

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
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# **China as a Global Power:**

## **Understanding Beijing's Competing Identities**

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This Policy Report is based on the conference “China as a Global Power: Contending Views from China,” convened at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, November 15, 2012. The conference was co-sponsored by George Washington University’s Sigur Center for Asian Studies’ Rising Powers Initiative and the Woodrow Wilson Center’s Kissinger Institute for U.S.-China Relations. The conference and Policy Report are supported by a generous grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

The Rising Powers Initiative is a multi-year, cross-national research effort that examines the role of domestic identities and foreign policy debates of spiring powers in Asia. The Initiative is based at the Sigur Center for Asian Studies, an international research center of the Elliott School of International Affairs at The George Washington University. Its mission is to increase the quality and broaden the scope of scholarly research and publications on Asian affairs, promote U.S.-Asia scholarly interaction, and serve as the nexus for educating a new generation of students, scholars, analysts, and policymakers.

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## Contextualizing China's Rise

The ascent of China on the global stage is considered by most observers to be the most significant change in international affairs since the collapse of the Soviet Union. By any number of measures, China has emerged as a major international actor in the short span of three decades. Every day and everywhere, China figures prominently in global attention—soaking up resources, investing abroad, asserting itself in its Asian neighborhood, being the sought-after suitor in global governance diplomacy, sailing its navy into the Indian Ocean and waters off of Africa, broadening its global media exposure and trying to build its cultural presence and “soft power,” while managing a mega-economy that is an major engine of global growth. China’s global impact is increasingly felt on every continent, in most international institutions, and on many global issues.<sup>1</sup> Thus, by many indices, China is now clearly one of the world’s two leading powers along with the United States.

While China’s rise is important for these reasons, it must also be viewed in the context of several other rising and aspiring “middle powers” (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, and Turkey). These nations now share space on the regional and global stage with the more “traditional” middle powers Britain and France.

Taken together, this conglomeration of states is reshaping the landscape of international relations by collectively contributing (in the words of the U.S. National Intelligence Council’s recent report *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds*) to an inexorable “diffusion” of global power over the next two decades.<sup>2</sup> Understanding and predicting how these national actors may evolve internally and behave externally—individually and interactively—is a central concern of governments and private sector analysts worldwide.

## The Importance of Perceptions

While many variables will shape their calculations and behavior, the national identities and worldviews of each will play no small role. It is therefore crucial to understand the internal debates and competing identities of these rising powers. As noted American sociologist W.I. Thomas observed nearly a century ago: “If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences.”<sup>3</sup>

The study of perception is nothing new in international relations. Ancient writers from Thucydides and Clausewitz to Ole Holsti and Robert Jervis in the modern era have long studied the relationship between perception and state behavior. During the Cold War, Sovietologists and Sinologists paid particular attention to how communist and traditional political culture interacted and impacted policy—it was this set of scholars who were pioneers in peering behind the façade of totalitarian uniformity to identify competing “tendencies” and “schools of thought” in Soviet and Chinese foreign and national security policy. Area studies experts who possessed the language skills and political knowledge to “decode” these esoteric debates led the way. This euphemistically became known as “Kremlinology”

and “Pekingology.”<sup>4</sup> In the post-Cold War period scholars of American foreign relations have adopted this approach to understanding the competing tendencies in U.S. foreign policy.<sup>5</sup> More recently, Princeton Professor Gilbert Rozman has led a multinational effort to contrast Northeast Asian national identities and their impact on the foreign policies of China, Japan, and South Korea.<sup>6</sup> The Rising Powers Initiative based at the Sigur Center for Asian Studies at the Elliott School of International Affairs of The George Washington University, has extended the comparative worldviews and “schools of thought” framework to understand foreign policy debates in China, India, Iran, Japan, and Russia.<sup>7</sup>

## China Debates its Future

China is anything but a unified state and society. It is a continental size country filled with contradictions and vast diversity. It is also a nation that has undergone unparalleled and profound changes over the past three decades of its “reform and opening” policy (对外开放) and rapid modernization. The rapidity and extent of this change has raised many questions in the minds of Chinese about their past, present, and future. *Debating* their historical, current, and forthcoming identity is now a national preoccupation among Chinese.

This Policy Report explicitly explores competing viewpoints that exist within China’s international relations community as a means to identifying likely trajectories of China’s foreign and national security policies and behavior in the years ahead.

## Parsing Chinese Debates

In November 2012, the Rising Powers Initiative invited a group of three of China’s leading international relations specialists to Washington, DC to explore a number of specific aspects of China’s current and future foreign policy challenges.

- **Professor Shen Dingli**, Executive Dean of the Institute of International Relations, Fudan University, Shanghai.
- **Professor Zhu Liquan**, Vice-President of China Foreign Affairs University, Beijing.
- **Major General Zhu Chenghu**, Professor of National Security Studies and former Director of the Institute of Strategic Studies, National Defense University, Beijing.

The selection of these Chinese scholars was based not only on their national and international reputations, but also on their diverse viewpoints within the Chinese discourse on their nation’s global roles and responsibilities.

