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# Is China a Status Quo Power?

Alastair Iain Johnston

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is more integrated into, and more cooperative within, regional and global political and economic systems than ever in its history. Yet there is growing uneasiness in the United States and the Asia-Pacific region about the implications of China's increasing economic and military power. Characterizations of Chinese diplomacy in the policy and scholarly worlds are, if anything, less optimistic of late about China's adherence to regional and international norms. In the 1980s there was little discussion in the United States and elsewhere about whether China was or was not part of something called "the international community." Since the early 1990s, however, scholars and practitioners alike have argued increasingly that China has not demonstrated sufficiently that it will play by so-called international rules and that somehow it must be brought into this community. The subtext is a fairly sharp othering of China that includes a civilizing discourse (China is not yet a civilized state) or perhaps a sports discourse (China is a cheater).

Many of the most vigorous policy debates in the United States in recent years have been over whether it is even possible to socialize a dictatorial, nationalistic, and dissatisfied China within this putative international community. Engagers argue that China is becoming socialized, though mainly in the sphere of economic norms (e.g., free trade and domestic marketization). Skeptics either conclude that this is not the case, due to the nature of the regime (for some, China is still Red China; for more sophisticated skeptics, China is flirting with fascism), or that it could not possibly happen because China as a rising power, by definition, is dissatisfied with the U.S.-dominated global order (a power-transition realpolitik argument). A logical conclusion is that both groups view the problem of China's rising power as the primary

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source of instability in Sino-U.S. relations and by extension in the Asia-Pacific region.

This article explores the degree to which China's leaders are pursuing status quo or revisionist foreign policies. It examines the evidence for and against the most common characterization of China—that it is a dissatisfied, revisionist state, expressed in everything from a desire to resolve the Taiwan issue in its favor to excluding U.S. military power from the Asia-Pacific region to replacing U.S. unipolarity with a multipolar distribution of power.<sup>1</sup> This characterization generally draws on or hews to various realist insights into why rising powers are almost invariably interested in challenging extant institutions, norms, and power distributions. That is, the argument falls generally within a power-transition version of realism where a static set of interests—the desire to establish a great power's sphere of influence—interact with changing Chinese relative capabilities to give China more opportunities to challenge U.S. power. I suggest that this line of argument is insufficiently attentive to the analytic ambiguities in the terms “status quo” and “revisionism” as used in international relations theory and practice. Moreover, this hypothesis fails to examine both the status quo elements in Chinese diplomacy over the last couple of decades and the problematic status of the empirical evidence used to make claims about PRC revisionism. In short, it is not clear that describing China as a revisionist or non-status quo state is accurate at this moment in history.

### *What Is a Revisionist State in the Twenty-first Century?*

In the last decade or so in the United States, many scholars, pundits, and policymakers have characterized China as a state operating outside of, or only partly inside, the so-called international community on a range of international norms. As Secretary of Defense William Perry noted in a speech in Seattle in 1995, engagement was a strategy for getting China to act like a “responsible world power.”<sup>2</sup> In March 1997, in outlining national security policy for President Bill Clinton's second term, National Security Adviser Samuel Berger

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1. For one of the few public scholarly debates over the status quo orientation of Chinese diplomacy, see the exchange between Xiang Lanxin and David Shambaugh in *Survival*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (Autumn 2001), pp. 7–30.

2. William H. Perry, “U.S. Strategy: Engage China, Not Contain,” *Defense Issues*, Vol. 10, No. 109, <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/1995/s19951030-kaminski.html>. Perry delivered his remarks to the Washington State China Relations Council in Seattle on October 30, 1995.

referred to Sino-U.S. engagement as designed to pull China “in the direction of the international community.”<sup>3</sup> Stanley Roth, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, noted that “[the United States wants] China to take its place as an active and responsible member of the international community.”<sup>4</sup> Secretary of State Madeleine Albright once wrote in an opinion piece: “The manner in which the United States engages China now and in the future will influence whether China *becomes* a constructive participant in the international arena. . . . We seek a China that embraces universally recognized human rights and global norms of conduct and one that works with us to build a secure international order.”<sup>5</sup>

President George W. Bush’s administration and its supporters have used similar language. In the centrist realpolitik language of Colin Powell’s Department of State, Assistant Secretary of State James Kelley has remarked, “We will have to see how China responds to us. It would be unfortunate if it were to renege on commitments to international standards that most of the world supports and adheres to. . . . We encourage China to make responsible choices that reflect its stature in and obligations to the community of nations.”<sup>6</sup> Just before becoming national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice argued that “China is not a ‘status quo’ power.”<sup>7</sup> Conservative pundits offer blunter language: Morton Kondracke suggested during the EP-3 incident in April 2001—when a Chinese fighter jet crashed into a U.S. intelligence-gathering aircraft off the southern coast of China—that China was not a “civilized” country.<sup>8</sup> Others, reflecting some of the views of the primacist wing of the Bush administration,<sup>9</sup>

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3. Samuel Berger, “A Foreign Policy Agenda for the Second Term,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C., March 27, 1997, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/EOP/NSC/html/speeches/032797speech.html>.

4. Stanley O. Roth, “U.S.-China Relations on the Eve of the Summit,” World Economic Forum, Hong Kong, October 14, 1997, [http://www.state.gov/www/policy\\_remarks/971014\\_roth\\_china.html](http://www.state.gov/www/policy_remarks/971014_roth_china.html).

5. Madeleine K. Albright, “The U.S. and China,” *Diario Las Americas*, Miami, Florida, July 5, 1998, <http://secretary.state.gov/www/statements/1998/980705.html> (emphasis in original).

6. James A. Kelly, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Washington, D.C., May 1, 2001, <http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/2001/index.cfm?docid=2697>.

7. Condoleezza Rice, “Promoting the National Interest,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 75, No. 1 (January/February 2000), p. 56.

8. See *Fox Special Report with Brit Hume*, April 9, 2001, [http://lib.harvard.edu:2052/universe/document?\\_m=9e1f24a9d14cf99046fe9df7f690cc1f&\\_docnum=3&wchp=dGLStS-ISlzV&\\_md5=b2c8795991545bea5396fccc0e3d5fea](http://lib.harvard.edu:2052/universe/document?_m=9e1f24a9d14cf99046fe9df7f690cc1f&_docnum=3&wchp=dGLStS-ISlzV&_md5=b2c8795991545bea5396fccc0e3d5fea).

9. William Kristol, one of the most prominent voices in this wing, has used the term “neoimperial” to describe these views.

compare China's rise with that of other revisionist states such as fascist Japan, and especially Wilhelmine Germany.<sup>10</sup>

The common themes in all these characterizations are obvious: China is not yet or is only starting to become a constructive participant in "the international community"; China does not yet wholly endorse global norms of conduct. Moreover, a rising, dissatisfied China presents a fundamental challenge to the international order established and preferred by the United States.

There are at least two even more basic, implicit assumptions that undergird these characterizations of China and "the international community." The first is that there is an extant international community that is sufficiently well defined such that it is obvious who is and who is not part of it. The second assumption is that this community shares common norms and values on human rights, nonproliferation, trade, and so on.

But what does it mean to be a status quo or a revisionist power in international relations in the early twenty-first century? Despite the centrality of the terms in international relations theorizing and in discourse in the policy world, definitions of status quo and revisionist are not only vague but also undertheorized.<sup>11</sup>

According to Hans Morgenthau, "The policy of the status quo aims at the maintenance of the distribution of power as it exists at a particular moment in history."<sup>12</sup> A status quo policy is opposed to any "reversal of the power relations among two or more nations, reducing, for instance, *A* from a first rate to a second rate power and raising *B* to the eminent position *A* formerly held." Minor adjustments, however, "which leave intact the relative power positions of the nations concerned are fully compatible with a policy of the status quo."<sup>13</sup>

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10. See Robert Kagan, "What China Knows That We Don't: The Case for a New Strategy of Containment," *Weekly Standard*, January 20, 1997 p. 22; Paul Wolfowitz, "Bridging Centuries—Fin de Siècle All Over Again," *National Interest* (Spring 1997), pp. 3– ; Arthur N. Waldron, professor of strategy, Naval War College, "China as an Ascending Power," testimony before the House National Security Committee on Security Challenges, March 20, 1996. Only in late 2002 did a Bush administration official challenge this characterization. Richard Haass, head of State Department policy planning, argued in a speech in December 2002 to the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations that China was for the most part "in" the international community and that the analogies to imperial Germany were inappropriate. It is unclear, however, how representative Haass's views are. See <http://www.state.gov/s/p/rem/15687.htm>.

11. For example, E.H. Carr refers to "status quo" states at least twelve times in his classic, *The Twenty Years Crisis, 1919–1939* (London: Macmillan, 1940), without providing a definition.

12. Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 5th ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), p. 46. See also his criteria for determining whether a state has an imperialist (i.e., revisionist) foreign policy. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

There is little in Morgenthau beyond this about how one would actually determine whether a state desires minor or major “adjustments,” what a first-rate or second-rate power concretely looks like, or whether such desires for adjustments are good predictors of the state’s actual behavior.

Power transition theorists A.F.K. Organski and Jacek Kugler defined status quo states as those that have participated in designing the “rules of the game” and stand to benefit from these rules. “Challengers” (e.g., revisionist states) want a “new place for themselves in international society” commensurate with their power. Revisionist states express a “general dissatisfaction” with their “position in the system.” They have a “desire to redraft the rules by which relations among nations work.”<sup>14</sup> There is nothing in Organski and Kugler, however, that defines what “rules” do in fact govern interstate relations, whether these rules are widely accepted, or how one would know. Nor is it clear what indicators to use to determine what a “place” in the international system looks like from the perspectives of a state’s leaders.

Randall Schweller offers a typology of revisionist and status quo states that allows for some variation in degree. This provides more nuance than some of the earlier classical realist writing. Basically, “revisionist states value what they covet more than what they currently possess. . . . they will *employ military force* to change the status quo and to extend their values.”<sup>15</sup> Still, it is unclear what the components of the status quo are, other than the extant hierarchy of power (and prestige, assuming these are coterminous) at any given moment.

Among realist scholars, Robert Gilpin offers perhaps the most precise discussion of revisionist and status quo orientations.<sup>16</sup> He breaks down the rules

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14. A.F.K. Organski and Jacek Kugler, *The War Ledger* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1980), pp. 19–20, 23. There is some tension between Morgenthau’s definition and Organski and Kugler’s. The power transition definition sees the status quo partly in terms of intentions, not just capabilities. Does the rising power intend to or want to change the rules as its relative power increases? Morgenthau’s definition emphasizes simply a change in the distribution of power (which is presumably followed by a change in the rules). For Morgenthau, any rising state is by definition a revisionist one insofar as it wants to change the global distribution by increasing its own power. For Organski and Kugler, only rising states that want to change the rules as the power distribution changes are non-status quo powers.

15. Randall L. Schweller, “Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In,” *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer 1994), p. 105 (emphasis added). By Schweller’s definition, China would not be a revisionist state if it used economic development as a way of increasing its political influence in the Asia-Pacific.

16. Not all realist theorists use the status quo–revisionist typology. John J. Mearsheimer’s offensive realism contends that all great powers are revisionists because they are compelled to maximize their power in order to achieve security under anarchy. See Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), p. 29.

of the game into somewhat more operationalizable components: the distribution of power, the hierarchy of prestige (which, however, tends to be coterminus with the distribution of power for realists), and “rights and rules that govern or at least influence the interactions among states.”<sup>17</sup> Thus, if one uses these three major components, then it is legitimate to ask the following questions to determine whether a state pursues a fundamentally status quo or revisionist foreign policy. First, how do state leaders speak and act with regard to the specific rules, for example, of interstate diplomacy, of security institutions, and of international economic institutions? Second, how do state leaders speak and act regarding the distribution of power globally or regionally? Third, how do they speak and act regarding the hierarchy of prestige (though this should be essentially coterminus with the first test)? For Gilpin revisionist states seek to fundamentally alter these three components. Anything less, and it becomes problematic to call the state either revisionist or non-status quo.

For a concept at the core of international relations theorizing, it disturbing how little thought, with the exception perhaps of Gilpin, has gone into determining whether a state is status quo or revisionist across the totality of its foreign policy preferences and actions.<sup>18</sup> Perhaps because, as James Morrow notes, Nazi Germany is the paradigmatic revisionist state,<sup>19</sup> international relations theory has tended to assume that we should recognize a revisionist state when we see one. But it is not always obvious. More refined indicators of revisionist and status quo diplomacy are needed. And when one does develop and apply these indicators, as I argue below, the orthodox rising-power-as-revisionist argument does not really help to explain the totality of China’s diplomacy.

Below I propose a set of indicators by which one can assess whether any particular actor is outside a status quo “international community.” I develop five such indicators and group these into two sets. These move from the least chal-

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17. Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 34.

18. For a far more sophisticated summary of international relations theory’s treatment of revisionism than I offer here, see Jay Lyall, “The Revisionist State: Definitions and Measures,” Cornell University, 2001.

19. James D. Morrow, “Alliances: Why Write Them Down?” *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 3 (2000), p. 74. Henry A. Kissinger uses Nazi Germany to define a “revolutionary” (read revisionist) state. He does not really outline generic indicators of what this dissatisfaction looks like. But inferring from this example, it would mean substantial dissatisfaction with weak power, territorial control, economic losses in the current global economy, imposed restrictions on its relative power by institutions, and perhaps some vaguer notion of lack of respect or status. See Kissinger, *A World Restored* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1957), pp. 1–2.

lenging to the most challenging to the status quo. The first set addresses the question of how proactive an actor is in challenging formal and informal rules of the major institutions in the international system that most other actors support most of the time.<sup>20</sup> Here I draw on Gilpin's discussion of what constitutes the "rules of the game."

1. The actor's participation rates in the institutions that regulate the activities of members of the community are low. At its simplest, a non-status quo actor is one that could be but is not involved in the many international institutions that help to constitute and mediate the relationships of the international community.
2. The actor may participate in these international institutions, but it does not accept the norms of the community. It breaks these rules and norms once it becomes a member of these institutions.<sup>21</sup>
3. The actor may participate in these institutions and may abide by their rules and norms temporarily, but if given a chance, it will try to change these rules and norms in ways that defeat the original purposes of the institution and the community.

The second set of indicators addresses the attitudes and behavior of an actor toward distributions of material power that appear to be disadvantageous to it.

4. The actor has internalized a clear preference for a radical redistribution of material power in the international system.
5. The actor's behavior is aimed in the main at realizing such a redistribution of power, and to this end military power is considered to be a critical tool.

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20. I realize that these indicators mix preferences and behavior, and that behavior is not necessarily a good indicator of preferences. But behavior that is, across different contexts, persistently and consistently similar to what one would expect if preferences were of a particular kind is one place to start, especially when analyzing an inordinately opaque decisionmaking process. That said, in the Chinese case, there is fairly good evidence that the post-Mao Chinese leadership—reversing years of intention and practice—initially joined some of the main economic institutions because it believed that these capitalist institutions, though U.S. dominated, served their interest in improving China's economic well-being and shoring up the legitimacy of the regime. In other words, there is little evidence that, in joining these institutions, China was either compelled by U.S. power or motivated by a desire to undermine capitalist institutions upon becoming a member. In short, the move into economic institutions in particular reflected the growing convergence of the Chinese leadership's interests with the ideology and interests of these status quo institutions.

21. This indicator assumes that these norms and rules are obvious. As I show later, one analytical difficulty is that, in some cases, there is no plausible international community standard to follow. This complicates, but does not undermine, the endeavor to estimate the degree to which a state's policies are status quo oriented, however.

