

Keeping the Rise of China in Check: A Review Essay

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Aaron Friedberg, *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America, and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011), 360 pages, maps, index.

Baogang Guo and Chung-Chian Teng (Eds.), *China's Quiet Rise: Peace Through Integration* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2011), 180 pages, tables, index.

Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao and Cheng-yi Lin (Eds.), *Rise of China: Beijing's Strategies and Implications for the Asia-Pacific* (London: Routledge, 2009), 312 pages, tables, index.

Ashley J. Tellis, Travis Tanner, and Jessica Keough (Eds.), *Asia Responds to Its Rising Powers: China and India* (Seattle: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2011), 380 pages, index.

The rise of China has now become one of the few most important developments in world politics today and is likely to remain a subject of intense debate in the years to come. Although much has been written about this topic, scholars still disagree on what the future holds. In *Rise of China: Beijing's Strategies and Implications for the Asia-Pacific*, for instance, editors Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao and Cheng-yi Lin make this remark:

The question debated in policy circles throughout the [Asia-Pacific] region no longer falls on whether or not China will become a superpower, but what it will do when it possesses and wields such influence in the international system—and which school of thought will prevail and control the helm of policymaking in Beijing's opaque leadership decisions. (2009, p. 4)

Realists in the United States, especially offensive realists, remain pessimistic about China's rise, but liberals and constructivists paint a more optimistic picture of this phenomenon. Who is winning the debate? There are no clear answers to this question. What we do know is that ample evidence points to the fact that the rapid rise of an authoritarian power has been threatening declining liberal powers whose strategy has also been perceived as a threat to authoritarian regimes in rising powers. The book by Aaron Friedberg in particular shows that China and the United States are rivals for mastery. The four publications under review help us carefully reflect on whether the contest for supremacy between the two great powers can be mitigated or pacified by global and regional economic integration.

China's Quiet Rise Through Integration

China's Quiet Rise: Peace Through Integration, edited by Baogang Guo and Chung-Chian Teng, is a collection of papers from an international conference entitled "China's Peaceful Development and the Deepening in the Greater China Region," held June 11–12, 2009, in Taipei. The nine chapters are a collective response to the pessimistic thinking of some China watchers and presents the contributors' general consensus that the success or failure of China's economic integration with the rest of the world will determine whether its rise is peaceful or prone to conflict. China's motivations and actions are assessed.

The introduction written by the two editors reviews, albeit scantily, theoretical arguments ranging from Hans Morgenthau's classical realism to Samuel Huntington's culturalism, Woodrow Wilson's democratic liberalism, and liberal institutionalism. The editors believe that

China's deep integration with the world is a positive development in an era of globalization. It ensures peace and promotes growth. Without these integrations [sic], China's rise may not be peaceful or can even be on a collision course with existing global powers in the world. (p. 6)

The volume does not ignore the fact that China's military modernization program has been rapid. The first two chapters deal with the rise of China's hard and soft power. In Chapter 1, Tieh-shang Lee provides a statistical analysis of China's rising military power and predicts the probability of war between China and the United States occurring around the years 2063–2079, when the former will have been in the process of catching up with the latter and starting to dominate the Asia-Pacific militarily, assuming that China's dissatisfaction with the status quo persists. Data show that between 1990 and 2005, China's military power still lagged behind that of the United States and that China's level of dissatisfaction was not extremely high, thus explaining China's peaceful behavior. Yu-nu Lu's Chapter 2 further shows that the idea of soft power also began to attract the attention of Chinese elites in 2007, one year before the Olympic Games China hosted in 2008. Leaders in Beijing have since viewed soft power, especially in cultural and language promotion forms, as a way to project its power around the world. This type of public diplomacy is insufficient, and the author thinks that China should go beyond building its positive image of modernization by democratizing its political system as a viable option. All these imply that China has shown more interest in using soft power rather than hard power.