Recent research on this discourse and the state of international relations studies in China today has revealed a very active, fluid, and contested set of debates.<sup>8</sup> Unlike the case of India, where three distinct worldviews are discernible,<sup>9</sup> Chinese debates are more variegated. This research revealed seven principal discernible schools of thought:

- **The Nativists.** This group is a collectivity of populists, nationalists, and Marxists. They distrust the outside

world, seek international autonomy, and view international multilateral involvement as “traps” (laid by the West) to ensnare and embroil China in costly commitments overseas. They are vociferous critics of the West; some in this cohort bear a strong traditional Marxist orientation.

- **The Realists.** Like the Nativists, they are staunch nationalists—but of a more pragmatic and less xenophobic variety. They may also be considered dogmatic “China Firsters,” caring little about the interests of other countries or constituencies in world affairs. They uphold the principle of state sovereignty above all else, rejecting arguments that transnational issues penetrate across borders. Like realists elsewhere, they tend to see the international environment as anarchic and unpredictable—thus placing a premium on building up a strong state that can navigate its own way in the world and resist outside pressures.
- **The Major Powers School.** This cohort argues that China should concentrate its diplomacy on managing its relations with the world’s major powers and blocs—the United States, Russia, perhaps the European Union—while paying relatively less attention to the developing world or multilateralism. This group of analysts stress the crucial importance of relations with other great powers in China’s foreign affairs, arguing that if China’s ties with the major powers are not right, then this will be detrimental to a range of Chinese interests and will complicate China’s other regional relationships.
- **The Asia First School.** This group argues that if China’s neighborhood is not stable this will be a major impediment to development and national security. Thus, priority should be placed on building ties and a stable environment all around China’s periphery.
- **The Global South School.** This group argues that given China’s historical experience with colonialism and imperialism, and as a developing country, its main international identity and responsibility lies with the developing world. They argue for at least a more balanced foreign policy that takes account of China’s longtime partners and client states in developing countries, and that should advocate their interests.
- **The Selective Multilateralists.** This group believes that China should expand its global involvements gradually, but only on issues where China’s national (security) interests are directly involved. The Selective Multilateralists generally eschew increasing China’s global involvements, but they realize that China must be seen to be contributing to global governance. For them, contributing to global governance is a tactic, not a philosophy.
- **The Globalists.** This final cohort believes that China must shoulder an ever-greater responsibility for addressing a wide range of global governance issues commensurate with its size, power, and influence. They are the equivalent of “liberal institutionalists” in the West. They are also more philosophically disposed to humanitarianism, embrace globalization analytically,

and believe that transnational challenges require transnational partnerships. They are more supportive and trusting of multilateral institutions than the Selective Multilateralists, and they believe China should become much more fully engaged in global governance around the globe. They are interested in soft, not hard, power, and they put their faith in diplomacy and pan-regional partnerships. The Globalists are of the view that it is incumbent upon China, given its global rise, to contribute much more to global governance and to act as a “responsible power” in the international arena.

Though intellectually distinct, it would be incorrect to see these schools as mutually exclusive. Even if sometimes contradictory, they can also be complementary. Also, intellectual schools of thought do *not* correlate with institutions. Cohorts of thinkers crosscut institutions.

There is considerable evidence that the proponents of these schools of thought all contend to influence Chinese foreign policy decision-makers. There exists considerable competition and multiple channels that these actors employ to try and influence actual Chinese foreign and national security policy.<sup>10</sup> Thus the new Chinese leadership not only inherits the previous government’s policies, but it is a policy orientation that is being struggled over by many domestic groups. As a result, this spectrum of opinion offers a range of policy alternatives for the new leadership.

## Outcomes of the Washington Conference

Judging from their previous publications, the three scholars invited to the Washington conference were indicative of the above described spectrum of these schools of foreign policy thought. While each has exhibited a “main perspective,” their writings also indicate shared perspectives of different schools at different times. For example, Shen Dingli is illustrative of the Major Powers School (with an emphasis on Sino-American relations), but his writings and media statements also evince the Realist and Selective Multilateralist perspectives. Professor Zhu Liquan is mainly a Globalist in orientation, but her writings on Europe (and the United States to a lesser extent) place her in the Major Powers School, while her work on Asian multilateral institutionalism also locates her in the Asia First School. Major General Zhu Chenghu is primarily a “hard” Realist, although he too exhibits perspectives of other schools. His work on Sino-American relations locates him in the Major Powers School, while his expertise on non-proliferation and arms control, military modernization and transparency, and non-traditional security illustrate his Selective Multilateralist perspectives. Although these three scholars do not represent the Nativist or Global South Schools, both are very evident in China’s media, blogosphere, and international relations discourse.

## Chinese Perspectives on Domestic Debates

The three Chinese scholars all confirmed the existence of dynamic and contentious debates over foreign policy. Vice-President Zhu Liquan observed: “Nowadays in China it is difficult for us to find consensus over everything. Everything is divided among scholars, especially when we are talking

about foreign policy issues...Foreign policy decision-making is becoming very open nowadays, open to the public. Public opinion can make some kind of influence over policymaking.”

