nature of modern conventional warfare. See John Mueller, "The Essential Irrelevance of Nuclear Weapons: Stability in the Postwar World," in *Cold War and After*, 45–69.

10. Dilip Hiro, *After Empire: The Birth of a Multipolar World* (New York: Nation Books, 2010), 274–75; and Avery Goldstein, *Rising to the Challenge: China's Grand Strategy and International Security* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 118–76.

11. Overholt, *Asia, America, and the Transformation of Geopolitics*, 11–27, 49–53.

12. Ibid., 219–36; and Col John P. Geis II, "Harmonious Discordance: China in 2030," in *Discord or "Harmonious Society"? China in 2030*, Occasional Paper no. 68, ed. Geis et al. (Maxwell AFB, AL: Center for Strategy and Technology, February 2011), 94–98, 101–2.

13. Hiro, *After Empire*, 274–75; and Geis, "Harmonious Discordance," 99–100.

14. The converse is true for the traditional Western great powers, as seen for instance in the case of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), an admittedly ideological, values-based alliance involving democratic-capitalist states with strong shared values on domestic governance.

15. For an overview of rising Asian nationalism in general (including major border and territory issues), see Overholt, *Asia, America, and the Transformation of Geopolitics*, 33–42, 54–55, 63–103, 139–69.

16. On "bisecting borders" see Bikash A. Roy, "Bisecting Borders: Neo/realism, Issues, and War," presentation at 1995 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago. For Chinese nationalism specifically, see Andrew Scobell, *China's Use of Military Force: Beyond the Great Wall and the Long March* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 15–39. For the rise of nationalism as a broad sociopolitical and socioeconomic movement in states all across the globe, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Books, 1983), 1–46, 155–85; Hein Goemans, "Bounded Communities: Territoriality, Territorial Attachment, and Conflict," in *Territoriality and Conflict in an Era of Globalization*, eds. Miles Kahler and Barbara F. Walter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 25–61; and David Newman, "The Resilience of Territorial Conflict in an Era of Globalization," in *Territoriality and Conflict in an Era of Globalization*, 85–110.

17. Overholt, *Asia, America, and the Transformation of Geopolitics*, 27–62.

18. Col Blaine D. Holt and Col John P. Geis II, "Harmonious Society: Rise of the New Boxers," in *Discord or "Harmonious Society"?* 40; see also Hiro, *After Empire*, 278–80.

19. Overholt, *Asia, America, and the Transformation of Geopolitics*, 41–42.

20. Ibid., xxv–xl, 1–16, 63–64, 230–62. See also Franklin B. Weinstein, "The Concept of a Commitment in International Relations," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 13, no. 1 (March 1969): 39–56; and Hiro, *After Empire*, 272–76.

21. Overholt, *Asia, America, and the Transformation of Geopolitics*, 33–35, 41–56, 139–85; and Goldstein, *Rising to the Challenge*, 118–76.

22. Geis, "Harmonious Discordance," 103–4. For similar points made within the same overall study, see Ralph A. Sandfry, "China's Military Modernization," in *Discord or "Harmonious Society"?* 71–92.

23. Overholt, *Asia, America, and the Transformation of Geopolitics*, 37–38.

24. Akio Takahara, "A Japanese Perspective on China's Rise and the East Asian Order," in *China's Ascent*, 235.

25. Ibid., 219.

26. Ibid., 230–31.

27. Ibid., 218–21.

28. Overholt, *Asia, America, and the Transformation of Geopolitics*, 85–95, 128, 154–69.

29. Evan S. Medeiros et al., *Pacific Currents: The Responses of U.S. Allies and Security Partners in East Asia to China's Rise* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2008), http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG736.pdf. See also Overholt, *Asia, America, and the Transformation of Geopolitics*, 154–86.

30. CAPT Philip Dupree, USN, and Col Jordan Thomas, USAF, "Air-Sea Battle: Clearing the Fog," *Armed Forces Journal*, June 2012, 30. For escalation management more specifically, see Alcazar, *"Crisis Management and the Anti-Access/Area Denial Problem*," 57.

31. Ibid., 56.

32. See for instance the capabilities called for in Mark A. Gunzinger, "Sustaining America's Strategic Advantage in Long-Range Strike," *Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments*, http://www.csbaonline.org/publications/2010/09/americas-strategic-advantage-long-range-strike/. See also the Committee on Conventional Prompt Global Strike Capability (Naval Studies Board and the National Research Council of the National Academies), *U.S. Conventional Prompt Global Strike: Issues for 2008 and Beyond* (Washington: National Academies Press, 2008), 1–60, 87–146.

