



Balancing on the Pivot

How China's Rise and Offshore
Balancing Affect Japan's and
India's Roles as Balancers
in the Twenty-First Century

Reginald J. McClam
Lieutenant Colonel, USMC



Air University

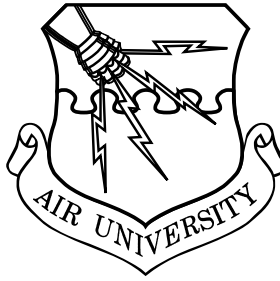
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REGINALD J. McCLAM
Lieutenant Colonel, USMC

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Project Editor
James S. Howard

Copy Editor
Sandi Davis

Cover Art, Book Design, and Illustrations
Daniel Armstrong

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Diane Clark

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Please send inquiries or comments to

Commandant and Dean
School of Advanced Air and Space Studies
125 Chennault Circle
Maxwell AFB, AL 36112
Tel: (334) 953-5155
DSN: 493-5155
saass.admin@us.af.mil

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About the Author

Lt Col Reginald J. McClam is currently the commanding officer, 3d Battalion, 8th Marines, 2d Marine Division. He was commissioned through Officer Candidate School in 1998. He is a career infantry officer with multiple combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. His assignments include various infantry command and staff duty positions. He holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke, a master of arts degree in management and leadership from Webster University, and a master of philosophy in military strategy from the School of Advanced Air and Space studies. He is a graduate of the Nonresident Amphibious Warfare School, the Expeditionary Warfare Staff Planning Course, the Infantry Mortar Platoon Leaders Course, the Advanced Infantry Officer Course, and the Army Command and General Staff College. He was previously the US Marine Corps aide to the president of the United States and the Marine Air Ground Task Force Planner for United States Marine Corps Central Command.

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Abstract

The United States has used primacy as its grand strategy for some time now. While this strategy has ensured US hegemony, it has also fiscally drained American power and left the United States with a poor global standing. As such, the United States should rethink its grand strategy in order to maintain its relative position in the twenty-first century. The United States is poised to pivot eastward to meet the demands of China as a rising challenger. The question I raise here is, how viable would an alternative grand strategy in Asia be? There is considerable enthusiasm in some corners of the policy-making world for the United States to return to a balancing strategy in Asia. Formerly known as offshore balancing, the strategy aims to conserve American power as it deals with the challenges of a rising China. One important, albeit overlooked, element of offshore balancing is, who plays the role of the balancer? This thesis seeks to answer that question.

Chapter 1

Getting “Balance” Back into the Lexicon of Grand Strategy

In a world where great states confront overstretch, they must make hard choices. Thus, in the end, grand strategy is more often than not about the ability to adjust to the reality that resources, will, and interest inevitably find themselves out of balance in some areas. Strategy is about balancing risk. But above all, it is about insuring that the balance is right in those areas that matter most. And in times of great stress, it is also about adapting national focus on the international environment to those areas of overstretch that threaten the polity to the greatest extent.

—Williamson Murray

The United States is in transition within the international security environment and must assess grand strategies and determine if resources, will, and national interests are in balance. After more than 10 years fighting two wars in a changing global environment, some would argue for considering changes in US grand strategy. Further, the United States has reached the point where it should now make hard choices about its grand strategy because of overstretch, the strain of two major wars, economic depression, a stagnant Congress, and the lingering effects of a hegemonic strategy. This combination has led to failure to contain China’s rise. Williamson Murray’s quote above describes the adjustments that will be required to rebalance US resources, will, and interests.

Some believe the United States lacks the resources to sustain its present predominance, suggesting that hegemony is inherently unstable and, therefore, a nonwinning grand strategy.¹ Simply put, the status quo is untenable. In his *Grand Strategy*, Elbridge Colby aptly defines grand strategy as “a nation’s conscious effort to employ all elements of national power to advance and fulfill its security-related objectives in the foreign sphere.”² Christopher Layne simplifies, stating, “Distilled to its essence, grand strategy is about determining a state’s vital interests—those important enough to fight over—and its role in the world.”³

As mentioned above, the United States has so far been unable to check a rapidly rising China. Ashley Tellis points out that the rise of China requires policy-makers to manage the dilemma of sustaining economic interdepen-

dence, generating overall growth but producing new geopolitical rivals to US primacy.⁴ Indeed, Chinese political, military, and economic ambitions are challenging the US liberal international order, forcing the United States to reconsider its interaction and integration within the Asia Pacific region. According to Hugh White, “If America tries to preserve the status quo and avoid fundamental change in the relationship, it will be choosing to accept China as a strategic rival.”⁵ Change is a vital component of life; it is as perennial as the grass.

As the United States draws down its forces in Afghanistan and explores solutions to its fiscal problems, it is appropriate to rethink and thus make comprehensive changes to its grand strategy. The constant presence of US land forces in Europe and Asia is expensive and induces risk. The United States is sitting in the middle of several regional security dilemmas and runs the risk of being drawn into conflicts regardless of the threats to US national interests. As Stephen Walt states, “The United States today needs much more cost-efficient ways to influence geopolitics in Asia than keeping troops there indefinitely. We need to better leverage the natural competitions in this region to our ends. There is more than one way to play the Great Game, and we need to learn it.”⁶ The US military presence limits the ability of regional states to develop and carry out their own security solutions. They are merely part of a security dilemma by default. A shift to a different grand strategy might offer the United States opportunities to maintain or even improve its security positions and those of its allies.

Moving to an offshore balancing grand strategy (to be defined in the next section) aligns with the recently announced pivot to the Asia–Pacific region.⁷ The United States could be able to economize expenditures at home and abroad, shift burdens to other countries in the region (this is called “buck passing”), reduce risk, and improve its global standing.⁸ Ultimately, an offshore balancing grand strategy provides the United States the ability to maintain its relative position in the twenty-first century more effectively than its current strategy concerning China.

Offshore balancing would conserve American power while it deals with the challenges of a rising China. Japan and India are both states that could play a significant role in an American offshore balancing strategy because they are considerable powers in Asia. The time has come for the United States to get “balance” back into its lexicon of grand strategy. Offshore balancing is a good strategy, weaving issues such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, trade policies, and the defense budget into a coherent framework as well as strengthening alliances and allies.⁹

Offshore Balancing

To understand the benefits of offshore balancing, it is necessary to understand the differing approaches of the two foremost scholars, Christopher Layne and John Mearsheimer. While both argue the United States should adopt this strategy, they have slightly different views of America’s current position in the world and of how America would implement the strategy.

Christopher Layne is a neorealist and believes the United States is an extra-regional or global hegemon, yet his approach has many similarities to defensive realism.¹⁰ He believes that since domestic politics can influence foreign policy, an adversary could be destabilized and/or affected by diplomacy before resorting to force. As such, he believes US policy-makers can signal their intentions prior to taking actions against other states rather than needing to maintain maximized, overwhelming power all the time. Neorealists believe that grand strategies result from systemic factors—especially distribution of power in the international system—as well as from domestic power dynamics.¹¹ Layne believes domestic issues argue for the adoption of an offshore balancing strategy by the United States. This is prescient with the current fiscal environment and American attitudes toward the foreign policy future after 10 years of two wars abroad. Layne believes the current US hegemonic strategy does not enhance security and makes the United States less secure. Hegemonic strategies are fundamentally ambitious, expensive, and ultimately unable to prevent the rise of other potential hegemons.

Layne sees three reasons why a hegemonic strategy is not as effective as offshore balancing.

- Over time, new powers or even superpowers will emerge. Offshore balancing would allow the United States to maintain its superpower status in a multipolar world, whereas a hegemonic strategy would provoke other nations to seek to counterbalance the United States and its imperial overstretch.
- US hegemony fuels terrorism against the United States by groups like al-Qaeda. He believes the events of 9/11 are a reminder of the asymmetric threats created and executed to diminish or destroy American preeminence.
- “Until new poles of power emerge to offset US military preponderance, the United States will succumb to the ‘hegemon’s temptation’—employing its formidable military capabilities promiscuously and becoming entangled in conflicts that it could avoid.”¹²

Layne takes direct aim at the central assumption that has undergirded America’s grand strategy since 1945, what he calls “Open Door diplomacy.” According to Layne, the Open Door incorporates economic expansion and ideological expansion that created new interests linked to national security. This economic and ideological expansion led to projecting military force abroad to counter threats to national interests *and* threats to American core values. Layne posits that the full panoply of American power—military, economic, and ideological—should be employed in the international system to shape and secure the external environment of the United States.¹³ John Mearsheimer provides a slightly different perspective.

Mearsheimer, an offensive realist, contends great powers tend to dominate their regional system (e.g., Europe or Northeast Asia). However, without clear-cut nuclear superiority, it is virtually impossible for a great power to achieve global hegemony.¹⁴ This is a defining difference between Mearsheimer and Layne. Mearsheimer also claims that “given the difficulty of determining how much power is enough for today and tomorrow, great powers recognize that the best way to ensure security is to achieve hegemony now, thus eliminating any possibility of a challenge by another great power.”¹⁵ Mearsheimer’s drive toward hegemony is another critical difference between the two scholars. Layne tends to believe hegemonic stability leads to the hegemon’s temptation while Mearsheimer believes that no state has achieved global hegemon status, and it would be almost impossible to become one.

Offensive realists believe states maximize their power and influence at their rivals’ expense. The bedrock of Mearsheimer’s version of offshore balancing would rest on what he calls “buck passing.” A buck passer tries to get another great power to protect/promote its national interests while the buck passer remains on the sidelines. The magnitude of the threat and geographical distance relative to the threat determine the degree to which great powers buck pass.¹⁶

According to Mearsheimer, a threatened state usually prefers buck passing because it avoids the costs of war.¹⁷ Furthermore, the United States does not intend to conquer and control distant regions and relies on the seas for its security.¹⁸ The United States is peerless in its ability to project power overseas. Mearsheimer’s offensive realist argument rests on the structure of the international system, not the characteristics of individual great powers. This structure drives great powers to think and act offensively and to seek hegemony.¹⁹

Layne’s version of offshore balancing directly challenges Mearsheimer’s version; specifically, Layne contends the United States is more than Mearsheimer’s “regional hegemon.” Layne states, “United States expansion did not stop at the water’s edge.” Rather, as Mary Ann Heiss observes, “as the

twentieth century dawned” the United States was “ready to use its new position [as a regional hegemon] as a springboard for expanding its influence and interests to other areas.”²⁰ The difference is subtle, but Layne believes the United States is a *global* hegemon, with its current military capability, economic capacity, and the ability to fight two wars simultaneously. On the other hand, Mearsheimer believes the United States is merely a regional hegemon because it is virtually impossible for any state to become a global hegemon without clear-cut nuclear superiority. Mearsheimer also concludes that the United States has employed an offshore balancing strategy since it became a great power, buck passing from the end of World War II.²¹

However, Layne’s version of offshore balancing will be employed in the rest of this paper unless otherwise specified. His approach seems to favor the proposition that defensive balancing allows states to maximize their relative power to achieve national security. The past 10 years of continuous conflict also suggests alternative, less offensive minded, strategies may be the way forward for some time unless America is faced with an existential threat. Layne contends that offshore balancing is a realist balance-of-power grand strategy deduced from international relations theory and defined by five key considerations:

- It is a strategy for an emerging multipolar world.
- The United States will find it increasingly more difficult, dangerous, and costly to maintain order in, and control over, the international political system.
- The strategy prevents the rise of a Eurasian hegemon.
- The United States would be able to disengage from its military commitments in Europe, Japan, and South Korea.
- An offshore balancing strategy would insulate the United States from future great power wars and maximize its relative power position in the international system.²²

The strategy would maximize military-technology advantages in order to facilitate strategic flexibility as well. In January 2012, the US secretary of defense published a portion of *Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense*, a document providing strategic guidance to the joint force. Two areas highlight the military technology advantages that are essential to sustaining US leadership.

- The Joint Force must be able to project power despite anti-access / area denial (A2/AD) challenges of the twenty-first century. The military will

continue to invest in undersea capabilities, develop a new stealth bomber, improve missile defenses, and continue efforts to enhance the resiliency and effectiveness of critical space-based capabilities.²³

- Modern armed forces must be able to operate effectively in cyberspace and space. The secretary of defense’s guidance in this area is that the Department of Defense will continue to invest in advanced capabilities for network defense, operational capability, and resiliency in cyberspace and space.²⁴

All of these capabilities are ideal for implementing a balance of power strategy like offshore balancing. The United States seeks to protect its economic vitality and conduct a responsible drawdown from two wars. An offshore balancing strategy aligns well with both the changing geopolitical environment and the secretary of defense’s strategic direction to sustain US global leadership.

The US retraction of its ground forces from two overseas engagements further reflects a core principle of offshore balancing. Having fewer troops overseas reduces the risk of future major wars since foreign occupiers often produce resentment.²⁵ Furthermore, the insular position of the United States provides flexibility in tactics like buck passing or bystanding. However, if vital interests are at stake, the United States retains offshore balancer options for deployment or redeployment of forces. This strategy does not espouse leaving our partners or allies to go it alone, but it does suggest they must do more for their own security. If the United States reduces overseas commitments and retracts its current security umbrella, the United States will have to retain substantial military forces stateside or offshore to retain credibility. These forces must be capable of forcible entry, sustaining operations away from garrison to hold or wrest territory away from an adversary.²⁶

The United States should seek to balance its resources and interests to reflect the challenges of the current security environment. Layne’s version of the offshore balancing strategy is compelling concerning Asia: “The United States enjoys no privileged exemption from the fate of hegemons. . . . Since 1990 this has included soft and hard balancing, and terrorism . . . but, in China’s case, a determined effort at hard balancing against American hegemony by building up its military capabilities.”²⁷ Richard Ellings states that “for the past decade China has been rapidly modernizing its military capabilities through a combination of indigenous development, foreign purchases, and significant improvements in doctrine, education, and training. Military planners of the People’s Liberation Army have focused primarily on capabilities designed both to pressure Taiwan and to counter third parties, especially the United

States, in a cross-Strait conflict.”²⁸ Nevertheless, there are many objections to implementing the offshore balancing strategy.

Popular objections against an offshore balancing grand strategy include an increasing risk of US involvement in a major war. According to Layne, decreasing the geopolitical and military footprint on the ground in the Middle East could reduce the incidence of Islamic fundamentalist terrorism directed against the United States.²⁹ In addition, the current strategy of hegemony has costs that exceed its benefits.³⁰ If the object of a hegemonic strategy is to prevent other hegemons from rising, then it has failed, considering China’s meteoric rise over the past decade. As will be shown, adopting and implementing offshore balancing will reduce risk, shift burdens, and maintain the relative power position of the United States.

Several theoretical assumptions are required. When great powers choose their grand strategies, they must determine which is likely to provide the most security.³¹ One key assumption of offshore balancing is that the United States would be more secure after withdrawing its security umbrella from overseas allies and force them to assume more of the defensive burden.³² Retracting the security umbrella reduces risk by getting other states to do more for their own security and the United States less, decreases expenditures, and provides new diplomatic options with fewer inherent commitments to allies.

Adoption of this strategy, however, has to assume that Japan and India possess the material—military, economic, and technical—capabilities to balance against threats and defend themselves. As China continues to grow its military, economic, and technical capabilities, the other states in the region would have to balance against this potential regional hegemon.³³ The United States would also have to accept some—preferably managed—nuclear proliferation as regional balancing occurs. The United States would be in a better position to properly oversee these programs by assisting the potential balancers through the nuclear proliferation process. Balancers would need US assistance to gain the appropriate nuclear capabilities for credible balancing with China in the region.

Economics has played a crucial role in victory and defeat in the modern era of industrial and technological warfare. Layne states that “an offshore balancing strategy would be grounded on the assumption that relative economic power matters. Domestic economic revitalization and a neomercantilist international economic policy would be integral components of the strategy. . . . The US is well placed to adopt an insular grand strategy because it can diversify its export markets; it can minimize its reliance on overseas raw materials (including petroleum) by stockpiling, diversification, and substitution; and external trade is a relatively small component of its gross do-

mestic product (GDP)”³⁴ Finally, the strategy rests on the premise that US foreign and domestic commitments are made to support concrete vital interests.³⁵ Credibility should not determine what commitments are, and commitments should not determine what interests are. This is prudent strategic decision making.

China’s Patterns of Behavior

With the lexicon of the offshore balancing strategy fully established, an examination of China’s rise and the geostrategic picture of the region provide perspective regarding the roles of balancers in the region. China’s rise is the hallmark of the anticipated “Asian Century” because of China’s enormous power potential: a large territory, vast resources, and a huge population.³⁶ Hugh White, a leading Asian affairs expert, lays out the impact of America’s choices about China cogently. White contends that Chinese acceptance of America’s superiority has been the cornerstone of the Asian strategic order since Pres. Richard Nixon and Chairman Mao Tse-tung met in 1972. At that time, China’s economy was one-twentieth the size of America’s and China lacked strategic choices for achieving parity. China accepted this unequal relationship as a temporary expedient. Because of China’s long history, its citizens feel it is exceptional and destined to lead. Many Chinese see other powers as depriving their country of its rightful great power status.³⁷

J. V. Singh states that “recognizing that the United States is the world’s sole superpower and one of China’s key providers of capital, technology, and market, China cannot afford to have an irreparable rupture in its relationship with the United States.”³⁸ This suggests China will develop a grand strategy to maintain the status quo while trying to “soft balance” against the United States. China looks to remain amicable until it achieves enough power to rise to peer status with the United States. Until then, China seeks an essentially nonconfrontational approach to the United States while pursuing diplomatic coordination with other countries to constrain US actions that might be harmful to Chinese interests.³⁹

China has four overriding conditions that form a unique set of security problems for both the Asian region and the United States.

- China has a long and geographically vulnerable border. A large porous border means China must control or pacify the periphery of its border to protect the homeland. This has the potential to create unforeseen or unwarranted second- and third-order effects such as another border war with India.

- There are many potential threats from the Chinese perspective, both nearby and distant. China exists in a dangerous neighborhood where surrounding states are seeking to balance its rise, and there are threats from abroad such as the United States, whose security interests in the region clash with those of the Chinese.
- China’s domestic political system suffers from chronic and sometimes intense conflict with weak institutions for its mediation and resolution. A focus on leadership politics and leadership personalities has caused corruption and has distorted Chinese policy over the years. This dynamic has exacerbated the deep-seated tensions between leadership and society.
- China has great power pretenses—it expects to be accepted and treated as such.⁴⁰

China’s ascent may also cause a power transition within the international system, challenging the United States as the region’s preeminent security provider.⁴¹ China perceives the US pivot to Asia as an attempt to encircle and contain it. This perceived encirclement leads China to believe it may be unable to achieve its desired great power status in the region. According to J. V. Singh, the central objective of China’s grand strategy for the next several decades can be captured in just one sentence: “Secure and shape a conducive environment so that China can concentrate on development.”⁴²

China’s security problems and its geographic location led to the adoption of a hybrid strategy of regional and global considerations coalesced into a calculative grand strategy.⁴³ Michael Swaine and Ashley Tellis define the term “calculative” in this way: “In *substantive* terms as a pragmatic approach that emphasizes the primacy of internal economic growth and stability, the nurturing of amicable international relations, the relative restraint in the use of force combined with increasing efforts to create a more modern military and the continued search for asymmetric gains internationally.”⁴⁴ The basis of this calculative strategy is economic and technological growth without any geopolitical distractions. The strategy prevents China from taking on the obligations of great power management as well, giving time to work through the problems of establishing domestic social order and protecting security interests along the Chinese periphery.