Below I assess trends in Chinese diplomacy over the last decade or so along these five indicators.<sup>22</sup>

### *Participation Rates in International Institutions*

China's membership in international institutions and organizations has increased dramatically in the post-Maoist period. Figure 1 shows the relative number of cross-region international governmental organizations in which China belongs compared across time with a number of industrialized powers and with India, one of the most diplomatically active developing states. From the mid-1960s to the mid-1990s, China moved from virtual isolation from international organizations to membership numbers approaching about 80 percent of the comparison states.<sup>23</sup>

Figure 2 provides another view of this change in Chinese participation rates. It uses level of development as a predictor of membership in international organizations for all states in the international system. The assumption here is that more resource-constrained states with fewer linkages to the global economy should be less involved in international institutions as well. High levels of development are associated with high levels of interdependence, hence with a high demand for institutions that can regulate these interactions. Thus gross domestic product (GDP) per capita can act as a proxy indicator for a demand for international institutions.<sup>24</sup> Figure 2 shows that prior to the 1990s, China's

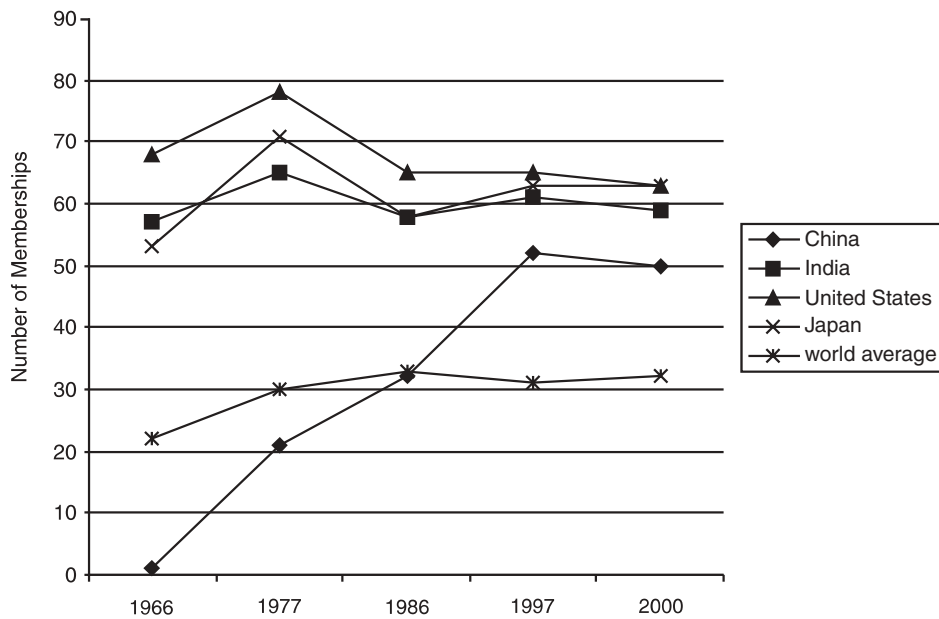
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22. Zhang Biwu's important analysis of Chinese images of the United States is one of the few other studies to try to develop criteria for measuring the level of China's status quo orientation. Basically U.S. domestic and foreign policy behavior is used as a benchmark for the status quo, and Chinese attitudes toward these behaviors is observed to determine how much distance exists between the United States and China. I find the use of the United States as the benchmark problematic because while U.S. power defines the polarity criteria, U.S. power and interests are not always coterminous with international norms and the normative purposes of international institutions. Thus the U.S. as a benchmark for the first three criteria becomes problematic. See Zhang, "China's Perception of the United States: An Exploration of China's Foreign Policy Motivations," Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 2002.

23. Prior to 1971 the PRC was not in the United Nations, so it is unclear how one should code its memberships prior to this point. That is, even if China had wanted to join many international institutions, it would have been excluded from doing so by insisting on the expulsion of the Republic of China. Technically, however, one could argue that China's leaders made that policy choice, and thus the low level of participation prior to 1971 should be coded the result of a conscious policy choice. My thanks to Al Willner for making this point. The pattern of participation in international governmental organizations is similar in the history of China's treaty accessions as well. For example, in the early 1970s China had signed 10–20 percent of the international arms control agreements that it was eligible to join. By the mid-1990s it had signed 80 percent of such treaties. These data capture the willingness of China's leaders to participate in international institutions.

24. I used GDP per capita as a predictor for the number of intergovernmental organization memberships for each state for which both sets of data were available, and entered these data into an

Figure 1. China's International Organization Memberships in Comparative Perspective.



SOURCE: This figure is compiled from data in the *Yearbook of International Organizations*, 38th ed. (Brussels: Union of International Associations, 2000/2001).

participation rates fell below the regression line. That is, for its level of development, China was underinvolved in international organizations. During the 1990s China became overinvolved in international organizations for its level of development.

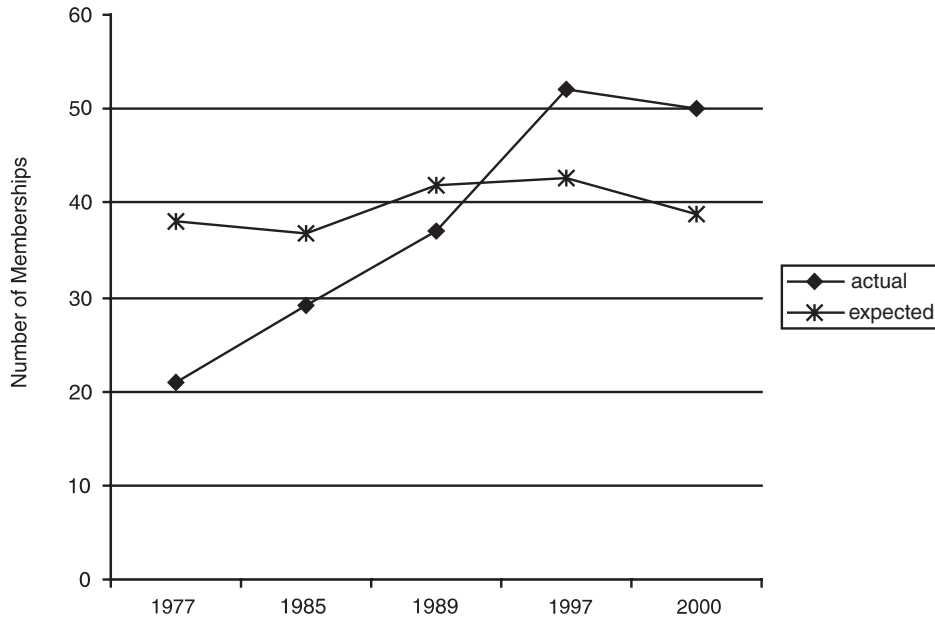
### Degree of Compliance with International Norms

Increased participation in international institutions may not necessarily be a strong indicator of status quo behavior.<sup>25</sup> Some might argue that what matters

ordinary least squares regression equation for the years listed in Figure 2. The  $R^2$  ranged from 0.16 to 0.23, and all were statistically significant below the 0.01 level.

25. A state could in principle hide or isolate itself from most interactions in the international system, and thereby not challenge the status quo. But if it is a potentially powerful or important state on some issue of regional or global importance (e.g., if it is a major transboundary polluter, or a major source of some key economic good, or a large failed state whose very failure destabilizes its neighbors), then hiding may in fact undermine the purposes of status quo institutions.

**Figure 2. China's Actual and Expected Memberships in International Organizations**  
(based on ordinary least squares regression of gross domestic product per capita as a predictor of memberships).



more is compliance with the rules, norms, and goals of these institutions. Thus a state that participates but violates the prescriptions of these institutions and its commitments to them (willfully, as opposed simply due to the lack of capacity) might still be considered a non-status quo state. In some cases, determining what international norms are is fairly straightforward. In other cases it is more difficult, thus making the question of compliance very complicated very quickly. Below I code China's compliance with five major international normative regimes: sovereignty, free trade, nonproliferation and arms control, national self-determination, and human rights.

#### SOVEREIGNTY

Perhaps the most deeply internalized fundamental norm in international diplomacy is sovereignty. It defines the key units of the international system, the key features of most international institutions (their membership rules and decision rules), and the key diplomatic practices of these units. The meaning of sovereignty is historically contingent. But today China is one of the

strongest defenders of a more traditional absolutist concept. Along with a large number of other developing countries, it is by and large fighting as a conservative power to reaffirm sovereignty and internal autonomy against challenges from evolving concepts of human rights, domestic governance, and humanitarian intervention—concepts being pushed by some liberal democracies, non-governmental organizations, and international civil society activities.<sup>26</sup>

#### FREE TRADE

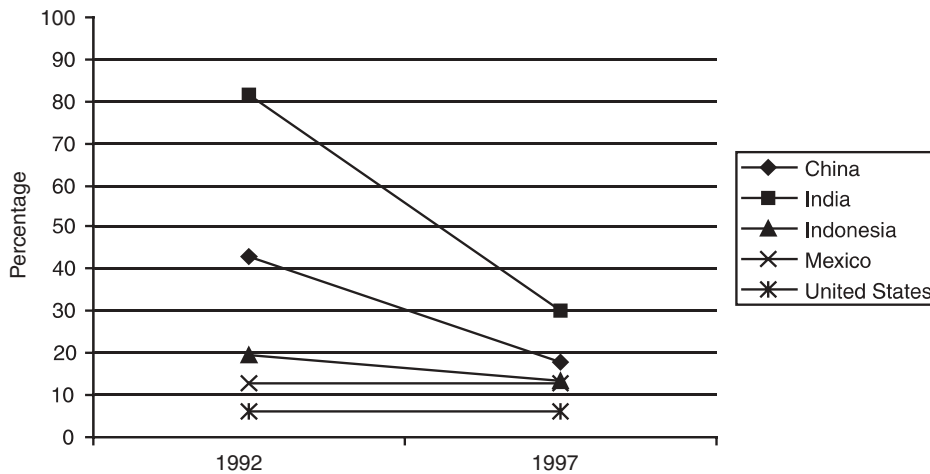
Free trade is perhaps the international norm (except for sovereignty) least contested by national governments around the world at this point in history. In the reform period, from the late 1970s on, China has moved generally to support norms of global free trade, even though, due to the remnants of the Maoist command economy and powerful protectionist economic interests, compliance with and implementation of these norms will be difficult. In concrete terms, China's average tariff rate declined from more than 40 percent in 1992 to slightly less than 20 percent in 1997 (see Figure 3). These tariff rates will decline further under the conditions of China's entry into the World Trade Organization (to an average of 9.4 percent for industrial products and 14.5 percent for agricultural products by 2004–05). China's entry into the WTO is the clearest signal yet that officially China embraces the extant free trade regime. No doubt there will be violations, but it will be very hard for China to escape international scrutiny on this score. China will likely use many of the loopholes in WTO rules to protect politically important economic constituencies when necessary. This is no different in kind, however, from the arbitrary use of anti-dumping rules by the United States to protect its politically important economic constituencies. Many experts also argue that China's primary compliance problem will not so much be a willful disregard of WTO commitments by the central government, but rather noncompliance by hard-to-control provincial and local economic interests.<sup>27</sup> Even so, at this stage the U.S. State Department has officially concluded that China has made a "good faith approach" to meeting WTO entry requirements.<sup>28</sup> The General Accounting

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26. See Allen Carlson, "Constructing a New Great Wall: Chinese Foreign Policy and the Norm of State Sovereignty," Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 2000. Interestingly, under the Bush administration's conservative sovereignty-centric impulses, U.S. and Chinese policies are more convergent in defense of a traditional definition of sovereignty than was the case for most of the 1990s.

27. See, for example, Donald C. Clarke, professor of law, University of Washington, testimony before the Congressional–Executive Commission on China, June 6, 2002, <http://www.cecc.gov/pages/hearings/060602/clarkeTestimony.pdf>.

28. See Jon M. Huntsman Jr., U.S. deputy trade representative, testimony before the Congressio-

**Figure 3. Comparative Reductions in Mean Tariff Rates, 1992–97.**

SOURCE: *World Bank Indicators, 1998*, CD-ROM, Table 6.7.

NOTE: The data years are not uniform in the World Bank tables. For Mexico the data are for 1991 and 1997, for Indonesia 1996 and 1993, and for India, 1990 and 1997.

Office (GAO) recently reported that China had “shown considerable determination” to put in place the domestic legal infrastructure required by the WTO.<sup>29</sup> Secretary of State Powell put it bluntly: China “is no longer an enemy of capitalism.”<sup>30</sup>

China’s gradual embrace of global capitalist institutions and, increasingly, their norms of free trade, open capital flows, and transparency has been a function, apparently, of the desire of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to enhance its legitimacy through economic development. Thus it strains logic to say, as many in the policy and pundit worlds do, that China is dissatisfied with the international “rules of the game” when these same individuals also say

nal–Executive Commission on China, June 6, 2002, <http://usinfo.state.gov/regional/ea/uschina/huntsman.htm>.

29. See Susan S. Westin, managing director for international affairs and trade, General Accounting Office, before the Congressional–Executive Commission on China, June 6, 2002, <http://www.cecc.gov/pages/hearings/060602/westinTestimony.pdf>. For the full report, see GAO, *World Trade Organization: Observations on China’s Rule of Law Reforms*, GAO-02–812T (Washington, D.C.: GAO, June 6, 2002).

30. Colin Powell, U.S. secretary of state, remarks at the Asia Society Annual Dinner, New York, June 10, 2002, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2002/10983.htm>.

that Chinese leaders base their legitimacy in part on economic growth. Chinese leaders realize that this economic growth—hence their legitimacy—comes from integration into the global capitalist institutions, not isolation from them or attempts to alter them fundamentally.

#### NONPROLIFERATION AND ARMS CONTROL

On these issues, judgments about China's performance need to distinguish among five kinds of behavior: (1) actions that violate a formal multilateral treaty; (2) actions that violate a unilateral or bilateral statement of policy but are not illegal under international law (e.g., the November 2000 commitment not to assist countries in developing missiles proscribed by the missile technology control regime [MTCR]); (3) actions that do not violate Chinese statements of policy or international law (nuclear technology transfers to International Atomic Energy Agency-inspected sites); (4) actions that keep China outside of a treaty but that reflect shared interests with the United States (e.g., opposition to the Ottawa Landmine Treaty, which calls for a global ban on the use, development, and transfer of antipersonnel landmines); and (5) actions where China stands with a large number of other states in opposition to an isolated United States (e.g., China's opposition to the Bush administration's December 2001 announcement that it would withdraw from the 1972 Antiballistic Missile Treaty).

Actions of the first and fourth types are most clearly challenges to unambiguous international norms. Actions of the second and third types—even though they may challenge U.S. interests—are less obviously violations of the “rules of the game.” And actions of the fifth type cannot be counted as violations of international regimes.

On many arms control issues, China's performance has been hard to measure. On the question of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation, Chinese suppliers are not alone in transferring technology (often not formally restricted technology) to states that have major conflicts of interest with the United States. For instance, the list of foreign suppliers for the WMD-related programs in these types of states is a who's who of status quo states.<sup>31</sup> The

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31. As of 1998, suppliers of nuclear-related technology to Iran included companies from such countries as Argentina, Belgium, Britain, China, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Switzerland, and the United States. See Andrew Koch and Jeanette Wolf, *Appendix: Selected Iranian Nuclear Imports* (Monterey, Calif.: Monterey Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, 1998), <http://cns.miis.edu/pubs/reports/pdfs/irantbl.pdf>. One could argue that given the authoritarian nature of the Chinese regime, the government could, if it had its normative and budgetary priorities right, crack down on these shipments. In contrast, for Western states these suppliers tend to be harder-to-monitor private companies.

major concern about China's WMD behavior has been the transfer of nuclear weapons-related technology to Pakistan in the 1980s and M-11 ballistic missile components to Pakistan in 1992. After China agreed to abide by the 1987 version of the MTCR, and signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1996, the U.S. government officially pronounced its performance as improved, though problematic in some cases. Robert Einhorn, the State Department's assistant secretary of state for nonproliferation during the Clinton administration, has noted that "China's record on nuclear exports has dramatically improved in the late 1990s. But its record is, at best, mixed on missile-related exports."<sup>32</sup> A similar conclusion came from an unnamed senior Bush State Department official: The Chinese are "less active traders and proliferators than they used to be," but still not in compliance with the MTCR.<sup>33</sup>

Continuing concerns in the United States are either with dual-use technologies that in some cases China has the legal right to transfer, or in the case of missile components to Pakistan, transfers that may violate unilateral Chinese statements made to the United States rather than formal multilateral treaties. More generally China has signed a number of potentially constraining arms control agreements. The CTBT is the most notable, as it limits China's ability to modernize its nuclear weapons warhead designs. As yet there is no credible evidence that China has violated this commitment.

In terms of conventional arms transfers, there are very few intrusive regimes to be violated by any state. Thus there is no obvious international normative standard against which to judge China's performance. The regimes that have emerged are not especially strong. China opposes, as does the United States, the Ottawa Treaty as well as efforts to establish stricter multilateral controls on small arms trade. More generally, although China is still a major arms exporter, it has lost much of the arms market it had in the 1990s as countries have turned to former Soviet suppliers for cheaper and better-quality weapons or to suppliers in the United States and Western Europe. China's record in this regard does not reflect any dramatic new normative opposition to arms transfers, simply a loss of market share.

#### NATIONAL SELF-DETERMINATION

China is routinely accused of violating this norm, whether in the case of the Tibetans in Tibet or the Uighurs in Xinjiang, or the Taiwanese. There are two

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32. Robert Einhorn, "Proliferation Challenges in Asia," comments at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Asia Security Conference, Singapore, May 31–June 2, 2002.

33. Jane Perlez, "Chinese Firm Is Punished by the U.S. for Arms Sale," *New York Times*, September 2, 2001, sec. 1, p. 9.

problems here. First, although one may personally abhor the treatment of minority populations in China, or the refusal of the PRC regime to allow the Taiwanese people to peacefully choose de jure independence from the Republic of China (ROC), the accusation that China is violating the international norm of self-determination misconstrues this norm. International practice and international law, while often unclear and in constant evolution, does not recognize the absolute right of any social, political, or ethnic groups to sovereign independence. States are leery of the unconditional endorsement of a norm of national self-determination. United Nations documents on decolonization and national liberation in the 1960s were clear: They recognized the right of oppressed peoples to determine their future (though not necessarily by setting up an independent sovereign state), but they also attempted to protect newly independent, decolonized states from further dismemberment.<sup>34</sup> That is, the right to self-determination has generally been extended only to those peoples who are subject to alien rule (e.g., colonialism) and who have few if any opportunities to participate meaningfully in their own governance.<sup>35</sup> Most state constitutions—a good indicator of customary international norms—do not recognize a right to autonomy or right to secession for minority groups. In general, international norms concerning self-determination are designed to protect existing sovereign states, as much as one might personally prefer to see the formal independence of particular peoples.