In these domestic debates, the voice of the military (People’s Liberation Army) is often among the most hawkish. When asked about this, Major General Zhu Chenghu dismissed their views and cautioned foreigners not to overestimate and overreact to such bombast: “Don’t listen to those guys who speak on CCTV-4. They are a bit hawkish. I don’t think they are the mainstream of the PLA....Actually the PLA has very little say on the formulation of foreign policy.” On the other hand, General Zhu admitted that there are harsh criticisms of government policy: “Many people are criticizing the policies of China’s foreign policy and they [particularly] criticize the Foreign Ministry—they criticize them because they think that they are too soft and they are too tolerant.”

Dean Shen Dingli provided an example of a current issue under debate in China: whether China should forge alliances with foreign nations? Some scholars, such as Professor Zhu Feng of Peking University and Yan Xuetong of Tsinghua University, have been publicly critical of China’s total *lack* of alliances. As such, Professor Zhu describes China as a “lonely power.” Professor Shen Dingli, on the other hand, dismissed the need for alliances: “Only the weak need to ally with someone. I think we are very powerful. We are so powerful we don’t need to ally with anyone.”

### ***Definitions and Threats to China’s National Security***

The conferees spent some time discussing how China defines its national security interests. Unlike the United States which—prior to threat of domestic terrorism and homeland security—has emphasized security from external threats, Chinese definitions have always included domestic security as a major component of national security. The term for security in Chinese, 安全, means “complete tranquility” (which suggests internal stability).

All three Chinese participants noted the increasingly elastic definitions of security in Chinese domestic discourse. They all agreed that there is a “tendency to ‘securitize’ everything.” Shen pithily observed that, in the end, “You can call it financial security, environmental security, ecological security, etc.—therefore you have no security because everything is security!” Shen went on to distinguish political security and regime security. Former President Hu Jintao also put “cultural security” on the national agenda at the Sixth Plenum of the 17th Central Committee in 2011. Professor Zhu Liqun observed that China faces a complicated security environment and “a lot of difficulties at different levels: the domestic level, regional level, and international level.” Professor Shen noted, however, that there is one unique aspect of China’s security (or insecurity): [contested] sovereignty. “China is in a unique situation in that as a major power it is not unified, and part of it has a complicated relationship with a major power [Editorial note: referring to Taiwan’s relations with the United States]...Other major powers do not have such a sovereignty issue,” observed Professor Shen.

General Zhu Chenghu agreed: “If you look outside, China’s

security environment is very, very complicated. China is facing all the challenges and threats that are faced by other major powers, as well as many not faced by other major powers. Some of them belong to traditional security while some belong to non-traditional security issues, like the ethnic issue and other internal problems.”

Among the external security challenges, General Zhu noted “disputes over territory and maritime interests.” “As you can see,” he observed, “in recent years we have disputes over the South China Sea and we have disputes over the East China Sea. Some of these issues have become very hard.” Zhu Liqun concurred that these maritime disputes are a “big challenge.” In particular, she noted “it is a big challenge how to improve our relationship with Japan, because Japanese-Chinese relations are very fragile nowadays and we need to improve them.”

General Zhu also raised the challenge that the United States poses to China’s security, noting in particular, “...the military activities directed against China, like close-in reconnaissance, like arms sales to Taiwan, like large-scale military exercises on China’s periphery, like outer space security, internet and cyber security. In these regards, China is facing very, very serious challenges and even threats from outside.”

This led to a discussion of the U.S. strategic “rebalancing” or “pivot” to the Asia-Pacific region.

### ***The U.S. Strategic “Pivot” to Asia***

This issue is another that is hotly debated in China. General Zhu observed: “...There are very controversial views in China over the rebalancing, over the ‘return to Asia’ concept, over the modification of the Asia-Pacific strategy of the United States... Actually, I don’t think the Chinese have a very unified consensus or a unified conclusion [over the purposes of the rebalancing].” General Zhu identified three schools of thought that have emerged in the Chinese domestic debate.

- The first school argues that rebalancing is not intended to contain China and reflects the “realistic situation that the economic focus is shifting from trans-Atlantic to trans-Pacific.” This school of thought argues that that the strategic reorientation is a natural reflection of changing geoeconomic and geopolitical realities.
- The second school argues that rebalancing “is mainly intended to contain China.” Such an effort was being justified by the belief among “some Americans,” General Zhu said, that “China’s development may force the United States to withdraw from East Asia.” With this reasoning, the new U.S. strategy was being justified as a reaction to [alleged] Chinese intentions and behavior.” While no Chinese believes the alleged justification, many accept that the U.S. “pivot” is (another) move to contain China.
- The third school argues that the U.S. is trying to broaden and deepen its footprint in the region, by “strengthening alliances, expanding partners, and finding new military bases.” While there are these efforts to expand the U.S. position, this school holds that the U.S. never “left” Asia and thus there is no such thing as a “return to Asia.”

For his part, Shen Dingli assessed the American rebalancing strategy as “a matter of defense-offense.” On the one hand, Shen observed, the U.S. strategy is intended to “prevent bad things from happening, preventing Americans from being hurt, and preventing American allies from being hurt.” This is the “defensive” explanation. The “offensive” explanation is that the “pivot” is intended to “restrain the freedom of action of China.” Professor Shen then described how many Chinese analysts interpret the rising number of territorial and diplomatic disputes with neighbors in the context of the new U.S. assertive posture in the region—implying that the United States was provoking and aggravating these disputes and rising tensions. This is a classic example of diametrically opposed justifications, i.e. the United States argues that it is “responding” to entreaties from Asian nations to bolster its regional presence precisely because of *China’s* rising “assertiveness” of recent years. In any event, Professor Shen concluded on a sober note: “We think the U.S. is globally shrinking—and there is no way they can contain us.”