The whole volume places too much emphasis on the functionalist/constructivist optimism about attaining global or regional peace and security through economic integration, especially when it reaffirms the liberal proposition that states that trade with each other do not wage war against each other. Chapter 3 by Wei Liang examines China's free trade negotiations in Asia, regards the country as an activist interested in economic gains through international trade, and considers this policy activism consistent with its long-standing policy toward multilateralism. China's peaceful rise is also considered in relation to Latin America. As Chapter 4 by Antonio Hsiang and Jerome Hsiang shows, relations between the two sides are characterized by the enjoyment of mutual benefits through expanding trade flows and business connections, not through establishing military and political ties the way Russia has done in the region.

China's trade-based policy toward Latin America has contributed to the latter's economic growth in the 2000s.

In Chapter 5, Itamar Y. Lee devotes his attention to Sino-India relations, contending that more can be done to improve their ties. They used to be like "brothers" divided only by the Himalayan mountain: for more than two thousand years, their "relations . . . were in friendly cooperation about 99 percent of the time and had years of unfriendly conflict last about only one percent of the time" (p. 86). Mutual suspicion and distrust remain but can be overcome if the two states just learn to

communicate clearly with each other to prevent malicious understanding, cultivate a friendly bilateral relationship based on mutual respect, enhance the spirit of *Hindi-Chini* [Bhai] *Bhai* [brotherhood] as indispensable partners, and promote a cooperative Asian renaissance with open regionalism beyond the Himalaya in an era of globalization. (p. 97)

The rest of the volume "tests" the functionalist proposition that integration is likely to bring about peace. In Chapter 6, Shaohua Hu focuses on relations between China and the two Koreas and assesses different scenarios and implications about a unified Korea. In the foreseeable future, Korea is unlikely to be integrated with China because the former is likely to remain neutral, as the United States will remain crucial to Korea's economy and security. Taiwan seems to have a brighter prospect of positive-sum economic relations with China. In Chapter 7, Pei-shan Kao shows how Taiwan, under the leadership of President Ma Ying-jeou, became friendlier to China and enjoyed better social and economic relations with the latter, thus suggesting that interdependence between the two sides continues to deepen. The role of Taiwanese businessmen in promoting economic integration between the two sides is discussed in Chapter 8, where Shu Keng and Ruihua Lin view with optimism growing economic exchanges and social contacts between businessmen across the Taiwan Strait. They ask if this trend will eventually lead to a reunification. Chapter 9, written by Yuan-ming Alvin Yao, further examines maritime interdependence and energy cooperation between China and Taiwan. The chapter is more prescriptive than analytical, and the author basically argues that both states should enhance their cooperation on the basis of their heavy reliance on energy resources.

The liberal proposition that peace can be promoted through international trade, commerce, and integration has some merit, so long as states remain interested in doing business together. The problem with this positive-sum assumption is that trading states are expected to keep reaping mutual benefits. The issue of trade deficit and surplus is not seriously addressed. The volume assumes that as long as China is satisfied with the status quo, all will be well. But evidence suggests that China's dissatisfaction may grow if it does not get its way; moreover, dissatisfaction by other trading states over China's policy may also increase. In the case of China's policy toward Latin America, Antonio Hsiang and Jerome Hsiang also contend that Beijing has tried to offer the region an alternative model of development—a challenge to the Washington Consensus model now on the wane. This further raises the question of whether China's rise will remain peaceful when it succeeds in promoting the Beijing Consensus, emphasizing the need for political stability, strong government, and state intervention in the economy. The use of soft power as a way to change the status quo defended by liberal states

in the West may pose a threat to them. They may not share the idea that integration is about China becoming part of the global economy but might rather worry about the ever-growing gravitational pull of its economy turning integration into a Trojan horse, undermining the current global capitalist system.