33. Greg Jaffe, "US Model for War Fans Tensions with China and Pentagon," *Washington Post*, 1 August 2012.

34. Gunzinger, "Sustaining America's Strategic Advantage in Long-Range Strike."

35. For both sides the of the debate—the "indirect approach" of hitting "the enemy as a system" to "paralyze them" so as to undermine "political will" (i.e., "strategic interdiction") versus hitting military targets and their immediately supporting bases (i.e., "battlefield interdiction")—see Heuser, *Evolution of Strategy*, 314–45; and Dag Henriksen, *NATO's Gamble: Combining Diplomacy and Airpower in the Kosovo Crisis, 1998–1999* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2007), 31–62.

36. Andrew Scobell, *China's Use of Military Force: Beyond the Great Wall and the Long March* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 79–93, 119–43.

37. Lt Col Scott E. Caine, "The Influence of Culture, Demographics, and Education on the Development of the Middle Kingdom," in *Discord or "Harmonious Society"?* 7–25.

38. Ibid.; and Geis, "Harmonious Discordance."

39. Karen Ruth-Adams, "Attack and Conquer? International Anarchy and the Offense-Defense-Deterrence Balance," in *Offense, Defense, and War: An International Security Reader*, eds. Michael Brown et al. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004), 400–3, 407–16, 428–34; and Richard Ned Lebow, *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 238–42.

40. Bernard Brodie, *Strategy in the Missile Age* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1959), 409.

41. For recent examples of planning around this long-standing military-strategic goal in airpower theory, see Jaffe, "US Model for War Fans Tensions with China and Pentagon." For the classic arguments regarding high-density bombing of infrastructure, industry, leadership, and even population centers to paralyze and disorient adversary decision-making and war support functions, see Heuser, *Evolution of Strategy*, 297–336, 342–44.

42. Heuser, *Evolution of Strategy*, 312, 328, 342, 344, 350, 465–67.

43. Gordon A. Craig and Alexander L. George, *Force and Statecraft: Diplomatic Problems of Our Time* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 206–7.

44. Janice Gross Stein, "Deterrence and Reassurance," in *Behavior, Society, and Nuclear War*, vol. 2, eds. Philip. E. Tetlock et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 31–33.

45. Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 128–42; John Steinbruner, *The Cybernetic Theory of Decision* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 103–9; and Lebow, *Between Peace and War*, 102–7.

46. Roger Fisher et al., *Coping with International Conflict: A Systematic Approach to Influence in International Negotiation* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1997), 138–57, 209–15.

47. The importance of using a period of militarized crisis bargaining to "learn" via clarifying one's own interests, examine one's own assumptions, and "educate" the adversary—as opposed to simply using a period of heightened hostilities to issue threats of punishment—is explicated in both the rational choice/game-theoretic and cognitive-psychological literatures in political science. See Stein, "Deterrence and Reassurance"; James D. Fearon, "Deterrence and the Spiral Model: The Role of Costly Signals in Crisis Bargaining," presentation at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, 30 August–2 September 1990, San Francisco; Frank C. Zagare and D. Marc Kilgour, *Perfect Deterrence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); and R. Harrison Wagner, "Bargaining and War," *American Journal of Political Science* 44, no 3 (July 2000): 469–84.

48. For the logic of "information updating" (logic-based learning), see the game-theoretic explication of unilateral deterrence, massive retaliation, and flexible response deterrent relationships in Zagare and Kilgour, *Perfect Deterrence*, 133–254.

49. Clausewitz, *On War*, 98.

50. Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *Strait Talk: United States–Taiwan Relations and the Crisis with China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 13–17, 231–52.

51. Moises Naim, "The Five Wars of Globalization," *Foreign Policy*, 1 January 2003, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2003/01/01/five_wars_of_globalization.

52. Alcazar, "Crisis Management and the Anti-Access/Area Denial Problem," 47.

53. Lebow, *Between Peace and War*, 305; and James L. Richardson, *Crisis Diplomacy: The Great Powers since the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 248.

54. Dupree and Thomas, "Air-Sea Battle,"12, 30.

55. Julian S. Corbett, *Principles of Maritime Strategy* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1911), 128–35.

56. On the constraints created by relations with third nations beyond the bilateral dispute alone, see for instance the discussion of the international moral costs of different bombing

and targeting strategies in the war against Milosevic's Serbia in Scott A. Cooper, "Air Power and the Coercive Use of Force," in *Immaculate Warfare: Participants Reflect on the Air Campaigns over Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq*, ed. Stephen D. Wrage (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), 12–13.