Second, U.S. foreign policy practice is also ambivalent about specific cases of national self-determination. For example, the United States does not support Quebec independence, even though a majority of francophones in Quebec did, at one point, indicate support for some form of independence in a referendum

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34. For useful discussions of conditional norms of national self-determination, see Michael Freeman, "National Self-Determination, Peace, and Human Rights," *Peace Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (Summer 1998), pp. 157–163; and rapporteur's report on the Competing Claims: Self-Determination, Security, and the United Nations conference, University of Denver, November 29–December 1, 2000, [http://www.ipacademy.org/Publications/Reports/Research/PublRepoReseCompClaims\\_body.htm](http://www.ipacademy.org/Publications/Reports/Research/PublRepoReseCompClaims_body.htm). See also the "Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples," G.A. res. 1514 (XV), 15 U.N. GAOR Supp. (No. 16) at 66, U.N. Doc. A/4684 (1961). This document places self-determination in the context of anticolonialism. This context has evolved over time to open the possibility of self-determination to peoples who are subject to systematic discrimination based on factors such as race, creed, and ethnicity. It is unclear, however, how this condition is to be determined, particularly in nondemocracies where everyone suffers from political discrimination, and in the China/Taiwan case where Taiwanese are not subject to this discrimination. See Valerie Epps, "Self-determination in the China/Taiwan Context," *New England Law Review*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (Spring 1998), <http://www.nesl.edu/lawrev/vol32/vol32-3/epps.htm>.

35. For an analysis of the problems that arise in applying international norms of self-determination to Taiwan, see Byron N. Tzou, "Does the Principle of Self-determination Apply to Taiwan?" *Issues and Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 6 (June 1992), pp. 70–85.

in the 1990s. In 1999 the United States intervened against Serbia's suppression of the Kosovar population but did not support Kosovo independence. Indeed, initially the United States did not support Yugoslavia's breakup. It clearly does not officially recognize the right to national self-determination and sovereign statehood for Native Americans or Chechens, or indeed, even Tibetans.

#### HUMAN RIGHTS

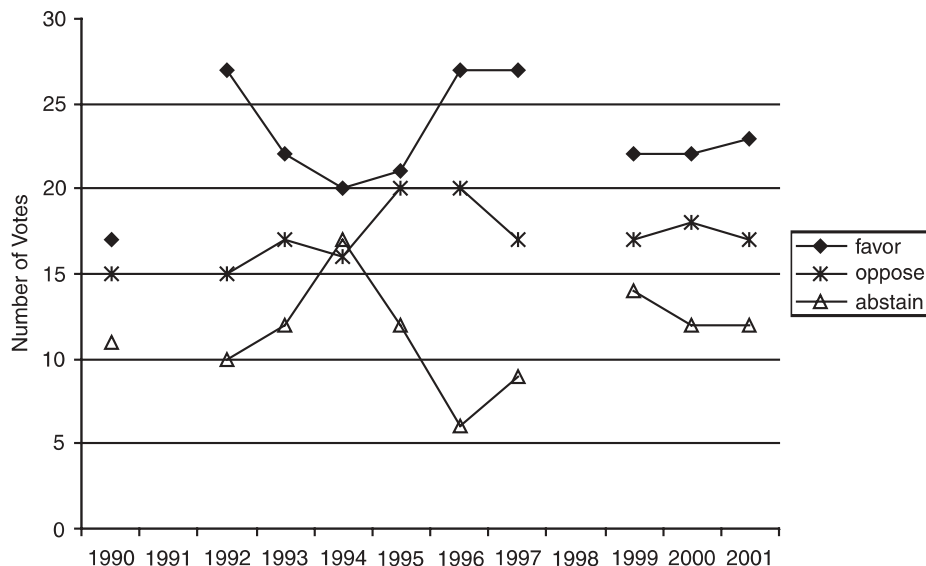
More than any other major cluster of international norms, human rights highlight the difficulty in coding China's compliance with the status quo. Liberal democracies and human rights nongovernmental organizations routinely and accurately point out the violation of human rights in China. Two questions emerge, however. First, how are "the international community's" views on the human rights regime defined? One logical start would be to look at the positions taken by a majority of states toward China's human rights practices. The problem here is that in one of the key international forums for the examination of human rights practices, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, China managed to put together a winning coalition of states to vote in favor of quashing every resolution critical of the PRC from 1992 to 2001 (see Figure 4). This simple majority (or plurality) criterion would place China inside the "international community" and its human rights regime. If one uses the domestic political practice of the majority of states in the international system as a criterion, however, China would be on the outside of the "international community," but barely. A small majority of states in the international system function as democracies, but a relatively large minority function as dictatorships or autocracies.<sup>36</sup>

Second, what is the content of the international human rights regime? Technically, based on perhaps the most comprehensive, authoritative consensus statement of the content of the international human rights regime—the Vienna Conference Declaration of 1993—the "international community" recognizes the equal status of individual political and civil liberties on the one hand, and collective social and economic rights (including the right to development) on the other. In this regard, when the United States measures Chinese behavior using the standard of political and civil liberties, and when China responds by stressing collective social and economic rights, both sides may be misrepre-

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36. In 1999, 55 percent of states scored a 5 or higher on the Polity IV index for overall level of democratic institutions. Sixty-four percent scored 1 or higher on this index. The index runs from -10 (autocracy) to 10 (democracy).

**Figure 4. Voting in the United Nations Commission on Human Rights on No-Action Motions on Resolutions Critical of the PRC (a vote in favor means a vote against criticizing China).**



SOURCES: These data come from Anne Kent, *China, the United Nations, and Human Rights* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), pp. 60–79; and UN Commission on Human Rights Reports, E/1993/23, E/1994/24, E/1995/23, E/1996/23, E/1997/23, E/1999/23, E/2000/23, and E/CN.4/2001/L.10/Add.9.

NOTE: In 1991 and 1998, there were no resolutions critical of the PRC.

senting “international community” standards. There is no doubt that China’s authorities, whether central or local governments, routinely violate the political and legal rights guaranteed by the PRC constitution and by the human rights agreements that China has signed. The question remains, however: Is China’s performance on protecting the social and economic rights of the Chinese people as embodied in the Vienna consensus equally egregious? Economic development has led to a rapid increase in the standards of living for millions of Chinese citizens. But whether this constitutes a net gain in socioeconomic rights is not so obvious. At root this becomes an ideological question, because it requires judging whether socioeconomic advances, mainly in urban China, should be counted as gains in social and economic rights for the Chinese people as a whole, or whether growing income inequality, environmental degradation, and the absence of equitable education, welfare, and health sys-

tems (mainly in rural China) violate social and economic rights. Depending on whether one is a supporter of state welfare systems or a more marketized economy, China's protection of its people's economic and social rights could be deteriorating or improving.

In sum, on a number of international normative questions, China appears to be conforming more with an extant international community, such as it is, than it has in the past. But this discussion also highlights a fundamental problem in assessing the degree to which China is upholding or challenging international norms: These norms themselves are often contradictory. It is problematic to say that there is a coherent body of international norms, endorsed by a single international community, when there are often tensions among these norms, such as there is, say, between the sovereignty norm and the free trade norm or the political rights norm.<sup>37</sup>

### *Behavior toward the "Rules of the Game"*

A third possible indicator of a state's approach to the international status quo is whether or not it proactively seeks to change rules in ways that defeat the purposes of international institutions. That is, does it try to undermine the so-called rules of the game? This is hard to gauge because the term "rules of the game" as it is used both in realist theorizing and in policy debates about China is extremely vague. Typically when the phrase is used by academics, policymakers, or pundits, the implicit standard is: Does the state behave in ways that the United States would prefer? Obviously this is not a social-scientific criterion.

There are, however, two questions that one might logically ask in trying to give more analytical substance to the phrase "rules of the game": First, is the state trying to change the formal and informal operational rules of major international institutions of which it is a member? And second, does the state routinely oppose the interests of unambiguously status quo states in major international institutions?

With respect to China, one indicator would be the gap between what it has proposed as rules for institutions in which it has become a member versus rules that it has had to accept. The gap may say something about what the

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37. Indeed Thomas Weiss calls for banishing the term "international community" on the grounds of its intellectual vacuousness. See Weiss, "Researching Humanitarian Intervention," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 38, No. 4 (July 2001), pp. 423-424.

rules would have looked like had Chinese leaders designed them predominantly by themselves.

In international economic institutions, at least, China has proposed very few new rules. This is mainly because China entered most of these institutions well after their creation, and because these rules have often served China's economic interests (e.g., accessing funding from the World Bank). Moreover, most academic observers have generally been positive about China's conformity to extant rules once it has become a member of these institutions. The best studies on China's involvement in the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund all suggest a generally sound performance. The Chinese government has tended to meet both institutions' reporting requirements, for instance, and there have been no dramatic efforts to change the way decisions are made to favor China.<sup>38</sup> In the WTO, the PRC has generally accepted the overall decisionmaking procedures and structures, and has been cautious about taking a leadership role inside the institution.<sup>39</sup>

In security institutions, the picture is somewhat less clear in part because China has participated in the construction of some of the more important of these institutions. Take, for example, the CTBT. Had some bargaining positions that China took into the negotiations prevailed in the design of the CTBT, the treaty would be less intrusive and compliance less strictly monitored (assuming, of course, that these initial positions reflected basic preferences as opposed to opportunistic opening gambits). Moreover, states would have been allowed to conduct "peaceful nuclear explosions," severely undermining the verifiability of a ban on testing nuclear weapons. On the other hand, had other Chinese bargaining positions prevailed, nuclear weapons states would have had to abide by a no-first-use pledge. If verifiable (through escrowing warheads, for instance),<sup>40</sup> a multilateral no-first-use pledge could reduce incentives to rely on

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38. See Margaret M. Pearson, "China's Integration into the International Trade and Investment Regime," in Elizabeth Economy and Michel Oksenberg, eds., *China Joins the World: Progress and Prospects* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1999), pp. 161–205; and Nicholas R. Lardy, "China and the International Financial System," in *ibid.*, pp. 206–230.

39. See Margaret M. Pearson's pioneering study of China's performance in the WTO, based on detailed interviews of various national delegations to the WTO, in Pearson, "China's Multiple Personalities in Geneva: Constructing a Template for Future Research on Chinese Behavior in WTO," paper presented at *New Directions in Chinese Foreign Policy: Conference in Honor of Allen S. Whiting*, Fairbank Center for East Asian Research, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, November 8–9, 2002.

40. Nuclear escrowing would entail storing warheads several hundred miles from delivery vehicles, thus making preparations for a first strike easily detectable. See Stansfield Turner, "The Case for Strategic Escrow," *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, Vol. 54, No. 2 (March/April 1998), <http://www.thebulletin.org/issues/1998/ma98/ma98turner.html>.

nuclear weapons for security. Although a Chinese-designed CTBT would have had weak on-site inspection provisions, it would have had a very expensive and extensive satellite monitoring capacity. This would have added early warning capabilities to the treaty. At present the monitoring system only allows for the verification of violations after the fact. Other states, such as Canada, supported the principle of international satellite monitoring for the CTBT but objected to the cost of the Chinese proposal.<sup>41</sup>

One final point: Even if there were evidence of strong Chinese preferences to radically reorder existing international economic and security institutions, it would not be easy. Sometimes the pundits suggest that changing the “rules of the game” means changing the norms or ideology of an institution. In the China case, this invariably means that China will try to weaken the constraints on sovereign state behavior. But most institutions have rules about rules; there are often procedures that govern how these norms, ideologies, and institutional purposes can be changed. Thus to analyze whether China can change the rules requires understanding these procedures. And not surprisingly, in many institutions these procedures tend to be highly conservative. They are designed to prevent actors whose preferences might change or new actors with different preferences from easily altering the purposes of the institution. The institutions themselves, if they are highly developed, with their own bureaucracies and sense of organizational interests and mission, will also develop decision rules and norms that prevent erosion or dilution of their power and mission. Institutions that require supermajorities or consensus, for example, are exceedingly hard to change (e.g., the WTO). The dissatisfied actor has to put together a supercoalition or somehow overcome the veto of a single player in a consensus/unanimity system.<sup>42</sup>

As for the second question, the evidence concerning whether China increasingly opposes the interests of other states that observers might uncontroversially call status quo states is exceedingly complex. Ideally it requires inventorying a long list of China’s economic, political, and social interests, expressed in a wide range of international forums. But one quick indicator would

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41. For an analysis of these bargaining positions in the CTBT, see Alastair Iain Johnston, “The Social Effects of International Institutions on Domestic (Foreign Policy) Actors,” in Daniel W. Drezner, ed., *Locating the Proper Authorities: The Interaction of Domestic and International Institutions* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), pp. 176–187.

42. On how decision rules can protect the ideology of an institution, see George W. Downs, David M. Rocke, and Peter N. Barsoom, “Managing the Evolution of Multilateralism,” *International Organization*, Vol. 52, No. 2 (Spring 1998), pp. 397–419.

be to look at the congruence of voting in the United Nations General Assembly.<sup>43</sup> Not surprisingly, the index of similarity (essentially an index of political distance between two states) from the mid-1970s through to the mid-1990s is quite high between China and developing states such as India and Mexico (see Figure 5). The average index is lower for China and status quo developed states such as Britain, Canada, and Japan, but it increased over the 1990s in the case of the latter two countries. It is lowest, by far, for China and the United States and it decreased into the 1990s. Thus, whatever growing friction there has been between U.S. and Chinese interests—as manifested, say, in General Assembly voting—this is not an across-the-board phenomenon in China’s relations with a range of other status quo states. Figure 5 suggests, therefore, that the issue is not China’s status quo or non-status quo behavior, but rather its potential conflicts of interests with the United States, given how the leaderships in both countries have defined these interests. These two issues should be kept analytically separate when determining how dissatisfied China is with international norms and institutions.

### *Revisionist Preferences and the Distribution of Power*

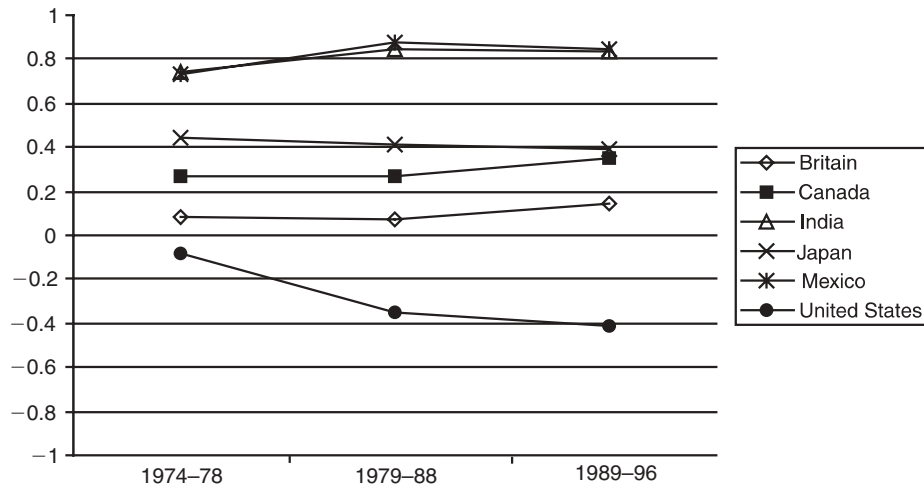
Concerning this fourth indicator of revisionism, it seems to be conventional wisdom among many scholars and policy analysts in the United States that China has a clear goal of establishing regional hegemony and will do so as its relative power increases.<sup>44</sup> Their argument variously invokes Sino-centric im-

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43. Here I use the index of similarity developed by Curtis S. Signorino and Jeffery M. Ritter. The S index is basically a spatial model measuring the distance between state *A* and state *B* on one or more policy dimensions, and is a more accurate indicator of congruence in roll call voting than the traditionally used tau B. See Signorino and Ritter, “Tau-b or Not Tau-b: Measuring the Similarity of Foreign Policy Positions,” *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (March 1999), pp. 115–144. I am grateful to Erik Gartzke for providing me with his similarity (Affinity) index data set. Period one (1974–78) starts with the beginning of the data set and goes to the end of the Maoist era. Period two (1979–88) runs from the start of the Dengist reforms to just prior to the June 4 suppression of the democracy movement in Beijing. Period three (1989–96) runs from June 4 through the end of the data period.