Professor Zhu Liquan echoed many of her colleagues’ views, but added the interesting observation that some Chinese observers have argued that the U.S. rebalancing has come in part at the cost of Sino-American relations. That is, that Washington’s emphasis on strengthening ties with other countries in the broader region has resulted in a *de facto* downgrading of China in U.S. priorities and a relative neglect of building sound Sino-American bilateral relations.

Professor Zhu also observed that “American primacy in East Asia is reality. If you look at the current power structure in East Asia, the United States is in the primary position...I think we [China] are not against such kind of primacy of the United States, as long as the leadership of the United States is positive for the whole region, especially for the regional architecture.” General Zhu Chenghu concurred with these views, observing:

“I think the world needs a leader, but we hope that the leadership of the United States is benign. We hope that the United States will reduce its use of force, and we hope that its leadership in world affairs will be fair. Do not try to introduce a double standard or multiple standards. We hope that the United States will act equally to different countries with different political systems, with different histories, with different levels of economic development, with different cultures, etc.”

## The Security Dilemma

The conferees also addressed the related issue of a growing “security dilemma” in U.S.-China relations, within the Asia-Pacific region but also increasingly globally. While General Zhu and Professor Shen’s remarks seemed to acknowledge the existence of a Sino-American security dilemma, Professor Zhu said that she did not think such a condition (yet) existed. But all three took pains to reiterate the Chinese government’s position that it does *not* seek to strategically compete with the United States nor to exclude the U.S. from the Asia-Pacific region. Professor Zhu Liquan noted: “China has tried very hard and tried its best to *avoid* such a security dilemma between China and the United States. This is China’s policy...the leaders in China

try very hard to establish the kinds of communications and exchange of views with the U.S. to avoid such kinds of security dilemmas...China has no intention and no capacity to compete with the United States.”

Shen Dingli concurred and went further by arguing that China did not wish to enter into an arms race with Washington: “We do not intend to compete with the U.S. Let the U.S. burn its money [on military equipment]!”

But General Zhu acknowledged that China’s military is not sitting idly by and is undertaking its own steady modernization program. “In future years, five to ten years, you will see a very, very big development in the hardware of the PLA—because it was well-planned. It is not a new plan. It was planned about ten years ago. So some of the [new] aircraft, some of the warships, will be launched, and you will see. Some of you guys might be surprised!” But, General Zhu quickly cautioned, “Just take it easy.” “They are not for the purpose of fighting against the United States. We have neither the intention nor the capability to arms race against the United States. We have neither the intention nor the capability to drive the Americans out of East Asia. *We believe the U.S. military presence in East Asia plays a very positive role and a constructive role in the area.*” While reassuring, to our knowledge, General Zhu’s last statement has never been explicitly made publicly by *any* Chinese official or military officer.

## Chinese Perspectives on Global Governance

Another issue discussed at the conference concerned China’s contributions to global governance. All three Chinese participants voiced the view that China takes seriously its responsibilities and roles in global governance. But the operative question for China is *how much* and *what kinds* of contributions China should make and contribute? Professor Zhu Liquan offered the opinion that “[Global governance] is a big challenge for us—how much responsibility China should take in international society and what kind of role China is going to play in international society? We have not solved [this question]. The biggest challenge for China is that China is not yet ready to take the lead in international society, not only in terms of willingness, but also in terms of capacity and capability.” General Zhu noted the considerable commitment China, and its military, have made to global peacekeeping operations (PKO).

## Energy Security

While the Chinese participants noted China’s increased dependence on imported energy and commodities, all three did not think this was going to be a difficult problem for China in the future. General Zhu and Professor Shen noted China’s growing domestic production, particularly in coal, oil, and shale gas. They also said that China has ready access to international sources of supply. Professor Zhu also noted the considerable efforts and investments China is putting into combatting climate change and building an “eco-friendly society.” Professor Shen did note, however, the difficulties China faces in its energy relationship with Iran—which, he said, supplies seven to nine percent of China’s imported energy supplies. International concerns

over Iran's nuclear weapons makes this very "complicated" for China, Shen observed.

### ***Status Quo or Revisionist Power?***

There was considerable discussion at the conference of what kind of power China was becoming. Former United States Ambassador to China J. Stapleton Roy asked if the Chinese participants agreed with the dichotomy frequently used in the U.S.—a "status quo" vs. "revisionist" power in the international system. Professor Zhu Liquan expressed her unease with this typology, but was of the opinion that:

"China is mainly a status quo power...China is trying, and has been trying very hard, to get involved in the international system, which is dominated by the United States, and this system is very much based on liberalism and led by Western powers. But China has tried very hard to get into this international system—and China gets benefits from such engagement and involvement. Without such kind of involvement in the international system and the international market, China could not reach such a level of development. This is the first reason I think we are a status quo power. The other reason is that China has joined many international organizations and international institutions since the reforms in our policy were adopted and, generally speaking, China abides by the rules and norms of these institutions... Third, China has a long process of learning. China is still in a learning curve, to learn from others, to learn from the international system. In the future, there will still be lots of room for China to learn."