In order for China to influence others consistently on the international stage, it will have to make many economic and political reforms. China’s strategy assumes that economic prosperity and stability will afford it substantial international influence and diplomatic advantage as well as a robust, modern military.⁴⁵ There will come a time, however, when China will consider that its

development has reached fruition. Then China will confront the world order with all of its military, economic, and political power.

Based on China’s patterns of behavior, America will have to make some difficult choices to protect its interests in the region. White claims that “America’s choices about China are among the most important and difficult it has ever faced” and that America has three options.

- It can resist China’s challenge and preserve the status quo.
- It can completely step away from its dominant role in Asia, allowing China to make an attempt at hegemony.
- It can remain in Asia on a new basis, the proposed grand-strategic alternative of offshore balancing, sharing power with China while still maintaining a strong regional presence.⁴⁶

A crucial aspect of US engagement with China is ensuring that it becomes more cooperative whether it is weak or strong in the future.⁴⁷ The security competition between the United States and China is already clear. China espouses a peaceful rise strategy, but its political and military actions suggest a different intent altogether. China’s slow attempts at coercing Taiwan, its military modernization—developing aircraft carriers and submarines for a blue-water navy—and its efforts to increase access to the Indian Ocean region represent intentions different than those suggested by Beijing’s rhetoric. An offshore balancing strategy might prevent crossing the tipping point into conflict.

China’s Military Capability

The calculative strategy aims at reducing China’s geopolitical vulnerabilities by expanding and modernizing its military for diplomatic and political advantage. The military buildup has been marked with inconsistency, starting in the 1950s with its military relationship with the Soviet Union, followed by indigenous modernization under Deng Xiaoping in the 1980s. In the 1990s, the Chinese leadership concluded that its ground forces were obsolete with the West’s successful use of high-tech weaponry against the Iraqi army.⁴⁸ The buildup of its nuclear and conventional forces is moving slowly. This is in keeping with the calculative grand strategy’s premise of not alarming its neighbors and other major powers. J. V. Singh contends a sudden military buildup might also detract from China’s emphasis on civilian economic development.⁴⁹ Despite China’s rhetoric of a peaceful rise, China’s

neighbors and other major powers should pay attention to its military expansion and modernization.

The People’s Liberation Army (PLA) consists of 2,285,000 active duty personnel, making it the largest armed force in the world.⁵⁰ It has 510,000 personnel in its reserve force. The essential organizations within the PLA are its strategic missile forces, army, navy, air force, marines, and airborne corps.⁵¹ The Chinese built and structured the PLA to fight conventional operations, but its modernization is significant in Chinese rethinking of the use of force in the current and future global environment. China looks to use pinpoint accuracy ground attack and antiship missiles, a growing and modern naval fleet, and cyber and antisatellite weapons to destroy or disable another nation’s military assets from afar.⁵² The idea is to hold adversary bases in the Asian region at risk, thereby deterring aggression by threatening power projection capabilities. This fits the A2/AD debates within the development of the US AirSea Battle Concept.⁵³

This should cause America alarm since it has several bases in the region, and it serves as the security guarantor for several regional allies. Dan Blumenthal presents a clear picture of China’s intentions and the threat to US national interests in a report that assesses the military balance between the United States and China:

A China that can block chokepoints in the South China Sea poses a threat to United States’ interest in unimpeded access to critical trade routes in Asia. A China with aircraft carriers (and the logistical support such ships need) can start to project power and gain a measure of sea control, thereby instigating harmful arms races as well as putting at risk US maritime interest. In sum, if China were to realize its military aspirations, it could begin to achieve hegemony in one of the world’s most critical regions, enabling Beijing, if it chooses, to reshape the international system more to its liking and—for the first time since before the attack on Pearl Harbor—pose a threat to the United States from the Pacific.⁵⁴

The purpose of China’s future military strategy is to be capable of winning local wars under high-tech conditions.⁵⁵ As China continues to retool its military capability, it will raise significant issues for the region and the United States.

China’s Economic Capacity

A growing and stable economy is crucial for China to achieve military expansion and modernization. The growth of China’s economy has significant implications for the United States and world politics. Some scholars and economists have claimed China’s ascendancy as a peaceful one, and China’s

calculative strategy reinforces that impression. John Kirshner states, “China’s expanding economy will create greater challenges for and frictions with the United States—challenges because China’s economic might will enhance its political influence, which will increasingly frustrate some US foreign policy efforts; frictions, because the importance of China’s economy will exacerbate not easily resolved international macroeconomic conflicts, adding a new source of tension in Asia–Pacific international relations generally.”⁵⁶ China’s rise will have uncertain effects on international politics, but there is little doubt China’s economy will continue to increase.

China has sustained substantial economic growth year after year, becoming a pillar of the global economy and a critical component of global economic growth.⁵⁷ It is the third largest trading nation in the world. China requires a large amount of resources, which it lacks, requiring it to interact with many countries in the world. The power of China’s domestic political structure has been increasing since the 1970s, based on the economic reforms instituted by Deng Xiaoping.⁵⁸ They propelled China forward, allowing it to evolve and replace its socialist economic initiatives with capitalistic market principles.

According to Swaine and Tellis, the “transformation produced revolutionary improvements in Chinese growth rates, patterns and volumes of manufacturing and trade, personal income levels, state revenues, foreign exchange earnings, and levels of technology all of which taken together portend a qualitative increase in national capabilities, and if continued over many decades, a shift in the regional and global balance of power.”⁵⁹ China has economic ties with states in Asia, the oil-producing states in the Middle East, states in Africa, and in Latin America that provide natural resources. Kirshner predicts that China’s economic attraction, especially with its exports, but also as a magnet for foreign investment, will translate into greater political influence for China.⁶⁰

China’s underlying domestic issues, demographic shifts, social dislocations, and internal unrest all threaten economic growth. Swaine and Tellis assert that to begin correcting the problems requires extensive structural and procedural reforms in the tax, fiscal, banking, and legal areas.⁶¹ Furthermore, continued long-term growth for China needs further liberalization of foreign investment practices, trade, currency convertibility, and environmental protection measures.⁶² Conversely, intractable internal corruption and poor leadership threaten China’s growth as a world power.

China’s growing economic role will translate into what Joseph Nye calls “soft power.” Soft power is one’s ability not to force others to do what you want but to get others to want what you want them to want.⁶³ Even though China’s

ascent is remarkable, China’s regional neighbors view this rise with caution and some alarm. Nevertheless, China is still afraid of modernizations such as open internet access and trade reforms that would allow China to embrace aspects of globalization. Any future balancer will have to contend with the dynamics of China’s grand strategy, military capabilities, and economic rise to balance effectively against China’s ascendancy.

Background

What would future offshore balancing look like in Asia, and what should the United States expect of a balancer in the region? This research seeks to propose and elaborate the offshore balancing grand strategy. The strategy could effectively outline US objectives and provide guidance on how to achieve them. Understanding of how a historical equivalent worked can explain the worth of balancing in the contemporary security environment and, thereby, validate it as an effective strategy.

This research will also explore the viability of a “free-floating” Japan or India. Considering their current relationships in the region and globally, their histories are certain to have profound influences on their roles as balancers. Ultimately, military capabilities and economic capacities determine abilities to affect the distribution of power and security.

Methodology

Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver’s regional security complex theory (RSCT) provides the theoretical basis of this thesis. The theory provides explanatory power and a level of predictability to patterns of behavior for actors within Asia, particularly Japan and India. The theory combines materialist and constructivist approaches. The former is based on neorealist ideas of bounded territoriality and distribution of power dynamics—states drive for power and security within an anarchic international system. The latter approach rests on the constructivist concept of securitization, the political process by which security issues are dealt with within the international system.⁶⁴

This multifaceted theory has three central components: regional security complexes (RSC), securitization, and desecuritization. RSCs are sets of “states whose major security perceptions and concerns are so interlinked that their national security problems cannot reasonably be analyzed or resolved apart from one another.”⁶⁵ Moreover, this supports the idea that states within secu-

rity complexes are more likely to react to threats from within their immediate region than to external ones.

America’s adoption of offshore balancing would heavily rely on this aspect of the theory. According to Buzan, “The logic of security regions stems from the fact that international security is a relational matter. International security is mostly about how human collectives relate to each other in terms of threats and vulnerabilities, although sometimes it addresses the ways such collectives relate to threats from the natural environment.”⁶⁶ The RSC is a relational matter influencing states through the amity and enmity that exist between them. These relationships determine whether states adopt securitization or desecuritization measures within a region.

Securitization is another core component of the RSCT. It is not concerned whether an issue is really a threat but focuses on the surrounding conditions.⁶⁷ What matters is not whether a threat actually exists, only that a perceived existential threat is accepted as such. Securitization also helps to determine the differences between security and routine politics.⁶⁸

Because regional security policy determines the interaction between adjacent governments in the region, states must pay close attention to what other governments say and how populaces respond. The premise underlying societal security is the interplay between referent objects—those things to be secured—and securitizing actors, those who make claims about security.⁶⁹ An actor securitizes against some existential threat on behalf of a referent object. Identification of existential threats forms the basis of the balance of power relationships and the causal dynamics of security policy. An example of the government acting as a securitizing actor can be found in Pres. Barack Obama’s speech to the Department of Defense:

Indeed, as we end today’s wars, we will focus on a broader range of challenges and opportunities, including the security and prosperity of the Asia Pacific. As a new generation across the Middle East and North Africa demands their universal rights, we are supporting political and economic reform and deepening partnerships to ensure regional security. In contrast to the murderous vision of violent extremists, we are joining with allies and partners around the world to build their capacity to promote security, prosperity, and human dignity. And the growing capabilities of allies and partners, as demonstrated in the successful mission to protect the Libyan people, create new opportunities for burden sharing.⁷⁰

President Obama’s speech at the Pentagon established the continued existential threat from violent extremists. It appears the American populace accepted that violent extremists are a threat, so the next step is for the United States to take action or take desecuritization measures instead.

Desecuritization is the opposite of securitization, and it is the last major component of RSCT. Buzan and Wæver define desecuritization as “a process by which a political community downgrades or ceases to treat something as an existential threat to a valued referent object and reduces or stops calling for urgent and exceptional measures to deal with the threat.”⁷¹ For example, state A considers state B’s expansion in the region as a threat to its economic interests. If state C balances against state B, then state A can downgrade or cease to treat the expansion by state B as a threat to its economic interests.

Three case studies, Britain, Japan, and India, are used to explain advantages of opting for an offshore balancing strategy. A blend of RSCT and qualitative descriptive analyses set out the independent variables to answer the research question. A history of Britain’s use of a foreign policy built upon its military capability and economic capacity during Pax Britannica (1815–1914) demonstrates the validity of the strategy. The Japanese and Indian case studies examine both an insular power’s and a continental power’s potential to play roles of balancers in the Asian region, especially with regard to their patterns of behavior, military capability, and economic capacity. A synthesis of data sets provides a qualitative descriptive analysis of Japan’s and India’s military capabilities and economic capacities. These determine a state’s ability to play the role of the balancer.

Statement of the Research Question and Its Significance

This thesis seeks to answer the question “Who could play the role of the balancer in the Asian region?” The United States has a strong alliance with Japan and serves as its security guarantor. Japan maintains self-defense forces but has limited independent security capabilities. It also has a vibrant and strong economy with a defined middle class, it has been a great power in the past, and it is an insular nation with natural defenses. If it were to lose the American security umbrella, Japan would have to decide whether it should acquire nuclear weapons. A nuclear Japan’s past behavior could make some states in the region extremely nervous.

India does not have defined alliances with the United States, but it does possess a modern military to protect its security interests. It has a growing economy, a rapidly growing population, a burgeoning middle class, and multiple environmental issues. In the late 1990s, India became a nuclear state, instantly gaining great power respect as a member of the nuclear club. India must contend with its neighbor, a nuclear Pakistan, however. India must solve its numerous internal problems—rising population, environmental prob-

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lems, and political corruption—and external challenges before it can become an effective balancer.

As the United States pivots towards Asia, Japan instead of India could be more effective in the role of balancer in Asia considering patterns of behavior, potential military capability, and economic capacity. As will be shown later in this essay, Japan may make the better choice for this role.

Notes

(All notes appear in shortened form. For full details, see the appropriate entry in the bibliography.)

1. Layne, “Rethinking American Grand Strategy,” 25.
2. Colby, *Grand Strategy*, 10.
3. Layne, *Peace of Illusions*, 13.
4. Tellis, “United States and Asia’s Rising Giants,” 3.
5. White, *China Choice*, 4.
6. Walt, “Offshore Balancing.”
7. US Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership*.
8. Layne, “From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing,” 112.
9. Layne, “Rethinking American Grand Strategy,” 8; and Layne, “From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing,” 98.
10. Layne, *Peace of Illusions*, 3.
11. *Ibid.*, 8.
12. *Ibid.*, 6–7.
13. *Ibid.*, 7.
14. For more information on offensive realism, see Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 4.
15. Layne, *Peace of Illusions*, 35.
16. Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 267.
17. *Ibid.*, 139.
18. *Ibid.*, 41.
19. *Ibid.*, 53.
20. Layne, *Peace of Illusions*, 3.
21. *Ibid.*, 23.
22. Layne, “From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing,” 105.
23. US Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership*, 5.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Mearsheimer, “Middle East.”
26. Colby, *Grand Strategy*, 6.
27. Layne, *Peace of Illusions*, 157.
28. Ellings, “Preface,” ix.
29. Layne, “(Almost) Triumph of Offshore Balancing.”
30. Layne, *Peace of Illusions*, 110.
31. *Ibid.*, 7.
32. Layne, “From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing,” 109.
33. *Ibid.*, 106.
34. *Ibid.*

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35. Ibid., 107.
36. Swaine and Tellis, *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy*, ix.
37. White, *China Choice*, 3.
38. Singh, “Interpreting China's Grand Strategy,” 39.
39. Ibid., 43.
40. Swaine and Tellis, *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy*, 9.
41. Ibid.
42. Singh, “Interpreting China's Grand Strategy,” 38.
43. Ibid., 49.
44. Swaine and Tellis, *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy*, 97.
45. Singh, “Interpreting China's Grand Strategy,” 32.
46. White, *China Choice*, 5.
47. Swaine and Tellis, *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy*, xiii.
48. “China's Military Rise,” *Economist*.
49. Singh, “Interpreting China's Grand Strategy,” 50.
50. *Military Balance 2012*, 233.
51. Ibid., 233–38.
52. “China's Military Rise,” *Economist*.
53. “Air-Sea Battle rightly emphasizes improved command and control, precision strike, advanced missile defenses, robotics, submarine operations, and the use of air and space domains. So far, it has not involved big new weapons platforms.” Michael O’Hanlon and James Steinberg, “Going Beyond ‘Air-Sea Battle,’” *Washington Post*, 23 August 2012, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/beyond-air-sea-battle-a-military-concept-that-challenges-poli-cymakers/2012/08/23/8fd4f8fa-ed31-11e1-9ddc-340d5efb1e9c_story.html.
54. Blumenthal, *Sino-U.S. Competition and U.S. Security*, 19.
55. “China's Military Rise,” *Economist*.
56. Ibid., 238.
57. Ibid., 240.
58. Singh, “Interpreting China's Grand Strategy,” 29.
59. Swaine and Tellis, *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy*, 98.
60. Kirshner, “Consequences of China's Economic Rise,” 241.
61. Swaine and Tellis, *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy*, 99.
62. Ibid., 99.
63. Kirshner, “Consequences of China's Economic Rise,” 242.
64. Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, 4.
65. Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde, *Security*, 12.
66. Ibid., 10.
67. Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, 71.
68. Ibid., xvi.
69. Ibid., 71.
70. US Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership*.
71. Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, 489.

Chapter 2

Pax Britannica **Historical Perspective of Offshore Balancing**

The United Kingdom has also followed an offshore balancing strategy. As Sir Eyre Crowe noted in his famous 1907 memorandum about British security policy, “It has become almost a historical truism to identify England’s secular policy with maintenance of this [European] balance by throwing her weight . . . on the side opposed to the political dictatorship of the strongest single state.”

—John J. Mearsheimer
The Tragedy of Great Power Politics

Selecting strategies requires reflection of the past to assist with envisioning possible futures. While America’s current grand strategy has been successful, realism teaches that relative power and position in the international arena are not permanent. All states experience decline, but selecting strategies that either mitigate this decline or reverse it is desirable. Britain’s zenith, the Pax Britannica (1815–1914), is a historical example of an effective offshore balancing grand strategy. During this near century of peace, Britain was the dominant great power. This case study examines this historical offshore balancing and highlights the dynamics of Britain’s role as a great power within the European regional security complex.

Historical Background

As stated earlier, the definition of an RSC from Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde is “a set of states whose major security perceptions and concerns are so interlinked that their national security problems cannot reasonably be analyzed or resolved apart from one another.”¹ Threats travel much more easily and quickly over short distances, and security interdependence is patterned into regionally based clusters.² Despite global influences in international affairs, every state has to manage power distribution and interaction with the amities and enmities within its regional security complex. Britain accomplished this and became the largest empire of all time.

According to Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde’s regional security complex theory, Great Britain was indeed a great power during “this era.”

- Britain had just defeated another great power, France, in the Napoleonic Wars.
- Britain had the material capability, both economically and militarily, to assume great power status. This is critical because RSCT has elements of both constructivist and materialist approaches. The two approaches allowed the British to frame threats and vulnerabilities and coerce its adversaries by force.
- The other great powers within the region formally recognized Britain's great power status.

The regional and global security environment of the nineteenth century provides a unique setting to examine historic offshore balancing. This study does not exactly fit Layne's modern definition and characteristics of offshore balancing, nor is it a perfect example to apply Buzan and Wæver's RSCT. However, its close resemblance to offshore balancing is instructive in analyzing its advantages and disadvantages as a grand strategy. Scholars consider Britain's grand strategy during the nineteenth century as a close representation of what offshore balancing could achieve in the modern era. Nuclear arsenals, modern air forces, and adequate ground forces facilitate a modern offshore balancer's ability to conduct forcible entry actions, a requirement if a regional hegemon ascends and upsets the regional balance.³ Great Britain lacked a nuclear deterrent capability, air force, and substantial ground forces in the nineteenth century.

The British leveraged their naval supremacy, the high technology of the era; ground forces, employed primarily offshore; and economic capacity, the dominant economy, to balance the Concert of Europe. They achieved the same sorts of goals that might be sought by a contemporary offshore balancer. Christopher Layne's core principles of offshore balancing illustrate some similarities in the British example and a modern offshore balancer.

- Fiscal and economic constraints require that the United States set strategic priorities. Accordingly, the country should withdraw or downsize its forces in Europe and the Middle East and concentrate its military power in East Asia.
- America's comparative strategic advantages rest on naval and air power, not on sending land armies to fight ground wars in Eurasia. Thus the United States should opt for the strategic precepts of Alfred Thayer Mahan (the primacy of air and sea power) over those of Sir Halford MacKinder (the primacy of land power).⁴

The similarities in Layne's core principles and historical employment of military, economic, and political assets by the British and a modern offshore balancer are striking.