57. Christopher Bolkom, *Air Force FB-22 Bomber Concept*, CRS Report for Congress (Washington: CRS, May 2004).

Staying In Step

The US "Pivot" and UK Strategic Choices

Clive Blount, Group Captain, Royal Air Force

In 2011, the Obama administration announced that the United States needed to make "a strategic pivot" in its foreign policy, in which it would downsize the US presence in the Middle East and Afghanistan over the next decade and turn attention to and, particularly, invest more in the Asia-Pacific region.[1] This decision has since been recharacterized as a "rebalancing" of US policy in the region.[2] The decision to pursue such a strategy was mainly driven by perceptions of a growing "triumphalist attitude" in the leadership of a rising China and evidence that Chinese leaders would leverage their newfound power to play a much greater role in influencing events in the Asia-Pacific region. This strategic decision is complicated by the fact that the United States is trying to make this switch at a time when it is beset by a range of domestic challenges—not the least, strained finances. Foreign policy seemed to be little more than a background issue for most voters in the recent presidential election. The question posed by the "traditional" allies of the United States in Europe, and elsewhere, is just how the new Asian strategy will affect US commitments in the rest of the world as it redeploys finite and, most likely, reduced resources to meet new challenges.

The declaration of a US "pivot" to Asia poses some compelling challenges, particularly for the United Kingdom (UK) which has, increasingly, adopted a position on world affairs almost entirely driven by its close relationship with the United States. The United Kingdom has formally declared that its "pre-eminent defence and security relationship [is] with the US."[3] Whether the relationship between the two countries is actually "special," or is just one of many bilateral partnerships between the United States and its allies, the United Kingdom has taken on the

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job of "transatlantic bridge" between the North American and European members of NATO. It has supported the United States wholeheartedly—even when that support has resulted in significant impacts on international legitimacy and wider support. The effects of a continuing recession, constant pressure to reduce deficit spending, and the recovery from the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts suggest that there is likely to be little money available for new capability or any significant increase in resources. The shift of US focus eastward therefore poses a significant challenge for the United Kingdom if it is to retain influence upon the United States and, thereby, maintain its current position as a world power.

Although there is general resignation in Europe to the strategy shift and despite explicit reassurance to the contrary from the new US secretary of state,[4] there is a concern that the shift of focus away from the region may leave gaps in regional defense. However, by its very nature, British foreign and defense policy is global. The United Kingdom has commercial, diplomatic, historical and military links with the Asia-Pacific region and, increasingly, has indicated that this area will be of growing importance in the coming decades. Examining the pivot from the perspective of the United Kingdom, this article argues that the new US Asian strategy provides a number of opportunities to strengthen and deepen the UK-US relationship as we move into an increasingly interdependent global era. It first establishes the importance of the Asia-Pacific region to the United Kingdom, both in terms of history but also from the perspective of current diplomatic, trade, and defense initiatives. It then examines the main strategic choices open to the United Kingdom if its relationship with the United States is to remain relevant and identifies and discusses three strategic concerns: European "burden-sharing" or "back-filling"; leverage of current arrangements and influence in the region, such as basing agreements and alliances; and a rebalancing of British military force structures to provide more utility for employment in support of US-led operations in the region. It then considers the nature of the future world and its impact on any strategic choices. The research suggests that, far from being a threat, the US pivot to Asia provides Britain with a number of opportunities to strengthen its relationship with the United States and enhance its long-standing relationship beyond that of the Atlantic "bridge."

UK Asia-Pacific Perspective

The Far East is an area which has long held a fascination for Britain and, since the earliest days of the British Empire, has been a source of economic prosperity. It is also a region that engenders deep emotions, with memories of the Second World War in the Pacific and the wars in Korea and Malaya driving both pride and humiliation.[5] The tragedy of the fall of Singapore was possibly one of the worst periods in recent British history, perhaps in sharp contrast to the contribution by British forces to the anti-communist campaign in Malaya—often held up to be the model for how to conduct counterinsurgency operations.[6] More recently, the British have viewed the Far East as a source of innovation, an area providing vibrant new business opportunities, and as a popular tourist destination. Expanding from the Asia-Pacific area specifically, Britain has long-standing ties with the wider Indian Ocean and its bordering nations, an area that is likely to play an increasingly vital role in the rise of the East. Middle Eastern oil and gas will remain crucial to the developing economies in the Far East, and the Indian Ocean will provide the main trade routes by which it is delivered. The routes will transit vital choke points, such as the Strait of Hormuz, the Strait of Malacca, and the Horn of Africa, and the security of such trade must play a key role in any Asian strategy.[7] In addition, as China looks to new regions for trade and natural resources, the impact of events as far away as Africa and South America cannot be ignored. Britain has significant influence and interests in all these areas.