General Zhu Chenghu offered a contrasting view. "I believe that China is not a status quo power," he opined. General Zhu went on to characterize China as a "cautiously revisionist power, instead of a radical revisionist power." He agreed with Professor Zhu that China has benefited a great deal from the "existing international system and regimes" and claimed that "China is not strong enough to upset the existing regimes and systems, and we do not have the capability to modify it. Thus, we have to adapt ourselves to the existing regimes and systems." General Zhu went on to observe that "these systems and regimes have been formulated under the dominance of Western developed countries, and some are not in the interests of China, but we have to abide by them."

Shen Dingli sought to stake out a middle ground in the status quo-revisionist power debate. Rejecting both labels, Shen observed that: "We want to be reformist—to take whatever is good, constructive, and to reform using incremental evolution, consultation, and means of reconciliation to improve where [the international system] is weak in terms of its current status quo. We want to change, and to change for the better...We are pro-constructive reformism." Zhu Liquan agreed: "We have to reform the international system, because it is not adequate for today's world."

### ***Chinese Expectations for U.S.-China Relations***

The Chinese conferees also discussed their expectations for the future development of Sino-American relations. While all expressed a hope for stable and positive bilateral relations

under the new U.S. and Chinese administrations, they also expressed nuanced perspectives on the development of relations.

Both outgoing President Hu Jintao and incoming President Xi Jinping have expressed the desire to build a "new type of major power relations" between the two nations. While the Chinese government has yet to flesh out the specifics of what this means, the assumption is that it would be a cooperative relationship unlike that of past rising power/established power relations historically (which, almost always, has resulted in adversarial and even conflictual relations).

Professor Zhu Liquan noted that while there has been considerable discussion in China about this new concept:

"There is no consensus over this, and some people even just use the concept without [specifying] its content." She continued to offer a variety of possibilities for evolving U.S.-China relations: "I think we are not allies...it is not possible for us to be an ally. Nor will there be a 'G-2' [condominium], because we are too different. We have cultural differences, ideological differences, and many, many other types of differences. So, it is not easy and it is not possible for us to be allies. Secondly, I don't think we will be rivals and we are not going to be adversaries. We are not going to have a confrontational relationship because we are not the Soviet Union, China is not the Soviet Union. China is very different. So, not allies—but also not enemies or rivals. Third, I believe that Dr. Henry Kissinger's concept of 'co-evolution' is a good word and way to think about our relations. The two countries are too big to be dominated by each other respectively, too unique to be transformed easily, too interdependent to be isolated respectively."

General Zhu Chenghu, agreed with Professor Zhu: "We need to redefine the nature of the relationship between China and the United States. The pure enemy or friend cannot tell the true story or true nature of the relationship." However, General Zhu noted that "it will be very difficult for the Chinese and the Americans to manage their relationship in the near future." He went on to note three reasons managing Sino-American relations will be difficult:

"First is distrust. We are short of trust, not to mention strategic trust. Because of the shortage of trust, the second problem is that there are miscalculations on both sides. The Chinese believe that the military exercises, the reconnaissance, the arms sales to Taiwan, the strengthening of military and security alliances, and the redeployment of strategic sites by the United States are all intended to encircle China, to contain China... On the American side, they also have miscalculations. They believe that China's military development in particular is intended for war against the United States, at least they are developed for the purposes of driving the Americans out of East Asia. Some of these miscalculations lead to action and reaction—which is the third problem underlying relations between China and the United States. That is to say, when one action is taken by one side, the other side will have to undertake reactive actions."

Based on this reasoning, General Zhu advised that both sides “give up the Cold War mentality,” each side should not take provocative actions against the other side, and each side should reflect the core interests of the other side.”

## American Perspectives on a Rising China and U.S.-China Relations

A separate session of the conference brought together four leading experts on Asia and U.S.-China relations, each from a different Washington think tank, to assess the implications of the rise of China for U.S. strategy and policy:

- **Dan Blumenthal**, Resident Fellow, American Enterprise Institute
- **Ted Galen Carpenter**, Senior Fellow in Defense and Foreign Policy Studies, The CATO Institute
- **Michael Green**, Senior Vice-President for Asia and Japan Chair, Center for Strategic and International Studies, and Associate Professor at Georgetown University
- **Michael Swaine**, Senior Associate, Asia Program, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

The panel engaged in a dynamic and animated discussion, offering a range of perspectives on the challenges that China poses to the United States and appropriate strategies for dealing with China. To some extent, the panelists’ differing perspectives reflected the differing ideological orientations of their respective think tanks—but *all* four panelists advocated a mixture of “engagement” and “strategic hedging” in American policy towards China. To be sure, there were nuanced differences among them concerning the *balance* between these twin strategies, but all seemed to endorse the twofold strategy that has been adopted by the Clinton, Bush II, and Obama administrations. All four agreed that there are competitive aspects in the relations—many and rising recently in the strategic and other domains—but none voiced the view that such competition could not be ameliorated or buffered through a combination of unilateral actions and bilateral cooperation in certain areas.