Although not carefully edited, the volume should be a welcome addition to the academic literature on Asia-Pacific security because of its emphasis on peace through integration. More careful work needs to be done, however, if integrationism is to gain real momentum in conceptual and theoretical terms. The concept of integration is not clearly defined and the approach is not theoretically rigorous, despite some good efforts to test some propositions based on quantitative and qualitative data. Relying on China, Korea, and Taiwan as country studies to build a case for peace through integration is woefully inadequate. John Ravenhill also reminds us that “the relationship between the growth of interdependence and a reduction in militarized conflict between states is at best a probabilistic one: no proponent of the liberal approach would be sufficiently naïve to assert that growing interdependence will assure peace” (2009, p. 207).

As it is, the volume provides scanty evidence to demonstrate the fact that powerful authoritarian and democratic states can be expected to enjoy peaceful integration. The theory of integration would be far more convincing if the authors in this volume were to go beyond the positive outlook of social-economic relations and if they were to address contentious issues such as regime type or political systems, nationalism, and political ambitions. If they hope to win the debate, integration scholars need to pay more attention to relations among the great powers, which feature prominently in realist thinking. Sino-Indian relations are far from ideal, as Itamar Y. Lee himself notes in this volume: India thinks that “China will exercise gradual, but increasing, hegemony” when it “acquires more economic and military capabilities” (p. 95). As shall be seen, China shows no willingness to regard India as an equal partner. Chinese leaders are evidently not less politically ambitious than their American counterparts, especially the unipolarists who sought to maintain American supremacy in the post-Cold War world (Ryan, 2010).

A Sino-American Contest for Supremacy in the Asia-Pacific

A Contest for Supremacy: China, America, and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia is a major extension of Friedberg’s articles “The Struggle for Mastery in Asia” and “Ripe for Rivalry.” It is an excellent addition to neoclassical realist work on security and is likely to generate further debate. *Asia Responds to Its Rising Powers: China and India* reinforces neoclassical realism inspired by the classic work of Thucydides and contemporary scholars like Robert Gilpin.

The pessimistic view about the rise of China is based on the neoclassical realist assumption that rising states tend to be troublemakers or that they tend to be revisionist rather than status quo. Central to this thinking is a combination of factors at work: namely, international anarchy, relative power, political ambition, perception, and domestic politics. In his chapter “International Order and the Rise of Asia: History and Theory” in *Asia Responds to Its Rising Powers: China and India*, Kenneth Pyle uses European experience to illustrate this point: “As the Industrial Revolution made possible greater wealth and power, swift changes in

the distribution of power resulted in a new territorial ambitions, armament races, and unrestrained, all encompassing contests for primacy." He then adds that "the political awakening of the masses and their mobilization as a matter of national strength provoked nationalism that eroded any sense of shared values that remained from the Concert of Europe" (p. 40). The role of elites, their values, their perceptions, their definition of national interest, and their distinctive sense of national identity matter when assessing the dynamics of security politics (p. 43). Instead of assuming that state leaders are driven by a biological lust for power, as classical realists see it, neoclassical realists tend to see political ambitions as the by-product of growing material power.

According to Friedberg, "as the wealth and power at its command have grown, Beijing has begun to exert increasing influence, both in Asia and around the world," and "evidence of China's expanding capabilities and ambitions has continued to accumulate" (p. xv). China has increasingly become more politically ambitious. Since the global financial crisis that erupted in 2008–2009, its leaders have become more assertive than ever before. They have become more willing to resist external pressure for change, more open about their country's rapidly evolving military capabilities, "blunter in warning its neighbors against opposing its wishes, more willing to use its growing economic clout in an attempt to exert diplomatic leverage, and more open in questioning the likely longevity of America's leading role in Asia and the world" (p. xvi).