44. The U.S. Department of Defense’s (DoD’s) *Report to Congress Pursuant to the FY2000 National Defense Authorization Act* on Chinese military power states that “China also wants to become the preeminent Asian power by generating enough ‘strength’ so that no major action will be taken by any other international actor in Asia without first considering Chinese interests. . . . China seeks to become the preeminent power among regional states in East Asia.” See <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jun2000/china06222000.htm>. This is taken to be axiomatic by many commentators. See Aaron L. Friedberg, “The Struggle for Mastery in Asia,” *Commentary*, Vol. 110, No. 4 (November 2000), p. 17; and Larry Wortzel, *China’s Military Potential* (Carlisle, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, Army War College, October 1998), p. 16.

**Figure 5. Mean Similarity Index with Select Countries per Foreign Policy Period, 1974–96.**



ages of Middle Kingdom impulses, the desire to create a modern-day version of the ancient “tribute system” whereby smaller states meekly defer to China’s interests, or more generalized historical analogies whereby China, like Germany and Japan in the past, would naturally want to change the power and prestige hierarchy in Asia, and eventually to end U.S. unipolarity, replacing it with a multipolar world.<sup>45</sup>

The claim about Chinese revisionism toward regional and global power distributions raises two questions. The first and perhaps most fundamental question is whether China’s leadership has a well-thought-out, shared preference for establishing hegemony in the region, for pushing U.S. military power out

45. There are two broad clusters of arguments that one could invoke for explaining this hypothesized revisionism, and proponents of this characterization of Chinese goals will often use all of them. The first includes domestic political change arguments. Here there are three separate claims: The CCP regime faces legitimacy problems and has been willing to play the nationalist card domestically, including appeals to historical notions of Chinese greatness in the region. Relatedly, nationalist messages are combined with militaristic and mercantilist conceptions of how to achieve security, giving relatively more influence in the policy process to hard-liners. Finally, the CCP leadership has historically been committed to reasserting regional hegemony, but until this point has lacked the capabilities to do so. Economic growth over the past twenty years is creating the resources for a more assertive foreign policy. The second cluster focuses on international structural changes. In particular, the collapse of Soviet power and emergence of the United States as hegemon directly threatens Chinese security. Thus China’s leaders, being security-maximizing rational actors, are balancing against U.S. power as neorealist theory suggests they should.

of the region, and for setting up a tribute system redux, or in Western international relations parlance, a sphere of influence similar to the Soviet sphere in Eastern Europe or the U.S. sphere in Latin America during the Cold War. The second question is whether China is indeed proactively balancing against U.S. military power and trying to undermine its alliances.

As for the first question, this is a hard to answer.<sup>46</sup> If one were to list the range of revisionist goals that observers believe Chinese leaders have in the East Asia region, it would include, from most grandiose to least grandiose, establishing Chinese hegemony in the region at the expense of U.S. power; asserting sovereign control over territory explicitly claimed by China (e.g., the Spratly Islands); and reunifying Taiwan with the mainland under the one-China rubric.

The clarity of the evidence for these revisionist politico-military goals in the region, however, is inversely related to the grandiosity of the goals. The best available evidence concerns the Chinese leadership's desire to eventually revise the status quo on Taiwan. There are plenty of Chinese government documents and statements, think-tank studies, and interview data about the leadership's intent to at least prevent any further drift of Taiwan toward permanent separation. There is good evidence as well that military modernization programs, training exercises, and doctrinal innovation in the People's Liberation Army (PLA), particularly since the Taiwan Strait crisis of 1996, are aimed to a large degree at dealing with Taiwanese separation.<sup>47</sup>

The evidence on the Spratly Islands issue is somewhat more speculative. Chinese diplomacy on this question in the last five years or so has been more moderate than it was in the early 1990s, as China moves tentatively toward

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46. This is a separate question from whether or not Chinese leaders and elites would like to see China as a great power with interests and influence beyond its immediate boundaries. Proponents of hard realpolitik in Chinese foreign policy undeniably see the behavior of other major powers as giving China a mandate to develop global interests and enforce these, when necessary, with military power. See for example, the argument by Zhang Zuqian, a researcher with the Shanghai Institute of International Studies: "Zhongguo guofang xiandaihua yu Taiwan wenti" [China's national defense modernization and the Taiwan question], [http://www.siiis.org.cn/inc/wzzw.asp?re\\_id=193](http://www.siiis.org.cn/inc/wzzw.asp?re_id=193). Many Russian and French citizens wish the same for their own countries. In the absence of a clear concept of the kinds of institutions, norms, regimes, actors, and redistributions of territory and power that a state's leaders believe ought to occur, this kind of hope is not particularly strong evidence of proactively revisionist preferences. Moreover, it is unclear how widespread these sentiments are.

47. On the importance of preventing Taiwan's independence, see Thomas J. Christensen, "China," in Richard J. Ellings and Aaron L. Friedberg, eds., *Strategic Asia: Power and Purpose, 2001–2002* (Seattle, Wash.: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2001), pp. 39–47; and David M. Finkelstein, *China's National Military Strategy* (Alexandria, Va.: CNA Corporation, January 2000), pp. 5–6.

accepting a code of conduct promoted by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Some internal circulation materials from government-connected think tanks do indicate, however, that the long-term intention is still to establish sovereign control over the islands. For some Chinese analysts, this should occur once China has the military capacity to achieve this goal. For others it should occur through diplomatic negotiations, joint economic development, and the use of international legal instruments, because the costs of military action are too high.<sup>48</sup> But in this regard China is like the Spratlys' other claimants. Indeed none of the claimants has sound legal basis—be it on the basis of discovery, occupation and settlement, extension of the continental shelf, the archipelago principle, or extension of an exclusive economic zone—for the claims they make.

The evidence is most problematic concerning the goal of establishing Chinese hegemony in the region or beyond. Most scholars, government officials, and pundits who routinely make this claim infer it from particular readings of particular parts of Chinese history. Some invoke the ancient Middle Kingdom or the more recent Qing dynasty tribute system narratives as though the existence of these historical analogies is incontrovertible evidence for the current leadership's thinking. Others make this inference on the basis of historical analogies from Europe (most commonly, the rise of Wilhelmine Germany). Needless to say, historical analogies are analogies, not causes or explanations. Analogical arguments such as these tend to haphazardly pick and choose the similarities to focus on while ignoring potentially important differences. Those who use historical analogies to reason about the current Chinese leadership's intentions tend to commit one of two kinds of analytical errors. Either they are unclear about why precisely China's current leaders would have internalized some historical analogies (say analogies to China's tribute system or some Sino-centric imperial system from the past) and not others. Or they are imprecise about why China's foreign policy preferences today are similar to those of

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48. As one study put it, China's policy of "putting aside differences and jointly developing" the area (*gezhi zhengyi gongtong kaigfa*) is a "stratagem not a goal." See Lu Jianren, "Nansha zhengduan ji duice" [Disputes in the Spratlys and countermeasures] (1995), in *Nansha wenti yanjiu ziliao* [The Spratly issue research materials] (Beijing: Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 1996), p. 311. For an argument in favor of diplomacy over military force, see Zhang Zhirong and Wu Chong, "Jiejue Nansha zhengduan de duice xuanze" [Choices among countermeasures for resolving the Spratly disputes], in *ibid.*, p. 267. Canadian diplomats have noted that privately PRC ministry of foreign affairs specialists in regional security have acknowledged that the existence of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and other multilateral relationships with states in the region have reduced the probability that China could use force to resolve its claims. Interview with Canadian diplomat involved in regional security dialogues, October 1998.

Chinese or Europe leaders in earlier times, and apparently uncorrupted, or unaltered by obviously new and different historical conditions. Why, for instance, would any similarities in the influences drawn from Wilhelmine Germany's militarism and the current Chinese leadership's coercive diplomacy, say, on the Taiwan issue, not be altered by the fact that the CCP leadership probably depends more on foreign investment for economic growth and political legitimacy than did Wilhelmine Germany. Why would not any similarities also be affected by the fact that in the early twenty-first century, unlike the early twentieth century, the acquisition of new colonies by great powers is not a marker of major power status. Or why would not any similarities be changed by the fact that China's relative power vis-à-vis the status quo-oriented United States is far less than Germany's vis-à-vis status quo-oriented England?<sup>49</sup>

However, perhaps the more problematic element of these analogy-based claims about long-term Chinese goals in the region is the hard-to-interpret nature of the documentary paper trail, relative to the other two revisionist goals. One of the best pieces of evidence for these inferences about PRC intentions is the Chinese leadership's claim that U.S. relative power is weakening as the world heads toward multipolarization (*duojihua*), and that this is a good thing for China. Statements that multipolarity is an objective trend and a normative good explicitly challenge any continued U.S. hegemony or primacy. The meaning of this discourse, therefore, needs to be examined closely because even American scholars who are considered pro-engagement point to the PRC leadership's preference for a multipolar world as indicative of a fundamental clash with the desire by American leaders to preserve U.S. global and regional predominance.<sup>50</sup>

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49. For a pithy critique of this and other analogies to describe a rising China, see Avery Goldstein, "The Diplomatic Face of China's Grand Strategy: A Rising Power's Emerging Choice," *China Quarterly*, Vol. 168 (December 2001), p. 862.

50. Evan A. Feigenbaum, "China's Challenge to Pax," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (Summer 2001), pp. 31–43; David Shambaugh, "Sino-American Strategic Relations: From Partners to Competitors," *Survival*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (Spring 2000), pp. 97–115; and Bates Gill, "Contrasting Visions: China, the United States, and World Order," remarks to the U.S.-China Security Review Commission, Washington, D.C., August 3, 2001, <http://www.uscc.gov/tesgil.htm>. Often analysts in the United States will point to PLA writings as evidence of revisionist claims (e.g., evidence of the use of preemption, power projection, and offensive operations; the desire for a blue water navy; etc.). There is no doubt that these concepts are increasingly informing how China's military would prefer to fight military conflicts should it be given the political go-ahead. Inferring a desire for political and diplomatic dominance from a military operational claim is problematic, however. Military operations and politico-strategic decisionmaking by civilian leaders are not the same thing. No one would infer the foreign policy preferences of the U.S. president or the executive branch solely from an analysis of the DoD's *Joint Vision, 2020*, or the doctrinal manuals of different

How, then, should we understand the multipolarity discourse in China? The discourse is in fact a long-standing one. Indeed one can trace it back to Mao Zedong's evolving three world thesis, where he argued that in addition to two superpowers there were, variously comprised, a second world (capitalist developed states) and a third or revolutionary world (developing countries), and that the more powerful the second and third worlds were, the more constrained the superpowers would be.<sup>51</sup> In the 1980s and 1990s, Chinese foreign policy discourse claimed that the world was heading toward multipolarity, a more stable world of balanced power among five or so major centers (China, Europe, Japan, Russia, and the United States).<sup>52</sup> This was both a descriptive and a normative claim. It is unclear, however, what precisely one can infer about Chinese strategic goals from this multipolarity discourse.

First, the multipolarity discourse plays an ambiguous role in China's foreign policy process. There has often been a strong post hoc, faddish flavor to Chinese commentary on broad trends in international relations (*guoji geju*). It is unclear whether the multipolarity discourse informs leadership decisions, reflects leadership preferences, or is the manifestation of a deeply ingrained victimization view of China's relationship to the world. Thus, for instance, Chinese leaders have long favored multipolarity in an abstract way, because in principle it reflects a diminution of the influence of superpower or superpow-

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service branches. Of course, military operational requirements, once established, can spill over into, and constrain, diplomatic commitments (U.S. relations with Saudi Arabia are a case in point). But in this regard, currently the best evidence for a conscious design to pursue regional hegemony does not come from the capabilities and operational doctrine being developed by the PLA. Rather the evidence suggests that the PLA appears to hope to keep the U.S. Navy and Air Force far enough away from the Chinese coastline such that U.S. cruise missile and long-range strike advantage is neutralized; realistically this is likely to be along the boundaries of the so-called first island chain (Japan, the Ryukyus, Taiwan, and the Philippines). This may help to explain the lower-than-expected interest in logistics support and long-range power projection (e.g., aircraft carriers) and long-range amphibious landing capabilities. Others argue that the PLA envisions relying less on the navy to keep U.S. naval power at bay in the region than on long-range cruise and ballistic missiles. These capabilities are not the kind that necessarily allow for the creation of a Chinese "lake" in East Asia. See the summary of a CNA conference on PLA naval strategy in Kenneth Allen, *PLA Navy Building at the Start of a New Century* (Washington, D.C.: CNA Corporation, July 2001), p. 6.

51. One of China's top international relations experts, Wang Jisi, traces it back to Mao Zedong's concept of an intermediate zone between the Soviet Union and the United States that he developed in the 1940s. See Wang, "Multipolarity versus Hegemonism: Chinese Views of International Politics Today," paper prepared for the Conflict or Convergence: Global Perspectives on War, Peace, and International Order conference, Harvard Academy of International and Area Studies, Cambridge, Massachusetts, November 13–15, 1997, p. 1.

52. For a thorough summary of this discourse, see Michael Pillsbury, *China Debates the Future International Security Environment* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2000), pp. 3–61.

ers and a relative rise in the international influence of developing states and China. But as Thomas Christensen has pointed out, if one asks Chinese strategists if support for multipolarity means support for a rise in the relative power and strategic independence of Japan or nuclear weapons development in India, for instance, the response is often a negative or an ambivalent one.<sup>53</sup>

Second, there has been much debate in China over what the trend toward multipolarity means. Typically since the early 1990s, the official claim has been that international power trends showed a movement away from the bipolarity of the Cold War and toward multipolarity. Left unstated, however, is whether the current transition period is objectively one of unipolarity, with the United States as the sole remaining superpower.<sup>54</sup> For instance, some conservative nationalists have argued that the world is indeed unipolar and that the official terminology is laughable. This means that China has to be cautious in the short run in challenging U.S. power, but that the long-run goal should be to develop the strategic and diplomatic alliances to do so.<sup>55</sup> Some moderate voices agree that the current era is essentially one of U.S. unipolarity,<sup>56</sup> but that this is not

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53. See Christensen, "China," p. 30. One well-known conservative Chinese strategist, a major and early proponent of the multipolarity concept, noted that he personally supported a U.S.-China alliance against Japan. This position is in considerable tension with the argument that Japan should become a separate pole in a multipolar world. Conversation with the author, May 1996. This underscores an important methodological point in analyzing Chinese intentions: One has to engage interlocutors in discussion about real-world scenarios and the choices they believe they would make under those conditions.

54. For a subtle but devastating critique of his own leadership's tendency to view every era in international relations as a "transitional period" with little explication of the content of these transitions, see Wang Jisi, "Guoji guanxi lilun yu Zhongguo waijiao yanjiu" [International relations theory and research on Chinese foreign relations], in Zi Zhongyun, ed., *Guoji zhengzhi lilun tansuo zai Zhongguo* [Explorations of international politics theory in China] (Shanghai: People's Publishing House, 1998), p. 302.

55. He Xin, "Guanyu dangqian guonei xingshi de yi feng xin" [A letter concerning the current domestic situation], May 4, 1992, in He, ed., *He Xin zhengzhi jingji lunwen ji* [He Xin's collected essays on politics and economics] (Harbin: Heilongjiang Education Press, 1993), pp. 174-175; and Fang Ning, Wang Xiaodong, and Qiao Liang, *Quanjihua yinying xia de Zhongguo zhi lu* [China's road under the shadow of globalization] (Beijing: Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Press, 1999), p. 47. See also Zhang Runzhuang, "Chong gu Zhongguo waijiao suo chu zhi guoji huanjing" [Reestimating the international environment in which China's foreign relations are situated], *Zhanlue yu guanli* [Strategy and management], No. 1 (2001), p. 28. Those who prefer a more proactive anti-U.S. balancing strategy are, not surprisingly, leery of China's growing dependence on global capital and markets. Thus they are also critical of China's decision to enter the WTO. Given that WTO membership is Chinese policy, however, this suggests that the hard-line balancers are not the dominant voices at the moment in the foreign policy decisionmaking process.