There was considerable discussion about what constitutes American “primacy” in the western Pacific, whether it is sustainable and desirable, and what the implications are for China and other nations (including U.S. allies) in the region. Three of the four argued that it was desirable, but questioned maintaining primacy towards what end? To sustain primacy simply for its own sake, to sustain hegemony, was rejected by all participants. Rather, they agreed that the U.S. role in the region should be to continue to foster an open commercial order and other exchanges among states, to provide common security and stability, to guarantee the security of allies and strategic partners, and to advance general American interests (two specifically included advancing democracy as one such interest). All seemed to agree that sustaining such a regional order—essentially as it has since the Korean War—is the overarching goal. To the extent that China seeks to participate in, and benefit from, such an American-fostered order, it is welcome to do so. But if China seeks to overturn this order, much less to establish an alternative order anchored on Beijing, it will encounter significant

resistance from the United States and many other nations in the region.

Another topic of discussion was the existence and intensity of the “security dilemma” between China and the U.S. The American participants all recognized its existence, but differed over its intensity and the methods to manage and ameliorate it. Dan Blumenthal was notably dismissive: “I am very skeptical that we can cooperate on any security issue at all.” Michael Green was similarly skeptical: “I am not a big believer that [confidence building] mechanisms will work in the short term...I think that what matters is establishing a level of personal trust between leaders, between military commanders, and between diplomats. It is the personalities and the personal trust you have to invest in.” Others agreed that Sino-American security dialogues and cooperation has been limited, but still argued that it is an important buffer against escalating competition. Michael Green also further noted the potential for “third parties” (countries) to exacerbate U.S.-China frictions—particularly in the case of Japan and some Southeast Asian nations (with which China has sharpened maritime territorial disputes).

Finally, the American participants discussed the role and importance of economic ties between the United States and China. All agreed that deep interdependence exists between the two economies, but—as importantly—the two are now among the major anchors of the global economy and resuscitating global growth. They also agreed that the economic interdependence can ameliorate the security dilemma. Recognizing this, Michael Green noted the rising economic competition between the two nations, and he drew the historical parallels that such “competitive interdependence” can also exacerbate frictions in the strategic, ideological, and other realms.

## Dynamic Debates

The diversity of Chinese and American perspectives on the above issues is testimony to the dynamic quality of foreign policy debates taking place in both countries and capitals. As such, it is vitally important to understand the diversity and nuances of such debates as a means to identify possible pathways to policies towards each other and a range of bilateral, regional, and global issues.

Having ascertained the spectrum of opinion in both the United States and China, the next analytical step will be to examine how the respective schools of thought actually interact and produce reactive policy responses on each side. Despite differences, American and Chinese views of international relations actually reveal surprising symmetries. The operative question is the degree to which they reinforce each other’s prejudices and drive the two nations apart—or the degree to which common ground can be found which can lead to more sustained cooperative relations?

\*Author's Note: Quotations in the text are drawn from a verbatim transcript of the conference "China as a Global Power: Contending Views from China," co-sponsored by the Sigur Center for Asian Studies Rising Powers Initiative and Kissinger Institute for U.S.-China Relations of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, November 15, 2012, Washington, D.C. Only minor editing was done for grammatical purposes.

1. See David Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).
2. See National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2020: Alternative Worlds* (Washington, DC: National Intelligence Council, December 2012), available at: <http://www.dni.gov/nic/globaltrends>.
3. W.I. Thomas, *The Child in America* (New York: Knopf, 1928), p. 572.
4. This is a very large and rich literature. On the Soviet Union see, for example, Nathan Leites, *The Operational Code of the Politburo* (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 1951); William Zimmerman, *Soviet Perspectives on International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969); Seweryn Bialer (ed.), *The Domestic Context of Soviet Foreign Policy* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1981); Jerry Hough, *The Struggle for the Third World: Soviet Debates and American Options* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1986). On China see, for example, Thomas Gottlieb, *Chinese Foreign Policy Factionalism and the Origins of the Strategic Triangle* (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 1977); Kenneth Lieberthal, "The Foreign Policy Debate in Peking as Seen Through Allegorical Articles, 1973-1976," *China Quarterly* (September 1977), pp. 528-554; Allen S. Whiting, *Chinese Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy in the 1970s* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for Chinese Studies, 1979); Gilbert Rozman, *The Chinese Debate About Soviet Socialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); David Shambaugh, *Beautiful Imperialist: China Perceives America, 1972-1990* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).
5. See, for example, Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World* (New York: Routledge, 2002); Charles A. Kupchan, *The End of the American Era: U.S. Foreign Policy and the Geopolitics of the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Knopf, 2002).
6. See Gilbert Rozman (ed.), *East Asian National Identities: Common Roots and Chinese Exceptionalism* (Washington, DC and Stanford, CA: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Stanford University Press, 2012).
7. See Henry R. Nau and Deepa Ollapally (eds.), *Worldviews of Aspiring Powers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).
8. This research has, to date, appeared in four iterations (chronologically): David Shambaugh, "Coping with a Conflicted China," *The Washington Quarterly* (Winter 2011); "International Relations Studies in China: History, Trends, and Prospects," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* (September 2011); "China: The Conflicted Rising Power," (with Ren Xiao) in Henry Nau and Deepa Ollapally (eds.), *Worldviews of Aspiring Powers* (Oxford University Press, 2012); and *China Goes Global: The Partial Power* (Oxford University Press, 2013), chapter 2.
9. See Deepa Ollapally and Rajesh Rajagopalan, "India: Foreign Policy Perspectives of an Ambiguous Power," in Nau and Ollapally, op cit; and Henry R. Nau and Richard Fontaine, *India as a Global Power: Contending Worldviews from India* (Washington, DC: Sigur Center for Asian Studies Policy Report, March 2012).
10. In this regard, see Linda Jakobson and Dean Knox, "New Foreign Policy Actors in China," *SIPRI Policy Paper*, no. 26 (Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2010), <http://books.sipri.org/files/PP/SIPRI26.pdf>.