Central to Friedberg's analysis is the concept of relative power. As more and more observers continue to talk about America's inevitable decline, China continues to enjoy rapid economic growth (close to 10% in the 2000s). As its resources continue to dwindle because of preoccupations with urgent dangers coming from "rogue states" and terrorists and because of unusually stringent fiscal restraints, the United States has been less able to deal with the rise of China. Unlike Nazi Germany, imperial Japan, and even the Soviet Union, China's vast human and natural resources, its extraordinary economic growth rates, its integration into the world economy, and its technological progress will make it difficult for the United States to respond. China's economic growth, achieved through integration into the global economy, has made it possible for it to afford a sustained, fast-paced, and wide-ranging military buildup. The United States still enjoys military superiority over China, but the gap continues to be narrowed. The balance of military power continues to shift in favor of China (pp. 215–244).

Relative power alone does not explain Sino-American rivalry. What has kept the two great powers "locked in a quiet but increasingly intense struggle for power and influence" is not simply "the result of easily erased misperceptions or readily correctible policy errors." Their emerging rivalry "is driven instead by forces that are deeply rooted in the shifting structure of the international system" and in their "very different domestic political regimes" (p. 1). Rivalry between China and the United States has also resulted from their ideological differences and hostilities. The two powers have different political systems. As a democracy, the United States has sought a regime change in China, but the latter has sought to preserve its authoritarian system by pushing back and seeking to displace the former as the preponderant power in East Asia. This has created a source of mutual mistrust between them. Compromise is unlikely because each tends to think that history is on its side. Rivalry would not end even if China were still on

the march toward liberal democracy. A democratizing China may stir up nationalism or patriotism or make the country more antagonistic and aggressive (pp. 249–250).

Another challenge that makes it difficult for the Americans to think about the dangers of China's rise is of an intellectual nature. Friedberg bemoans the fact that American policy makers, diplomats, and most China experts in the United States have been, since the days of Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger, overly optimistic about the future of Sino-American relations. This optimism makes it difficult for dissenting voices to be heard and more unpleasant factors to be considered (pp. 5, 264–265). Friedberg warns that if such optimistic views are allowed "to carry the day, the shift in the regional balance of military power toward China will accelerate" (p. 262).

All of these factors worry Friedberg because they continue to leave the United States unprepared for the potential balance of power shifting in favor of China. If this were the case, the United States would lose its allies who doubted its resolve to protect them, and undemocratic forces would threaten the free world. China would be able to advance its interests in its backyard and other distant regions of the world, such as the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America.

However, Friedberg still remains optimistic about the future of his country because it is a democracy with some enduring advantages over China, such as political stability, a rich endowment of natural resources, strong protections of property rights, deep capital markets, a commitment to free enterprise, the world's leading university system, and demographic strength (p. 242). The United States should maintain the following: its "technological edge" by moving ahead without holding China back, "a first-class educational system, a society open and attractive to talented and ambitious immigrants, and generous public and private support for basic scientific research" (p. 274). China will not keep growing forever, especially when its population ages, labor becomes scarcer, wages rise, and its exports become less competitive. For instance, "the rapid aging of China's population will probably cause its rate of economic growth to fall sooner and faster than would otherwise have been the case" (p. 243). According to Friedberg, "It may also turn out that China will have gotten old, and less dynamic, before it has had the chance to consolidate its position as a truly global power" (p. 244).

A weaker and unstable China may still pose a threat to regional or world security. When weak, Chinese leaders might seek confrontation with foreign powers instead of accommodation with them. Not wanting to be seen as weak in the midst of social and political instability, they may adopt more provocative or extremely risky postures vis-à-vis foreign powers.

For Friedberg, the United States must prepare itself for the worst until China becomes a liberal democracy, for only then can the former learn to live with the latter as the preponderant power in East Asia and call home its legions (pp. 251, 252). His analysis has incorporated liberal democratic insights. In his words, "if we permit an illiberal China to displace us as the preponderant player in this most vital region, we will face grave dangers to our interests and our values throughout the world" (p. 8). He also seems to think that only democracies can coexist peacefully. Evidence from Europe further suggests that "nationalist passions, territorial disputes, and arms races [over there] were fast dwindling into historical memory" (p. xiii).