On the other hand, Buzan and Wæver's RSCT is mainly interpretive for regional security complexes in the post-Cold War era. According to Buzan and Wæver, "One could think of Europe during this period [the nineteenth century] as a regional security complex but, being composed largely of great powers, and being in effect the only one, it was of a special kind. For the European imperial powers, the world was their region."⁵ Diminishing imperial power and decolonization created many new states that allowed regional security dynamics to flourish, thereby making RSCT more suitable for the post-Cold War era. Regardless of this difference in periods, it does not invalidate a case study or the application of RSCT within it.

Applying RSCT analysis to the Pax Britannica should show patterns of behavior validating the offshore balancing strategy. By focusing on the British Pax Britannica, the author seeks not only to validate offshore balancing with a historical example, but also to identify the requisites for modern-day balancing success.

Paul Kennedy says, "Pax Britannica was a three-sided equation that consisted of an expanding formal empire together with a larger informal empire both of which provided raw materials and markets for the British economy; an adequate and overwhelming navy, and an industrial revolution that poured British products into the rest of the world."⁶ Britain combined its empire, formal and informal, its considerable military capabilities, and its preponderant economy with a foreign policy called "splendid isolation" that could be seen as a nineteenth century offshore balancing prototype.

Regional Patterns of Behavior

The British Empire was comprised of "formal" and "informal" parts. The formal empire of Britain consisted of the United Kingdom, the colonies, the self-governing dominions, protectorates, and mandates.⁷ *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the British Empire* refers to the informal empire as those areas where British influence extended beyond the bounds of the formal empire.⁸

Splendid isolation was the name given to Great Britain's regional pattern of behavior, or foreign policy, during the Pax Britannica.⁹ The grand strategies splendid isolation and offshore balancing have four similar goals:

- a reduced defense budget,
- a reduction of risk—insulation from great power wars,
- an ability to shift burdens via buck passing and to assume a bystander posture, and
- an ability to maintain or increase a relative power position.¹⁰

As Nigel Jones summarized, “Britain, ruling the world’s waves, was content to mind its business on Europe’s sidelines, enjoying what the great Victorian statesman Lord Salisbury called splendid isolation, concentrating on getting rich with Victorian industry and extending its empire until it ruled one-quarter of the globe.”¹¹ The United Kingdom did well to avoid major engagements, especially those that might have led to land war, unless her full weight could prevent the scales from tipping on the side of the strongest single state.¹² British retrenchment after the Napoleonic Wars illustrates the characteristics of an offshore balancing strategy. Namely, Britain’s grand strategy of splendid isolation conserved Britain’s power as it faced the potential rise of other European great powers.

It is necessary to acknowledge that within an anarchic security structure some security actions may result in positive or negative consequences concerning the RSC. As previously noted, from a realist perspective, a state cannot sustain dominance forever; states develop alliances to balance against hegemonies. Britain enjoyed many years of near hegemonic status during the “peace of Britain.” Ultimately, Britain suffered from gradual decline as David Reynolds relates: “Rather than the Pax Britannica sustaining an era of European peace, it was peace that sustained the Pax. Indeed Britain was almost a *free rider*—allowed to concentrate its resources on global expansion because of the European equilibrium. When continental states chose once more to use war as an instrument of policy—with the unification of Italy and Germany in the 1860s—Britain could do little to affect the outcome.”¹³ The splendid isolation strategy provided Britain with enormous wealth and power, but a state cannot remain aloof to relational dynamics within the region without risking decline.

Britain adopted splendid isolation as a defense of a favorable status quo in an anarchic security environment that was uncertain and ambiguous.¹⁴ As Williamson Murray puts it, “One does not make effective grand strategy entirely as one would like but rather according to the circumstances in which a national polity finds itself.”¹⁵

According to Buzan, “the logic of security regions stems from the fact that international security is a relational matter.”¹⁶ Relations between states revolve

around the securitization/desecuritization processes within the individual states of security regions. Therefore, as Britain's power declined it began to focus on the balance of power theory. Because regional security policy determines how governments interact with each other, close attention must be paid to what other governments say and how their populaces respond.

Britain's most salient security interests focus on issues and actors in close physical proximity to them, and most states do not have the capacity to project force beyond their existing region.¹⁷ The most prominent states of the European RSC during the nineteenth century consisted of Great Britain, Austria, Prussia, Russia, France, and Austria–Hungary. All of them emerged as great powers from the Congress of Vienna in 1815.¹⁸ The relationship among these great powers resulted in relative success concerning the balance of power dynamics. This mainly occurred because none of the great powers relied on a permanent or rigid system of alliances that could divide them.¹⁹ According to Paul Kennedy, “Britain was considered the only real industrialized nation in the world; . . . her dominance in commerce, transport, insurance and finance was great, and in most cases increasing; . . . she possessed the most extensive colonial empire ever seen, yet one which was to multiply in size during the century; and . . . despite occasional scares, her naval strength and potential was virtually unchangeable.”²⁰ Many factors influenced Britain's dominance during this era, but Lord Palmerston's foreign policy leadership set the stage for British regional patterns of behavior.

Britain's most influential character in shaping foreign policy during the Victorian era was Henry John Temple, 3rd Viscount Palmerston. He was a former Tory, serving as prime minister on two occasions but, more importantly, as foreign secretary from 1830 to 1834, from 1835 to 1841, and again from 1846 to 1851.²¹ Lord Palmerston was involved in British foreign policy for the majority of the formative years of the Pax Britannica. He believed that the continental peace was a requirement for British dominance, and he is known for his political brinksmanship in that regard. The Concert of Europe was a balancing action. At times, Palmerston thought of it as two antagonistic camps—the liberal West (Britain and France) facing the reactionary East (Russia, Prussia, and Austria).²² Palmerston's policies of brinksmanship in this era typify the style required to make an offshore balancing strategy effective.

Britain relied on buck passing and bystanding, unless her full weight was required for the development of hegemons. Mearsheimer defines buck passing as getting another state to do the heavy lifting.²³ Moreover, buck passing only has to do with the balancer.²⁴ The idea of buck passing is the preferred method for a balancer because it will likely maintain or increase its relative power position.

The British used this political technique throughout the nineteenth century. As an insular nation, Britain could focus on buck passing as a suitable course of action until a potential hegemon grew to a point that maintenance of the status quo required either a balancing coalition or direct action. One of the bedrocks of British strategy was to prevent the rise of a hegemon in Eurasia. Preventing hegemony in a security region remains a core objective of a modern offshore balancer as well.

Britain's ability to balance against the continental powers was crucial to its splendid isolation strategy. Many British still viewed France as an enemy and wanted to ensure no new Napoleon came to power. Russia soon would become an enemy, as well. The balance of power framework of the era swayed British balancing initiatives. However, this balance remained strong only as long as no one side—patterns of behavior, military, and economic—of the three-sided edifice weakened and collapsed the entire infrastructure.²⁵ The 40-year balance of power framework—this Concert of Europe—collapsed as Russian expansion threatened peace.

Global Patterns of Behavior

The first year of the Crimean War serves to illustrate British offshore balancing. Orlando Figes describes the Crimean War as “the earliest example of a truly modern war—fought with new industrial technologies, modern rifles, steamships, and railways, novel forms of logistics and communication like the telegraph, important innovations in military medicine and war reporters and photographers directly on the scene.”²⁶ Again, this example is not a perfect representation of Buzan and Wæver's definition of global patterns of behavior. It is global in the sense that security actions took place across portions of the European, Middle Eastern, and Asian RSCs.

Britain's intervention in the Middle East was an attempt to protect its interests and balance the expanding threat posed by Russia. Buzan and Wæver's constructivist approach within RSCT explains the British behavior. More importantly, the Russian Empire was a potential hegemon in the Eurasian regions, and three British national interests were at stake:

- the potential loss of wealth and gains from free trade,
- maintaining the balance of power within the Concert of Europe, and
- ensuring Russia did not dominate the region.

Britain, the securitizing actor, claimed to be fighting to protect Turkey from Russia. In fact, the British were fighting to protect their national interests

within the Ottoman Empire.²⁷ Securitization of Turkey was merely a justification for the British balancing Russia.

As RSCT explains, since Britain was a securitizing actor claiming the existence of existential threats, it had rights to use extraordinary means, or to break the rules, in its national defense.²⁸ Interestingly, the difference between the securitizing actor claiming a threat and the reality of the claim is critical to the popular perception of the British government's response to Russian expansion. According to Buzan and Wæver, "The very act of labeling something a security issue—or a threat—transforms this issue and it is, therefore, in the political process of securitization that distinct security dynamics originate."²⁹ One of the keys to understanding the British intervention is that the Ottoman Empire was part of the informal British Empire.

This makes securitization a bit more difficult to understand as causality because the securitizing actor determines what is and is not an existential threat, despite the actual conditions of the security environment. Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde state, "Thus, the exact *definition* and *criteria* of securitization is constituted by the establishment of an existential threat with a saliency sufficient to have substantial political effects."³⁰ This might seem ambiguous because it suggests anything could constitute an existential threat. Walter Arnstein suggests that Russophobia had recently bubbled to the surface, jingoistic reporting was appearing in British newspapers of the time, and Lord Palmerston demanded that the government take a stand. These were sufficient cause for the British populace to view Russia as a threat to their way of life.³¹

Britain had three identities:

- Britain as a *state* refers to the territorial entity as defined by its borders and its physical possessions both within and without its borders.³²
- Britain as a *nation* relates to British national identity, first as a nation where authority emanated from the Crown and Parliament in Britain, then as one of the great power states.³³
- Britain as a *global empire* refers to the British ability to maintain or shift the balance of power and affect the polarity inside and outside of the European RSC.

The Crimean War was fought between Russia on one side and the French, British, and the Ottoman Turkish Empire on the other. Each of the belligerents fought the war for many reasons, but the Russian and British reasons are most relevant to this study. British motives for fighting the Crimean War have already been established. Orlando Figes describes Tsar Nicholas I as "the

man more than anyone responsible for the Crimean War, he was partly driven by inflated pride and arrogance . . . having been tsar for twenty-seven years, partly by his sense of how a great power such as Russia should behave towards its weaker neighbors, and partly by a gross miscalculation about how the other powers would respond to his actions; but above all he believed that he was fighting a religious war, a crusade, to fulfill Russia's mission to defend the Christians of the Ottoman Empire."³⁴ For the Russians at least, this was a war over religion. For purposes of this discussion, however, the idea that it was about the struggle between the European powers for influence in the Ottoman Empire is of extreme importance.

The negotiation process in the prelude to war was critical, and the great powers attempted buck passing to solve the emerging issues in the Ottoman Empire, which became known as the Eastern Question. Four great powers—Britain, France, Austria, and Prussia—met in Vienna to design a compromise between Russia and the Ottoman Empire. David Wetzel posits, “No doubt the British line in the Near East continued to be dictated by strategic needs—the need to safeguard British preponderance over the Mediterranean routes; to preserve the Ottoman Empire as a barrier against Russian expansion; to keep Russian warships behind the Straits.”³⁵ The Vienna compromise was contentious among the great powers, but their resolve was essential in order for it to work. Britain, France, and Austria all relied upon the international negotiation system that the Congress of Vienna established to solve major crises. However, their efforts resulted in failure, as the Turkish Sultan Abdülmecid rejected the ambiguous language of the compromise.³⁶ As noted earlier, if buck passing or bystanding fails, an offshore balancer must take direct action to protect its interests. Britain made military preparations to quell the rising hegemon—Russia.

Lord Palmerston, no longer the foreign secretary, summarized, “We are connected, and have been for more than a century, with the general system of Europe, and any territorial increase of one Power, any aggrandizement which disturbs the general balance of power in Europe, although it might not immediately lead to war, could not be a matter of indifference to this country and would, no doubt, be the subject of conference, and might ultimately, if that balance were seriously threatened, lead to war.”³⁷ The potential for expansion or contraction of the Middle Eastern RSC because of the Russian threat represented an external transformation of the Middle Eastern RSC. This change in the RSC threatened the status quo that Britain relied upon for trade and economic gains, and Britain's intervention prevented the rise of a potential Eurasian hegemon.³⁸

Russian aid had assisted with putting down the 1848 revolutions in Europe. Because of their assistance to Austria during the revolutions, the Russians assumed the Austrians would not object to the Russian annexation of the Ottoman provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia. However, Austria, now a British ally, was near collapse. According to Wetzel, “the revolution in Hungary and Germany had been battered into defeat by the tsar; and the refugees who poured into England after 1848 identified his success with abject tyranny, and alien conspiracy to destroy civilization.”³⁹ The dangers that the British feared from Austria’s near collapse and the shattering of the Metternich system were the ability for the French to advance across the Alps on one side and cross the Rhine on the other.⁴⁰ The Russian expansion in the Middle East influenced these two factors, making them a possibility if the Russians were successful. If the Austrians were no longer British allies, Britain would not be able to buck pass to balance against France and Russia. The Congress of Vienna system had held for four decades, and though there had been minor skirmishes and domestic revolutions, the great powers had shown considerable restraint—this did not last.⁴¹

Therefore, Britain deployed its navy in response to a situation in which a perceived hostile power, Russia, sought hegemony over a critical region of the world, the Ottoman Empire.⁴² However, the deployment of the British navy triggered the Russians to occupy the Ottoman provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia in modern-day Moldova and Romania.⁴³ The sultan announced that Turkey would go to war if the Russians would not evacuate within two weeks.⁴⁴ The tsar’s refusal led to conflict between the Russian Empire and the alliance of the French, British, and Ottoman Empires.

If Russia took Istanbul, it would gain not only the city but also access to the Mediterranean Sea. France, Britain, and Austria wanted to maintain the neutrality of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles to prevent this.⁴⁵ The Turks knew that this was of preeminent concern to their allies and used the particulars of the situation to their advantage.⁴⁶ When Russia and the Turks broke off relations, the British sent a peacekeeping naval force to the northern Aegean Sea.⁴⁷

The use of overwhelming naval power as a deterrent is another critical component of an offshore balancing strategy. The fleet deployed to protect British trade and economic interests. Free trade in all parts of the Ottoman Empire was essential to British interests in the Near East, especially the unique trading privileges it extended toward Turkey.⁴⁸ Once an offshore balancer takes direct action, it must have the ability to project appropriate power. According to Buzan and Wæver, “great powers possess global military reach. They have the ability to project force around the globe, and, as a

result, they can intervene in any regional security complex whenever it suits their interest.”⁴⁹

The tipping point of the war came in late November of 1853 when the Russian fleet destroyed a Turkish flotilla at Sinope on the Turkish coast of the Black Sea. Elbridge Colby maintains that “an implicit task of an offshore balancer is to retain substantial military forces with forcible entry capabilities that can sustain operations away from bases stateside, in order to hold or wrest territory away from an adversary.”⁵⁰ The sinking of the Turkish flotilla stimulated Britain’s social construction of the Russian threat to British security interest in the Near East. Walter Arnstein illustrates this point using a quote from the *London Chronicle*: “We shall draw the sword, if draw we must, not only to preserve the independence of an ally, but to humble the ambition and thwart the machinations of a despot whose intolerable pretensions have made him the enemy of all civilized nations!”⁵¹

Britain and France began waging a war with Russia. As Arnstein continues, “their fleets entered the Black Sea, and both nations insisted that Russia confine its naval forces to the Crimean port of Sebastopol. The Russians refused, and war was declared in March 1854.”⁵² The examination of the first year of the Crimean War is useful for examining global patterns of behavior during splendid isolation. It also serves to validate offshore balancing as a viable strategy today. Analysis shows how Britain intertwined its constructivist patterns of behavior with the materialist aspects of the military to balance the Russian threat of expansion into the Middle East.

British Military Capabilities

After the defeat of Napoleon, the British Empire had one of the strongest militaries in the world. The British relied heavily on the military to enforce its foreign policy and increase the nation’s overall wealth. The convergence of military power and Britain’s socioeconomic progress was critical to the nation’s rise to world dominance. The British mainly relied on economic initiatives as an offshore balancer before resorting to military force ashore to coerce other states. This flexibility in national security is the essence of offshore balancing. Britain maintained a relatively small conventional army because the foreign policy of splendid isolation did not require a large standing army. Essentially, the British buck passed the requirement for troops by relying on the Indian Army abroad.

Carl Watts explains, “Traditionally Britain was not a great military power, but its control of the Indian Army provided a significant military reserve of

around 180,000 troops, which accounted for more than sixty percent of total manpower in British garrisons overseas in the 1880s. The Conservative prime minister, Lord Salisbury, once remarked that India was “an English barrack in the Oriental Seas from which we may draw any number of troops without paying for them.” Indeed, the Indian Army served in more than a dozen imperial campaigns in Africa and Asia during the second half of the nineteenth century. The Indian Army was, therefore, a significant element of the Pax Britannica. Without it the cost of maintaining imperial control would have been much higher.⁵³ The British case is unique because they employed another state’s army to provide their collective security; this takes the offshore balancing strategy to another level. However, the possession of land involves considerable logistics, civil responsibility, and military establishments—all issues that detract from economic growth. A state would seek to avoid becoming engaged in land wars and look to an offshore option as its primary strategy. The basis of an effective offshore balancing strategy for Britain during this period was overwhelming naval power.

The Empire would not have existed without a substantial military apparatus, specifically the Royal Navy. Ronald Hyam quotes Adm Lord John Fisher saying in 1903, “The British Empire floats on the British Navy.”⁵⁴ A strong naval force ensures that an offshore balancer is capable of securitization and maximizing its share of world power. Naval supremacy gave the British the global reach required to maintain the empire. Paul Kennedy describes the Pax Britannica: “The result of this century of intermittent warfare was the greatest triumph ever achieved by any state: the virtual monopoly among European powers overseas colonies, and the virtual monopoly of world-wide naval power.”⁵⁵ In essence, the British Empire was synonymous with sea power.

The Royal Navy focused on preventing the establishment of competing naval bases, overawing any prospective naval competitors, and protecting British interests, citizenry, and property abroad.⁵⁶ Command of the sea helped to improve communications within the empire. Therefore, Britain established a worldwide chain of strategic bases from which it could exert its influence.⁵⁷ Britain was able to conduct these functions because it possessed more naval tonnage than any other country in the world.⁵⁸ In 1815, Britain had 214 ships of the line and 792 cruisers.⁵⁹ Naval supremacy ensured Britain could penetrate emerging markets and protect its security interests. It was decided to maintain a hundred ships of the line and 60 cruisers. From 1815 to 1835, naval interventions made up the preponderance of British military actions.

British naval mastery was unique in this period because the other great powers were in naval decline or did not present any real threat to the Royal Navy. France still had the second largest navy, about 50 ships of the line, but

she suffered defeat at the hands of the British during the Napoleonic Wars.⁶⁰ Ironically, British naval dominance existed because none of the other great powers could prevent British dominance. None of the great powers, individually or collectively, tried to build or staff equivalent warships because of destruction of their naval fleets from previous engagements, the absence of monetary assets to support the fleet, and the lack of will to engage in a naval arms race.⁶¹ Any states that could balance or challenge Britain did not seek overseas bases because they had not the industrial strength due to the internal problems listed above.