From a military perspective, the United Kingdom has a small permanent footprint in the Asia-Pacific region of merely 1,000 or so personnel. This is in contrast to the large force structures maintained in the region until the middle of the last century. Withdrawal from "East of Suez," driven by a fast deteriorating financial position, commenced in the 1960s, with the United Kingdom steadily withdrawing the several thousand troops it had based in the Asia-Pacific region, and, in particular, greatly reducing its footprint at its naval base in Singapore. The final act of military withdrawal from British-owned bases did not, however, take place until 1997 when Britain handed back the Crown Colony of Hong Kong and the New Territories to China. The largest current concentration of British military personnel is in Brunei. The British garrison in Brunei serves at the behest of the Sultan of Brunei, who meets a large proportion of the operating costs of the force to provide security for

his country. There has been a British military presence in Brunei since 1962, and today the garrison consists of some 900 personnel, mainly from the Royal Gurkha Rifles, supported by a small flight of helicopters. The United Kingdom also maintains its primary jungle warfare school in the sultanate.[8] The only other permanent UK military presence of any note in the region is in Singapore, where Britain owns a large fuel depot and a number of berthing wharves in Sembewang dockyard. This facility provides access and fueling for three escort-sized vessels and limited spares support. The fuel depot is, allegedly, the second largest of its type in the Asia-Pacific region and is therefore an indispensable asset for the Royal Navy and allied navies.[9]

In addition to these two permanent installations, the United Kingdom maintains a network of defense attachés and advisors in embassies and consulates throughout the region and a large number of exchange postings, particularly with Australia and New Zealand. Of particular note with regard to these latter countries is Exercise Long Look, which enables a large number of UK, New Zealand, and Australian personnel to work embedded in each other's services for short-term periods (approximately four months). On 18 January 2013, British defence minister Phillip Hammond signed a treaty with the Australian defence minister Stephen Smith to formalize further Anglo-Australian defence cooperation, pledging the two countries to work together in areas such as cyber security, defense reform, personnel exchange, equipment, and science and technology.[10] There are also reasonably regular visits by Royal Air Force aircraft and Royal Navy vessels, but operational demands in Afghanistan and elsewhere, and the severely limited budget, have currently curtailed the magnitude and frequency of these visits. Despite the reduction in permanent, declared physical military presence in the region, the United Kingdom is committed to a major formal defense agreement there. This is the Five Power Defence Arrangement (FPDA). The United Kingdom, Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, and Singapore devised this loose alliance in April 1971 to share the responsibility for the defense and security of peninsular Malaysia and Singapore—particularly against the threat of a resurgent Indonesia. This series of bilateral arrangements replaced the Anglo-Malaya Defence Agreement (AMDA) after Britain's decision to withdraw permanently based forces from the region in 1967.[11]

The FPDA is a useful grouping and serves the region well. It has not only served as a rationale for the United Kingdom to remain engaged

in the region (and has thus proved a useful political lever in times of shrinking defense budgets), but it has also benefited the other nations in the alliance by keeping a leading world player physically engaged. Not only does this keep a permanent member of the UN Security Council tied to issues in the area, but also provides access, both for exercises and if necessary during conflict, to high-end military capabilities such as amphibious maneuver, attack submarines, and air-to-air refueling. The cost of maintaining FPDA membership is relatively small but provides reassurance to nations that the United Kingdom is still interested in the region. Perhaps most crucially, it provides no legal obligation other than to consult—no nation is committed to military action in support of another as part of this treaty. As the other nations in the FPDA—especially Singapore and Malaysia—have developed their armed forces, a physical security guarantee from the United Kingdom has therefore become less important than efforts to build capacity by providing access to expertise and high-capability platforms and a shared voice in the international arena. Thus, the United Kingdom is still able to wield significant influence despite strained financial circumstances.[12]