*Conference Agenda*  
**China as a Global Power: Contending Views from China**

**November 15, 2012, 9:00 AM - 4:45 PM**  
Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars  
Kissinger Institute on China and the United States  
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20004

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>9:00 AM- 9:30 AM</b>    | <b>Registration and Continental Breakfast</b>   |
| <b>9:30 AM - 9:45 AM</b>   | <b>Welcome and Introductory Remarks:</b><br><u>Speaker:</u> Henry R. Nau (GWU)  |
| <b>9:45 AM - 10:45 AM</b>  | <b>Session I: Chinese Views on National Security and Defense</b><br><u>Chair:</u> David Shambaugh (GWU) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Shen Dingli</b> - Executive Dean, Institute of International Studies, Fudan University</li><li>• <b>Zhu Chenghu</b> - Major General &amp; Professor, PLA National Defense University</li><li>• <b>Zhu Liqun</b> - Vice President, China Foreign Affairs University</li></ul>   |
| <b>10:45 AM - 11:00 AM</b> | <b>Break</b>  |
| <b>11:00 AM - 12:00 PM</b> | <b>Session II: Chinese Views on Economics, International Institutions, and Transnational Issues</b><br><u>Chair:</u> Robert Sutter (GWU) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Shen Dingli</b> - Executive Dean, Institute of International Studies, Fudan University</li><li>• <b>Zhu Chenghu</b> - Major General &amp; Professor, PLA National Defense University</li><li>• <b>Zhu Liqun</b> - Vice President, China Foreign Affairs University</li></ul>  |
| <b>12:15 PM - 1:00 PM</b>  | <b>Luncheon</b>   |
| <b>1:00 PM - 1:45 PM</b>   | <b>Keynote Address</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Jane Harman</b> - Director, President, and CEO, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars</li></ul>  |
| <b>2:00 PM - 3:15 PM</b>   | <b>Session III: American Views on US-China Relations</b><br><u>Chair:</u> Henry R. Nau (GWU) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Dan Blumenthal</b> - Resident Fellow, American Enterprise Institute</li><li>• <b>Ted Carpenter</b> - Senior Fellow, Defense and Foreign Policy Studies, CATO Institute</li><li>• <b>Michael Green</b> - Senior Vice President for Asia and Japan Chair, Center for Strategic and International Studies</li><li>• <b>Michael Swaine</b> - Senior Associate, Asia Program, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace</li></ul> |
| <b>3:15 PM - 3:30 PM</b>   | <b>Coffee/Tea Break</b>   |
| <b>3:30 PM - 4:30 PM</b>   | <b>Session IV: Chinese Responses to American Views on US-China Relations</b><br><u>Chair:</u> J. Stapleton Roy (WWICS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Shen Dingli</b> - Executive Dean, Institute of International Studies, Fudan University</li><li>• <b>Zhu Chenghu</b> - Major General &amp; Professor, PLA National Defense University</li><li>• <b>Zhu Liqun</b> - Vice President, China Foreign Affairs University</li></ul>  |
| <b>4:30 PM - 4:45 PM</b>   | <b>Closing Remarks</b><br><u>Speaker:</u> Deepa Ollapally (GWU)   |

# RIISING POWERS INITIATIVE

The Rising Powers Initiative is a multi-year, cross-national research effort that examines the role of domestic identities and foreign policy debates of aspiring powers in Asia. The Rising Powers Initiative consists of three distinct projects:

## WORLDVIEWS OF ASPIRING POWERS



CARNEGIE CORPORATION OF  
NEW YORK

## WORLDVIEWS OF ASPIRING POWERS: EXPLORING FOREIGN POLICY DEBATES ABROAD

PHASE I: 2009-2011

PHASE II: 2011-2013

**Phase I:** The first phase of this project focused on identifying and tracking the internal foreign policy debates in five major and rising powers—China, Japan, India, Russia

and Iran. The strategic awakening and reawakening of these countries is leading to domestic debates about their own national security, international economic policymaking, image and power, and US global leadership. The research team developed a “schools of thought” framework useful for comparative analysis. An edited volume entitled *Worldviews of Aspiring Powers* is forthcoming from Oxford University Press in 2012.