Reliance on naval power allows a state a level of disengagement in that it does not need ground forces to maintain the balance of power within a given region. This lack of troops ashore on foreign soil reduces potentially messy interactions between states and lowers the risk of conflict. However, an offshore balancing strategy does not ensure dominance forever. David Reynolds states, “The Pax Britannica was the product of a brief era in which Europe was unusually stable and sea power was the dominant military technology. The empire rested not on armed might but on a delicate balancing act of coercion and persuasion, all done on the cheap at a time when rival European empires had temporarily been eclipsed. When other nations industrialized, great powers reemerged, and the empire became harder to retain.”⁶² The Crimean War, combined with the eventual unifications of Italy and Germany later in the century, destroyed the peace Britain had used to gain her dominance. Future offshore balancers must recognize this aloofness and its implications for either Japan or India as the balancer. Essentially, a state employing an offshore balancing strategy must remain cognizant of regional security dynamics. Sea power and adequate power projection were factors underlying Pax Britannica, but arguably, the most important material factor ensuring the peace of Britain was its economic capacity.

British Economic Capacity

The backbone of British dominance during the nineteenth century was its economic capacity. The British populace, the industrial revolution, including revolutions in commerce and banking and trade were the three elements that built enormous British wealth. Paul Kennedy notes, “Britain maintained this dominance, at a cost to the nation of £1 or less per annum per head of population in defence expenditure—equivalent to somewhere between 2 and 3 percent of the national income. Rarely has such a position in the world been purchased so cheaply.”⁶³ The economic comparison between splendid isola-

tion and offshore balancing reflects a less expensive approach than other aggressive grand strategies. Christopher Layne points out a general comparison between Britain's budget during splendid isolation and a modern offshore balancing strategy. Layne generalizes, "An offshore balancing strategy would require defense budgets in the range of 2–2.5 percent of the gross national product."⁶⁴ While this budget is a generalization, it marks the similarities despite the gap between the respective centuries.

British economic power provided revenue to increase military strength, and it was an effective tool in coercing weaker states when required. It was able to coerce other states by holding economies of noncompliant states at risk. A British economic embargo of Europe during the latter part of the Napoleonic Wars almost brought Europe to its knees.⁶⁵ Britain employed naval blockades in order to ensure it maintained its economic wealth from international commerce. Moreover, Britain could choose between economic warfare, sanctions, or embargoes to coerce others, an economic technique not easily matched by the other great powers. In David Baldwin's seminal work, *Economic Statecraft*, he states, "Power relations infuse every aspect of social life: there is no reason to make an exception for international economic relations."⁶⁶

The people of any nation are fundamental to its success. According to Walter Arnstein, "The population of England, Wales, and Scotland in 1831 was 16,161,183—more than twice what it had been seventy years earlier."⁶⁷ The burgeoning population that began to coalesce around towns and cities brought with it less of a focus on farming as people looked for factory jobs. The change from the feudal farming system to a more industrialized urban society was foundational to the industrial revolution that was under way.

British citizens began to emigrate as the cities became crowded and the jobs scarce. British colonists abroad played a vital role in passing along British ideas, ideology, and institutions after emigrating. P. J. Marshall notes, "British emigrants took their values with them and adhered tenaciously to them. When they tried to rule other peoples, British administrators in this period were not mindful of the need to adapt to indigenous ways of doing things, but the assumption that British ways were the norm was usually inescapable."⁶⁸

The British view of themselves provides a window into the expansion of the empire. For example, Marshall posits that British citizens believed that they only resorted to violence in self-defense. The record, however, shows continuous conquest and violence from 1783 through 1870.⁶⁹ This point is critical because the British government would have to make calculated decisions about the cost incurred in wars of conquest or interventions. Moreover, John Mearsheimer posits that population size and the wealth of a country matter.

A simple equation illustrates the point: size of population plus a state's wealth equals the sinews of military power.⁷⁰ Latent or potential power was enough at times to deter aggressors and maintain the peace of Britain. A key factor in this equation was the wealth of the state. Without an economic foundation, the ability to generate power of any type is difficult. While effective economies require people, there must be an apparatus to turn power into actual goods that a collective society needs to influence other states. The industrial revolution was that apparatus.

The industrial revolution marked an era of unprecedented economic growth that coincided with the Peace of Britain. The year 1815 is an excellent starting point because it was the first time a modernizing industrial economy was able to operate in peacetime conditions.⁷¹ For as Paul Kennedy states, "Through the industrial revolution, the island people has been transformed from a *nation of shopkeepers* into the *workshop of the world*."⁷² By the middle of the nineteenth century, Britain produced about two-thirds of the world's coal, about half of its iron, five-sevenths of its steel, two-fifths of its hardware, and about half of its commercial cotton cloth.⁷³ The spread of goods across the world vastly increased British wealth.

As Britain industrialized, it brought many countries into the world economy. Interestingly, London was the primary financier of many of the new and emerging markets across the globe. Kennedy posits that returns on overseas investments of £10.5 million in 1847 rose to £80 million by 1887. By 1875, Britain had over £1 billion invested abroad with the interest reinvested in old and new areas.⁷⁴ Much of the increase in capital went directly into shipping; the increase in British ship tonnage also increased her advantage during early industrialization—by 1890 she had more registered tonnage than the rest of the world put together.⁷⁵ London was the principal financier of this massive fleet as well as the central hub of international finance. According to Paul Kennedy, "The City had become the centre of international finance in all its aspects: loans, private and governmental, were floated there, currencies exchanged there, insurance arranged there, commodities bought and sold there, shipping chartered there; and every one of these services increased the centralizing tendency by the establishment of branch offices and agencies abroad."⁷⁶ While the industrial revolution was only one aspect of the British economy—trade also increased British wealth.

Trade was the decisive facet of the British Empire. Britain relied on commerce with its colonies, such as importing raw materials and exporting manufactured goods, to increase its overall wealth. However, trade went beyond the empire. Britain sought to increase trade with the former colonies of Spain and Portugal in Latin America, the Ottoman Empire, the Middle

East, and China.⁷⁷ Paul Kennedy explains, “Cotton, the fastest growing industry of all, was a catalyst or multiplier in itself, demanding ever more machinery, steam power, coal, and labour. In 1793 cotton exports had totalled £1.65 million; by 1815 they had risen to £22.55 million, becoming Britain’s greatest export by far.”⁷⁸

Trade provided wealth to increase shipping, which in turn increased British military power, allowing the empire to use its naval supremacy to expand across the globe without committing significant troops ashore to maintain order. Military capability and economic capacity provided Britain with a powerful combination of material strength to deploy the necessary assets to enforce the British foreign policy.

Notes

1. Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde, *Security*, 12.
2. *Ibid.*, 15.
3. Colby, *Grand Strategy*, 7.
4. Layne, “(Almost) Triumph of Offshore Balancing.”
5. Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, 15.
6. Kennedy, *Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*, 157.
7. Marshall, ed., *Cambridge Illustrated History of the British Empire*, 11.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*.
10. Layne, “From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing,” 87.
11. Jones, “‘Very Well, Alone!’”
12. Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 261.
13. Reynolds, *Britannia Overruled*, 18.
14. Murray, “Thoughts on Grand Strategy,” 8.
15. *Ibid.*, 7.
16. Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde, *Security*, 10.
17. Stewart-Ingersoll and Frazier, *Regional Powers and Security Orders*, 4.
18. Arnstein, *Britain Yesterday and Today*, 55.
19. *Ibid.*
20. Kennedy, *Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*, 150.
21. Arnstein, *Britain Yesterday and Today*, 58.
22. *Ibid.*, 59.
23. Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 269.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Kennedy, *Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*, 157.
26. Figes, *Crimean War*, xix.
27. *Ibid.*, xxii.
28. Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, 71.
29. *Ibid.*
30. Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde, *Security*, 25.
31. Arnstein, *Britain Yesterday and Today*, 96.

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32. Marshall, *Cambridge Illustrated History of the British Empire*, 10.
33. *Ibid.*, 11.
34. Figes, *Crimean War*, xxii.
35. Wetzel, *Crimean War*, 15.
36. *Ibid.*, 86.
37. Arnstein, *Britain Yesterday and Today*, 95.
38. Layne, *Peace of Illusions*, 105.
39. Wetzel, *Crimean War*, 18.
40. *Ibid.*, 19.
41. Arnstein, *Britain Yesterday and Today*, 95.
42. Colby, *Grand Strategy*, 27.
43. Arnstein, *Britain Yesterday and Today*, 96.
44. *Ibid.*
45. *Ibid.*
46. *Ibid.*
47. *Ibid.*
48. Wetzel, *Crimean War*, 15.
49. Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, 33.
50. Colby, *Grand Strategy*, 6.
51. Arnstein, *Britain Yesterday and Today*, 96.
52. *Ibid.*
53. Watts, "Pax Britannica," 50.
54. Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century*, 15.
55. Kennedy, *Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*, 150.
56. Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century*, 17.
57. Kennedy, *Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*, 154.
58. Ferguson, *Empire*, 50.
59. Kennedy, *Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*, 156.
60. *Ibid.*, 157.
61. *Ibid.*
62. Reynolds, *Britannia Overruled*, 30–31.
63. Kennedy, *Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*, 150.
64. Layne, *From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing*, 112.
65. James, *Rise and Fall of the British Empire*, 158.
66. Baldwin, *Economic Statecraft*, 61.
67. Arnstein, *Britain Yesterday and Today*, 18.
68. Marshall, *Cambridge Illustrated History of the British Empire*, 29.
69. *Ibid.*, 30.
70. Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 61.
71. Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century*, 21.
72. Kennedy, *Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*, 151.
73. *Ibid.*
74. *Ibid.*
75. *Ibid.*
76. *Ibid.*
77. Marshall, *Cambridge Illustrated History of the British Empire*, 25.
78. Kennedy, *Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*, 140.

Chapter 3

Land of the Rising Sun Adjusting the Asia Balance Using Japan

The global situation surrounding Japan is continuing to change on a daily basis, even following the recent disaster (Great East Japan Earthquake). The global presence of emerging economies is increasing and in response to the new requirements of the times, brought about by multi-polarization it is vital that Japan's foreign policy respond robustly to these changes. . . . In accordance with the new National Defense Program Guidelines that were formulated at the end of last year, Japan will enhance its readiness and mobility and work to build a dynamic defense force, thus responding to the new security environment.

—Yoshihiko Noda
Former Prime Minister of Japan

Japan is a country in transition. Japan's foreign policy has been distinct but evolving since the end of World War II. According to a 2012 report by Randall Schriver and Isabella Mroczkowski, "Japan since the turn of the century has led some experts to conclude that the 'Land of the Rising Sun' is on the decline. The debt is 200 percent of the annual gross domestic product. Japan's population is aging at the fastest rates in the world while the birth rate is decreasing steadily, and the nation's energy security faces an uncertain future. . . . While Japan may appear on the decline, Japan is, in fact, reemerging and reshaping the sources of its national power. The source of Japan's national strength and resilience is its people and culture."¹ Japan's foreign policy has evolved, beginning shortly after World War II. It now faces the realities of globalization and new emerging threats from within the Northeast Asian RSC. According to RSCT, Japan represents a referent object. As such, Japan will look to securitize according to its interests, regionally and internationally. The political leadership of Japan strongly influences its security agenda, which in turn requires popular acceptance and support.²

Background

Andrew Oros and Yuki Tatsumi suggest that "in the next year or two, many aspects of Japan's security policies may change as a result of the new domestic political situation, combined with deepening demographic and economic

challenges as well as tensions between at least two competing visions of Japan's security future that have been evident in the past decade."³

Japan's historical narrative since the beginning of the twentieth century has been dynamic. Japan achieved great power status in its victory in the Russo-Japanese War, 1904–5. Japan lost that great power status, at least militarily, in World War II. With the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security in 1945, the war in the Pacific ended, the United States became Japan's security guarantor, and demilitarized Japan was allowed to build forces for its self-defense.⁴

Japan's demilitarization required it to chart a new course in the world to ensure its security. The 1951 mutual security treaty with the United States, renewed and modified in 1960, reinforced US security guarantees to Japan. The Japanese prime minister, Yoshida Shigeru, promulgated the Yoshida Doctrine. Japan no longer would build "war potential," foreswearing the "use of force or the threat of force to solve international conflicts." Yoshida relied on Article 9 of Japan's postwar "pacifist" constitution as the basis of his doctrine.⁵

While Japan's experience after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki has cast a long shadow over its foreign policy, Yoshida also emphasized economic necessity. "For our country which has adopted pacifism as its basic policy the only way to raise the living standards of 90 million people living on four small islands, and to develop our economy, is peaceful expansion of our economic power."⁶ The Yoshida Doctrine has been Japanese foreign policy for more than 60 years, and Japan has become a unique great power relying on economic power and a small self-defense force. Japan would need to continue to make incremental changes in order to protect its interests in an evolving security environment.

Japanese Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira set up the Study Group on Comprehensive National Security, which submitted a report in 1980 recommending that Japan "increase military cooperation with the United States, strengthen its own defense capabilities, persuade the Soviet Union that Japan was neither a weak state or a threat . . . and improve crisis management for large scale disasters."⁷ Japan adopted this strategy and began to view the world slightly differently after the report. Economics would not be its sole tool of statecraft—Japan began to think about blending its economic, political, and military tools to protect its security.⁸ Despite this change in mind-set, it was not quite manifested in action plans at regional and global levels. However, a new multipolar and globalized world may cause Japanese political decision makers and the populace to transform current foreign policy to protect national interests.

Japan's ability to transform and securitize against threats in the region requires a popular willingness to support the actions of the government. Since the end of the Gulf War, the economic and military ascendancies of China and India have deeply disturbed the foundations of Japan's foreign and security policies. Securitization occurred when the Japanese people accepted the Indian and Chinese economic and military powers as existential threats. This dynamic is critical because Japan can operate at the edges of its pacifistic constitution, gradually securing its interests, and become a "normal nation" as a middling or great power. Japan will try to securitize its interests and create the balance of power required for stability in the region as long as it remains an economic great power.

If Japan is an economic great power, then it is an unbalanced one. Great powers traditionally rely on decisive military strength for their great power status. In order for Japan to normalize itself, it must regain the right to use force in its foreign policy. A change in Japanese pacifist patterns of behavior would begin with significant modifications to its constitution. Japan's regional security environment since 1990 suggests that change is required, and Japan should become a normal nation with the right to use force in its foreign policy.⁹

Another requirement will be for Japan to not "free ride" on its ultimate security guarantor—US military assistance. According to Article V of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, an armed attack in territories administered by Japan against either Japan or the United States is a danger to the peace and safety of both countries. They would address the common danger in accordance with Japan's constitutional provisions and processes.¹⁰ While this article has clear language, how Japan and the United States determine what constitutes an armed attack that threatens both nations' interests is ambiguous. For Japan to be able to use force in its own defense and rely less on the US security guarantee, it will have to militarize without becoming either unreliable or overly aggressive. Japan will also have to unload its historical baggage of aggression and violence at home, with its neighbors, and with the rest of the world. Japan's regional patterns of behavior—whether pacifistic or militaristic—are critical to the changes required in its foreign policy. They are fundamental to the assessment of its ability to serve as an effective balancer within the precarious Northeast Asian RSC.

As mentioned above, Japan's regional patterns of behavior are critical to the incremental changes required for its foreign policy to change. They are also fundamental in assessing its ability to serve as an effective balancer within a precarious Northeast Asian RSC and Asian supercomplex.

Regional Patterns of Behavior

Using Buzan and Wæver the regional actors of the Northeast Asian RSC are China, North Korea, and Japan.¹¹ Japan's great power status achieved in the early years of the twentieth century set the parameters for a fully independent Japan to engage a quasi-independent China, thereby forming the basis of an RSC in Northeast Asia.¹² A deeper analysis of Sino-Japanese relationship illustrates the security dynamics of the Northeast Asian RSC and the Asian Supercomplex. The Asian Supercomplex is a set of RSCs, the South Asian RSC, the Northeast Asian RSC, and the Southeast RSC. The presence of one or more great powers generates relatively high and consistent levels of inter-regional security dynamics within the Asian Supercomplex.¹³

Japan and China

Japan's relationship with China is complex. Their long histories have had significant influences on that relationship. They are economically and culturally interdependent. There is a unique dynamic between the overall sizes of the two nations and their respective economies. Oros and Tatsumi estimate "China's population of approximately 1.34 billion is over ten times that of Japan, but its official economic size (in terms of GDP at official exchange rates) is slightly smaller than Japan's."¹⁴ According to Anthony DiFilippo there are two factors that underlie Japan's complicated securitization of Chinese threats. They are Japan's culture, which continues to exude pacifist values, and Japan's incremental approach and debate on the path to becoming a "normal country."¹⁵

Further complications arise from the American security umbrella that Japan relies on when dealing with China. Not only does Japan have to consider using its military forces beyond its borders to deal with China, it also has to think about Chinese nuclear weapons. Japan has not yet undertaken military or nuclear transformation, but its political leadership is considering both.

The dispute over the Senkaku Islands between Japan and China is just one of many foreign policy issues between the two countries. The Japanese government has stated,

The Senkaku Islands were neither part of Taiwan nor part of the Pescadores Islands, which were ceded to Japan from the Qing Dynasty of China in accordance with Article 2 of the Treaty of Peace signed at Shimonoseki, which came into effect in May of 1895. The fact that China expressed no objection to the status of the Islands being under the administration of the United States under Article III of the San Francisco Peace Treaty clearly indicates that China did not consider the Senkaku Islands as part of Taiwan. The Republic of China (Taiwan) recognized the San Francisco Peace Treaty in the Sino-Japanese Peace Treaty, which came into effect in August 1952.¹⁶

In this case, Japan has conducted securitization of the sovereignty of the islands against Chinese claims of territoriality.

Oros and Tatsumi state, “The rhetoric and action over territorial disputes over the offshore islands and maritime resources have ratcheted up notably in the past decade, fueled by nationalist activists on both sides.”¹⁷ The importance of the areas surrounding the islands concerns access to explore the undersea oil and gas resources. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan website, it was not until 1971 after a 1968 survey indicated the possibility of the existence of petroleum resources under the surrounding sea that China and Taiwan authorities officially began to make their assertions about territorial sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands.¹⁸

The problem remains contentious because of the Japan–United States security treaty. If Japan conducts actions in defense of the islands, it may compel support from the US military. Recently, Japan purchased the remaining islands from a private citizen and transferred them to itself under its civil law.¹⁹ The Chinese have reacted by sending vessels into the territorial waters of Japan, which has resulted in protest in China by Japanese nationals. Tensions flared in late 2010 following the Japan Coast Guard’s detention in September of a Chinese trawler captain near the disputed islands.²⁰ China responded by suspending political and diplomatic exchanges with Japan, halting bilateral talks on the joint exploitation of gas fields in the East China Sea, and strengthening its unofficial embargo on the export of rare earth minerals.²¹ The protest resulted in violent acts against the Japanese protesters by the Chinese.

The nature of the alliance between Japan and the United States has a profound influence on the balancing behavior in the region. Japan has conducted desecuritization with a commitment to dealing with the current situation in a calm manner from a broad perspective. In fact, at this time Japan plans to maintain close communications with China in an effort to ease tensions to prevent further escalation.²²

Japan and North Korea

Japan’s security relationship with North Korea is relatively simple. If Japan’s foreign policy has an economic focus, then Japanese policy toward North Korea has a military focus. A 2011 Japanese white paper described North Korean ideology as building a “powerful and prosperous nation” through “military-first politics.”²³ Simply put, the North Korean leadership has devoted enormous resources to the military building missiles, weapons of mass destruc-

tion, nuclear weapons, and elevating tensions on the Korean Peninsula and the Northeast Asian RSC.