Links with the region are far wider than purely military activity. In the economic arena, there are very healthy trade relationships and codependence between Europe and the Asia-Pacific region. By far the most useful lens with which to look at this activity is that of the European Union (EU), of which Britain is a member (although not linked to the common currency of the euro). Notwithstanding the struggle with which the Eurozone has been contending since the start of the global recession, the *CIA World Factbook* lists the EU as the world's largest economy, just $30 billion ahead of the United States and $3.6 trillion ahead of China.[13] Indeed, the close interest the international community has maintained in the Eurozone crisis and its impact on world markets clearly demonstrates the importance of the EU as a global economic player. Furthermore, evidence suggests that as the United States turns its attention to Asia, China has been increasingly turning to Europe. The mutual trade relationship between China and the EU is the biggest economic partnership for each party. China imports more from the EU than from anywhere else in the world and invests 33 percent of its foreign direct investment (FDI) in Europe—second only to Asia (49 percent) and surprisingly more than the 28 percent it invests in the United States. In early 2012, the United Kingdom was the largest source of FDI into

China from within the EU. The amount of this investment had grown significantly over the previous few years—by 40 percent in 2010 and by 20 percent in 2011.[14] To underline this commitment, Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne made a trip to China in January 2012. Osborne urged China to invest further in British infrastructure and, following this trip, China used its sovereign wealth to acquire a stake in a major UK water utility.[15] Even more recently, the Bank of England faces increasing pressure to support renminbi trading in London to boost the nascent market in China's tightly controlled currency. The *Financial Times* quotes a senior Bank of England spokesman as saying, "The Bank has been and remains fully engaged with the City of London initiative to develop London as a center of renminbi trading and is in regular dialogue with the People's Bank of China on a range of issues."[16] Furthermore, in a recent Fullerton Lecture, Foreign Secretary William Hague described Asia as "the engine of the world's growth today" and committed Britain to be "part of that success story."[17] He went on to state that British exports to the Asia-Pacific region have increased 20 percent year on year, but that much more needs to be done to encourage economic growth in an economy that depends "overwhelmingly on expanding trade and investment." He recognized the immense opportunity that lies in the vast markets of the Asia-Pacific region and described Britain's ambitious targets to increase, and in some cases double, bilateral trade between the United Kingdom and China, India, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, and South Korea within the next five years; the overall drive is to double British exports to £1 trillion a year by 2020.[18] Most recently, Foreign Minister Hugo Swire restated a previous commitment to the Anglo-Japanese relationship saying in a speech prior to a visit to the region, "Whether it is global trade or international peacekeeping our relationship with Japan is fundamental to UK foreign policy, not just in Asia but around the world."[19]

Britain has also increased, significantly, its diplomatic activity in Asia since 2010. A series of visits to the region by senior politicians and members of the royal family has spearheaded this initiative, but there have also been significant increases in professional diplomatic staff in embassies and consulates across the Asia-Pacific area. The United Kingdom is one of the few countries in the West that is expanding its diplomatic network at a time of economic crisis. The largest focus of this diplomatic expansion is in Asia, with eight new British diplomatic posts in Asia to

be established by 2015. Separately, Britain will also deploy around 60 extra staff to China, 30 to India, and another 50 across Asian networks in Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Burma, Singapore, Cambodia, Brunei, North and South Korea, and Mongolia. As an interesting aside, the Foreign and Commonwealth office has funded an initiative to increase by 40 percent the number of staff who speak Chinese.[20] The British Embassy in Laos, closed in 1985, is to be reopened so the United Kingdom will then be represented in each Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member state. This is a deliberate move ahead of the planned transformation of the ASEAN into a single, highly competitive market—a clear indication of UK economic intentions in Asia.

Finally, the United Kingdom has a large Asian diaspora. People originating from the subcontinent (India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh) make up around six percent of the UK population. This constituency is likely to be very influential in forming UK policy in the future, both in developing business ties and cultural exchanges, but also in the event of a future regional conflict, it could have significant influence on British strategic involvement. This is especially significant given the importance of the Indian Ocean and its surrounding countries. There is also a large Chinese community comprising just less than one percent.[21] Links with Hong Kong remain strong, even after its return to Chinese rule in 1997. Cultural ties between Britain and these regions are resilient, and long-established cultural relationships are highly influential. For instance, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is the world's largest international broadcaster and, for several years, the largest audiences for its World Service have been in the Middle East and Asia. Transmission stations in Britain, Cyprus, Oman, and Thailand and a wide selection of cable and satellite channels transmit in all the principal languages of the region, with the largest audiences being in English, Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, and a number of other South Asian languages. There are broadcasts in both Mandarin and Cantonese Chinese. Twenty-four-hour television broadcasting in Arabic and Farsi has proved influential in key regions, particularly as a trusted alternative view to Al Jazeera.[22] It is essential to remember that the United Kingdom and the United States share remarkably similar views on the importance of international and economic norms and, essentially, a liberal world order. Both countries support open free markets, legal transparency, popular self-determination,

and a free press; cooperation and partnership options extend far beyond geopolitical affairs.