56. See, for instance, Zhang Yunling's analysis of the strength of U.S. unipolarity, in Zhang, ed., *Huoban haishi duishou: tiaozheng zhong de Zhong Mei Ri E guanxi* [Partners or adversaries? Sino-U.S.-Japanese-Russian relations in transformation] (Beijing: Social Science Documents Press, 2000), pp. 24-30. He implies that even if one refers to the current system as "one superpower and many

entirely to China's disadvantage. U.S. hegemony is preferable to Japanese hegemony, for instance.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, even though the United States is the sole superpower, China can benefit from economic relations with the United States and from the relative global stability that U.S. hegemony affords. As one analyst put it, although China does not like an international system governed by U.S.- and Western-designed rules, it still has to admit that China can free ride on the provision of certain international and regional public goods.<sup>58</sup> Another concluded that although China supports a more just and reasonable international order, "China is by no means a challenger to the current international order. Under the current international system and norms, China can ensure its own national interests."<sup>59</sup> Still another analyst argued that China is neither a challenger nor a blind follower of the U.S.-defined international order. Rather China should focus its attention on helping to build international institutions and organizations, particularly among the great powers.<sup>60</sup> If there is policy advice from this group of moderates, it is that China should use international institutions—multilateralism more so than military power—to constrain U.S. behavior.<sup>61</sup>

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major powers" (*yi chao duo qiang*) as a somewhat more politically correct way of referring to U.S. unipolarity, of these "many major powers" a number of them are close U.S. allies and thus part of American power. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

57. See Wang Jianwei's study of Chinese elite attitudes in the early 1990s, *Limited Adversaries: Post-Cold War U.S.-China Mutual Images* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). It is interesting to note that in the 1998 Beijing Area Study, a randomly sampled poll of about 700 Beijing residents conducted by the Research Center on Contemporary China at Beijing University, those who believed that U.S. power would increase over the next ten years held far higher levels of amity toward the United States (measured on a 100 degree feeling thermometer) than those who believed that U.S. influence would decline (ANOVA  $F = 29.01$ ,  $p = 0.00$ ). The same pattern holds in attitudes toward China's influence over the next ten years. Those who believed that it would increase had a lower level of amity toward the United States than those who believed that China's influence would remain the same or decline (ANOVA  $F = 3.05$ ,  $p = 0.048$ ). More interesting, the small number of respondents who believed that U.S. power would strengthen while China's would not also held extraordinarily above-average levels of amity toward the United States (75 degrees on the 100 degree scale compared with the sample average of 63 degrees). These findings would suggest that a strongly pro-American posture is associated with a descriptive and normative preference for increased U.S. power.

58. Wang Yizhou, "Guanyu duojihua de ruogan sikao" [A few thoughts concerning multipolarity], Institute of World Economics and Politics, Beijing, April–May 2000.

59. Zhu Feng, "Zai lishi gui yi zhong bawo ZhongMei guanxi" [Understand Sino-U.S. relations from the legacy of history], *Huanqiu Shibao Guoji Luntan* [Global Times international forum], February 28, 2002, <http://interforum.xilubbs.com/>.

60. Fan Shaojun, "Canyu he peiyu guoji guanxi de zhidu jianshe" [Participate in and cultivate the institutional construction of international relations], *Guoji guanxi xueyuan xuebao* [School of International Studies journal] (Shenzhen), No. 2 (2002).

61. See Zhang Yunling, "Zonghe anquan guan ji dui wo guo anquan de sikao" [The concept of comprehensive security and reflections on China's security], *Dangai Ya Tai* [Contemporary Asia-

Other moderates, on the other hand, continue to claim that multipolarity is still the main trend. But they make this claim to head off Chinese hard-liners who believe that the unipolar moment requires more vigorous balancing against the United States. Thus, for these moderates, multipolarity means that China does not need to so actively confront and challenge U.S. interests.<sup>62</sup> This point is missed by some analysts in the United States who believe that the multipolarity discourse is evidence of a monolithic Chinese desire to challenge U.S. primacy.<sup>63</sup> For more centrist realpolitik voices, multipolarity essentially means an international system based on the five principles of peaceful coexistence—hardly revolutionary or dramatically revisionist values—and where other states will have to take China's vital interests into account.<sup>64</sup>

Overall, then, since the early 1990s, if not longer, Chinese analysts have not agreed on what the trend lines have been in the evolution of polarity,<sup>65</sup> or on whether multipolarity even implies that China should launch a major chal-

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Pacific studies], No. 1 (2000), pp. 1–16; Wang Yizhou, “Duojihua bu deng yu fan mei” [Multipolarity is not equivalent to anti-Americanism], n.d., <http://memo.363.net/comment/duice09.htm>; Wang Yizhou, “Xin shiji de zhongguo yu duobian waijiao” [The new century China and multilateral diplomacy], paper presented to the Theory of Multilateralism and Multilateral Diplomacy research conference, Beijing, July 2001. Zhang Yunling notes that under the conditions where potential balancers against U.S. power are U.S. allies, one should not overestimate the emergence of a more powerful Europe, for instance, as a constraint on U.S. power. Rather, under these conditions the two major constraints on U.S. power are markets and international organizations. See Zhang, *Huoban haishi duishou*, p. 31. Another moderate analyst, Shen Biru, argued even at the height of fears of U.S. interventionism during the Kosovo war that building multipolarity and opposing U.S. unipolarity cannot be accomplished through traditional great power conflict, but through the construction of a new world order. “‘Heping yu fazhan’ mianlin yanzhong tiaozhan” [“Peace and development” faces a serious challenge], in Wang Yizhou, ed., *Danji shijie de yinmai* [The gloom of a unipolar world] (Beijing: Social Science Documents Press, 1999), p. 383.

62. See, for instance, the critique of the moderate Shi Yinhong's views by Wang Xiaodong, one of the more prominent nationalist intellectuals. Wang, “Meiguo zhadan Zhongguo zhu Nan shi hou de yi xie sikao” [Some thoughts after the U.S. bombed China's embassy in Yugoslavia], in Fang, Wang, and Song, *Quanqiuhua yinying xia de Zhongguo zhi lu*, pp. 3–20.

63. See *Report to Congress of the U.S.-China Security Review Commission*, July 2002, <http://www.uscc.gov/anrp02.htm>.

64. The five principles are “mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, noninterference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.” See Yan Xuotong's vision of a multipolar world where in ten to fifteen years the five principles of peaceful coexistence reign, where China is a more powerful defender of developing world interests (why China would still be a developing country after its rise as a pole is unclear), and where “Eastern” values of collective and national interest are stronger relative to “Western” values where the individual is more important than the state or group. Yan, *Zhongguo jueqi—guoji huanjing pinggu* [An assessment of the international environment for China's rise] (Tianjin: People's Publishing House, 1999), pp. 349–355.

65. This diversity of views is a point made by Michael Pillsbury in his book, *China Debates the Future International Environment*, but one that is lost on many of the users of his research in Washington.

lenge to U.S. power. Moreover, since the mid-1990s and especially after the successful projection of U.S. power in Kosovo, as well as in the face of the growing military capabilities gap between the United States and potential contenders, many Chinese analysts have expressed increasing pessimism that multipolarity trends are going the way the Chinese leadership would prefer. In the mid-1990s it seemed that the regime was hedging: It claimed that there was a long-term trend toward multipolarity, but that the international system would be characterized by one superpower and many major powers (*yi chao duo qiang*) well into the future.<sup>66</sup> Most interesting in this regard was the 2000 White Paper on National Defense, compiled largely by PLA strategists. In the preamble to this document, the authors regard U.S. relative power—the gap between the United States and all other states—as remaining constant, if not actually increasing. Chinese assessments of comprehensive national power (CNP)—a composite index that weights hard power (gross national power, military power, levels of education, etc.) and soft power (foreign policy influence, cultural dynamism, etc.) indicators to determine relative power among major powers over the next ten to twenty years—are increasingly doubtful about China's ability to close the gap with the United States. As Figure 6 shows, the projections for China's CNP as a percentage of U.S. CNP over time are increasingly pessimistic.<sup>67</sup> For some Chinese analysts, the gap in power and in geostrategic capabilities vis-à-vis the United States means that China cannot realistically become an ocean great power.<sup>68</sup> In practice this means that it cannot realistically think of replacing the United States as the regional hegemon.

Finally, the notion that multipolarity best describes the changing structure of world politics appears most recently to be on the wane relative to new concepts such as globalization. As one indicator of this, references to globalization

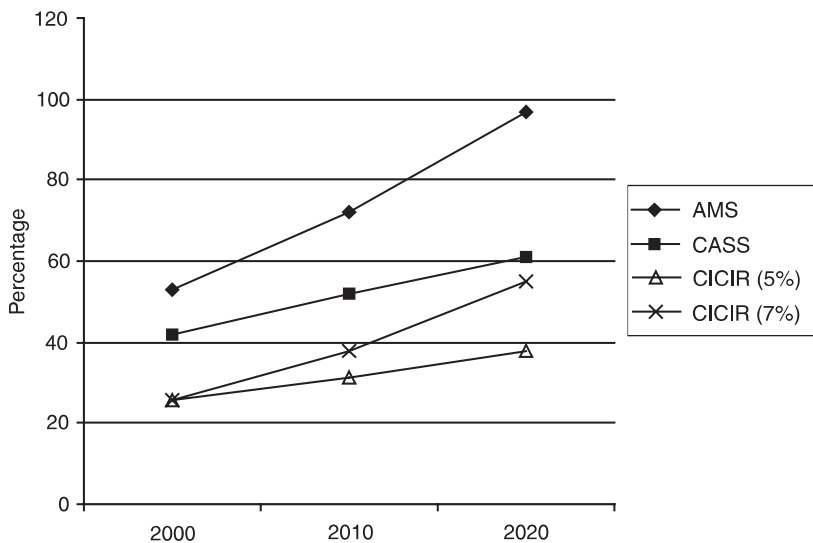
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66. See Wang, "Multipolarity versus Hegemonism," p. 4. This characterization is one that China's "new thinkers"—those less worried about American unipolarity because China benefits from some of the institutions created by U.S. power—are happy to live with. Interview with think tank specialist on Asia-Pacific international relations, December 1998.

67. See also Yong Deng's analysis of pessimism among Chinese analysts about the likelihood of multipolarity, "Hegemon on the Offensive: Chinese Perspectives on U.S. Global Strategy," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 116, No. 3 (Fall 2001), pp. 343–365. Yong aptly describes the normative preferences of the Chinese leadership as "China's utopian multipolar world." *Ibid.*, p. 344. For an insightful assessment of the estimates of China's relative weakness vis-à-vis the United States, and the caution this has induced in Chinese diplomacy in the region, see David Finkelstein, "Chinese Perceptions of the Costs of a Conflict," in Andrew Scobell, ed., *The Costs of Conflict: The Impact on China of a Future War* (Carlisle, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, Army War College, October 2001), pp. 9–27.

68. See Tang Shiping, "Zailun Zhongguo de da zhanlue" [Once again on China's grand strategy], *Zhanlue yu guanli*, No. 4 (2001), p. 33.

**Figure 6. Chinese Estimates of Trends in Comprehensive National Power as a Percentage of U.S. Comprehensive National Power, 1990–2020.**



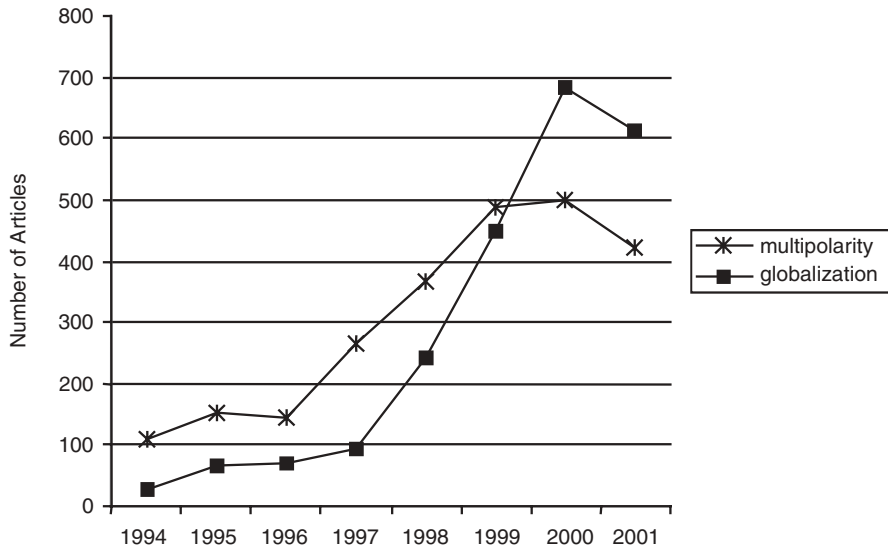
SOURCES: The AMS (Academy of Military Science) and CASS (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) estimates are taken from Pillsbury, *China Debates the Future International Security Environment*, p. 249, Table 10. The CICIR estimates are calculated from data in CICIR, *Zonghe guoli pinggu xitong: yanjiu baogao* [System for estimating comprehensive national strength: research report] (Beijing: China Institute of Contemporary International Relations, 2000), p. 20.

NOTE: AMS refers to the most optimistic estimate of relative CNP trends from a study by an AMS scholar conducted in the late 1980s and early 1990s. CASS refers to a 1996 estimate from one of its subordinate institutes. CICIR (5 percent) refers to an estimate by the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations, the rough equivalent to the Directorate of Intelligence in the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, that assumes a 5 percent growth in China’s CNP and a 3 percent growth in U.S. CNP. CICIR (7 percent) refers to a CICIR estimate that assumes a 7 percent growth rate for China’s CNP. The CICIR estimate was made in 2000.

in Chinese academic journals have surpassed references to multipolarization (see Figure 7).<sup>69</sup> The globalization discourse recognizes that the main factors that will constrain states and state sovereignty in the future—their domestic economic choices, domestic cultural choices, even domestic political choices,

69. Interestingly, Qian Qichen, the former minister of foreign affairs and still the dominant elder figure in foreign policymaking, recently listed some of the key issues in international relations research for China. First on the list was the “information society.” Second was the question of globalization. Multipolarity was not among the topics. See Qian, “Dangqian guojiguanxi yanjiu zhong de ruogan zhongdian wenti” [Several key issues in current research on international relations], *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi* [World economics and politics], No. 9 (2000), pp. 5–8.

**Figure 7. Frequency of International Relations Articles That Use the Terms “Multipolarity” (*duojihua*) and “Globalization” (*quanqiuhua*) in Chinese Academic Journals, 1994–2001.**



NOTE: The frequency counts come from keyword searches of articles from the international relations and world politics subcategories in the online China Academic Journal Database.

and their foreign policies—may have less to do with material power distributions and more to do with a state’s openness to global capital, information, and technology flows. Chinese analysts mostly agree that globalization is a double-edged sword, with adverse effects for state sovereignty and autonomy in a range of policy areas (economics, culture, and even domestic governance issues such as human rights).<sup>70</sup> According to some analysts, globalization creates a new structure of capital penetration within which states compete for the (often finite) benefits of the information and technology that capital brings with it. Globalization does not always connote a global village that replaces interstate relations, nor does it necessarily equate to integration (*yi ti hua*), or the dissolution of the nation-state.<sup>71</sup>

70. See for instance, Huang Shixi, “Quanqiuhua dui guoji fa de yingxiang” [The influence of globalization on international law], *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi*, No. 11 (2000), pp. 28–33; and Liu Jie, *Jingji quanqiuhua shidai de guojia zhuquan* [National sovereignty in an era of economic globalization] (Beijing: Long March Publishing, 2001), pp. 304, 307.

71. See Wang Yizhou, *Dangdai guoji zhengzhi pouxu* [Analysis of contemporary international poli-

According to more liberal analysts, the globalization trope dilutes somewhat the long-dominant Chinese vision of international politics as a struggle among states to enhance relative power in the international power structure (polarity). The metric for determining the vitality and longevity of the state and its political structures is not how much relative power the state controls, but how it has configured its economic and foreign policies in such a way as to tap into the transnational production of new sources of wealth, status, and economic security. Where a state stands in the hierarchy of material power distributions matters less than where it sits in the global division of labor in value-added production.<sup>72</sup> Some analysts push this further and argue that in a globalization framework for analysis the nation-state is no longer the primary unit of analysis, and that it is within this framework that one can talk about common global norms of behavior that transcend state interests.<sup>73</sup> Implicit in some conceptualizations of globalization is the argument that national self-reliance is no long a viable development (or security) option, particularly in the face of transnational or nontraditional security problems (e.g., illegal drugs, crime, terrorism, and ecological damage) whose appearance and virulence is related to economic and technological globalization.<sup>74</sup> Moreover, globalization transforms political relations among major powers into more complex combinations of cooperative and conflictual interactions, the relative balance of which is not so clearly determined by polarity.<sup>75</sup>

In short, the multipolarity discourse is not an unproblematic indicator of the revisionist intentions of China's leaders. Unfortunately, this point has been missed by much of the academic and pundit analysis of Chinese foreign policy recently. One important example is the 2002 congressionally mandated U.S.-China Security Commission report. It seems to take the multipolarity concept as prime facie evidence of a consensus in China that U.S. unipolar power was

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tics] (Shanghai: People's Publishing House, 1995), p. 16; and Liu, *Jingji quanqiuhua shidai de guojia zhuquan*, pp. 304–305. For one of the few secondary analyses of the concept of globalization in China, see Thomas Moore, "China and Globalization," in Samuel S. Kim, ed., *East Asia and Globalization* (Lanham, Md.: Rowan and Littlefield, 2000), pp. 111–118.

72. Appropriately, then, some Chinese analysts argue that traditional realist theory is no longer as useful for understanding international politics as liberal and institutional theory. See, for instance, Wang Xueyu, "Cong guojihua dao quanqiuhua" [From internationalization to globalization], *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi*, No. 8 (2000), p. 52.