Neoclassical realists like Friedberg and Pyle also regard power transitions between democracies as less prone to war than those between undemocratic powers (Pyle, pp. 46, 51). Until China becomes a liberal democracy, argues Friedberg, the United States should maintain and enhance the strategy that combines engagement and containment or “conengagement” adopted since the mid-1990s. Friedberg is critical of calls for pure engagement showing more deference to China and less criticism of its leaders. Engagement without containment simply means appeasement, which amounts to accepting the inevitability of China’s rise and learning to live with this reality. As he puts it: “Giving way in the face of demands from such [an autocratic] regime might simply embolden it to press for more and, by signaling U.S. weakness, could encourage aggressive behavior by other authoritarians in Asia and elsewhere” (p. 254). Pure containment is as dangerous as pure appeasement. He rejects offensive realists’ prescription for strategic preponderance by delaying or derailing China’s rise or staging preventive war. In his words, “Reverting to containment before it becomes absolutely necessary would also preclude the possibility that history might eventually follow other, more gradual and less dangerous paths. It would be a tragic example of the worst kind of strategic folly” (p. 253).

Friedberg prefers the strategy of “better balancing” instead of “enhanced engagement” advocated by liberals and constructivists who count on China’s peaceful rise and hypothesize that more engagement is better. He warns against this optimism because of its relaxed position on growing Chinese power and its failure to bolster deterrence, to show American resolve, to reassure U.S. allies, especially democratic ones, as well as to build a community of democracies to balance China. The United States should also woo other authoritarian states like Russia and Vietnam. Prospects of China becoming a democracy still look grim, but the Americans must also do more to promote democracy in the Asian state (pp. 267–268) while still balancing it, for “hard experience has taught that the best way to keep the peace is by preserving a favorable balance of power” (p. 266; see also pp. 274–284) by enhancing cooperation with its allies and finding cost-effective ways to deal with the Chinese military’s rapidly maturing anti-access/area denial capabilities (p. 275). The United States should acquire new offensive capabilities instead of more old ones like aircraft carriers and sleek manned fighter jets (p. 277). Emphasis is placed on the effectiveness of conventional forces’ offensive power, but not at the expense of nuclear weapons and threats of nuclear escalation (by not signing on to the no-first-use principle).

One thus wonders if Friedberg’s analysis makes him a neoclassical realist, but his work shows that he is not a Kantian internationalist to the extent that he sees a relationship between the rise of Chinese power on the one hand and on the other hand the growth of Chinese leaders’ ambitions and the relative decline of the United States, potential misperceptions and miscalculations in international politics, and the role of domestic politics. He does not embrace the kind of strategy embraced by liberals and constructivists who admonish American policy makers to continue trading and socializing with China and to let the Chinese promote democracy on their terms and in their own way. As shall be discussed next, his neoclassical realist thinking seems validated by evidence other contributors in the other two volumes present when examining other states’ responses to China’s rise.

The Rise of China and Responses From Other States

The other two volumes under review complement neoclassical realist thinking because of their theoretical insights and evidence presented in the chapters on country and regional studies. The chapters in Tellis, Tanner, and Keough's *Asia Responds to Its Rising Powers: China and India* reaffirm the proposition that states in the region have maintained a hybrid strategy of engaging each other and hedging against and balancing rising powers. China itself also plays this complex game.