If the standoff between the two Koreas broke out into conflict, it would likely force the United States to participate because of the US forces located in South Korea and the United States–South Korea security pact. It is also possible that China would intervene because of its traditional support for North Korea.²⁴ Japan has successfully securitized North Korea based on its potential missile and nuclear threats and its antics within the region.

Japan would likely support the United States and South Korea if this were to occur. Oros and Tatsumi say that this support is likely because of the disruption in trade, regional production, and the financial markets would severely affect the Japanese economy. Other negative consequences could include immigration of large numbers of refugees to Japan. There would be other serious domestic issues arising from Japan's constitutional constraints.²⁵ Beyond the possibility of a resumption of the Korean War there is also the threat of nuclear conflict that influence the Japanese–North Korean security dynamics.

Japan is slowly adjusting to account for potential nuclear conflict with North Korea. Shinzo Abe, prime minister of Japan, recently commented on a launch of a so-called North Korean “satellite”:

Japan will, in coordination with other countries take appropriate measures so that the resolution will be implemented effectively. Japan strongly urges North Korea to heed the firm message of the international community seriously and comply faithfully and fully with the relevant Security Council resolutions, and not to conduct any further provocative acts including further launches and nuclear tests. Japan is resolved to continue to make active efforts, in close coordination with the international community, for the comprehensive resolution of outstanding issues of concern regarding North Korea, including abductions, nuclear and missile issues.²⁶

The North Koreans have continued this behavior concerning potential nuclear and missile tests.

Additionally, *Nightwatch*, a critically acclaimed nightly newsletter that tracks and assesses US national security, published an analytic product on 11 February 2013 suggesting that North Korea may have conducted a third nuclear test. “The US Geological Survey reported seismic activity in North Korea that could represent a man-made detonation. The US Geological Survey said the 4.9 magnitude tremor occurred at a depth of 1km. It put the epicenter close to North Korea’s nuclear test site. Chinese, Japanese and South Korean earthquake and meteorological agencies also detected the event. The Chinese Earthquake Administration described it as a suspected explosion. South Korean forces are on alert. Japan has convened its national security council.”²⁷

Japan has maintained serious concerns over North Korea's bellicose stance toward its neighbors.²⁸ As Japan's foreign policy changes to adjust for the balance of power dynamics within the region, its quest to become a normal country relies on its ability to interact and influence using effective global patterns of behavior.

Global Patterns of Behavior

The advent of a post-Cold War era with the disappearance of the Soviets as a major threat in the Northeast Asian region was a catalyst for Japan to change its global patterns of behavior. Japan sought a new way forward by looking to enlarge its role on the international stage. According to James Llewelyn, Japanese prime minister Noburo Takeshita's 1988 International Cooperation Initiative was evidence of Japan being no longer content with passively following Washington's leadership: "The initiative was built on three relatively uncontroversial pillars, chiefly: to strengthen Japan's contribution to international peace, expand its Official Development Assistance [ODA], and promote cultural exchange."²⁹ These pillars illustrate the changes in Japanese foreign policy from the Yoshida Doctrine. The "Japanese Economic Capability" section in this chapter will elaborate on Japan's utilization of the ODA. A closer examination of Japan's efforts on behalf of international peace illustrates its new global behavior patterns.

Peacekeeping Operations

In June 1992, the Law Concerning Cooperation for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Other Operations (PKO) came into force. This allowed Japan to send Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) personnel abroad to participate in specified operations for the first time.³⁰ In 1992, the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia requested that Japan provide military and civilian personnel in secondary support roles, such as cease-fire observers, civilian police, and election monitors.³¹ This marked the first time that the JSDF participated in an overseas security action. Since 1992, Japan has sent more than 8,400 personnel (JSDF and police forces) to support UN missions in Cambodia, Mozambique, Golan Heights, Timor-Leste, Haiti, and other locations.³²

The Japanese have established a multiministerial group to evaluate Japan's role in UN PKOs. "Japan must take the initiative in actively addressing global issues and regarding them as its own problems. . . . Rather than being content with its current status, the country should consider expanding its cooperation while achieving a balance between specific peacekeeping needs and its own

capacity.”³³ Peacekeeping operations remain a critical component of Japan’s transition to normalcy. While it is a slow process, Japan can make changes in response to regional and global security dynamics. A true test, however, of this transition came during the Gulf War (1990–91) when the international community expected Japan to commit troops in defense of Kuwait.

Japan’s Lessons from the Gulf War

After Saddam Hussein had invaded Kuwait, the United Nations authorized the use of military force against Iraq, and Japan had a legitimate opportunity to deploy forces overseas to participate in actual combat.³⁴ If Japan had taken the opportunity, it would have made large progress in becoming a normal state. However, their constitution constrained the Japanese. Rather than send combat troops, Japan offered economic assistance, a missed opportunity at normalcy. Since Japan had slowly begun to evolve its foreign policy, the international community was shocked that Japan did not commit forces to the ground offensive. According to the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, the Gulf Crisis forced Japan to judge and cope with many questions that Japan had not experienced since 1945.³⁵

This was because Japan fully supported the UN-centered foreign policy, had strong ties to the United States, and pursued its own security interests in the region.³⁶ Despite Japan’s large financial contributions, the Gulf War was a failure of Japan’s checkbook diplomacy and indicated that Japanese policy-makers need to consider more carefully the international community’s perceptions of Japan. The Gulf War also highlighted the two salient constraints on Japan’s remilitarization: pacifism and dependence on the security relationship with the United States.

Japan and the United States

A unique dynamic of the Northeast Asian RSC is the United States’ security alliance with Japan. Nations in the RSC do not respond to the influence of the United States. Rather, the United States must respond to the interplay between the regional actors. This is the basis for the rest of the analysis of this region. Buzan and Wæver call this infusion of the United States in the region *overlay*. Overlay occurs when the interests of external great powers come to dominate a region so heavily that the local dynamics of security interdependence cease to operate. The long-term stationing of great power armed forces in the region and the alignment of the local states according to the patterns of great power rivalry are symptomatic of overlay.³⁷ The influence of the United

States over the security dynamics within the region and Japan’s foreign policy are indications of US overlay.

Oros and Tatsumi say that “so substantial is the role of the US that much analysis of Japan’s security policy—its development, its strategy, its future direction—begins by examining the role that the Japan-US alliance played in shaping Japanese security policy, and the contributions of the US in particular.”³⁸ Japan and the United States are interdependent in the contemporary international environment. This serves Japan quite well considering Article 9 of its constitution. Moreover, it has allowed Japan something of a free ride for its own military defense. The Japanese have not had one member of the military killed in combat in over 65 years, a point of pride and envy.³⁹ This success is mainly due to Japan’s alliance with the United States. Japan’s future as a “normal” country lies in transitioning the Japanese-US relationship from protectorate to partnership.

James Llewelyn wrote, “The primacy of Japan’s bilateral relationship with the US remained in both security and economic terms while the mutual security treaty remained the cornerstone of Japan’s security thinking.”⁴⁰ However, the security umbrella promised by the United States will come into question. So how does Japan achieve more autonomy from America in the international environment? Japan could continue to “normalize” under US guidance and oversight. The following table illustrates this.

Table 1. Major Japan–United States security agreements, 1996–2010

Year	Event
1996	Hashimoto-Clinton Joint Security Declaration
1996	New Acquisition and Cross-Service Agreement
1997	Security Consultative Committee (SCC) releases revised Guidelines for Defense Cooperation
2001	Japan offers to send ships to Indian Ocean to assist the US-led coalition forces fighting in Afghanistan, as well as other support since 9/11
2003	Japan offers to send troops to Iraq to assist with reconstruction and relief efforts
2005	Japan agrees to codevelopment of missile defense with the United States
2005	SCC reports released, February and October, on “common strategic objectives” and on realignment of the alliance
2006	SCC reports release an implantation plan for the realignment of US forces in Japan
2007	SCC report on “alliance transformation” issued
2009	Agreement signed on the transfer of the Third Marine Expeditionary Force from Okinawa to Guam, based on the 2006 report
2010	SCC joint declaration commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Security Treaty

Source: Adapted from Andrew Oros, *Global Security Watch–Japan* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2010), 81.

The United States has often pressured Japan to rebuild its military forces, but this has been difficult.⁴¹ The Japanese public has not supported any change to Article 9 of their constitution, and Japan's military history in the region has complicated matters, as well.

While the United States and other countries have often expected Japan to participate more in the maintenance of international security, the United States recognizes that a remilitarized Japan could be problematical. Llewellyn states, "Another important historical antecedent to understanding the current United States role in Japan's security policies was the simultaneous US desire to contain Japan—to prevent Japan from the development of sufficient military capacity to once again challenge the United States militarily, or to thwart security objectives in the region. The pursuit of a considerable US base presence in Japan served this, among other, purposes; a US effort to ensure that Japan would not become a nuclear weapons state in the 1960s, including efforts to secure Japanese ratification of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, is another."⁴² Nevertheless, a normalized, militarily restructured, and nuclear-capable Japan is a necessary balance to the region's rising or potential hegemony.

Likewise, if Japan is more militarily capable, America can avoid the high expenses of the current US overlay. There is no doubt that both Japan and the United States rely on one another for regional stability. However, Japan and the United States will have to resolve any misgivings about Japanese security independence so that Japan might become a normal country that can secure its own interests.

As long as a cooperative partnership remains in place, the United States will be capable of assisting Japan with its transition to normalcy. This would be beneficial, allowing Japan to continue transitioning with great power assistance while the United States has oversight of the transition. Further, the United States can use its alliance with a normal Japan to more effectively buck pass or burden share. Christopher Layne sums up stating, "As potential great powers (Japan) come to doubt the reliability of the US security umbrella (which will occur even if the United States sticks with a strategy of preponderance), they inevitably will seek strategic self-sufficiency (including nuclear weapons). It is unlikely, however, that an offshore balancing strategy would touch off a proliferation chain reaction. Middle and small powers, given their limited resources, might well decide that they would be more secure by enhancing their conventional forces than by acquiring nuclear weapons."⁴³

Additionally, an offshore balancing strategy does not advocate letting a normalized Japan go it alone; the United States would assist in situations where Japan's ability to check a rising hegemon becomes inadequate. This is

the essence of the January 2012 statement of US strategy. *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for the 21st Century Defense* announced a necessary rebalance toward the Asia–Pacific region.⁴⁴

Japan as a Nuclear State?

Since December of 1967 Japan has abided by its three nonnuclear principles:

- no possession of nuclear weapons,
- no production of nuclear weapons, and
- no introduction of nuclear weapons.⁴⁵

Japan is also a signatory of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Many argue that a nuclear Japan would upset the security balance in East Asia. That might be the case, but the balance of power theory suggests another outcome.

A nuclear Japan likely would precipitate a nuclear arms race in the region, but history has shown that balance of power dynamics determine state behavior. In the event of nuclear weapons proliferation in East Asia, it is most likely that Japan will act to prevent the domination of any one state. Currently, a nonnuclear Japan has not deterred either China or North Korea from seeking nuclear capabilities. Regardless, Japan will have to address the nuclear issue as existential threats increase.

If Japan is to become a “normal” country or become a great power in the Northeast Asian RSC, then nuclear arms for Japan are realistic and even critical for its security. Robert Gilpin suggests that prestige is about economic and military power, but nuclear prestige has significant influence that deters or compels states.⁴⁶ Development and subsequent procurement of nuclear weapons would also require amending Japan’s pacifistic constitution. The Japanese people would have to become willing to overcome the institutional pain and their abhorrence of nuclear weapons as well. Only Japan has experienced the horrors associated with atomic weapons.⁴⁷

This is a lot to overcome, but it is not impossible. Anthony DiFillipo states, “In 1969, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ Foreign Relations Policy Planning Committee produced a secret report entitled *Our Nation’s Foreign Policy Principles*. This report, not public until 1994, stated that ‘the policy for the time being is not to have nuclear weapons, but economic and technical potential to make nuclear weapons will always be maintained and care will be taken not to accept restriction on this.’”⁴⁸ If the United States security umbrella were removed or reduced significantly, Japan would be in a very dangerous neigh-

borhood where its potential existential threats possess or are developing nuclear arsenals. Finally, Japan is one of the most advanced technological societies in the world, producing one-third of its electricity from nuclear power prior to the Fukushima disaster.⁴⁹ This suggests that Japan could “go nuclear.” Oversight and assistance from the United States could be beneficial to both states in this process.

The most recent study completed in 1995, but not made public until 2003, posits three reasons why Tokyo should not acquire nuclear weapons:

- It would damage the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty critically.
- It would undercut the dependability of the US nuclear shield and weaken the United States–Japan security alliance.
- It would send a strong signal to other East Asian countries that Japan had embarked on a path to security independence from the United States.⁵⁰

The current international security environment may force Japan to undertake nuclearization to ensure its interests in the future. A normalized Japan without a significant security umbrella provided by the United States within the Northeast Asian RSC would require nuclear weapons. However nuclear weapons are only one piece of the normalization of Japan; the other piece is the development of Japan’s conventional arms.

Japanese Military Capability

In fiscal year 2005, Japan adopted the new National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG) and Midterm Defense Plan (MTDP). A long tradition of NDPGs outlined Japan’s basic national security policies since the first one in 1976. However, Japan’s defense doctrine had not been revised for a decade. The new NDPG and MTDP represented a comprehensive strategic reassessment, adding international peace support and counterterrorism operations to the Cold War and early post–Cold War force concepts.⁵¹ One of the most significant aspects of this version of the NDPG is that it explicitly identified China and North Korea as security concerns.⁵² Traditionally there has not been a public discussion of Japan’s defense forces. Now it is common to see uniformed members of JSDF featured in mass media, portrayed in movies, walking the streets of Japan, and working abroad in defense roles or participating in international relief.⁵³

The military response to the 2012 great Tohoku earthquake, subsequent tsunami, and Fukushima nuclear disaster has had a great effect on the popular perception of the military. *Military Balance 2012* states, “The JSDF mobilized

around 100,000 personnel, or 180,000 if support personnel are included, for disaster relief efforts. This represented nearly half of the forces' total strength and was the largest mobilization in JSDF history."⁵⁴ This is a notable precedent, and it suggests Japan may look to use its military in more assertive and creative ways in the future.

Prior to examining the specifics of Japan's military capability, a brief summary of the 2010 NDPG will reveal the framework of Japan's current disposition and military outlook. The current NDPG focuses on the development of dynamic defense forces. The change from "basic to dynamic" means that Japan will upgrade and increase its military and defense capabilities if defense expenditures will not be 1 percent of its GDP.⁵⁵ The significance of the upgrade option is cannot be overstated. It indicates acknowledgment of the increasing threats to Japan's security. According to a leading provider of intelligence, "Although Japan has traditionally restricted its defense budget to less than 1 percent of its Gross National Product (currently 0.8 percent of GDP), the sheer size of its economy has provided its armed forces with an annual military budget averaging more than \$40 billion. This is the world's third largest, which allows Japan to continue its role as a significant arms buyer. Despite its lackluster economic performance over the last decade and a half, Japan has resisted making deep cuts to its defense spending."⁵⁶ According to Axel Berkofsky, "the recent qualitative, and to a limited extent quantitative, upgrade of Japan's military and defense capabilities seems to indicate that Tokyo is preparing itself to deal with an attack on its national territory."⁵⁷

Three items form the basis of the national security of Japan: "1) the prevention and elimination of potential threats to Japan and the minimization of the damages thereof; 2) the further stabilization of the security environment of the Asia-Pacific region and the prevention of the occurrence of threats through the improvement of the global security environment; and 3) contribution to world peace and stability and establishing security for people."⁵⁸

According to *Defense of Japan 2011*, a Japanese white paper, it is necessary to utilize Japan's defense capabilities and build them up as dynamic and active resources. This ensures the capabilities to carry out various roles rather than relying on the conventional Basic Defense Force Concept that emphasizes deterrence through the "existence of defense forces."⁵⁹ Moreover, the white paper states, "To this end, the new NDPG calls for development of 'Dynamic Defense Forces' supported by advanced technology and intelligence capacities and characterized by readiness, mobility, flexibility, sustainability, and versatility, in consideration of the trends in military technology standards."⁶⁰ This newly envisioned JSDF is tremendously important to Japan's role as a

regional and global balancer. As Japan deals with issues like the dispute over the Senkaku Islands with China and the maritime disputes with North Korea, changes to its military structure are essential.

Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force

The mission of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) includes defense of the seas surrounding Japan, ensuring the security of the sea lanes, and international peace cooperation activities. These regularly include conducting such operations as intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) and antisubmarine operations.⁶¹ The four main units that compose the JMSDF are the destroyer units, submarine units, patrol aircraft units, and minesweeping units.

The JMSDF surface units are organized into four escort flotillas with a mix of seven or eight warships each, with bases at Yokosuka, Kure, Sasebo, Maizuru, and Ominato.⁶² The submarine units are organized into two flotillas based at Kure and Yokosuka; the remaining units are assigned to five regional districts. There are approximately 45,518 active duty personnel and 1,100 reserve personnel, making it one of the smallest of services of the JSDF.⁶³ Japan has continued to develop and increase the capabilities of its JMSDF because of Japan's dangerous insular geostrategic location.

As an island middling power with a heavy emphasis on commerce, its maritime force is of prime importance for maintaining sea lines of communication and in progress toward normalization. Axel Berkofsky posits that the JMSDF has in recent years replaced some of its destroyers with at least six destroyers equipped with the Aegis sea-mobile ballistic missile defense (BMD) system. This enables Japan's navy, at least in theory, to intercept incoming North Korean and Chinese ballistic missiles. According to Axel Berkofsky, "The Japanese Ministry of Defense estimates that hundreds of North Korean missiles are aimed at Japan, and South Korea for that matter. North Korea's short-range Nodong missiles can reach downtown Tokyo in less than ten minutes."⁶⁴

Although Japan's current missile interceptor systems—land and sea based—have been improved significantly in recent years through regular testing and joint tests with the United States, analysts and the Japanese government fear that existing systems might not be able to intercept and destroy incoming North Korean missiles.⁶⁵ Ballistic missile defense is essential for dealing with North Korea's and China's increasing and modernizing naval power.

In early 2011, the JMSDF deployed to the South China Sea to conduct joint exercises with the United States and Australia off the coast of Brunei.⁶⁶ Chris-

topher Layne states, “An offshore balancing strategy would stress sea-based ballistic missile defense (crucial in the event the United States has to wage a coalitional warfare in the early twenty-first century) and sea-based precision, standoff weapons systems (enabling the United States to bring its military power to bear without committing ground forces to combat).”⁶⁷ Additionally, the United States would assist Japan if required in projecting power in an anticipated A2/AD environment. According to Berkofsky, Chinese “anti-access strategy” increases in submarine fleets and plans for aircraft carriers are designed to make it difficult for the United States to project military power into the Pacific.⁶⁸ Japan can seize the opportunity to reassert itself in the buildup of its naval power.