73. Wang, *Dangdai guoji zhengzhi pouxu*, pp. 15–16.

74. See Wang Yizhou, "Zhubian shouji" [Editor's note], in Wang, ed., *Quanqiuhua shidai de guoji anquan* [International security in the era of globalization] (Shanghai: People's Publishing House, 1999), p. 8; and Liang Guangyan, "Quanqiuhua shidai: dangdai guoji anquan de beijing" [The era of globalization: the international security background], in *ibid.*, p. 25.

75. Wang, "Duoqihua bu deng yu fan Mei."

on the wane. As is clear from more recent debates over multipolarity in China, the report's conclusion was out of date before it came out.<sup>76</sup>

### *Revisionist Behavior and the Distribution of Power*

What about behavior toward the distribution of power, the fifth indicator of a state's level of revisionism? Is China's diplomacy consistent with a strategic goal of establishing regional or even global hegemony? Again the evidence is not clear cut. Even if the multipolarity discourse reflects a long-term wish, it is not an especially good guide to near- and medium-term foreign policy behavior. Indeed, for all its support for multipolarity, China's government is not doing a great deal concretely to encourage its emergence. In international relations theory, an active effort by states to reduce U.S. relative power and influence in the region would be called balancing. Typically states can balance internally by mobilizing economic, technological, and human resources to translate into military/strategic power or externally by finding allies that share a common interest in opposing a stronger hegemon or dominant state, or sometimes both. So is China balancing against the United States in the region?

There seems to be little doubt that China's military modernization program since the mid-1990s has been aimed in large measure at developing capabilities to deter or slow the application of U.S. military power in the region. But it is also clear that the immediate and medium-term issue at stake for Chinese leaders is Taiwan, not the U.S. strategic presence in the region per se or necessarily other military contingencies such as a war on the Korea Peninsula, or power projection far beyond its periphery.<sup>77</sup> That is, the PLA is tasked with minimizing the U.S. ability to defend Taiwan against Chinese military coercion in the event it is employed. Currently PLA modernization is not primarily designed to seize the rest of the South China Sea islands. The rate of real increase in Chinese military expenditures has grown substantially in last few years (18 percent in 2000 and again in 2001). Nonetheless, it is unclear whether this increased funding represents balancing in the traditional sense. For one thing, balance of power literature is extremely vague as to what kinds or levels of

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76. See *Report to Congress of the U.S.-China Security Review Commission*.

77. One other important general goal for the Chinese military is to protect China's "economic center of gravity," which has shifted from the hinterland in the Maoist and early Deng periods to the coastal areas. The anti-access capabilities useful for this purposes are similar to those required to keep the U.S. military away from the Chinese coast in the event of a war over Taiwan. See Finkelstein, *China's National Military Strategy*, pp. 17-18.

increases in military expenditures constitute balancing. Military expenditures are not simply functions of external threats/opportunities; they are also determined by technological innovation cycles, organizational interests, and domestic ideologies. Moreover, as a percentage of GDP, Chinese military expenditures do not appear to have reached levels where one could conclude that the Chinese economy is being militarized and mobilized to balance against U.S. power.

As for external balancing, China is not trying as hard as it might to construct anti-U.S. alliances or undermine U.S. alliances globally or regionally, at least nowhere near the degree to which the Soviets competed with the United States during the Cold War. Although China signed a treaty of friendship with Russia in 2001, it would be a stretch to call this an anti-U.S. alliance. President Vladimir Putin and his advisers' fundamental impulse is to rely on closer ties with Europe and the United States to develop the Russian economy. Strategically, Russia's most useful role in the Sino-Russian relationship is as a source of weapons, not a strategic partner for confronting and counterbalancing U.S. power and interests in every forum. And even then the Russian motivation appears mainly to be an economic one—keeping Russian industries and workers afloat—not primarily an anti-American strategic one. Moreover, even Sino-Russian positions that have been in some sense anti-American are often positions that would strengthen or uphold the international institutional status quo (e.g., strengthening the role of the UN and preserving existing arms control agreements such as the ABM).<sup>78</sup>

Nor does China appear to be all that active in trying to pry the United States and Japan or the United States and the Republic of Korea (ROK) apart. Beijing's official position has long been that foreign forces (e.g., those of the United States, and before that the Soviet Union) should withdraw from the region. For example, U.S. analysts and pundits in the 1980s generally did not take this position seriously enough to argue that China was a revisionist state at that time.<sup>79</sup>

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78. For an insightful study of the motives for and limits on Sino-Russian strategic cooperation, see Alexander Lukin, *Russian Images of China and Russia-China Relations* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Northeast Asian Studies, Brookings, 2001), [http://www.brookings.org/fp/cnaps/papers/lukinwp\\_01.pdf](http://www.brookings.org/fp/cnaps/papers/lukinwp_01.pdf).

79. For a more recent statement of this hope from one of the leading realpolitik analysts in China, see Yan Xuetong, *Zhongguo guojia liyi fenxi* [Analysis of China's national interest] (Tianjin: People's Publishing House, 1997), p. 288. Yan calls for the gradual reduction in foreign forces in the region, replaced by commitments of regional actors not to join alliances aimed at third parties, and an extensive multilateral structure that includes early warning mechanisms, increased military transparency, and a proactive preventive diplomacy committee, among other measures.

More important, in practice China's leaders are not unequivocally against these alliances. At the moment, the primary tool in Chinese diplomacy is rhetorical—a critique of the obsolescence of the “Cold War thinking” that undergirds bilateral military alliances in the region.<sup>80</sup> The conceptual replacement is the so-called new security concept (*xin anquan guan*), whereby the Asia-Pacific region would consist of multilateral institutions and stable bilateral relations based on the five principles of peaceful coexistence. This rhetoric has little appeal in the region and is hardly a substantive challenge to U.S. alliances. For instance, China has not (yet) used economic or military threats,<sup>81</sup> or covert financial intervention in domestic political debates, to promote anti-alliance policies within Japan and South Korea. Indeed, the reason probably has to do with the tension between China's sweeping anti-alliance rhetoric and its perceived interests in specific alliances.

The U.S.-ROK alliance, for instance, serves Beijing's interest in stabilizing the Korean Peninsula's division.<sup>82</sup> Beijing appears to believe that the ROK shares an interest in a so-called soft landing for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), a gradual process of domestic reform alongside greater diplomatic acceptance by the United States and Japan that help to preserve the regime as both Koreas slowly reduce barriers to trade and flows of people. Thus the ROK's interests also act as a brake on any rash U.S. attempts to engineer a so-called hard landing, the rapid dissolution of the DPRK, and unification of the peninsula under the ROK's control. China's leaders prefer the geopolitical status quo—the continuing existence of an independent ROK and DPRK. Chinese analysts indirectly suggest that the main source of instability on the pen-

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80. Minor diplomatic offensives in places such as the ARF have been aimed at constraining U.S. bilateral alliance activity. These have been unsuccessful, however, in undermining these alliances in the eyes of leaders of other states in the region. One such effort in 1997—to convince the ARF to agree to voluntarily invite observers to joint military exercises (which the United States and its allies conduct, and which China does not)—reflected PLA preferences more than those of the ministry of foreign affairs, and ran into heavy criticism from other ARF delegations. The PRC ultimately shelved the proposal. Interviews with various Chinese, Canadian, and U.S. diplomats, analysts, and military officers, 1996, 1997, 1998.

81. This does not exclude the likelihood, of course, that in the lead-up to an imminent war with the United States over Taiwan, China would threaten Japan with military retaliation for its intervention on the U.S. side. Some in the PLA contend that it would be a political mistake to attack U.S. targets in Japan, however. Conversation with a senior PLA officer, November 2000.

82. For a sophisticated analysis of Chinese interests on the Korean Peninsula, see Tang Shiping, “A Neutral Reunified Korea: A Chinese View,” *Journal of East Asian Affairs* (Seoul), Vol. 13, No. 2 (Fall/Winter 1999), pp. 464–483; and Avery Goldstein, “Across the Yalu: China's Interest and the Korean Peninsula in a Changing World,” paper prepared for New Directions in Chinese Foreign Policy: A Conference in Honor of Allen S. Whiting.

insula would come largely from the DPRK—a political coup, an economic collapse, additional tests of long-range ballistic missiles, or the development of nuclear weapons.<sup>83</sup> Thus Beijing appears to believe that stability on the peninsula can best be realized by restraint on DPRK WMD programs and delivery systems, by economic development and limited marketization roughly along the Chinese model, and by stable political relations among the key players—the DPRK, the ROK, China, the United States, and Japan.<sup>84</sup> This, evidently, has been China's message to the DPRK over the last decade. By most accounts, China has been relatively constructive in urging restraint in the DPRK's development of WMD capabilities and in supporting the institutions designed to ensure this restraint—the Framework Agreement of 1994 that froze the DPRK's plutonium production program, the Korean Energy Development Organization that was set up after the 1994 agreement to help provide energy supplies to the DPRK, and the Four Party peace talks (involving China, the United States, the ROK, and the DPRK) that began in 1999 to end the Korean War formally.<sup>85</sup> On relations with the ROK, Beijing does not have to worry much about

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83. See the analysis by several PLA strategists in Zhu Yangming, ed., *YaTai anquan zhanlue lun* [On security strategy in the Asia-Pacific] (Beijing: Military Sciences Press, 2000), p. 73

84. See Zhang Yunling, *Peace and Security of the Korean Peninsula and China's Role* (Beijing: Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 2001), [http://www.cass.net.cn/chinese/s28\\_yts/wordch-en/en-zyl/en-peace.htm](http://www.cass.net.cn/chinese/s28_yts/wordch-en/en-zyl/en-peace.htm). As of this writing it is still too early to tell what sort of changes the recent nuclear crisis, prompted by the DPRK's threats to undo all constraints on its nuclear weapons program unless the United States makes a formal nonaggression commitment, will bring to China's policies toward the ROK-U.S. alliance. At the moment China's and the ROK's preferences are closer than those of the ROK and United States. Both China and the ROK have argued that U.S. threats of further economic and political isolation are counterproductive. There are some hints, however, that China's leadership is increasingly impatient with the DPRK's nuclear diplomacy. A January 2003 article by Shi Yinhong, one of China's most respected moderate international relations specialist, suggests that China's interests are clearly threatened by what appears to be a DPRK effort to acquire a nuclear stockpile. Shi's article implies some convergence in U.S. and Chinese interests toward a quick and thorough end to the DPRK nuclear program. He notes that the main responsibility for the danger on the peninsula now resides with the DPRK government. The article may reflect a growing sentiment in the Chinese leadership because it appeared in *Ta Kung Pao*, a Hong Kong paper known sometimes to reflect the leadership's views on major issues. See Shi, "How to Understand and Respond to the Korean Nuclear Crisis," *Ta Kung Pao*, January 15, 2003, <http://202.83.203.133:8080/news/2003-1-15/ZMTG-95064.htm>. Whether Beijing's anger and concern about the DPRK's behavior would translate into acquiescence to a U.S. military response to Pyongyang's provocations depends on calculations about what sort of post-DPRK regime might be put in place and what its relationship to the U.S.-ROK alliance might be. These sorts of issues have never really been discussed between U.S. and Chinese officials because, to this point, Beijing has not wanted to worsen China-DPRK relations by talking with Washington about the modalities of the demise of North Korea.

85. Until the recent DPRK nuclear crisis, Chinese leaders may have calculated that the PRC's interests were served to some extent by the DPRK's use of potential, as opposed to deployed, WMD capabilities as a tool for extracting economic and political benefits from the ROK, the United States

public opinion in China. The Chinese public holds strongly positive views of the ROK, despite its formal military alliance with the United States.<sup>86</sup>

For the most part, the ROK shares Beijing's interests when it comes to the DPRK, having calculated that the costs of rapid unification would be excessively high (in 1998, estimates of the costs of unification after a DPRK "hard landing" in 2000 were anywhere from \$200 billion to \$1.2 trillion more in government spending over an indefinite period).<sup>87</sup> But the ROK's stake in this status quo is directly related to its sense of security vis-à-vis the DPRK, and the military alliance with the United States serves this purpose.<sup>88</sup>

Beijing's one major worry over the long term is the role that the alliance might play in any post-DPRK scenario. Chinese strategists are concerned that the United States intends to stay in the event of unification, and worse, may want to deploy forces above the 38th parallel. China's military exchanges with the ROK no doubt are designed to press home these concerns. The PRC hopes that the DPRK continues to exist because it acts as a buffer between U.S. military power and Chinese territory.

As for the U.S.-Japan alliance, Chinese attitudes are exceedingly complex. Since the announcement of guidelines for revising the U.S.-Japan security treaty in 1996 to specify more clearly the Japanese role in support of U.S. military operations in the region, Chinese leaders have been increasingly worried about the possibility that this alliance could become a tool for defending a permanently separated or even a formally independent Taiwan.<sup>89</sup> Many Chinese

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and Japan. This calculus may be changing, however. See Shi, "How to Understand and Respond to the Korean Nuclear Crisis."

86. According to the Beijing Area Study's feeling thermometer, on a 100 degree scale the mean degree of feeling toward the ROK in 2001 was 58 degrees, in contrast with 47 degrees for the United States and 35 degrees for Japan.

87. Marcus Noland, Sherman Robinson, and Li-gang Liu, *The Costs and Benefits of Korean Unification* (Stanford, Calif.: Asia/Pacific Research Center, Stanford University, March 1998).

88. On China's relatively relaxed view of the U.S.-ROK alliance, see Yu Bin, *Containment by Stealth: Chinese Views of and Policies toward America's Alliances with Japan and Korea after the Cold War* (Stanford, Calif.: Asia/Pacific Research Center, Stanford University, September 1999), pp. 10–11. Recent indications of dissatisfaction in the ROK with the alliance, due in part to a sense that the Bush administration has ignored ROK interests in its treatment of the DPRK, suggest that the alliance may weaken by itself, without any Chinese help.

89. Zhao Zijin, "ZhongMei guanxi zhong de Riben yinsu" [The Japan element in Sino-U.S. relations], in Zhu Chenghu, ed., *ZhongMei guangxi de fazhan bianhua ji qi qushi* [Changes and trends in the development of Sino-U.S. relations] (Nanjing: Jiangsu People's Press, 1998), pp. 362–363; Yang Bojiang, "Ribei lengzhanhou de anquan zhanlue," in Yan Xuetong, ed., *Zhongguo yu YaTai anquan* [China and Asia-Pacific security] (Beijing: Shishi Press, 1999), p. 160; Qing Wenhui and Sun Hui, "Hou lengzhan shidai de Zhongguo guojia anquan" [China's national security in the post-Cold War era], *Zhanlue yu guanli*, No. 1 (2001), p. 5; and Academy of Military Sciences Strategy Department, *2000–2001 nian zhanlue pinggu* [2000–2001 strategic assessments] (Beijing: Military Sciences Press, 2000), p. 83.

analysts believe, however, that a Japan within a bilateral alliance with the United States is still better than a Japan outside of such constraints as long as this alliance is not used to provide military cover for an independent Taiwan. Some of the more sophisticated analyses argue that, in the post-Cold War era, one of the purposes of the alliance has shifted from being a “bottle cap” (*pinggai*) on Japanese power, to being both a “bottle cap” on Japan and a constraint on Chinese and Russian power in the region.<sup>90</sup> It is the alliance’s alleged second purpose, tying China down in an U.S.-dominated security order, particularly as it relates to the Taiwan issue, that worries China’s leaders. Thus China’s diplomacy toward the U.S.-Japan alliance, particularly since the mid-1990s, has been largely aimed at extracting some kind of credible commitment—so far unsuccessful—that the alliance not be used to defend Taiwan in a conflict with the PRC.<sup>91</sup> In addition, Chinese analysts have suggested ways in which a weakened alliance might exist alongside and subordinate to multilateral institutions in the region, though these ideas remain rather underdeveloped.

In short, the Chinese leadership’s preference for the U.S.-Japan alliance at this moment is that it return to its pre-1996 form and function, constraining Japanese military power and assisting the United States to deter North Korea, not that it disappear entirely.<sup>92</sup> Chinese analysts usually are careful to state that they oppose the strengthening or reinforcement of the U.S.-Japan alliance, not the alliance’s existence per se.<sup>93</sup>

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90. See Jin, “MeiRi tongmen guanxi,” in Zhang, *Huoban haishi duishou*, pp. 260–261, 269. Even some PLA analysts imply that the United States intends to use the alliance both to control Japanese power and to deal with Chinese and Russian power. See AMS, *2000–2001 nian zhanlue pinggu*, p. 81.

91. See Wang Jianwei and Wu Xinbo, *Against Us or with Us? The Chinese Perspective of America’s Alliances with Japan and Korea* (Stanford, Calif.: Asia/Pacific Research Center, Stanford University, May 1998), p. 33. Beijing wants a statement excluding Taiwan from the scope of the U.S.-Japan treaty revisions. AMS, *2000–2001 nian zhanlue pinggu*, p. 83.

92. As Thomas J. Christensen points out, this contingent view of the alliance is consistent with the Chinese practical preference that Japan not emerge as an independent pole in a future multipolar world. See Christensen “China,” p. 30; and Christensen, “China, the U.S.-Japan Alliance, and the Security Dilemma in East Asia,” *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (Spring 1999), pp. 49–80.