The chapters on democratic states' responses to the rise of China (and India) shed additional light on Friedberg's thinking. While Japan may not want to pick a fight with China for various reasons, Michael J. Green argues in his chapter that Tokyo engages in the politics of balancing against its giant neighbor. Not only has the Japanese leadership strengthened its security ties with the United States, but it has also turned to India as a counterweight to China. Japan, India, and the United States should initiate an official trilateral strategic dialogue and enhance trilateral military exercises. Green's policy prescription helps affirm Friedberg's strategy of better balancing between democratic states and China. Other chapters make similar arguments. On Korea, Chung Min Lee explains Seoul's efforts to maximize its security and economic relations with China and India without weakening its alliance with the United States. South Korea should sustain its military reforms aimed at addressing the power projection capabilities of its more powerful neighbors without, at the same time, going nuclear. In his chapter on Australia, Rory Medcalf explains how the country has benefited from economic relations with India and China, as both Asian giant states have become principal markets for Australian products. Although it has reaped more economic benefits from China than from India, Australia has become more concerned about the growing military power of China and its undemocratic values. Canberra has thus maintained a hedging strategy against China by strengthening its naval power and enhancing its security alliance with the United States. In the chapter on India, Harsh V. Pant contends that there is a growing consensus in democratic India that China poses an increasing threat to Indian interests. China is the only one among the major powers that does not accept India as a rising power. India has thus sought to deter China by building closer ties with the United States. The two Asian powers seem locked in a classic security dilemma.

Other states in Asia have made similar responses to the rise of China. Russia, Dmitri Trenin argues, views the rise of China (and India) as challenges and opportunities for Moscow. Russian leaders should rethink their traditional Eurocentrism and make their state more secure by shifting its policy toward Asia through the establishment of international arrangements with China and the United States. However, Moscow should strike a balance in its relations with China and should reenergize its relations with India by transforming their relationship into one based on technical partnership and a security pillar, especially in Central Asia and Afghanistan. Russian relations with other states like Japan and South Korea also need attention.

These country studies reinforce the thesis that relations with rising powers like China and India must be based on both engagement and balancing. Other contributors also make the case that strategic competition among the key powers in the Asia-Pacific—namely, China, India, Russia, and the United States—remains

undiminished. As the chapter on Central Asia by S. Enders Wimbush shows, these powers still engage in “great games.” Most states in the region have been unable to advance common interests in the face of large-power competition where China enjoys large and growing advantages. But this may change. Although Russia remains the critical balancer in Central Asia, growing demands for Indian technology and a generational change in the region may result in an appreciation for India’s democratic values.

The strategy of engagement with rising powers and balancing against them has also taken place in South Asia. In his chapter on this region, Teresita C. Schaffer shows how states maintain a combination of engagement and balancing. States like Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka have accepted India’s regional primacy but at the same time sought to maintain ties with China as a way to increase their freedom of action against India. Pakistan regards the rise of India as a strategic nightmare and thus views the rise of China as an opportunity to check India’s power and as a way to reduce its dependence on the United States. As the Sino-Indian rivalry continues, U.S. strategic goals align well with those of India. The chapter further confirms that states in this region continue to maintain economic relations but are also mindful of the need to ensure strategic independence and to balance one of the two rising powers, India and China. China and India have also sought to deal with each other by combining engagement and deterrence. The chapter on China by M. Taylor Fravel contends that Beijing has sought to enhance cooperation with India because they share common economic interests and Beijing regards any confrontation with the latter as potentially costly. However, China’s ties with countries unfriendly to India, such as Pakistan, are also part of China’s deterrence policy. Overall, Sino-Indian relations remain uncertain because the two states may still misperceive each other’s strategic intentions.

A similar pattern of security behavior can also be observed in Southeast Asia, as covered in the chapter written by Carlyle A. Thayer. The Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN) states have welcomed the rise of both China and India because of the economic opportunities they bring to the region. However, they remain concerned about their security and have combined the policy of engagement and the strategy of deterrence. They have engaged China, India, and the United States in multilateral institutions while holding on to the need for keeping the United States involved on the military front as a form of deterrence against a possible China threat. The United States should also support India in its search for global power status, presumably because both states are democratic, and should encourage New Delhi to play a greater and independent role.