Japan Air Self-Defense Force

The Japan Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF) conducts continuous ISR over the seas and airspace surrounding Japan, general air defense, and air defense of key areas. The JASDF is one of the most advanced air forces in the world. It is comprised of approximately 47,123 active duty and 800 reserve personnel. The JASDF has a mix of combat, transport, advanced early warning, trainer fixed-wing aircraft, and search and rescue helicopters.⁶⁹

The JASDF has heavily invested in BMD, purchasing the Standard Missile SM-3s, upgraded radar systems for ASDF surveillance aircraft, and command and control systems to integrate seamlessly with the JMSDF.⁷⁰ Oros and Tatum state: “As the missile threat posed by North Korea began to rise, BMDs began to be considered as an important part of air defense missions.”⁷¹ The air and ground aspects of island defense are fully integrated, and the JASDF is in charge of the operation of Japan’s ballistic missile defense system. Beyond homeland defense, the ASDF continues to expand and test its capabilities. It has participated in disaster relief operations abroad and UN peacekeeping efforts in Cambodia (1992–93), Mozambique (1993–95), Rwanda (1994), East Timor 1999–2000, 2002), Afghanistan (2001), and Iraq (2003–9).⁷²

Another significant upgrade to the ASDF is the procurement of the conventional variant of the F-35 fighter aircraft. According to a Lockheed company representative, Japan signed a formal agreement with the United States to buy an initial four F-35 fighters built by Lockheed Martin and other equipment for 60 billion yen, or \$756.53 million.⁷³ According to a December 2011 white paper, “42 F-35A aircraft shall be procured from FY2012 as the new fighter, in order to supplement deficiencies resulting from aging of the currently used fighters of the Air Self-Defense Force and facilitate their modernization.”⁷⁴

The procurement of a next-generation fighter will provide excellent stealth capability and situational awareness (SA) capabilities. It will also permit the development of network-centric warfare to integrate fighter aircraft, the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS), aerial refuelers, surface-to-air missiles (SAM), and so on.⁷⁵ The F-35 represents the military-technological advantage and strategic flexibility that a balancer would seek within an off-shore balancing strategy.⁷⁶

Japan Ground Self-Defense Force

Ground troops are necessary for national power, and the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) meets that need. As Japan normalizes, it will place more emphasis on the capabilities of the JGSDF, which is the largest service within the JSDF. There are 151,641 active duty personnel, with 46,000 in its reserve system.⁷⁷ The original mission of the JGSDF was to deter attack, repulse small invasion, or provide a holding action until reinforced by the United States.⁷⁸ As the security environment evolved, the JGSDF's missions changed as well. The new missions for the JGSDF are homeland defense, both from conventional and unconventional threats, domestic disaster/humanitarian relief, and international activities. These include UN peacekeeping operations, international disaster/humanitarian relief efforts, and participation in other types of activities conducted by multinational forces.⁷⁹ If conventional warfare were to take place, the JGSDF would be the first line of national defense. The major components of the JGSDF are maneuver units; armored, mechanized, airborne, air assault, and light forces; combat support; and combat service support.

Japanese Economic Capacity

Japan's economy has been dynamic since the end of World War II. During the 1950s and 1960s, Japan's annual growth rate averaged 8 percent, and Japan was the first of the defeated powers to achieve "developed" status in the postwar era.⁸⁰ Being a great power before World War II, Japan has the institutional knowledge to use its economic power in its normalization. Japan is a stable democracy with the world's third largest economy, giving it the economic prestige of a great power without a great power military. Moreover, Japan owes the large part of nearly continuous economic growth and stable political life to its greatest ally—the United States.⁸¹

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs's "Japan Fact Sheet," the reasons for Japan's success in the postwar era include high rates of personal savings and private sector facilities investment, a labor force with a strong work

ethic, an ample supply of cheap oil, innovative technology, and effective government intervention in private-sector industries.⁸² According to Ashley J. Tellis, Mercy Kuo, and Andrew Marble, “The Japanese economy has increasingly become oriented toward East Asia, with much of the country’s manufacturing tied up in regional production networks. Reflecting this reality, Tokyo has sought to take a leadership position in regional initiatives, including ones that exclude its security patron, the US.”⁸³ However, Japan has some economic issues in maintaining its economic strength. Some of the challenges were the recovery from the collapse of the “bubble economy,” 1986 to 1991, multiple recessions in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the global financial crisis of 2007–8, and the economic impact of the earthquake and tsunami of 11 March 2011.

Another major challenge for Japan is dealing with population decline and aging. These will directly affect the country’s economic and strategic strength. An aging population is a tremendous burden on the working-age population.⁸⁴ With Japan’s low fertility rates, the ability to sustain its JSDF and a labor force is in jeopardy. Japan might overcome its demographic issues with immigration or an increased fertility rate. Japan’s fertility rate has experienced a continual decline, and the population is expected to shrink from 127 million to below 90 million by 2055.⁸⁵

The influence of Japan’s economy on its foreign policy has forced the government to solve the economic challenges, as well. Continued economic reforms are necessary to ensure that Japan can play the balancer role. As John Mearsheimer asserts, wealth underpins power, and wealth itself is a reliable indicator of latent power.⁸⁶ One can assume that if Japan desires to build its military forces and normalize, it has the economic capacity to do so. The number of US military bases in Japan and Okinawa provide security for Japan. This security umbrella could be a limiting factor in Japan’s building a powerful military. However, Japan enjoys a free ride with security provided by the United States and can focus its financial expenditures on other national interests.

Mearsheimer states, “The US preferred to keep Japan at bay, even though Japan was about as wealthy as the Soviet Union by the mid-1980s if not sooner. Indeed, the available evidence indicates that Japan had a larger GNP than the Soviet Union’s by 1987. . . . So although all great powers are wealthy states, not all wealthy states are great powers.”⁸⁷ This is a probable reason for Japan’s reliance on “checkbook diplomacy.” James Llewelyn states, “At the elite level there was recognition that the US had effectively taken control of Japan’s external security while their responsibilities tended towards maintaining internal domestic security. . . . Security was closely associated with domestic

stability and economic prosperity. . . . Conceptualizing security along economic lines soon manifested itself in Japan's economic diplomacy."⁸⁸

As long as the US security umbrella remains in place, economic diplomacy will dominate Japan's foreign policy. In January 2011, the minister of foreign affairs, Seiji Maehara, gave a foreign policy speech to the 177th session of the Diet in which he propounded his four pillars of economic diplomacy. These include free trade; long-term and stable supplies of resources, energy, and food; promotion of international infrastructure systems; and Japan's tourism orientation.⁸⁹ Japan has used its economic great power status in the form of official development assistance (ODA) to boost stability in the region and globally.

Japan responded to the criticism of the lack of "skin in the game" in crises by sending ODA instead. Japan's aid program has roots all the way back to the 1950s. Japan assisted Burma, the Philippines, and Indonesia with monetary aid to compensate for damages in World War II. James Llewelyn explained that "Following the 1973 oil shock Japanese quickly sent a \$3 billion aid package to the Middle East, Iraq and Iran receiving \$1 billion each. Overall financial aid to the region jumped from 1.4 percent in 1973 to 24.5 percent by 1977."⁹⁰ In this way, Japan sought to ensure access to oil resources. Instead of sending minesweepers, a military action contrary to Japanese pacifism, Japan sent economic aid in support of the Gulf War.⁹¹

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are recent ODA actions. Official development assistance is the primary tool for building bonds, partnerships, and alliances and is a vital part of Japan's security policy.⁹² Ironically, Japan led the world in this respect in the early 2000s. It has since dropped in overall rank trying to recover from recession, the global financial crisis, and the earthquake in 2011. Because of its overall rank then and now, Japan remains among other great powers who wield economic influence, both in their RSCs and globally.⁹³

Japan has been more capable of responding directly and coherently to economic crises rather than military ones. Japan has restricted itself to "spending strategies" such as ODA.⁹⁴ This requires Japan always to ensure that stability and peace are paramount in the region. The majority of Japan's ODA has gone to Asia because economic aid is a central factor in regional stability, and it is acceptable to the Japanese people. According to Bert Edström, Japan's ODA program always heavily emphasized economic infrastructure: roads, railways, harbors, airports, power plants, and other infrastructure necessary for economic development.⁹⁵ Alliance partners will continue to expect Japan to do more than just throw money at problems.

While economic tools can be quite effective in a stable environment, they are less so in times of war and conflict.⁹⁶

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Chapter 4

A Nuclear Republic Maintaining the Asia Balance Using India

India is the world's largest democracy, and one of its fastest-growing economies. The country is celebrated for its educated professional class, its urban-based prosperity, and its Bollywood-fueled cultural influence abroad. While parts of the country bask in the glow of newfound affluence, others continue to toil in the gloom of abject poverty. This other side of India is also riven by violence and unrest, which increasingly targets the government. Meanwhile, even as India takes on the trappings of a global power, it remains deeply concerned about security developments beyond its borders. Lurking beneath India's recent triumphs are internal and external security challenges that may well intensify in the years ahead.

—Michael Kugelman

India seeks to remain autonomous from the United States; however, it also faces hard choices like America. How does India assure its security and protect its national interests against a rising China? India is the largest democracy in the world, with a population of 1.21 billion, and it is South Asia's most powerful state.¹ India also has one of the fastest growing economies in the world. According to Michael Kugelman, a 2010 joint study by the US National Intelligence Council and the European Union declared it the world's third-most-powerful nation.² However, the internal issues India faces will have a profound influence on how India decides to resolve its external security dilemmas. Therefore, this chapter, unlike the preceding chapter, has a greater focus on India's domestic issues to show how these issues influence India's foreign policy, military capabilities, and economic capacity. Dr. Amit Gupta summarizes Indian foreign policy: neutralize Pakistan, gain respect from China, have closer ties with the United States yet not appear to be a puppet, and continue the military relationship with Russia.³

Background

After India gained its independence from the United Kingdom in 1947 and became a republic in 1950, the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty has influenced its do-

mestic politics and its outlook from the 1950s to the 1980s. Rohan Mukherjee and David M. Malone state, “India’s journey from 1947 to the present day, in terms of both foreign policy and domestic politics, can be seen as a transition from idealism under Nehru, through a period of ‘hard realism’ (or *realpolitik*) lasting roughly from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s (coinciding with the dominance of the Indian political scene by Indira Gandhi), to economically driven pragmatism today.”⁴

The first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, worked to fix domestic issues while following the path of nonalignment in the face of the bipolar order of the Cold War. He argued that India would have to “plow a lonely furrow.”⁵ Nehru believed that India had the right to be a prominent actor in international affairs and though a poor country it must think of itself as a great one.⁶ These concepts still define India’s foreign policy under Manmohan Singh, the current prime minister. Nehru also pushed for global disarmament and the reduction of tensions between the great powers. Despite this liberal outlook, Nehru remained a pragmatic and hard-core realist concerning Indian regional patterns of behavior. Very little information about foreign affairs flows to the public, minimizing government accountability and transparency of government decisions. This lack of accountability and transparency are still concerns in contemporary Indian governmental politics. The lack of transparency and nearly dynastic government led to corruption and other serious political issues. India’s actions conform to Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow’s model I, the rational actor model, which holds that decisions made by a unified state are rational and value-maximizing—an excellent explanation of the Indian leadership.⁷ Between Nehru’s death and Indira Gandhi’s ascension, India suffered from serious economic and social problems. Nehru’s daughter, Indira Gandhi, came into power in 1966, and her tenure only increased an already fractious polity. According to Gupta, Mrs. Gandhi’s government achieved noteworthy triumphs but also led India into economic stagnation; its socialistic practices weakened the economy and encouraged corruption.⁸

Governmental corruption remains a serious problem. Implementation of reforms has been made more difficult within Indian culture and institutions largely by the continued political dominance of the Nehru–Gandhi family. Corruption of local, regional, and national government officials leads to harassment and coercion of ordinary Indians over access to basic essentials of life. The recent fraud in the sale of 2G-cell-phonespectrum is cited as an example of this where \$31 billion in public funds were lost. The pervasiveness and levels of public corruption in India deeply undermine public confidence and deter outside investment in India.⁹ In 2011, a highly publicized hunger

strike led by Anna Hazare forced the government to agree to an anticorruption supervisory body.¹⁰ However, the planned bill followed the path of most reforms in the Indian government—it was blocked. These issues are a small representation of the corruption that happens on a daily basis in India at the expense of its people.

There is also a demographic chasm between India's aged leading politicians and the young majority of the country.¹¹ India's young generation has a globalized outlook while the old are cautious in the exercise of military power and have a limited worldview.¹² India's diverse and burgeoning population also affects its ability to achieve great power status and its ability to balance effectively against China. While a large population can build a large standing army, it is detrimental when the population is poor and uneducated, and there is a lack of critical infrastructure and finances. To put India's population problems into perspective, in 1968 S. Chandrasekhar stated, "With only 2.4 percent of the world's total land area, India has to support 14 percent of the world's total population. Ironically, a baby is born every second and a half, and there are 21 million births a year. Some 8 million persons die every year. Thus India adds 13 million people—Australia's present population—to its existing population every year."¹³ According to *Jane's Sentinel*, the population growth rate was approximately 1.4 percent between 2005 and 2010, and India's population is expected to be more than 1.6 billion in 2050.¹⁴ These astronomical numbers will adversely affect individual health and medical care, limiting the ability to sustain productive citizens, a capable military, and a stable economy.

The government expenditures on health services average around 1.2 percent of gross domestic product, one of the lowest proportions in the world.¹⁵ India's wealthiest citizens privately obtain most of their health care. Without government assistance, most Indians cannot afford the basic health and medical care they need. Many Indians go into debt attempting to gain access to health care. The majority of the population lives below the poverty line, and many of India's children under the age of five suffer from malnutrition. The mortality rate for children less than five years old is 66 for every 1,000 births. Half of those deaths result from malnutrition, which causes an estimated 2,400 child deaths every day in India.¹⁶

Environmental issues also will need to be overcome if India is to have influence outside its borders. India faces environmental challenges, including deforestation, desertification, soil erosion, overgrazing, air pollution, water pollution, poor sanitation, and resource shortages along with its growing population.¹⁷ Michael Klare states, "Although the planet is brimming with salt water—which covers about 70 percent of the earth's surface—the global

supply of fresh water is relatively limited. Less than three percent of the world's total water supply is fresh water. . . . As a result, less than one percent of the world's freshwater supply—or about 0.01 percent of all water on earth—is accessible to the human population.¹⁸ Nearly three-fourths of India's population lives in water-stressed areas within the country.¹⁹ Access to water is also essential for irrigating crops—a vital source of Indian livelihood. In 2010 agriculture accounted for almost 85 percent of the total water consumption. Industry and energy consumed 9 percent, while people only consumed 6 percent.²⁰

With limited amounts of usable water and an enormous population, India will seek to securitize this precious resource in the future. The *Indian Infrastructure Report, 2011* concluded that water will increasingly dominate domestic politics and international relations, and it may become critical to political, social, and economic stability.²¹ Many nations define resource security as a primary objective. India shares borders with Pakistan and China, and competition may lead to potential conflict. Already the Indus River basin water rights have been a contention between India and Pakistan and remain a potential flashpoint. Water issues will not be confined to the borders of India. Those issues will likely spill over into India's patterns of behavior, possibly redefining military missions and affecting India's economic capacity in unforeseen ways.

India's Regional Patterns of Behavior

The South Asian RSC is an ideal model for regional security dynamics. It consists of a variety of nations that vary in their global standing. China is a great power that has tremendous external influence and continues to ascend as a potential hegemon into the South Asian RSC. Pakistan is a nuclear state that has an extensive history of tensions and conflict with India. India has aspirations to transition from a regional power to one of the great powers. Buzan and Wæver explain, "South Asia retained its status as an independent RSC, but remained tied into the China-centered Asian super complex. India has inched its way towards great power standing, creating a complex centered on itself, but it has not yet succeeded in breaking the bipolar pattern with Pakistan in South Asia."²²

If India can overcome its domestic challenges, it would have the ability to drive the security dynamics within and beyond the region. According to Rohan Mukherjee and David M. Malone, six of India's neighbors rank in the top-25 dysfunctional states, in the world as tabulated by the *Failed States Index*

of the Fund for Peace.²³ India views the regional dynamics in terms of “contested dominance” because it seeks to dominate the region through an increase in its economic prowess, but Pakistan and China will contest this.²⁴

The South Asian RSC prior to the Cold War was a standard complex. Its structure was standard because it was a bipolar one rooted in mutual securitizations between India and Pakistan.²⁵ Weak states, such as Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives, and Bhutan, make up the rest of the RSC. Clearly, India has been able to dominate the region, but Pakistan has always been able to check India, especially with the development of nuclear capabilities. Furthermore, ethnic and religious differences have crossed national borders, fuelling strong interplay between domestic and regional security dynamics.²⁶ Since the end of the Cold War, it appears the RSC seems to have been changing into one where India is the dominant power, breaking the traditional bipolarity with Pakistan.

Buzan and Wæver summarize, “The case for transformation can almost be interpreted as a kind of continuity, same as those sketched during the Cold War: 1) internal transformation caused by the decay of the regional bipolar power structure; and 2) external transformation caused by the intensification of India’s rivalry with China.”²⁷

This does not suggest that Pakistan will desecuritize India’s foreign policies and its military activities, but a shift has occurred despite the nuclear parity. A few statistics bear this fact out:

- India’s population is seven times, and its land area is four times that of Pakistan;
- India’s gross national product (GNP) is more than six times that of Pakistan, but India’s GNP per capita is still only two-thirds that of Pakistan; and
- India’s military expenditure is well over three times Pakistan’s, and the former’s military manpower is twice as great.²⁸

This has failed to translate into geostrategic advantage against Pakistan. Externally, China is the new benchmark for India’s reach to gain great power status. India proclaims to the world that it now has a greater responsibility and obligation with its new increased power, but India remains focused on Pakistan. Neither China nor the rest of the world has acknowledged India’s claims.²⁹

India and Pakistan

Continuous conflict has plagued India and Pakistan since independence. There have been five Indo-Pakistani wars:

- 1) the first over the status of Kashmir in 948,
- 2) a second dispute over Kashmir the same year,
- 3) a conflict over the Rann of Kutch, Kashmir, in 1965,
- 4) another coinciding with the division of Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh, 1971–72, and
- 5) the latest when Pakistani forces and Kashmiri militants jointly invaded Indian-administered territory at Kargil in 1999.³⁰

This enduring conflict has evolved. Both have acquired nuclear weapons, were stressed by domestic terrorism, and have targeted the other's military forces.

India's great power aspirations cannot be realized unless India stabilizes its region. Amit Gupta's analysis of the situation suggests that the intensification of the regional security dynamics stems from competing models of nationalism, sectarian tensions, divergent political and economic paths, and the quest for riparian resources.³¹ It would be in India's and Pakistan's best interests to resolve their differences, but this will remain an elusive goal with their underlying enmity.

Differing religious and cultural ideologies form the basis and one of the causal links of conflict between India and Pakistan. These divergent views resulted in Hindus and Muslims realizing it was impossible for the two entities to survive within one sovereign place—the two nation theory.³² Pakistan hoped to be a moderate Muslim state while India sought to be a secular and democratic state. Pakistan's failed attempt at democracy has resulted in a series of military juntas and a civil war.³³ The 1971 Indo-Pakistani war culminated in East Pakistan seceding to form the new country of Bangladesh. This left India as the predominant power in the region and Pakistan further securitizing against India.