93. Jin Xide, “ZhongRi huoban guanxi de queli he weilai fazhan” [The establishment and future development of Sino-Japanese partnership relations], in Zhang, *Huoban haishi duishou*, pp. 205, 258; and AMS, *2000–2001 nian zhanlue pinggu*, p. 83. There is actually a very subtle, moderate, security dilemma-sensitive argument for increasing the relative importance of regional multilateral institutions, an argument that is not simply anti-American or Taiwan focused. The argument is that because the relative power shift between a rising China and a stagnating Japan will be so dramatic, China has an interest in reassuring Japan. The U.S. alliance, of course, could do this, but at China’s expense. Thus the alternative is a credible multilateral institution that channels Chinese power in ways that reassure Japan. For the outlines of this kind of argument, see Tang Shiping and Zhou Xiaobing, “Dongmeng, Zhongguo, Riben de hezuo ji DongYa de weilai” [ASEAN—China-Japan

Some Chinese strategists have also implied that China's diplomacy toward Japan has been counterproductive. In their view, this diplomacy has been too influenced by an emotional anti-Japanese sentiment arising from the history of Japanese imperialism in China, and by an underestimation of the economic benefits of a relationship with Japan. These strategists recognize security dilemma dynamics, an intellectual breakthrough in how at least some Chinese analysts understand the Sino-Japanese relationship.<sup>94</sup> Moreover, some of these analysts believe that Japanese militarism is generally in check due to, inter alia, the U.S. alliance, political change since World War II, the inculcation of more pacific norms in the population, the persistent economic problems that Japan has experienced over the past decade, the realism of Japanese politicians that having China as an enemy in such close proximity is contrary to Japan's interests, and the deepening economic interdependence between China and Japan.<sup>95</sup> Given these arguments, these strategists contend, China should use less emotional diplomacy (i.e., reduce the frequency with which Japan is lambasted for its past aggression in China). This will help to prevent the emergence of more nationalist and revivalist voices in Japan.<sup>96</sup> In addition, good relations with the United States and Japan will help to reduce the China factor behind the strengthening U.S.-Japan alliance,<sup>97</sup> an interesting admission, by reverse logic, that a hard-line policy toward these two countries will have a counterproductive effect. These are hotly and publicly debated arguments.<sup>98</sup>

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cooperation and the future of East Asia], *Guoji jingji pinglun* [Commentary on international economics], No. 6 (November/December 2001), pp. 19–24.

94. See, for example, the opinion piece written by a PLA officer prominent in regional security policy, Sr. Col. Zhu Chenghu from the National Defense University. See Zhu, "ZhongRi guanxi: liyi yu qinggan" [Sino-Japanese relations: interest and emotion], *Huanqiu shibao* [Global Times], July 30, 1999; Ma Licheng (a writer for the Chinese Communist Party newspaper, *People's Daily*), "Dui Ri guanxi xin siwei" [New thinking about relations with Japan], *Zhanlue yu guangli*, No. 6 (2002), pp. 41–47; and Feng Zhaokui, "Guanyu ZhongRi guanxi de zhanlue sikao" [Strategic thoughts on Sino-Japanese relations], *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi*, No. 11 (2000), p. 12. On the unconstructive interactivity in the relationship, see *ibid.*, p. 1; and Jin, "ZhongRi huoban guanxi," p. 207.

95. Zhu, "ZhongRi guanxi: liyi yu qinggan." See also Jin, "ZhongRi huoban guanxi," pp. 205, 207. Normally fairly realpolitik on regional security issues, Yan Xuetong does not list Japan among the region's major military powers (China, Russia, and the United States). See Yan, "Zhongguo lengzhan hou de anquan zhanlue" [China's post-Cold War security strategy], in Yan, *Zhongguo yu YaTai anquan*, p. 39.

96. Zhu, "ZhongRi guanxi: liyi yu qinggan"; Feng, "Guanyu ZhongRi guanxi de zhanlue sikao"; and Gilbert Rozman, "China's Changing Images of Japan, 1998–2001: The Struggle to Balance Partnership and Rivalry," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (February 2002), p. 113.

97. Jin, "MeiRi tongmeng guanxi," p. 301.

98. For example, some PLA analysts are worried that Japanese public opinion is no longer a constraint on Japanese military expansion. See Yang Yunzhong, "Ribei jiasu xiang junshi daguo mubiao maijin" [Japan speeds up in forging ahead toward the goal of military great power] (2001), CASS Asia-Pacific Institute web page: [http://www.cass.net.cn/chinese/s28\\_yts/wordch-en/](http://www.cass.net.cn/chinese/s28_yts/wordch-en/)

But they appear to be the dominant arguments for the moment. This may help to explain why the Chinese government shifted to what has been termed “smile diplomacy” toward Japan in 1999–2000. One manifestation of this was the PRC’s relative quiet when Japan offered to send naval forces to assist U.S. operations against the Taliban government and al-Qaeda in the fall of 2001.

Some among the Chinese public appear to agree with this more cautious understanding of Japanese power. While many Chinese citizens do not like Japanese people, and believe that the Japanese people and state are by nature even more warlike than the Americans and the U.S. state,<sup>99</sup> they appear not to be too worried about the revival of Japanese militarism. According to the Beijing Area Study’s random sample of Beijing residents in 2001, only 8 percent chose the revival of Japanese militarism as the main threat to China. Most considered domestic social unrest, Taiwan independence, or U.S. military power to be the major security threat.<sup>100</sup> It is likely, however, that were Japan to participate in U.S. military operations in defense of Taiwan, the lines between Taiwan independence, U.S. military power, and revived Japanese militarism could blur, and the emotional racial stereotyping behind many Chinese views of Japan could come to the fore.

Finally, somewhat puzzling for a balancing argument is the fact that the Chinese economy has become increasingly dependent on the United States since the end of the Cold War, despite the surge in U.S. relative military power. In 2002 the United States was China’s second largest trading partner, with about 16 percent of China’s total trade.<sup>101</sup> China imports critical products such as aircraft and electronic integrated circuits from the United States. The United States ranked first among developed economies (excluding Hong Kong) in contracted foreign direct investment in China in 2001.<sup>102</sup> American foreign direct investment is critical in certain sectors of the Chinese economy such as automobiles and telecommunications. According to realist arguments, as the

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ch-ddyt2002/ch-qkddy0205yyz.htm. Others want to retaliate for Japan’s alleged lack of contrition for its historical aggression against China by shifting economic linkages away from Japan and toward Europe and the United States. See Feng Zhaokui’s critique of this view in Feng, “ZhongRi guanxi de zhanlue sikao,” p. 12.

99. According to the Beijing Area Study, the mean temperature toward Japan on the 100 degree feeling thermometer dropped from 51 degrees in 1998 to 36 degrees in 2001. The mean level of warlikeness on a 1 to 7 point peaceful-to-warlike scale attributed to the Japanese people in 2001 was 4.2; to Americans 3.7, and to the Chinese people, 1.5. For a summary of a study of Chinese history textbooks and their images of Japan, see Rozman, “China’s Changing Images of Japan,” pp. 119–120.

100. Data are from the 2001 Beijing Area Study.

101. I am grateful to Robert Kapp of the U.S.-China Business Council for providing these data.

102. See China Statistical Data, <http://www.china.org.cn/e-company/02-06-20/web020417.htm>.

weaker state, running a large trade surplus with the United States, China's relative power benefits more from this relationship than if it did not exist. This argument has some merit, assuming that it is possible to determine precisely how much of this net flow of economic resources to the PRC can be or has been translated into military power that can deter the United States from operating in the Asia-Pacific.

On the other hand, the economic relationship also creates a dependence on U.S. markets and capital for economic growth. Economic growth, in turn, is directly related to the legitimacy and longevity of CCP rule. The CCP's economic development strategy creates economic, social, and technological interdependencies that—given the relative size and underdevelopment of the Chinese economy—would be far more costly to the Chinese regime than to the United States should they come to an end.

Moreover, these interdependencies create constituencies inside the PRC that are not self-evidently hostile to the United States or supportive of all of China's foreign diplomacy. Economic interests along the coastline would be adversely affected by the militarization of East China in the event of a major conflict over Taiwan. An emerging middle class in urban China may be somewhat less supportive of strongly anti-American diplomacy than other socioeconomic groups in the country, including the military. Data from the Beijing Area Study surveys from 1998 to 2001 show that wealth (and education) are generally positively correlated with higher levels of amity toward the United States. Middle-class supporters of free trade have among the highest levels of amity toward the United States.<sup>103</sup>

Relatedly, economic growth considerations, not strategic balancing against U.S. power, seem to dominate the PRC's reaction to Japan's economic troubles. A preference for pure balancing would, presumably, lead Chinese leaders to hope for continued recession because an economically weak Japan is a Japan that cannot supply all of the military support that the United States is demanding from it. Instead Chinese leaders continue to be concerned about the impact of Japan's recession on the Chinese economy. They, like American leaders, are worried that high public debt and banking insolvency will reduce Japan's role as a market and as a source of capital for Chinese economic development.

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103. See Alastair Iain Johnston, "Chinese Middle-Class Attitudes towards International Affairs: Nascent Liberalization?" Harvard University, October 2002; and Alastair Iain Johnston, "The Correlations of Beijing Public Opinion towards the United States, 1998–2001," paper prepared for *New Directions in Chinese Foreign Policy: A Conference in Honor of Allen S. Whiting*.

Thus, given China's growing economic interdependence, the regime appears to be unwilling, at this point, to bear the economic and social costs of mobilizing the economy and militarizing society to balance seriously against American power and influence in the region, let alone globally.<sup>104</sup> At best, one could describe China's balancing against the U.S. unipole as (in the words of one astute observer) "hesitant, low-key, and inconsistent."<sup>105</sup>

The exception that proves the rule about Chinese balancing behavior may be China's response to U.S. military power on the narrower issue of Taiwan. Asymmetric strategies, combined with relatively modest improvements in China's long-range cruise missile, ballistic missile, and submarine capability could slow the U.S. response to a rapid military-political fait accompli presented to the Taiwanese government.<sup>106</sup> The dangers of military conflict between China and the United States over Taiwan should not be underestimated. The interaction of China's symbolic commitment to sovereignty over Taiwan and the U.S. concern about preserving the credibility of its military commit-

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104. Reflecting more moderate voices in the Chinese analytical community, Wang Yizhou from the Institute of World Economics and Politics offers some concrete policy advice for promoting multipolarity, including the following actions: diversifying China's economic interdependence to include Europe, but doing so in a way that does not damage economic relations with the United States and Japan; improving relations with a wide range of influential middle powers countries such as Australia, Brazil, Egypt, and Turkey; joining in a strategic dialogue with the United States and Japan so as to pressure them to improve their transparency; becoming a more prominent voice in regional security issues; and joining important multilateral institutions, including the Group of Eight, so that China's voice is heard. See Wang, "Guanyu duojihua de ruogan sikao." Wang is careful to note, however, that a more active and leading role in multilateral institutions in the Asia-Pacific region does not mean that China should oppose all multilateral activities in which the United States does take the lead or controls the process. See Wang, "Duojihua bu deng yu fan Mei." These suggestions do not constitute a radically destabilizing challenge to the global distribution of power. Rather they would fall under what Hans Morgenthau might call "minor adjustments that leave intact the relative power positions of the nations concerned." These, he writes, are fully compatible with a policy of the status quo. See Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, p. 46. Indeed Wang notes that China must convince the world that its call for multipolarity is not a simplistic opposition to the extant order. Rather China should only support multipolarization that is gradual and stabilizing. Wang, "Duojihua bu deng yu fan Mei."

105. Yong, "Hegemon on the Offensive," p. 359. The U.S. DoD hedged in 1998 by claiming that "although China has no plan to lead a faction or block of nations in directly challenging U.S. power, its international political activities and certain of its economic and military policies are designed to achieve the same result." "Report to Congress Pursuant to Section 1226 of the FY98 National Defense Authorization Act," *Future Military Capabilities and Strategy of the People's Republic of China* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, November 1998), <http://www.fas.org/news/china/1998/981100-prc-dod.htm>. In other words, in the DoD view China is internally (not externally) balancing.

106. See, for instance, Thomas J. Christensen's argument about a Chinese limited blockade strategy against Taiwan, in Christensen, "Posing Problems without Catching Up: China's Rise and Challenges for U.S. Security Policy," *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (Spring 2001), pp. 5-40.

ments to friends and allies is ratcheting up the political-military stakes for both sides. The spillover effects of preparations for a war with the United States and its Asian allies are, of course, not limited to the immediate vicinity of Taiwan. The fallout of a war would be regionwide.<sup>107</sup> This would be true if China's primary strategic goal in the region is a limited one of preventing Taiwanese independence or compelling Taiwan's reunification. Here, the evidence does seem to suggest that the regime is preparing the option of using force to change the political and military facts on the ground. Nonetheless, China's preparations for dealing with U.S. military power in a Taiwan conflict are not really the same as balancing against U.S. power writ large in the region or beyond. Not to make excuses for China's coercive diplomacy over the last several years to deter a perceived threat of Taiwan independence, but it is hard to generalize from how Chinese leaders have handled the Taiwan issue to their attitudes toward long-term regional distributions of power, let alone to global institutions and "rules of the game."

Of course, the absence of clear evidence of an active effort by the PRC to fundamentally alter the distribution of power regionally or globally does not mean that such a desire does not exist. But the analytical problem needs to be recognized that the scope of China's revisionist claims is not obvious, and that the current empirical evidence about these claims is, at best, ambiguous. The Chinese leadership's growing concern that the United States intends to defend a permanently separated, if not formally independent, Taiwan could strengthen and expand more grandiose revisionist interests in China, which in turn could reveal more authoritative evidence of such long-term goals. For example, the defense of China's perceived territorial integrity as U.S. long-range precision strike capabilities improve means that the PLA's military operational perimeter has to expand outward.<sup>108</sup> But at present, the character of China's revisionism on the Taiwan issue does not appear to be reflective of China's

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107. Japan would likely be committed to supporting U.S. operations in defense of Taiwan. The United States might also put pressure on Australia to participate in some form. The spillover effects would of course be affected by the scope (e.g., whether Taiwan or the United States would strike mainland targets), duration, and severity of a war.

108. In the Cold War era, for example, U.S. leaders believed that the credibility of commitments to one ally influenced the credibility of commitments to all others. Thus the defense of credibility required a global military reach, which in turn required political acquiescence and deference from a wide range of countries. The expansion of U.S. power in the Cold War, therefore, was to some extent a function of a conservative geopolitical goal of containment combined with offensive military requirements dictated by the preservation of a global alliance system.

broader diplomacy elsewhere in the region or the globe. It is a dangerous exception but an exception nonetheless.

### *Conclusion*

This article has argued that with more rigorous criteria for determining whether a state's foreign policy is status quo or revisionist oriented than heretofore have been used in international relations theorizing, it is hard to conclude that China is a clearly revisionist state operating outside, or barely inside, the boundaries of a so-called international community. Rather, to the extent that one can identify an international community on major global issues, the PRC has become more integrated into and more cooperative within international institutions than ever before. Moreover, the evidence that China's leaders are actively trying to balance against U.S. power to undermine an American-dominated unipolar system and replace it with a multipolar system is murky. The multipolarity discourse is not a clear guide to understanding Chinese preferences, and behaviorally it does not appear at the moment that China is balancing very vigorously against American military power or U.S. interests as its leaders have defined them. The U.S. policy debate about the implications of rising Chinese power for U.S. interests and for regional and global peace needs to be more sensitive to ambiguities in the evidence about Chinese foreign policy.

The quality and quantity of revisionism in a state's policy are not static properties, however. There are two major factors that could increase the level of revisionism in the Chinese leadership's preferences. One is domestic social unrest. For China, globalization has meant a headlong, relatively unregulated, rush for short-term benefits under the rubric of the Open Door policy. This has created vast income discrepancies, social inequities, environmental degradation, and a public health crisis. Social stability in the face of income and social inequities can perhaps be sustained with relatively high rates of absolute growth across socioeconomic groups. But it is not hard to imagine social unrest leading to political preferences that are at odds with status quo interest in the current economic division of labor within China and between China and other states. China moved from being a revolutionary revisionist state to a more status quo-oriented one in forty-odd years. It is not implausible that a more fundamental revisionism might emerge from disillusionment with marketization, or from problems of internal secession, or from the domestic political

effects of Taiwan's reconstruction as a U.S. ally in the containment of China. Indeed, because of security dilemma dynamics and the negative effects of badly regulated marketization, we may see the 1980s and 1990s as a period of status quo-oriented foreign policy, sandwiched between Maoist revisionism and some post-Jiang quasi fascism. This will depend on the degree to which more liberal domestic and foreign policy preferences are incorporated into the political process. At the moment the main repository of such views, at least on foreign policy, tends to be the emerging urban middle class and educated elites. It is unclear how much these preferences would be reflected in a regime coping with severe domestic turmoil, however.