In Hsiao and Lin’s *Rise of China: Beijing’s Strategies and Implications for the Asia-Pacific*, the contributors also present a set of interesting arguments reinforcing those made by neoclassical realists. China continues to grow powerful on various fronts—most notably when it became the third largest economy and the second largest defense spender in the world by the end of the 2000s. Chinese leaders still show no signs of slowing down and appear to become more politically ambitious. As Chinese power expands, its leaders keep extending their influence over their state’s immediate periphery, spanning East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Central Asia, and moving assertively into other regions, such as Africa and Latin America.

The “China threat” factor is assessed not only in terms of its material power but also in terms of other states’ perceptions of its intentions. In spite of their efforts to assure the rest of the world of their good intentions manifest in the forms of “peaceful development,” “peaceful rise,” “good neighborliness,” and their official embrace of multilateralism, Chinese elites have hoped to constrain the United States and usurp Russia’s role in world politics. This point is made by Masko Ikegami in Chapter 2, where she contends that this may be a prelude to a new Cold War. In her analysis, “China’s recent procurement of [defense] systems . . . fall[s] within offensive power projection” (p. 6), and it defends authoritarian regimes and hinders democratization. In Chapter 3, Szu-chien Hsu further argues that China’s rising power and its pursuit of building comprehensive national power pose an ongoing set of concerns to other states in the world. Although it is based on capitalism, the Chinese economy remains dominated by the state, which enjoys the monopoly of power. Together, rapid economic growth, military modernization, and the economic and political structures—characterized as a party-state developmental syndicate—have left other states, especially democratic ones, suspicious of China’s intentions and worried about a potential shift of its foreign policy from a defensive into an offensive one.

Whether China will be transformed into an offensive power remains to be seen. Domestic politics and socioeconomic conditions may help determine Beijing’s strategy. The country continues to face the growth of social discontent and unrest, amid disparity in the realm of socioeconomic development, and the fragility of its social, economic, and political systems is evident. Chapters 4 and 5 offer detailed analyses of domestic challenges such as social unrest and economic changes and implications for future domestic or national stability. As Chih-jou Jay Chen shows in his chapter on “growing social unrest and emergent protest groups in China,” the market economy brought both wealth and social woes that keep the social and economic system fragile. In Chapter 5, To-far Wang notes that the Chinese government tends to exaggerate economic growth rates and underestimate unemployment rates, which are higher if workers laid off from state-owned enterprises were taken into account. Poverty and income gaps between the haves and have-nots and between those urban and rural areas continue unabated.

One question is whether domestic politics and unstable socioeconomic conditions will prevent China from taking adventurous steps toward realizing its political ambitions. While this may be the case, a counterargument can also be made: namely, the Chinese leadership may seek to drum up nationalist support for aggressive action in order to restore or enhance its political legitimacy at home. Srikanth Kondapalli’s Chapter 7, for instance, also shows why Beijing does not want to be perceived by the Chinese people as reluctant or unable to safeguard the territories, such as Taiwan, that China claims to be its own and must thus remain uncompromising.

While the contributors do not share the same view about China’s intentions, they tend to see the same dynamics of security politics in Asia. In Chapter 6, Rosemary Foot observes that China has since the 1997 Asian financial crisis been active in playing a role within multilateral institutions such as ASEAN, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and the Six-Party Talks over the North Korean nuclear challenges. While China

has made efforts to accommodate U.S. interests in the short term, it has also sought to reduce American influence in the region over the long term. Steps have been taken to exclude the United States from China-led multilateral organizations, to develop the East Asian summit, and to conduct joint military exercises with Russia. The analysis seems to suggest that China's security behavior has been driven by its leaders' careful calculations and the fact that China keeps expanding its sphere of influence as its power grows. As its power grows, China is less willing to be constrained by multilateral institutions.