The engagement between India and Pakistan has continued to evolve since the 1971 war. Mukherjee and Malone contend, "Pakistan's nuclear tests of 1998, following those of India in the same year, established at least notional nuclear parity [and] promoted strategic stability of sorts in their volatile relationship."³⁴ However, it is naïve to think tensions ceased to exist. Once Pakistan gained a nuclear capability, this newfound asset was used to promote unrest in the Kashmir region. Likewise, India began to develop a large conventional force, threatening Pakistan just short of provoking a nuclear exchange.³⁵ Pakistan has used extremism as another political tool to protect its sovereignty. Amit Gupta contends there are several issues shaping Indian and Pakistani amity and enmity: the nuclear relationship, terrorism, Kashmir,

Pakistan's fear of an emergent India, the water issue, and the continuing role of India in Afghanistan.³⁶

Stability with Pakistan and within the region requires India to solve its water problems. Both countries rely on the Indus Basin. In 1948, the Indian state of Punjab stopped the water flow to Pakistan in a show of sovereignty.³⁷ While access to water remains a source of tension between both countries, it could also bring them to the negotiation table. According to Gupta, "What is unfortunate about the entire water dispute is that cooperation between the two countries, as envisaged in the second part of the Indus Water Treaty, is necessary for harnessing the water resources of the Indus to the fullest benefit of both countries."³⁸

India and the Indian Ocean

The Indian Ocean is the world's third largest body of water, and it serves Asia's largest economies as a vital lane of communication. According to *The Diplomat*, a current affairs magazine, the sea lanes in the Indian Ocean are considered among the most strategically important in the world.³⁹ Sergei DeSilva-Ranasinghe states in *The Journal of the Indian Ocean Region*, "More than 80 percent of the world's seaborne trade in oil transits through Indian Ocean choke points."⁴⁰ The Indian Ocean region (IOR) also possesses vast natural resources, two-thirds of the world's proven reserves of crude oil, and a third of the natural gas.⁴¹ India wants to position itself as the dominant Indian Ocean power through security relationships with key littoral states such as Singapore, Mauritius, and Oman.⁴²

These are all reasons for India to conduct securitization of the IOR, but India has shown some reluctance to exercise actions that transition securitizing moves into securitization. In June 2012, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta gave a speech announcing India's importance to the US Indian Ocean strategy. He focused on the new twenty-first-century rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region and made it clear that defense cooperation with India is a linchpin in this strategy.⁴³

Gupta explains that India is not ready to be anybody's linchpin for two factors: adverse popular reaction to Indian expeditionary actions and a real belief in creating multilateral task forces to create order in the region.⁴⁴ India ostracizes the United States but seeks relationships with other states in the region. This is not necessarily correct, nor is it incorrect either. It is the basis of India's pragmatic approach and its self-reliant ideology—viewed from Allison and Graham's model, it all makes sense. Recently, the Indian external affairs minister, Salman Khurshid, cited the geostrategic importance of the

IOR. He touted the 20-nation Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation as enhancing individual and collective capacities to deal with the challenges of their common maritime domain.⁴⁵

Interestingly, Buzan and Wæver put it this way: “The prospect of economic growth and rising military capability may put India in a position where both China and the United States have to take it seriously. India could be an ally or an opponent of both. If China and the United States begin to compete for India’s favor, then it will be well on its way to achieving great power status.”⁴⁶ The Indian Ocean is an arena where both China and the United States may court India’s favor. This is important for a US offshore balancing strategy considering the maritime importance described in the first chapter and illustrated by the Pax Britannica case study. The security dynamics of the IOR will also extend beyond the region and affect India’s global patterns of behavior.

India’s Global Patterns of Behavior

India faces a number of complex external challenges that will affect its global patterns of behavior. According to Nick Norling, India has strived to maintain strategic autonomy in its foreign policy while seeking to preserve a large role for itself in international affairs.⁴⁷ The issue is whether India can overcome its many domestic problems while being a great power with China balancing against its every move. India’s biggest challenge is to develop the political will and capability to be a major stakeholder in the international system.⁴⁸ So far, progress has been poor, and India has only achieved the lower status of a middling power.

India is attempting to engage and interact on behalf of the weaker states within its region. Recently, the Indian prime minister, Manmohan Singh, exemplified this concept when he addressed the Indian Combined Commander’s Conference: “We cannot hope to develop and grow peacefully while our immediate neighbors struggle with poverty, strife and underdevelopment. Our external policies will, therefore, emphasize friendly and cooperative ties with our neighbors. We will also focus on establishing greater connectivity in South Asia and our expanded neighborhood to promote the movement of goods, services, investment and technology so that we can act as a motor of growth in this region. The Services are an inalienable arm of our diplomatic outreach, and I expect them to play a full and effective role in this national endeavor.”⁴⁹ India is beginning to understand that aspiring to be a great power and acting as a great power are not the same.

India and China

The relationship between India and China will have the greatest effect on India's foreign policy in the future. Gupta states, "The relationship with China has the ability to either lead the two countries into an era of great prosperity or, if poorly managed, aggravate tensions and lead to an arms race between the two largest countries in the world."⁵⁰ While India and China cooperate in trade negotiations, climate change, and a few other areas of congruence, they are both competing for wealth, energy, and influence as emerging powers.⁵¹

The pattern of amity/enmity has caused India to conduct securitization and desecuritization concerning China's foreign policy and military activities. Harsh V. Pant states, "Despite the rhetoric of cooperation, distrust of China is growing in India at an alarming rate."⁵² The differences in power distribution make for an interesting security dynamic. India's struggle is to be accepted as a powerful state within its own RSC while being a lesser power than China.⁵³ Geography is another source of tension and conflict on the global level.

The Sino-Indian border conflict has existed since 1914. India inherited its borders from the British, but the Nationalist Chinese and Tibetans rejected these at a 1914 conference.⁵⁴ Many attempts to settle the borders have failed, but matters reached another level of complexity in 1950 after China annexed Tibet and the Dalai Lama fled to India.⁵⁵ The Jammu and Kashmir province is the specific area of dispute, an area claimed by both India and China. India and China fought a border war over Aksai Chin in October 1962. The Chinese invaded and captured most of what was then the Indian Northeast Frontier Agency, the current Arunachal Pradesh.⁵⁶ India's humiliating loss in this war still influences New Delhi's views and interactions with Beijing.

Recently, China has made additional claims on Arunachal Pradesh, and there have been frequent incursions into the Indian state of Sikkim, causing the old tensions to resurface. India interprets China's sea-based and land-based actions as expansionist and intended as encirclement, a string of pearls strategy. Jeff Smith, a Kraemer Strategy Fellow at the American Foreign Policy Council states, "What riles India most is China's incursion into its backyard and the belief China is surrounding the subcontinent with its 'string of pearls'—Chinese 'investments' in naval bases, commercial ports and listening posts along the southern coast of Asia. There are port facilities in Bangladesh and radar and refueling stations in Burma. Thailand, Cambodia, and Pakistan now all host Chinese 'projects'; China's crown jewel is the Pakistani deep water port of Gwadar."⁵⁷ Each of these Chinese actions represents a pearl that India views as a link in a chain of the Chinese maritime presence to strangle India's regional and global interests. The relationship the Chinese foster with

Pakistan is another outstanding irritant and a growing bilateral divergence with China.

India is constantly adjusting its strategic calculus based on the “all-weather” friendship between China and Pakistan. The relationship only exacerbates the Indian security dilemma. It makes India’s regional and global security moves much riskier, as India is bracketed by a great power, China, on one side and a nuclear-capable Pakistan on the other. One of the biggest concerns for India is that China has provided Pakistan technology and designs for a workable nuclear weapon and missiles for delivery systems.⁵⁸ This was a balancing move to keep India focusing on Pakistan and limiting India’s range of action outside the South Asian region. India is responding to China’s rise and its balancing actions by mixing internal consolidation and external partnerships with countries like the United States and Australia.⁵⁹ India cannot deal with the China challenge at the military-strategic level right now. Amit Gupta suggests, “Such a challenge would require a massive investment in its conventional and nuclear capabilities, which the Indian government, with its commitment to national development, would not be able to fulfill.”⁶⁰ India’s best source of balancing China in the near term has been its partnership with the United States.

India and the United States

India and the United States share a common security interest—containing China. This sustains the basis of their relationship, but, unlike Japan, India desires to remain autonomous from the United States. Residual Cold War suspicions still color the attitudes in both India and the United States, complicating bilateral agreements—especially those of a political and military nature. Gupta believes a future relationship between the United States and India holds promise. “The post-Cold War international system has seen the rise of China as a near-peer competitor to the United States, and in an effort to engage in offshore balancing in Asia, the United States has sought to enlist India as a potential ally.”⁶¹

The United States–India relationship changed after the Cold War. A fiscally strained India sought military assistance from the Americans. This new arrangement was manifested in transfers of conventional weapons production technologies to India.⁶² This is significant in preparing India to be an effective balancer against the Chinese. Robert Blackwill, the former US ambassador to India, explains the importance of a capable Indian military force: “Of course we should sell advanced weaponry to India. The million-man Indian army actually fights, unlike the post-modern militaries of many of

our European allies. Given the strategic challenges ahead, the US should want the Indian armed forces to be equipped with the best weapons systems, and that often means buying American. To make this happen, the US must become a reliable long-term supplier through co-production and licensed-manufacture arrangements and end its previous inclination to interrupt defense supplies to India in a crisis.⁶³ This clearly marks a change from non-existent cooperation to trade in high technology, civilian space research, and nuclear energy cooperation.⁶⁴ The strongest ties and the area with the greatest potential to influence China's containment are United States–India military-to-military relations.

An offshore balancing strategy gains its comparative advantage from naval and airpower, and joint naval and air exercises are excellent precursors to the implementation of the strategy within the IOR. Indian caution in the extraregional use of the military and in aligning too closely with the United States impairs joint exercises and interoperability.⁶⁵ Another part of Prime Minister Singh's recent address to the Combined Commander's Conference focused on jointness, training, doctrines and strategies, integrated weaponry, and decision-making structures. These all require indigenous Indian research, development, and production capabilities.⁶⁶ The United States can assist India in all these areas, allow them to maintain their autonomy, and thereby create the security environment in the region that is mutually beneficial. Despite the arms trade and transfer of technology, a likely way forward for India is to purchase systems from Europe and the United States, while maintaining its long-standing military purchasing ties with Russia.⁶⁷

A Nuclear India

India's development of nuclear weapons began in 1947. In 1974, India conducted its first nuclear test—the Smiling Buddha. The culminating event was India's first nuclear fusion test on 11 May 1998.⁶⁸ Why did India seek a nuclear capability other than to attain national prestige? According to a 1996 Defense of Department report, the main reason was to redress threats to its security, namely China and Pakistan, who possess nuclear capabilities as well.⁶⁹

Pakistan announced its nuclear capability on 28 May 1998, two weeks following India's announcement. These actions increased the securitization by both countries against each other's nuclear arsenals. India can be viewed as a nuclear third-tier state. Gupta defines a nuclear third-tier state as having “forces that are numerically small, not technologically advanced, limited in range to their regions, and” . . . [without] “a deterrent capability against first

or second tier nuclear states.”⁷⁰ From this definition, the South Asian strategic subsystem defines India’s nuclear force as one order built for the two-class system of nuclear powers created through the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968.⁷¹

India conducts nuclear balancing on China and is balanced by Pakistan. After declaring themselves nuclear-weapons states, India and Pakistan entered into a minimum deterrence posture concerning one another.⁷² The nuclear dynamic between the two states is scary considering their past conflicts and especially since Pakistan could be on the verge of becoming a failed state. A shooting war between India and Pakistan easily could escalate into a nuclear exchange.

Prestige is the currency of great powers. A state attains a level of great-power respect, regardless of the size of its nuclear arsenal, by possessing a nuclear-weapons capability. Although the focus of India’s nuclear power is regional, it brings a certain level of national prestige and fits within the context of India’s desire to be recognized as a great power. Karsten Frey highlights this in *India’s Nuclear Bomb and National Security*. Nuclear capability is not seen so much as elements of military power but rather as elements of political power.⁷³ Despite India’s intention of not using nuclear weapons, the development of the capability followed a rational global foreign policy model.⁷⁴

Ultimately, nuclear weapons for India were less about defending a status quo than demonstrating military power. They are political tools that could make dynamic and favorable changes in the international system—acceptance of India as a great power or at least an emerging power.⁷⁵ India has not developed enough of a nuclear deterrent to make a first-tier state like China take it seriously.⁷⁶ India also lacks a submarine-launched second-strike capability. Gupta states, “The 2006 US-India nuclear agreement has made India both a de jure and a de facto nuclear power.”⁷⁷ This kind of great power endorsement that India’s needs if it is to serve as an effective and credible balancer. Outside of nuclear weapons, India’s military capabilities represent another component of its defense capabilities. India’s geostrategic location suggests that its military is likely to play a crucial part in India’s role as an effective balancer.

India’s Military Capability

India currently has the fourth-largest military in the world.⁷⁸ India’s strategic forces consist of an army, navy, air, and paramilitary forces. India’s total armed forces number 1,325,000 and 1,155,000 in reserve forces.⁷⁹ India has

deployed about 20 percent of its army on internal security duties, which has affected India's ability to project power externally. Other states in the international system have taken issue with India's inability to influence beyond its borders because India has made claims it is an emerging power and should be treated as such. Traditionally, India has focused on the primacy of land power because its two biggest threats have been Pakistan and China.

India is modernizing its forces to acquire the full spectrum capabilities as an effective land and naval power, especially its naval capabilities. In 2012, Forecast International published a report saying, "The Indian armed forces are essentially old-fashioned, in conceptual terms, and they have not changed since the 1960s. The problem is that the sheer size of the military, at least 1.2 million men under arms, absorbs most of the resources needed for modernization."⁸⁰ Simply put, India substitutes numbers for sophistication but hopes to change this incrementally. Ashley Tellis suggests, "The defense transformation strategies followed by different Asian states reflect their specific threat environments, economic performance, security dilemmas, and national regime and state structures. This change has the potential to alter the region's strategic balance and poses significant opportunities and challenges for both the United States and Asia."⁸¹ India's military modernization has also meant the diversification of the sources of its arms procurement. The traditional reliance on Russia has given way to increased trade with Israel, France, and, in particular, the United States.⁸² Russia remains India's primary military supplier. India is looking to become self-sufficient in arms production but has not been able to end its reliance on arms importation yet. Although procurement and modernization have taken place on a smaller scale than the naval and air forces, the Indian Army remains the most important branch of the military.

The Indian Army

India's conflicts have taken place primarily on land and the Indian Army is the largest branch of its armed forces and the third largest army in the world. Defeated in 1962 by the Chinese, the Indian Army redeemed itself with successes in two wars with Pakistan in 1965 and 1971. The Indian Army consists of 1,129,900 active duty personnel and a reserve force of 960,000 personnel.⁸³ The primary role and function of the Indian Army is to preserve national interests and safeguard sovereignty, territorial integrity, and unity of India against any external threats by deterrence or by waging war.⁸⁴ The secondary role of the army is countering and coping with internal unrest and disturbances.

Even though India has one of the world's largest armies, its equipment is antiquated, needing updates to cope with the likely threats in the current geo-strategic environment. According to Forecast International, the Indian Army has received \$14.6 billion for current expenditures and \$3.5 billion for capital expenditures, a total of \$18.1 billion. This represents about 50 percent of the total defense budget.⁸⁵ It is somewhat disturbing that half of the defense budget goes toward the branch of military capable of only low-tech counterinsurgency conflict. Because India remains focused on Pakistan, improving the Indian army's capabilities in terms of the weight of kit, firepower, and communications is critical. The fact that the army consumes 50 percent of the budget does not make sense considering India's great power ambitions.

Although India has an exceptionally large conventional force, this has failed to translate it into an effective exercise of power in the face of incessant Pakistani provocation.⁸⁶ Although this frustrates the leadership in New Delhi, they continue to fund upgrades to the army hoping to increase India's prestige.

India has invested \$800 million in new anti-tank guided missiles, light armored vehicles, new rifles, and secure tactical and communications equipment.⁸⁷ The challenge has become balancing army modernization between the slow and agonizing low-intensity conflict with Pakistan and a potential conventional war with China. Then there is India's domestic security to consider, as well.

India lacks the numbers of police and paramilitary personnel required to deal with domestic security issues, largely created by Pakistan. The government also frequently relies on the army to cope with these issues, diminishing the ability to prepare for conventional warfare.⁸⁸ As John Gill states, "China . . . plays a host of contradictory roles: economic competitor, potential military threat, increasingly important trading partner, occasional diplomatic collaborator, and ally and military supplier of rival Pakistan."⁸⁹ This shows the conundrum the Indian Army faces in modernizing for the correct threat while developing to become a balancer in the region. Undoubtedly, the Indian Army will continue to be sourced many crucial resources, but another crucial military branch that will assist in making India an effective balancer is the Indian Navy.

The Indian Navy

Despite the emphasis on land-based conflict, India's aspirations for great power status require developing and sustaining a significant naval capability. Unless India meets this need within the next two decades, it will likely be unable to protect its economic interests and energy access or to assert its

primacy in the Indian Ocean. Bethany Danyluk recounted how “the Indian Navy recently proved the country was a capable partner that could successfully undertake complex humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations in the region. In 2006, India evacuated more than 2,000 Indian, Sri Lankan, and Nepalese nationals from Lebanon during the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah, again demonstrating its ability to respond quickly and effectively.”⁹⁰ Indeed, this noncombatant evacuation was impressive and demonstrated India’s potential beyond its region, but to believe India is ready to sustain and execute these operations at any time is premature. Norling maintains that “history also suggests that a country without a strong navy is unlikely to become a great power.”⁹¹

The navy consists of 58,350 active duty personnel, 7,000 in the naval aviation contingent and 1,200 in the Marine Commando Force.⁹² The Indian Navy has aircraft carriers, one older, inoperable Russian model and two newer ones launched in 2012 and 2014. There are also destroyers; frigates; corvettes; amphibious warfare ships, including an amphibious transport dock; mine warfare ships; and submarines.⁹³ Clearly, it is investing in the classes of warships that will provide it the ability to project power. The Navy has commands located in Mumbai, Vishakhapatnam, and Kochi.⁹⁴ In March 1992, India established its largest naval air station in the southeastern Coromandel Coast, potentially one of the biggest in South Asia.⁹⁵

The roles of the Indian Navy that contribute most to India’s regional balancing are the application of maritime power in both offensive operations against enemy forces, territory, and trade and defensive operations protecting friendly forces, territory, and trade.⁹⁶ The Indian Navy has played an increasingly critical role within the region. Access to energy is essential to the burgeoning population, and the Navy protects the vital access to oil. Together with naval power projection capabilities, the Indian Navy has become critical to New Delhi’s diplomacy.⁹⁷

The Indian Navy also can operate and influence outside the South Asian region, as well. Gupta posits, “The Indian Navy has been the lead service in promoting Indian security interests throughout the Indian Ocean region and the service sees its area of responsibility stretching in the West to the Gulf and as far south as South Africa. In the East, the Navy recognizes that its area of operations extends to the Strait of Malacca, but not further South than that.”⁹⁸

With the advent of globalization and India’s desires for great power status, the lessons of Alfred Thayer Mahan are resonating in New Delhi. The Indian Navy is one of the largest navies in the world. India has allocated \$40 billion for military modernization, with a majority of those funds devoted to the Navy. Plans have been laid for the addition of aircraft carriers and nuclear-

powered submarines to the arsenal, clear steps toward India's achieving great power status.⁹⁹ As Arun Prakash explains, "International trade, the *sine qua non* of globalization, is carried overwhelmingly by sea, as is energy, the life-blood of industry. Ensuring stability at sea, as well as the safety of shipping lanes in the face of multifarious threats, has assumed prime importance and brought maritime forces into sharp focus."¹⁰⁰ Mahan's theory that the wealth of the nation comes from the command of the sea has drawn India closer to developing a blue-water navy, building deeper economic ties to the Indian Ocean region, and emphasizing maritime security.¹⁰¹ The development and acquisition of aircraft carriers and naval modernization are parts of India's strategy to realize a blue-water navy.