UK Strategic Choices

The future interests of the United Kingdom are thus closely entwined with the Asia-Pacific region, and it is difficult to think of a future where the region will not play a strategically significant role. It is clear that the United Kingdom should view US concerns in Asia, and its increasing desire to bring stability to the region, as very much in line with British interests. Britain should, therefore, aim to support the US "Asian pivot" initiative wherever possible, recognizing resource limitations at home and, at the very least, see it as an opportunity to strengthen UK-US partnerships. Now consider the main options available to Britain to support this grand strategy.

The first concern as the United Kingdom seeks a strategy against the background of the US shift to Asia is that of developing European defense activity. The EU, if considered as an entity, is, at first glance, the second largest military power in the world. France and the United Kingdom alone spend much the same as China in absolute terms on military expenditures. When the defense budgets of Germany, Italy, Spain, Greece, and Poland are added, the EU spends roughly $240 billion on its armed forces—almost twice as much as China and one-third the amount of the United States.[23] However, the conversion of this spending into comparative military power is problematic; manning costs in the West are very much the driver of defense spending, and the coordination of the forces of the European nations—all sovereign countries with individual interests and aspirations—to produce unified military power is far from straightforward. However, even as the US focus shifts eastward, there remain a number of key international issues in the Mediterranean, the Middle East, the Persian Gulf, the western Indian Ocean, and Africa. These issues include building the Libyan economy and society and creating a Mediterranean economic community that can give North African and some Middle East countries real reason to reform. These issues will still require a considerable investment, and it is perhaps here that Britain could use its influence to encourage Europe to "burden share" to enable US redeployment. While efforts to develop a common European security and defense policy have been sporadic and

beset with irreconcilable national interests, bilateral or multilateral arrangements offer more hope of success. In particular, the historic Anglo-French agreement signed at Lancaster House on 17 February 2012 may prove a model for future European cooperation and the leadership of European operations.[24] European leadership would be welcomed in the continuation of efforts to fight pirates off the coast of Somalia; the provision of a rapid-deployment capability to prevent eruptions of violence, such as those in recent years in Sierra Leone and the Ivory Coast; in helping to patrol the drug routes along the coast of western Africa; or even to exercise the rights of all countries to navigate freely in the Strait of Hormuz. Ongoing operations in Mali and the wider Sahel—where France is currently providing the lead (with British ISR and transport support) of what it intends will eventually become a largely African military operation—provide an example of how Europe can, in effect, "cover America's back" as it concentrates its main effort in the Pacific. It should also be remembered that, diplomatically, Europe holds two of five permanent seats on the UN Security Council and, with the third largest population in the world after India and China (all living under democratic rule), is largely allied with the United States in a zone of peace, democracy, and wealth.

Many NATO countries have apparently been counting on US military power in the region to offset their own deep defense reductions and were thus deeply concerned about the pivot. British defence secretary Phillip Hammond recently said that, instead of worrying about the cutbacks, the allies must recognize that "as a result, European nations, including the UK, will need to do much more of the heavy lifting in the security of their own region," including both Europe itself and the Middle East, Northern Africa, and the Horn of Africa, which he called "the near abroad." "This is not the end of Atlanticism, but the beginning of a new, more balanced relationship in the [NATO] alliance."[25] However, Britain's relationship with the EU has never been straightforward, and current discussions suggest there may be a future for the United Kingdom outside the EU. The United States has sounded a cautionary note, stating clearly that an Atlanticist Britain is not a direct alternative to a Britain that plays a central role in Europe and that it "believes that the 'special relationship' is best served by the UK remaining at the heart of Europe."[26]

A further strategic possibility to consider is aiding operations by providing basing in the Asia-Pacific region and using UK influence to ease

access. The massive air base and port at Diego Garcia in the British Indian Ocean Territories and the previously mentioned Singapore fleet facilities are invaluable for power projection, both into the region and for operations in the wider Indian Ocean (they played a large role supporting US operations during recent conflicts in Iraq and the global war on terror). In addition, Britain's ability to leverage its FPDA allies and its other long-standing diplomatic relationships in the region to support US initiatives and to facilitate access and overflight would likely prove a significant asset. Finally, Britain's membership in the P5 (group of permanent members of the UN Security Council) would not only enable it to support the United States directly in obtaining legitimacy for its actions within the UN itself, but could possibly provide Britain leverage in its dealings with the smaller nations in the region. Traditional links to Britain, such as commonwealth membership, provide smaller countries with access to a P5 member that is less partisan or diplomatically "charged" than the United States or China (although this could be arguable) and that may provide support for individual regional concerns in the council without necessarily antagonizing "great-power" politics. This support may in turn be used to garner support for wider US initiatives in the region.