The relationship between the growth of China's material power and its increasingly assertive behavior is further validated by the fact that the Chinese government has in recent decades made claims over disputed territories in the immediate periphery. Kondapalli's Chapter 7, for instance, shows convincingly that China was willing to forfeit and adjust its territorial claims during the 1950s and 1960s when it still weak and vulnerable to external threats. As China's economic growth required more natural resources and its military power expanded, the Chinese leadership became more assertive. In 1992, for instance, it adopted the "Laws of Territorial Waters and Continuous Zone" incorporating disputed territories such as Senkaku Islands (Diaoyudao), Paracels (Xisha), and Spratly Islands (Nansha) as its regulatory objects. The law permitted the Chinese navy to evict foreign intruders from these areas.

In Chapter 8, Chien-peng Chung explains why China's involvement in the region's only two security organizations—the SCO and ARF—moves in different directions. China considers the ARF less worthy of its attention because the member-states do not share similar interests and because it fears that its freedom will be subject to institutional constraints. The SCO, however, has been regarded by Chinese leaders as a more useful instrument because its member-states have similar interests, most notably their fight against separatism, Islamic extremism, and terrorism and their opposition to American hegemony or the unipolar world order.

Various country studies on the United States (Chapter 9 by Bruce Cumings), Japan (Chapter 10 by Yoshifumi Nakai), India (Chapter 11 by Vikram Sood), Southeast Asia (Chapter 12 by Carolina Hernandez), Hong Kong (Chapter 13 by Timothy Ka-ying Wong and Shirley Po-san Swan), and Taiwan (Chapter 14 by Cheng-yi Lin and Wen-cheng Lin) show similar concerns about the rise of China, including the dangers of China being authoritarian and competitive with other states. Most of the contributors see the need to engage China in a multilateral fashion and would like to see it become more democratic or pluralistic, but they also see other states as being prepared to deal with the threat of China. The chapter on the United States by Bruce Cumings urges, for instance, Washington not to treat China as a threat but to encourage it to become more decentralized, to promote the rule of law, to respect its citizens' rights, and to help China become a responsible member in the international community. The chapter on Japan shows that war with China is unlikely because of Japan's defensive-oriented policy and the constitutional limitation on the use of force. While India perceives itself to be encircled by China, the latter also perceives itself to be encircled by the former, especially when New Delhi reached a defense cooperation agreement with Washington in 2005. While they have benefited from China's economic growth, states in Southeast Asia have also become concerned about the

possible transformation of this country into a global military power capable of threatening their security.

The two volumes clarify the fact that the rise of China and India is no longer a matter of debate, but what the two Asian giant states will do in the future remains unclear. There seems to be a general consensus that the rise of India, a democracy, poses less of a threat to Asia-Pacific security than does the rise of China. Some contributors take a relaxed view of China's rise, but others share the growing concerns that Aaron Friedberg expresses regarding the growth of Chinese power, the negative perceptions of Chinese intentions shared by other states—especially democratic ones—and China's domestic politics. Disagreement on how to deal with the rise of China may also heighten concerns about intellectual and policy challenges.

Conclusion

The debate on the rise of China will continue to intensify in the years to come, but history seems to validate the proposition that authoritarian and liberal democratic states tend to find each other threatening even if they are integrated into the global capitalist economy. Without the high degree of mutual trust that democratic states usually share, capitalism alone may become a source of competition and friction, especially when economic gains are unevenly distributed. Chinese leaders may think that they have no intention of threatening others, but they have found others threatening to them, and other states have found China's rise potentially threatening. China may keep building its military power and expanding its sphere of influence in Asia and beyond, but other states have adopted a hybrid strategy of doing business with China, hedging strategies toward it, and balancing its potential threat. If the United States and China struggle for supremacy, neither will prevail for long because the successful aspirant will find itself exhausted by other states rising to balance its threat. If peace is to prevail in Asia and last, free trade, hedging, and balancing must be carefully maintained until China becomes democratic. Democracies may never be totally set free from the game of balancing, but power transitions between them seem less prone to war than those between authoritarian states, as history shows (for more on this point, see Peou, 2010).

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