The second factor would be an emerging security dilemma whereby China's revisionism on the Taiwan issue, combined with U.S. political and military responses, leads each side to see the other as fundamentally opposed to its basic security interests. The evidence for this kind of interactivity is suggestive, but worrisome. In principle, if a security dilemma is emerging at the level of discourse, one should expect to see an increase in the frequency and volume of conflictual discourses. Hard-liners on both sides should be making references to each other to justify an argument that the other side is threatening basic values and interests.

Behaviorally, if a security dilemma is emerging, one should see greater interactivity or endogeneity in the two sides' actions. This interactivity should be more than simple reciprocity. Rather, one should expect a process where cooperative moves are in some sense discounted, or perhaps even viewed as noncooperative, and where conflictual moves reciprocate both conflictual and cooperative actions. In addition, one should expect this more malign reciprocation to become faster over time, as both sides become more sensitive to the actions of the other. That is, the lag time between action and response should shorten on average as both sides are more alert in monitoring the other side's behavior.

These are indicators that we will need to watch for in the future. Some of this interactivity is already evident. In terms of policy discourse, from the mid- to late 1990s there appear to have been periods of interactivity with regard to what each side considered to be conclusive evidence of the attitudes of the other. On both sides, skeptics of the status quo orientation of the other have highlighted a small number of high-profile texts that allegedly confirm their case about the other side's underlying threat. (Richard Bernstein and Ross Munro's *The Coming Conflict with China*; Song Qiang, Zhang Zangzang, and Qiao Bian's *China Can Say No*; and Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangshui's *Unre-*

*stricted Warfare* are the most cited of these kinds of texts.) Hard-liners have decontextualized these texts and considered them to be representations of a unitary worldview on the other side. In essence, texts from one side that select on the dependent variable are used to inform texts from the other that also select on the same dependent variable.<sup>109</sup>

Behaviorally, after the PLA's missile exercises in the 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis and after the 1999 U.S. bombing of China's embassy in Belgrade, the militaries of both China and the United States stepped up their planning for and war gaming of conflict with the other. On the U.S. side, for example, the relationship with Taiwan has evolved into a quasi alliance as the two militaries explore everything from a widening range of arms transfers<sup>110</sup> to doctrinal reform to operational interoperability, to satellite downlinks, to U.S. participation in Taiwanese war games and exercises.<sup>111</sup> The recent *Quadrennial Defense Review* is perhaps the clearest statement that the U.S. military believes that rising Chinese power is the major long-term military challenge to U.S. power.<sup>112</sup> And on the Chinese side, internal circulation publications on PLA operational doctrine mostly seem to posit—without saying so directly—that the main military

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109. In the past there were occasionally texts that had a nontrivial effect in creating impressions of China in U.S. policy circles—Mao's *Red Book* and Lin Biao's 1965 essay, "Long Live People's War," which some U.S. State Department officials called China's *Mein Kampf*, being the most obvious. But in general in the Dengist era through to the early 1990s, we did not really see this phenomenon of a popular text plucked out of the Chinese context and dropped into U.S. policy debates and vice versa.

110. There is little doubt among Chinese and among many American experts that beginning with the 1992 U.S. sale of F-16s to Taiwan, the quality and quantity of U.S. arms transferred to the ROC have violated the letter and spirit of the 1982 U.S. commitment to China to limit arms sales. The U.S. definition of what constitutes "defensive" arms that can be sold to Taiwan has loosened considerably over time as well.

111. On the evolution of U.S.-ROC military relations, see Steven Goldstein and Randall Schriver, "An Uncertain Relationship: The United States, Taiwan, and the Taiwan Relations Act," *China Quarterly*, No. 165 (March 2001), pp. 147–172. On satellite downlinks, see "U.S. to 'Conditionally' Share Military Data with Taiwan," October 7, 2002, <http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AFP/2002/AFP100702-1.htm>. On the U.S. military's presence at Taiwanese military exercises and games, see "Pentagon Reviews Taiwan Ties," *Taiwan Defense Review*, January 18, 2003; and "U.S. Troops to See Hankuang Drills," *Taipei Times*, January 23, 2003. As for interoperability, the U.S. House of Representatives has recently pushed for this in defense appropriations legislation, though as of this writing the Bush administration is reluctant to put this requirement into law, preferring instead a quieter and more controllable increase in military-to-military coordination. The "Foreign Relations Authorization Act (FRAA), Fiscal Year 2003," signed into law in October 2002, for the first time states that, for the purposes of arms sales, Taiwan "shall be treated as though it were designated a major non-NATO ally" (MNNA). This designation is a specific legal term that allows much closer military cooperation, including the sale of specific weapons normally off limits to most other countries. Australia and Japan, for example, are also MNNA countries.

112. Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, September 30, 2001, <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/qdr2001.pdf>.

adversary the PLA needs to plan against is the United States.<sup>113</sup> Much of China's recent acquisitions of military technology from Russia appear aimed at developing capabilities to deter or hinder U.S. military operations in defense of Taiwan.

In addition, cooperative actions by one side have often been viewed as noncooperative behavior by the other. There is skepticism among some Chinese analysts about even relatively benign U.S. overtures. One example of this was a fundamental misinterpretation of the commander in chief of the Pacific Command, Adm. Dennis Blair, and his adviser John Hanley's proposal for setting up a security community in East Asia. The proposal comes directly from readings in constructivist arguments about how security communities emerge such that members come to accept the impossibility of violence in interstate relations. Such a proposal and the philosophical foundations for it are in some degree of tension with the realpolitik ideology of the Bush administration and U.S. hard-liners on China policy. Yet one Chinese analyst promptly took this proposal and called it part of more malign U.S. efforts to defend against a rising China.<sup>114</sup> On the U.S. side, among American government officials China's multilateral diplomacy in the ASEAN Regional Forum and various other security dialogues is almost uniformly viewed as directed at undermining U.S. alliances and U.S. power in the region, as is China's new interest in regional economic integration plans that exclude the United States (e.g., the ASEAN Plus 3 economic forum consisting of ASEAN, China, Japan, and the ROK).<sup>115</sup>

American concerns about the potential malevolence of China's intentions in the region have translated into concrete military and political steps to hedge

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113. This is an overarching theme even when the immediate scenarios are military operations against Taiwan, for instance. See, for example, the internally circulated military textbook entitled *Zhanyi xue* [Campaign studies] (Beijing: National Defense University, 2000).

114. For a recent statement of Blair's proposal, see Dennis C. Blair and John M. Hanley, "From Wheels to Webs: Reconstructing Asia-Pacific Security Arrangements," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (Winter 2001), pp. 7–17. They explicitly cite Michael Barnett and Emanuel Adler's work on security communities. For a Chinese critique of the security community proposal, see Song Yimin (from the foreign ministry's Institute of International Studies), "Yatai diqu de jige xin fazhan qushi" [Several new development trends in the Asia-Pacific region], *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi*, No. 9 (2000), pp. 12–13.

115. This is not to say that for some in the PRC, anti-American motives are not reasons to support the ARF or the ASEAN Plus 3. But the interpretation in Washington is too simplistic and misses some of the history of multilateralism in China. To be brief, the push for more activism in the ARF in the mid-1990s came largely from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Asia division, which has developed a more pro-multilateralist organizational mission than the PLA. The interest in ASEAN Plus 3 seems to be largely driven by China's economic reformers, such as Zhu Rongji, not from hard-line strategists whose primary consideration might be to constrain U.S. power in the region.

against Chinese power. While the U.S.-Japan treaty revision guidelines were initially conceived in the early 1990s as measures to prevent Japan's defection in a Korean crisis, after the 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis there is little doubt that China is one of the foci of the revisions. The military relationship with Taiwan under the Bush administration has evolved into a quasi alliance, surpassing the level of coordination reached under the Clinton administration. As a result, the credibility of U.S. alliance commitments elsewhere in Northeast Asia, in Washington's eyes, rests increasingly on its commitment to Taiwan's security.

In some cases, this ambivalence about China's power translates into concrete military-political steps to hedge against this power. China's leadership picks up these hedging signals and interprets them in malign ways (discounting the carrots while focusing on the sticks). Engagement with China during the Clinton administration, for instance, was sometimes termed a "soft containment" strategy. Influential voices in or close to the Bush administration have explicitly called for a mixed engagement/containment strategy, but they are unclear as to how to reassure Beijing that engagement is not subterfuge or strategic deception.<sup>116</sup> So it is not surprising that a hedging strategy is viewed by many analysts in Beijing as more sinister and less driven by uncertainty than its proponents in the United States claim.

It may well be that China's leaders are or will be less and less confident that the current distribution of power and influence in East Asia (or globally, for that matter) serves their definition of China's interests. But a powerful reason for any change in the estimate of the value of the status quo is likely to be the perception that other states, the United States in particular, are becoming more assertive in challenging what the Chinese leaders believe are their legitimate interests. For China, the long-term value of cooperation or restraint may decline because of perceptions of the behavior of others (e.g., a perception that the United States has violated its 1982 arms sales commitments to Taiwan; that the Japan-U.S. alliance is taking on roles in defense of Taiwan; and that national missile defense is designed to undermine China's deterrent). However, the U.S. violation of its 1982 commitments, the growing China focus of U.S. strategic policy in East Asia, and the DoD's push for national missile defense are, in part, a function of China's politico-military efforts to constrain U.S. intervention in a Taiwan crisis, and so on.<sup>117</sup>

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116. Zalmay M. Khalilzad, Abram N. Shulsky, Daniel L. Byman, Roger Cliff, David T. Orletsky, David Shlappek, and Ashley J. Tellis, *The United States and a Rising China: Strategic and Military Implications* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1999).

117. There has been some improvement in the tenor of official relations between China and the United States since the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, D.C., on September 11,

The presence of security dilemma dynamics does not mean that conflicts of interest do not exist. But security dilemma dynamics can change the severity and zero-sum nature of these conflicts of interest. Often the diplomatic language that the players use to describe the other can contribute to a worsening of the security dilemma. Recent work on interethnic conflicts in U.S. neighborhoods has shown that real conflicts of interest are accentuated by perceptions that other ethnic groups are blaming one's own in-group as a whole for the problem at hand. Rhetoric that uses identity language to blame, in other words, has an independent and destructive effect on intergroup relations, regardless of the nature of the real conflict of interests at stake.<sup>118</sup> This kind of language generalizes about the nature of the other side and about one's own side, where the other is believed to be morally responsible for conflicts. One striking feature of the 2002 U.S.-China Security Commission report is this kind of generalized, ahistorical identity language. A monolithic, generalized China is portrayed as being starkly different in how it understands international politics or how it conceives of strategy and force from the United States (or sometimes "the West"). Official rhetoric in China also routinely reverts to grossly generalized characterizations of the United States (or sometimes "the West") and its allegedly aggressive intentions against China. China, in contrast, is often portrayed as culturally peaceful and nonaggressive. This convergence in rhetorical style and polarization in rhetorical content between China and the United States needs to be watched carefully. If it moves to extreme levels on both sides, it may serve as an early warning indicator that the leaderships in both countries have given up searching for cooperative solutions to conflicts of interest. But if it moves to extremes, it may also have a more important independent impact on how both sides frame their definitions of interest and threat.

If indeed security dilemma dynamics explain the evolution both of China's level of dissatisfaction and of U.S. perceptions of China's revisionist goals, then

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2001. The Chinese leadership has offered limited intelligence assistance to the United States in the war against violent Islamic militants. And the Bush administration has said the right things, from the PRC's perspective, about not supporting formal Taiwanese independence. But it is not clear whether this improved atmosphere would survive another shock to the relationship similar to the EP-3 incident or the U.S. bombing of the PRC embassy in Belgrade. More fundamentally, the two issues that are central to Beijing's security concerns—expanding U.S. military commitments to Taiwan, and U.S. regional and national missile defense plans—are nonnegotiable from Washington's perspective.

118. See Daniel Romer, Kathleen H. Jamieson, Catherine Riegner, Mika Emori, and Brigitte Rouson, "Blame Discourse versus Realistic Conflict as Explanations of Ethnic Tension in Urban Neighborhoods," *Political Communication*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (July 1997), pp. 273–291.

Joseph Nye's famous statement about the self-fulfilling nature of the "China threat" is basically correct.<sup>119</sup> Similarly, so is the statement from two international relations scholars at Beijing University, Ye Zicheng and Feng Yin: "If China only looks at the actions of anti-China forces in the U.S., and views every U.S. move as an adversarial one and consequently adopts tit-for-tat methods, then the likelihood that China and the U.S. will mutually turn into enemies increases dramatically."<sup>120</sup> This kind of argument has had less appeal in the more traditionally realpolitik and overtly primacist schools in U.S. foreign policy because it requires policymakers to accept that definitions of interest are dynamic, and because it implies a degree of shared responsibility for the deterioration of relationships. Similarly, security dilemma arguments rarely have had appeal inside China because they require a recognition that China's own behavior has been counterproductive and has undermined its own security.<sup>121</sup> Thus Chinese and U.S. perceptions can feed security dilemma dynamics precisely because leaders on both sides tend to ignore or downplay the existence of these dynamics.<sup>122</sup>

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119. My claim about security dilemma dynamics in Sino-U.S. relations in East Asia is not a novel argument. In addition to Nye's famous comment, see also Christensen, "China, the U.S.-Japan Alliance, and the Security Dilemma in East Asia." Some of the components of a security dilemma argument are found even earlier in Karl W. Eikenberry, "Does China Threaten Asia-Pacific Regional Stability?" *Parameters*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Spring 1995), pp. 82-99.

120. Ye Zicheng and Feng Yin, "ZhongMei guanxi shilun" [Ten points about Sino-U.S. relations], *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi*, No. 5 (2002), p. 3.

121. A growing number of innovative analysts and strategists in China, however, are well aware of the security dilemma effects of China's own behavior on its security. See, for example, Zhang, "Zonghe anquan guan ji dui wo guo anquan de sikao"; Qin Yaqing, "Response to Yong Deng: Power, Perception, and the Cultural Lens," *Asian Affairs*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Fall 2001), pp. 155-158; Tang Shiping, "Zai lun Zhongguo de da zhanlue" [Once again on China's grand strategy], *Zhanlue yu guanli*, No. 4 (2001), p. 30; Shi Yinhong, "Meiguo guojia daodan fangyu jihua yu Zhongguo ke you de he yinggai you de duice" [U.S. national missile defense and the countermeasures China could and should take], *Harbin Gongye Daxue Xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* [Harbin Industrial College Journal (social science)], Vol. 2, No. 3 (2000), pp. 12-16; and Ye and Feng, "ZhongMei guanxi shilun." In a security dilemma, the tragedy is often that without high-level political protection those who understand this dynamic are delegitimized because they are seen as too soft, naïve or, worse, threats to national security. These thinkers and analysts are precisely the type that the United States should prefer to see influencing policy debate in China. But their credibility is not helped when there are sharp downturns in Sino-U.S. relations. Needless to say, the situation in the U.S. policy debate about China has its parallels.

122. As Robert Jervis puts it: "The dilemma will operate much more strongly if statesmen do not understand it." See Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (January 1978), p. 181. In large part, the Cold War ended because President Mikhail Gorbachev and his "new thinking" consciously recognized security dilemma dynamics in the U.S.-Soviet relationship. This allowed him to experiment with unilateral, de-escalatory signaling and the limited demilitarization of Soviet foreign policy. See Matthew Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces: The Transnational Movement to End the Cold War* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1999); and Celeste A.

My argument is not that a PRC which is more status quo-oriented relative to its past is necessarily a more benign or less violent actor in international politics than before. Status quo states, particularly those caught in security dilemmas, can be quite willing to use military force to defend their territory, their spheres of influence, and their client states. Nor is my argument that a more status quo-oriented China necessarily has fewer conflicts of interest with the United States. Security dilemmas are socializing experiences. They can lead to redefinitions of interests, as can changes in the leadership or the leadership's ideology in one or both countries. Some interests that were once defined as shared, such as preserving the ABM treaty, are no longer considered so. Nor is my argument that China's leaders do not wish to increase their relative economic and military power. Few leaders of states would not like to do this. The question is what opportunity costs in terms of other interests are they willing to pay? The Chinese leadership does not appear to wish to pay much in terms of its economic development interests or its relationship with the United States. In other words, the wish to be richer and more powerful has not translated into a concerted military effort to replace the United States as the predominant state regionally or globally.<sup>123</sup> Nor, finally, is my argument that with the decline in the level and scope of revisionist interests in China's overall diplomacy this trend will not reverse in the future. As I noted, two sources of a reversion to revisionism could be domestic social and political upheavals, and a spiraling China-U.S. security dilemma. There is less that U.S. policy can do about the negative effects of marketization than about an emerging security dilemma. The first step is to be on the lookout.

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Wallander, "Lost and Found: Gorbachev's New Thinking," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Winter 2002), pp. 117-129.

123. Thus China's diplomacy at this moment does not meet Morgenthau's or Schweller's definition of revisionism.