India can effectively balance against China in the region to increase its naval activities. Securing the sea lines of communication in the IOR is beneficial for both India and the United States. It shifts the burden from the US Navy while preventing China's unimpeded access to the natural resources in the region. If China continues to build its string of pearls, deep-water ports encircling India, India will need a blue-water navy with its multiple Madagascar and Mauritius listening posts to counter China's expansionism from Africa to Southeast Asia.¹⁰²

The Indian Air Force

The Indian Air Force has been transformed from a strictly tactical force to one with an extended reach. The primary function of the Indian Air Force is to defend the nation and its airspace in coordination with the army and navy. The secondary purpose is to provide assistance during natural calamities and domestic disturbances.¹⁰³ The Indian Air Force consists of a large active duty contingent with an array of aircraft, light bombers, fighter/attack aircraft, interceptors, reconnaissance aircraft, and various trainers, transports, and helicopters.¹⁰⁴ India possesses the fifth largest air force in the world, but its aging aircraft are in need of upgrade and modernization.

India still relies on Russia for the majority of its military aviation-related imports. Consequently India will acquire upgrades and technology to modernize its aging MiG-29 platforms from Russia. The Indian Air Force plans to take 166 single and 48 two-seat variants the Russian Sukhoi T-50, fifth-generation fighter.¹⁰⁵ The purchase of these mobility aircraft is a step toward a closer relationship with the United States. More importantly, it provides a power projection capability that India can use to complement the other aviation platforms and balance against China throughout the region. The Indian Air Force focuses on not only Pakistan but China as well. India

recently acquired 40 Su-30MKIs—one of the most advanced multirole fighters in the world.¹⁰⁶ India's Air Force is the branch of the armed forces most in need of upgrade and modernization. Until the air force accomplishes its modernization, it will remain focused on homeland defense in cooperation with the other military branches. It will continue broadening its engagements outside the region by assisting in limited United Nations operations.

The Indian Air Force is looking to further its modernization with the acquisition of air-to-air tankers, early warning and control systems, sophisticated air-to-air missiles, and precision-guided munitions. All of this sets the stage for a comprehensive doctrinal review and close integration with the army, but the Indian Air Force seems to remain focused on its traditional mission sets.¹⁰⁷ Issues still abound in homeland defense as Gill suggests that differences between the army and air force over the merits of close-air-support doctrine reduce joint effectiveness and joint operations and have seldom been accomplished smoothly. Air force–navy cooperation has also been problematic.¹⁰⁸ Clearly, India is gradually improving the capabilities of its armed forces, but domestic issues and the problem of integration of national security policies into a focused military strategy may be significant hurdles to overcome. India's military capability is just one of the tools New Delhi has at its disposal of power—it also has a growing economic capacity.

India's Economic Capacity

Indeed, India is an emerging economic power. In recent years, India has achieved astounding levels of economic growth—an average of 8.8 percent between 2002 and 2008.¹⁰⁹ India did withstand the global economic crisis with a growth of 8.5 percent in 2010–2011, but it anticipates slower growth as uncertainties influence the market.¹¹⁰ As Niklas Norling points out, “with a GDP per capita income barely above \$1000, India ranks among the 50 poorest countries in the world.”¹¹¹ Economically, India needs to continue policies encouraging market reforms while continuing to innovate, develop, and compete in the global economic system.¹¹² The 2011 economic downturn will worsen if India is unable to maintain growth.

Norling states, “Maintaining high growth rates is the essential precondition determining whether India can assert a notable presence beyond its borders and preserve social stability.”¹¹³ Despite this, India is one of the major economies of the G-20 and a member of the emerging Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) group.

India has transitioned from an autarkical economy to one that is a more open-market-driven economy. The former prime minister Narasimha Rao implemented progressive economic changes in the 1990s by liberalizing investment conditions, the capital market, and the exchange rate.¹¹⁴ Some of the problems with major economic changes have been their impacts on the labor force. The labor force suffered from skewed salary growth rates between the public and private sectors. According to Kiesow and Norling, “Employees in the public sector, representing a large share of the labor force, got relatively low salary increases in comparison to many of those who were employed in the private sector. The discrepancies created jealousy and strains on the labor market.”¹¹⁵

The public and private sectors were affected and so were the poorer members of the society and the growing middle class. India’s poverty rates directly affect national productivity, thereby decreasing the distance between the poor and middle class. Currently relatively little is spent on health care in India with poor health outcomes that only exacerbate poverty.¹¹⁶ The disparity between social classes and the second- and third-order effects of this gap complicate Indian domestic politics. This combined with the inherent corruption in the government suggests that the way forward for India will be very challenging.

According to the “2012 Corruption Index”, produced by Transparency International, a global coalition against corruption, the poor are usually the victims of corruption. Because India’s poor population is extremely large, this translates to enormous human suffering. Poor families are extorted for access to the basic necessities such as medicine and clean drinking water. Basic services like education or health care fail, derailing the building of essential infrastructure.¹¹⁷

The “2012 Corruption Index” ranks India as 94th of 174 countries for corruption.¹¹⁸ The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development also states that the “public sector governance should be made more transparent and accountable by separating operational and regulatory functions in the provision of public services and by strengthening the anti-corruption agency through an independent appointment mechanism for its head.”¹¹⁹ A failure by the government to gain control of corruption will likely prevent India’s advance toward great power status, let alone the achievement of effective basic governance.

Economic diplomacy could be an innovative way for India to solve some of its domestic problems. Kishan Rana and Bipul Chatterjee define economic diplomacy as “a multi-hued activity, easy to describe in broad brushstrokes, but harder to pin down with precision. From the perspective of members of

diplomatic and commercial or trade services, and those that are the customers or users of these services, economic diplomacy is a plural set of practices, all aimed at advancing the home country's external economic interests."¹²⁰ Economic diplomacy is an additional foreign policy tool New Delhi should leverage to benefit the country

Mukherjee and Malone provide examples of India's economic diplomacy at work: "Thus India is currently engaged in promoting economic development in Africa, securing oil fields in Central Asia, promoting trade and nuclear cooperation with the US, receiving remittances from its 3.5 million workers in the Gulf and acting as (at times) Israel's biggest arms market."¹²¹ The India Development Initiative is drastically reducing the amount of aid it receives and represents another unconventional method of economic diplomacy. India also has written off the debts of some poor countries and has increased its aid to others.¹²²

Until India can develop a unifying military strategy and vision, economic diplomacy may be the quickest means to leadership outside the region, to escape the label of the leader of the Third World's fight against imperialism, and to attain great power status.¹²³ India looks to leverage its economic interests abroad, whether it is in exporting surplus wheat or pursuing energy security in regions of Africa, Latin America, and Canada.¹²⁴ Both of these unique economic approaches bode well for India's future success and interaction on the world stage.

India is making significant strides in the economic realm with a more open-market economy and gradual implementation of monetary reforms. However, India has many barriers to overcome to be an effective balancer in the region, considering its foreign policy outlook, dysfunction within its military, and its domestic issues.

Notes

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5. *Ibid.*
6. Gupta, *Global Security Watch—India*, 3.
7. Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, 18.
8. Gupta, *Global Security Watch—India*, 5.
9. *Ibid.*, 16.
10. *IHS Jane's Sentinel, South Asia*, 187.
11. Gupta, *Global Security Watch—India*, ix.
12. *Ibid.*

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15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*, 207.
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20. *Ibid.*
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23. Mukherjee and Malone, "India's Contemporary Security Challenges," 93.
24. *Ibid.*, 94.
25. Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, 104.
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Ibid.*, 116.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Ibid.*
30. Kiesow and Norling, *Rise of India*, 24.
31. Gupta, *Global Security Watch—India*, 37.
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Ibid.*, 39.
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36. *Ibid.*, 43.
37. *Ibid.*, 48.
38. *Ibid.*, 49.
39. DeSilva-Ranasinghe, "Why the Indian Ocean Matters."
40. *Ibid.*
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44. *Ibid.*
45. "India Emphasizes on Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean Region," *The Hindu*, 2 November 2012, sec. National News, <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-emphasises-on-maritime-security-in-indian-ocean-region/article4057934.ece>.
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51. Mukherjee and Malone, "India's Contemporary Security Challenges," 97.
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60. Gupta, *Global Security Watch—India*, 72.
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63. Blackwill, “The India Imperative,” 11.
64. Kiesow and Norling, *The Rise of India*, 110.
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71. Frey, *India’s Nuclear Bomb and National Security*, 13.
72. Ibid., 15.
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104. *Military Balance 2012*, 246.
105. *Ibid.*, 217.
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108. *Ibid.*, 245.
109. "India," *IHS Jane's Sentinel Country Risk Assessments*. 187.
110. *Ibid.*
111. Norling, *India and Its Neighbors Development Scenarios*, 7.
112. Gupta, *Global Security Watch—India*, vii.
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120. Rana and Chatterjee, *Economic Diplomacy*, 3.
121. Mukherjee and Malone, "India's Contemporary Security Challenges," 97.
122. "Government of India, "India's Economic Diplomacy."
123. Mukherjee and Malone, "India's Contemporary Security Challenges," 103.
124. Parul Chandra, "India Tries Economic Diplomacy?"

Chapter 5

The Balancer on the Pivot as a Way Forward

Although cloaked in the reassuring boilerplate about American military preeminence and global leadership, in reality the Obama administration's new Defense Strategic Guidance is the first step in the United States' adjustment to the end of the Pax Americana—the sixty-year period of dominance that began in 1945. As the Pentagon document says—without spelling out the long-term grand-strategic implications—the United States is facing “an inflection point.” In plain English, a profound power shift in international politics is taking place, which compels a rethinking of the US world role.

—Christopher Layne

The aim of this research was to answer two simple questions. What is offshore balancing, and what should the United States expect of a balancer in the Far East region? Regardless of whether the United States is in a graceful decline or the rest of the world is rising—the United States must make hard choices concerning its role in the international system. The selection of a grand strategy is crucial in that decision-making process. The adoption of an offshore balancing strategy may be the hard choice required by current fiscal constraints, a stagnant Congress, and more than 10 years of American combat abroad. Pres. Obama's strategic guidance is a basic framework that could be used toward adopting such a grand strategy. For the strategy to be effective, the public must accept reductions in spending and of interventions abroad. Otherwise these fiscal issues and interventions could become existential threats to the United States.

Background

What does offshore balancing offer, given the current geostrategic environment? Offshore balancing is a strategy of shifting burdens, not one of burden sharing. The baseline of the strategy is getting other states to do more for their own security rather than relying on the US security umbrella. This will mean conducting an orderly and phased withdrawal of the United States from the Asia-Pacific region.

Because the Asian security environment may change over time, maintaining basing rights with key allies is crucial for reintroducing ground forces

alongside allies and partners if they are incapable of balancing on their own. The United States could avoid messy situations and conflicts by relying on strategic partners for regional balancing, with America committing assistance if balancing fails and national interests become at risk. Another potential benefit would be the ability of the United States to stand on the sidelines while other powers exhaust themselves in security competitions.

Analytical Review of Case Studies

Britain in the nineteenth century and contemporary Japan and India were selected for study as balancers and potential balancers. Their relative capabilities in that regard were the objects of this study. Each case study examined three independent variables: patterns of behavior (foreign policy), military capability, and economic capacity.

Pax Britannica

In chapter 2, the historical example of Pax Britannica serves as the foundation of the research, illustrating the validity of an offshore balancing strategy. The Peace of Britain revealed how Britain maintained its security and increased its power after the Napoleonic Wars. Great Britain dealt with the dynamics of its security region through splendid isolation, an offshore balancing of the other great powers of the Concert of Europe established during the Congress of Vienna in 1815. The strategy maintained a status quo in Britain's favor for almost 100 years.

Throughout the Pax Britannica era, Britain was able to gather and sustain its enormous wealth, power, and security by maintaining command of the sea. During the Crimean War, Britain sent its navy abroad to balance against an expansionist Russia—a clear existential threat to its national interests. Britain maintained a small domestic ground force and used the Indian Army as a surrogate force to protect its interests abroad when they were at risk. Britain's naval strength also allowed it to manage and secure its informal empire that spread around the globe. Finally, Britain's economic capacity was the backbone of its dominance. Britain used its economic power to increase its military strength, coerce weaker states, and spread its liberal free-market economy and consequently came to dominate one-quarter of the globe.

Japan

Chapter 3 examines Japan as a potential balancer in the Asia-Pacific region. Japan's geostrategic situation determined its selection as a potential balancer of China. Japan is reemerging, reassessing its post-World War II pacifism, modernizing the military and employing it abroad, and employing economic diplomacy. Simply put, Japan is incrementally changing in all three of these independent variables, becoming a normal nation with the right to use force in its foreign policy and less reliant on the US security umbrella. Japan's regional security dynamics are complex. It faces a rising China, and there could be conflict over the Senkaku Islands. North Korea's unpredictable antics threaten Japan and the tension between the two could destabilize the region.

Japan's economic prestige is a key factor in its transition to a normal country. Checkbook diplomacy has typified Japanese foreign policy, but the Japanese economy stagnated beginning in the 1990s and was further weakened by the worldwide recession beginning in 2009 and the 2011 earthquake and tsunami. The declining and aging population of Japan does not help its economic progress. If Japan is going to be an effective balancer in the Asia-Pacific region, the Japanese economy must be revived to fund Japanese foreign policy initiatives and its military modernization.

India

India is a complex country and the most powerful state in the South Asian RSC. It has one of the fastest growing economies in the world, a very large conventional military, and a nuclear capability and has pursued pragmatism and independence in its foreign relations. For these reasons India was chosen as a case study. Despite India's strengths, many domestic problems prevent it from achieving its great power ambitions.

These problems include India's burgeoning population, poverty rates, health issues, water and environmental issues, and governmental corruption. The conflict with Pakistan limits the influence India can project beyond its borders. Since India and Pakistan have nuclear weapons, there remains a potential for them to destabilize the region and draw other states into the conflict.

The Indian Ocean region is of significant strategic concern because it is a vital line of communication for India's trade relations. The IOR also possesses vast natural resources, two-thirds of the world's proven reserves of crude oil, and one-third of the natural gas. China is India's greatest challenge outside the South Asian RSC. The interdependence between the two countries has created patterns of amity/enmity, causing India to alternately securitize and

desecuritize China. India's military is currently being modernized to assure full-spectrum operations capabilities.

The Indian armed forces' inability to cooperate fully and jointly has been a drawback. The Indian Navy is quickly increasing its relevancy within the IOR and beyond the South Asian RSC as well. India is an emerging economic power that has transitioned to an open-market-driven economy. However, India's many domestic problems will likely prevent it from realizing its great power ambitions and becoming an effective balancer of China.

Implications

Both Japan and India could serve as balancers in the Asia Pacific region. Neither of them is ready to do so at present without assistance from the United States. Both have significant hurdles to overcome before serving as effective balancers. However, China is not waiting for either Japan or India. Nor should the United States wait to leverage what each offers in offshore balancing. Therefore, this analysis concludes that the United States ought to choose Japan as the balancer and not India.

Japan has a legacy of great power status, and it does not have as many domestic issues that prevent it from making the transition into a normal country. While the rise of China is a threat to the United States, it is a much bigger threat to the countries in the region. Japan must convince its people that China's rise is indeed an existential threat. This credible threat will eventually change Japan's ideology, and that appears to be only a matter of time. The majority of the issues that it faces are ideological in nature. For example, Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution says Japan forswears the building of war potential, the use of violence, or the threat of violence. Understanding the difficulties in discarding a long-established national ideology, the current geostrategic environment serves as a catalyst in Japan's process of revising its foreign policies and more forcefully using its military capabilities to protect its national interests.

An offshore balancing strategy is not a strategy of isolationism, and the United States will not force Japan to balance alone. Japan will just have to provide for its own security. This is the logical outcome of a "normalized" Japan. Termination or revision of the Mutual Security Treaty should reflect this change. The United States could continue to assist Japan by providing or assisting in the acquisition of necessary military capabilities. Japan will have to emphasize its naval and air capabilities to mitigate China's anti-access strategy in the region.

Acquisition of nuclear weapons will be critical for Japan to balance properly against North Korea and China. A Japanese nuclear deterrent and increased power projection capabilities are fundamental components for this strategy to work. A well-armed Japan may well alarm many others, but stability in the region is in Japan's and the United States' best interests. Cold War-style deterrence and memories of the cataclysm of World War II will minimize the likelihood of Japanese loose-cannon behavior.

Japan's economic capacity has been the hallmark of its foreign policy since World War II, and its economic capacity will enable Japan to normalize. John Mearsheimer explains that wealth underpins power and that wealth alone can indicate latent power.¹ Does Japan have the will to change?

Policy Recommendation

As Layne points out, a careful implementation of offshore balancing strategy is the best option for the United States.² Japan's unique capabilities should be leveraged as the preferred balancer in the Asia region. If the United States adopts the strategy, it will undoubtedly seek to buck pass to Japan, and the United States will look to get involved only if specific US national interests are at risk.

The logical outcome of this strategy will be the withdrawal of the majority of US forces from the RSC. The United States must realize the foundation of the RSC and its current stability relies on the US security umbrella being in place. It will take time for the region to adjust to the US absence, but balance of power theory suggests that Japan and other states in the region will adjust because they will have no other choice.

By adopting a long time horizon for implementing the strategy, Japan will have time to modernize and transform the Self-Defense Forces into normal military forces. Japan's current military structure, modernization activities, security alliance with the United States, and legacy of a former great power give Japan advantages over India. The Japanese MSDF and ASDF are currently quite capable and increasingly able to cope with China's anti-access strategy. By normalizing, Japan would now be able to power project throughout the region.

The acquisition or development of nuclear weapons is the next logical step in making Japan a credible balancer against China. The United States will assist Japan with appropriate technology transfers. It is impossible to see China taking Japan seriously without an independent nuclear deterrent capability. Until Japan normalizes, the United States can benefit from using Japan's cur-

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rent capabilities to share in the burden of active balancing, allowing a draw-down of US forces in the region. The question will always be, does Japan have the will to make the necessary changes?

India's role as a balancer should be limited at the present. Analysis suggests India has too many domestic problems preventing it from serving as an effective balancer right now. Despite its emerging power rhetoric, India has not been able to translate its potential into being a truly respected power on the world stage.

Note

1. Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*.
2. Layne, *Peace of Illusions*.

Glossary

A2/AD	anti-access / area denial
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
BMD	ballistic missile defense
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
GDP	gross domestic product
IOR	Indian Ocean region
ISR	intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance
JASDF	Japan Air Self-Defense Force
JGSDf	Japan Ground Self-Defense Force
JMSDF	Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force
JSDF	Japan Self-Defense Forces
MTDP	Midterm Defense Plan
NDPG	National Defense Program Guidelines
ODA	official development assistance
PKO	peacekeeping operations and other operations
PLA	People's Liberation Army
RSC	regional security complex
RSCT	regional security complex theory
SA	situational awareness
SAM	surface-to-air missile
SCC	Security Consultative Committee

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