**Phase II:** Phase 2 of this project aims to apply the framework developed from Phase I by exposing the domestic debates in rising powers to a Washington audience. The second phase adds a component on energy, maritime security and nuclear power that examines how different schools of thought react to these issues. The project will bring domestic perspectives on energy and maritime security together with differing views on nuclear power and nonproliferation in China, India, Japan, and Korea for the first time. This research produces fortnightly Policy Alerts and will publish an edited book volume entitled, *The Asian Energy Security Complex: Maritime Security, Nuclear Energy and Nonproliferation and U.S. Policy Implications*, along with numerous publications and major conferences and policy briefings in the United States and Asia.

### PARTICIPANTS

**CHINA:** David Shambaugh, GWU; Robert Sutter, GWU; Ren Xiao, Fudan University; Daojiong Zha, Peking University

**INDIA:** Deepa Ollapally, GWU; Sudha Mahalingam, Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board of India; Rajesh Rajagopalan, Jawaharlal Nehru University

**IRAN:** Farideh Farhi, University of Hawaii-Manoa; Saideh Lotfian, University of Tehran

**JAPAN:** Narushige Michishita, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies; Mike Mochizuki, GWU; Richard Samuels, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

**KOREA:** Scott Snyder, Council on Foreign Relations

**RUSSIA:** Shoichi Itoh, Institute of Energy Economics; Andrew Kuchins, Center for Strategic and International Studies; Igor Zevelev, MacArthur Foundation, Moscow

**U.S. FOREIGN POLICY:** Charles Glaser, GWU; Henry R. Nau, GWU

**CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS:** Henry R. Nau & Deepa Ollapally

## POWER AND IDENTITY IN ASIA



JOHN D. AND CATHERINE T.  
MACARTHUR FOUNDATION

## POWER AND IDENTITY IN ASIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION

The Power and Identity project aims to deepen understanding of how identity issues and power transitions affect the international policies of China, India, Japan, Korea and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). This is essential for addressing two issues: first, whether international relations in Asia in the foreseeable future are likely to be characterized by cooperation and regional integration or by security tensions and interstate war; second, assessing the dominant security orientations of the powers studied regarding cooperation with the United States and United States leadership in Asia. The project will make

an important contribution to international relations literature by defining, operationalizing, and examining identity issues across cases. Information about the relationship between identity and power in Asia is made available to policymakers, journalists and analysts through several mechanisms, including holding regional colloquia in Beijing and New Delhi, an international workshop in Washington DC, and through the production of policy briefs and commentaries.

### PARTICIPANTS

**ASEAN:** Amitav Acharya, American University; Allan Layug, University of the Philippines, Diliman

**CHINA:** Allen Carlson, Cornell University; Song Wei, Peking University

**INDIA:** Deepa Ollapally, GWU; Amitabh Mattoo, Jawaharlal Nehru University

**JAPAN:** Mike Mochizuki, GWU; Isao Miyaoka, Keio University; Daqing Yang, GWU

**KOREA:** Gregg Brazinsky, GWU; Jong-dae Shin, University of North Korean Studies in Seoul

**U.S. FOREIGN POLICY:** Charles Glaser, GWU

**CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS:** Mike Mochizuki & Deepa Ollapally

## ASIA'S ECONOMIC CHALLENGES



GWU OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT  
FOR RESEARCH

## ASIAN POWERS AND ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

No in-depth analysis of Asia's rising and major powers is complete without a thorough study of the many dynamic economic issues in the region. A team of five GWU experts working with scholars in Asia and GWU student research assistants examines the regional and global economic impact and challenges of aspiring Asian powers, with a focus on the economic policies of China, India, Japan, and Korea. In particular, this project investigates the rise of green industrial policy; trade, finance, and economic policy in China, Japan, and Korea; China's monetary policy coordination with the United States; international economic relationships in India; and India's economic relations with China. Under this project, the Sigur Center has launched an Asian Economic Events series which brings leading experts

from Asia and around the United States to GWU for public lectures. The Asian Powers and Economic Challenges project culminates in spring 2014 with a major international research conference at the Sigur Center at which the project participants present their research.

### PARTICIPANTS

**RISE OF GREEN INDUSTRIAL POLICY IN ASIA:** Llewelyn Hughes, GWU

**TRADE, FINANCE, AND ECONOMIC POLICY IN CHINA, JAPAN, AND KOREA:** Robert J. Weiner, GWU

**CHINA'S MONETARY POLICY COORDINATION WITH THE UNITED STATES:** Jiawen Yang, GWU

**INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS IN INDIA:** Srividya Jandhyala, GWU

**INDIA'S ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH CHINA:** Deepa Ollapally, GWU; Sudha Mahalingam, Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board of India

**CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS:** Edward McCord & Deepa Ollapally

The Rising Powers Initiative is housed at the Sigur Center for Asian Studies. The Sigur Center for Asian Studies is an international research center of The Elliott School of International Affairs at The George Washington University. Its mission is to increase the quality and broaden the scope of scholarly research and publications on Asian affairs, promote U.S.-Asia scholarly interaction and serve as the nexus for educating a new generation of students, scholars, analysts, and policymakers.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT US ON THE WEB:  
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