From a purely military perspective—in traditional terms of warships, divisions, and aircraft—it would appear that the United Kingdom has little to offer the United States. Successive defense reviews have reduced the size of Britain's armed forces considerably, and the war in Afghanistan has depleted both materiel and broader war-fighting experience, as the forces have concentrated on intensive counterinsurgency and stability operations. It will require some time to recover and restock for the full range of capabilities to be restored. However, Britain's armed forces still bring proven capabilities and experience. It remains a leading contributor to NATO, is the world's third-largest financial contributor to UN peace-keeping operations, and is one of the five nuclear weapons states recognized by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Britain thus retains some measure of global influence.[27] Moreover, the Strategic Defence and Security Review conducted in 2010 and the subsequent National Security Strategy recognize the UK's reliance on global trade and stress that Britain must maintain a power-projection capability of highly competent expeditionary forces to deal with emerging problems "at source," tackling threats before they reach the homeland.[28] While

the United States does not lack physical combat power, a capable, connected, deployable force able to operate easily alongside US forces and within an integrated command structure is likely to prove an asset in future global operations—and will remain influential and relevant. Less obviously, Britain's highly respected intelligence services (particularly signals and communications intelligence), its special forces, its contribution to the global missile warning network, and some "niche" assets such as airborne warning and control and "Rivet Joint" signals intelligence aircraft provide valuable support to US operations. That said, several senior commentators in the United States have already suggested that any further cuts in defense spending could severely test this relationship. So, the British government must remain mindful of the broader effects when considering future defense reviews.[29]

The Future Impact

Thus far, a rather traditional worldview has measured issues against the background of the traditional state system and international affairs as currently constituted. However, states in the future world are likely to become increasingly interdependent and interconnected, and traditional national boundaries will likely become more porous. An increasing level of international business and diplomatic affairs will make unrestricted access to the so-called global commons of the sea, air, space, and cyberspace ever more vital.[30] Therefore, it becomes increasingly obvious that any future world power would be ill-advised to limit its strategy purely in terms of geography or regions of interest. The effects of the Chinese antisatellite tests in January 2007 and January 2010 (and early reporting suggests 2013) which caused significant debris fields in busy orbits are a harbinger of the extensive disruption that irresponsible behavior, or intentional attacks, could have on global operations across all areas of human activity.[31] The widespread repercussions of aggressive actions in cyberspace, as exemplified by the attacks on the Estonian banking system,[32] or by the Stuxnet virus in Iran, further demonstrate that a global outlook is required when enumerating national interest. It is no longer sufficient to designate regional areas of concern, or, indeed, divide the world into "regions of influence." Again, the Anglo-American emphasis on norms of international behavior comes to the fore.

Britain considers its partnership with the United States vital to its security and economic well-being and seeks to maximize its influence on US policymaking. Many in Europe have seen the US shift to Asia as threatening due to their zero-sum philosophy; reality is a lot more nuanced. A number of options are available to Britain in the wake of the pivot to maintain relevance or enhance its influence upon the United States. Britain has a long history in the Asia-Pacific region and has a number of well-developed diplomatic and military relationships in the region on which it can draw. It also has a significant trade relationship with the region, particularly with China and Japan, and as a member of the EU. As a leading member of NATO and the EU, Britain should continue in its attempts to influence European nations to take more of a share in providing security in Europe and the near abroad, releasing the pressure on US forces to be redeployed to the Asia-Pacific region. Britain can also encourage burden-sharing and take a leading role in facilitating international cooperation in the provision of global "goods" such as the prevention of piracy and in counterterrorism. The United Kingdom is an influential P5 member of the UN Security Council and still possesses credible, deployable armed forces that are interoperable with those of the United States. In addition, it can enable unique access to the region and has certain niche areas of expertise and capability that would provide significant support to US operations. Therefore, UK policymakers should see the US strategic rebalancing to Asia as an opportunity rather than a threat, providing as it does, security in an area of global economic importance but also opening broader opportunities to stay in step with the United States, further develop influence, and remain relevant to the relationship.

The UK's economic recovery and continuing prosperity, as with those of most developed countries, depend on global stability and growth. The country has always been a trading nation and will not prosper without a sustained economy, continued access to new markets and new sources of inward investment, and a global commons that is secure. The US pivot to Asia must, therefore, be seen not as a "distraction" from Europe and the Middle East but as an attempt to support stability and security worldwide and therefore as opening new opportunities for prosperity and peace. SSQ

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Book Review

The Asia-Pacific Century: Challenges and Opportunities, edited by Adam Lowther. Air University Press, 2012, available online only at http://aupress.au.af.mil/.

Ever since the US Army purchased its first aircraft more than 100 years ago, the nation's primary aviation arm—as with all services—has progressively increased its military capability. One could argue, however, that the Air Force's vastly improved equipment and training over the past century have not been equally matched with the intellectual development of its Airmen, particularly in terms of strategic thought. Too often throughout history, the Air Force has found itself engaged in conflicts, as in Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, and Southwest Asia, without the necessary background on the political and economic instruments of power associated with these regions.

One must commend the Air Force, then, for having the foresight to recognize that the Obama administration's strategic shift from Europe and the Middle East to the Asia-Pacific theater will require Airmen to have sufficient knowledge of the political and economic factors of the region to develop a coherent military strategy. To that end, the Air Force Research Institute conducted a year-long study, including a global conference on the Asia-Pacific region. The proceedings of that conference, *The Asia-Pacific Century: Challenges and Opportunities*, have now been published.

This work represents an ambitious attempt to assemble a diverse group of scholars to define how the strategic picture in the Asia-Pacific may look in the next 20 years. Thirteen civilian scholars from the Air Force and academia, including two academics from the region, contributed 13 chapters on the current and future strategic state of the Asia-Pacific theater. While the entire region receives some coverage, the bulk of the analysis is understandably directed toward the People's Republic of China as an emerging power. Every chapter deals either directly with China or, when addressing other countries, includes some aspect of Chinese influence.

All the authors agree that China will continue to experience economic growth, albeit unlikely at the same pace as the past decade. There is less agreement as to whether its economic ascendancy poses a threat to the United States and global interests. While the analysts concur that China will continue to emphasize economic growth to ensure internal stability, they disagree on the strategic implications of its military modernization. Will China eventually seek hegemony, or will it stay committed to only defending its core interests?

Whether China chooses to flex its economic, political, or military muscles, it will undoubtedly remain a major player in the region. Chinese investment and trade continue to rise regionally. It has also exhibited military responses to territorial disputes in the South China Sea and over island possessions against Japan. The

question now becomes what role can the United States play in that dynamic? No scholar predicts a new Sino-US cold war on the Soviet model. But there remains the issue of whether the United States should contain China militarily or engage it economically. One analyst contends that doing both simultaneously has actually been US policy since the end of the Cold War.

Another issue is how other state actors in the region will react to China's growing influence. Since China prefers bilateral relations with its neighbors—as opposed to dealing with multinational organizations such the Association of Southeast Asian Nations—these countries may find it in their interest to bandwagon either with China or the United States. Some scholars contend that most Asia-Pacific countries do not want to side with either power, but prefer having a US presence in the region as a stabilizing influence. With the growing US debt problem, however, they may have to assume more responsibility for their own defense needs.

With the focus primarily on China as a potential peer competitor to the United States, deterrence and major combat operations dominated the strategic military discussion. Terrorism, which brought the return of a US military presence to Southeast Asia early this century after a 10-year absence, was virtually ignored. While admittedly on the wane following 10 years of military assistance and recent peace agreements, Islamist terrorism and separatism is still a potential threat, particularly in southern Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines. The strategic implications of humanitarian assistance provided following the devastating tsunami in 2004, Cyclone Nargis in 2008, and the Japanese earthquake and tsunami of 2011 also received comparatively little coverage.

Conspicuously absent from the list of distinguished contributors was a dedicated sinologist. As China was the major focal point of the conference, the perspective of one intimately familiar with Chinese domestic issues and the inner workings of its party politics may have been invaluable in discerning the motivations of China's leadership and their outlook for the next two decades. Save for the foreword written by an Air Force general and feedback garnered from officer attendees at the conference breakout sessions, no uniformed military member contributed to the proceedings. The military's Air-Sea Battle concept designed primarily for the Asia-Pacific theater would rely heavily on the power projection capability of the Air Force. Hence, a knowledgeable Airman could have provided important information and a point of view that would have complemented the outlook of the civilian scholars.

Nevertheless Airmen and all uniformed personnel can still make important contributions to the military dimension of strategic discussion, provided they learn the political and economic instruments of power associated with the Asia-Pacific region. These proceedings will help provide the necessary information and insight for both the warrior and civilian scholar to formulate strategy in the coming years.

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