

the tens of millions. The costly nuclear weapons infrastructure worsens the highly stressed fiscal pressures for countries possessing weapons. Pakistan is the most dangerous country on earth because of the confluence of several factors: an unstable government, a fragile economy, a strong jihadist threat to the state, the presence of Islamist influences within the military and intelligence services, a fast growing nuclear arsenal, and a long running conflict with nuclear-armed India.

So what can be done? To begin with, the number of nuclear weapons possessed by the US and Russia – which comprise around 95 per cent of global totals – could be scaled down dramatically with no net security loss (because parity is not required to achieve deterrence), to below 500 each. Such major reductions would significantly reduce proliferation pressures also. Weapons could be taken off high alert and warheads de-mated and stored separately from delivery systems. All nuclear-armed states could greatly increase the transparency around their arsenals, doctrines, and deployments. Unfortunately, the unexpected flare-up of the crisis in the Ukraine and the sharp deterioration in relations between Russia and the West is likely to reverse rather than move forward the nuclear arms control agenda.

As well as being a renowned specialist on nuclear policy, Cirincione is president of the Ploughshares Fund. He concludes the book with a chapter on the role of philanthropic foundations in promoting objective, research-based analysis, public education efforts, and other initiatives to reduce nuclear risks and dangers. Ploughshares itself is described as an ‘impact-philanthropy model’, leveraging its modest size by linking grantees in a network, working to a shared vision and a common goal.

The two major existential threats we face today are climate change and a nuclear Armageddon. The latter is as grave as the former, but more immediate. This book is an excellent source to understand why, to learn what can be done about it, and why it is a shared global responsibility.

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David P. Rapkin and William R. Thompson, *Transition Scenarios, China and the United States in the Twenty-First Century*, The University of Chicago Press, 2013  
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As the World Bank’s International Comparison Program (ICG) announced in April this year that China’s economy, measured in PPP, would surpass the United States’ in late 2014, China’s rising status in the global economy alongside recent United States’ ‘rebalancing Asia’ strategy has led to considerable speculations that the world is already in the early stage of a transition in power relations. In this book, David Rapkin and William Thompson make a great attempt to identify likely scenarios for power transition and the drivers behind the possible scenes in this century.

Rapkin and Thompson begin with the chapter elaborating the current transition struggles between the United States and China. The transition struggles have created tremendous uncertainties in the policy and academic circles. Of course, the key question is whether the two great powers are going to repeat what the academic circles have called ‘the great power

tragedy'. Therefore, in the second chapter, the authors discuss how this current situation can be understood by building different scenarios of relationships between the two powers.

Like all scenario-building researches, the two authors reach no absolute conclusion about an explicit 'most likely' US–China transition scenario. Based on existing research and their own observations, the authors build four main scenarios, giving a thorough discussion on each of these scenarios in subsequent chapters. These scenarios include: (a) 'more of the same' and 'pax Americana II' scenarios; (b) 'transition war' scenario; (c) 'pax sinica' scenario; (d) 'liberal peace' scenario. These scenarios vary from one another, depending on how strong/weak the conflict is – be it regional or global – and constraints/inducements are. Among these projections, the 'transition war scenario' and 'pax sinica scenario' tend to indicate unavoidable warfare throughout the transition while others do not. The authors conclude that the power transition from US to China is not necessarily inevitable since during the process conflict-promoting factors tend to win hands down.

Scenario building is a difficult research agenda. It makes complicated things simpler, but sometime it also brings confusion. Rapkin and Thompson make great efforts to avoid this, and make three major contributions to power transition studies. First, they delineate all possible outcomes of a power transition without neglecting the structural change in world politics rather than simply focusing on warfare, and thus provide a platform with theoretical models for future extended discussions. Second, they apply scenario drivers, such as US–China technological competition, US relative decline, Chinese dissatisfaction, nuclear deterrence, sources of energy like petroleum and gas, water, food and arable land, to examine the possible transition process in a structural setting. Third, they make an effort to integrate international politics and geopolitical theories such as the Kantian Triangle to sketch constraints on transition conflict. They also use a straightforward yet sophisticated, if not comprehensive, way to display their findings in a 2'2 matrix, laying out the transition scenarios with different drivers behind the scene, transiting processes, and the possible regional and global outcomes delivered.

By doing so, the two authors provide a very useful tool for us to understand the current situation. These scenarios are also helpful in 'projecting' our futures. However, the overall conclusion is far from convincing due to, first, the very term 'power transition' as a core concept is not well defined, and, second, their measurements of accessing 'transition outcomes' are not discussed. For example, if one points to factors like GDP per capita, dominance in international institutions, advanced education system, then one can argue that the transition process may not complete anytime soon; but if one considers factors such as the size of economies, innovation-led growth, and the amount of FDI inflow and outflow, then one can argue that this 'transition' is almost unavoidable. The problem is that it is difficult to weigh relative significance of each factor in leading the transition. Even if this transition will eventually take place, it is still hard to tell how long the process of transition will take.

In the third chapter, the authors discuss how the US–China transition differs from the previous transition processes such as Great Britain gaining leadership from the Netherlands, and decades' later losing power to the US. They examine the existing transition theories and point to the limitations to applying these theories to today's case of China–US relations. In the following three chapters, they compare the latest versions of the Organski-derived power transition model, Mearsheimer's offensive-realism model and the challenger/transition model and argue that more attention should be paid to technological changes rather than general economic growth. A key idea that the authors try to tell is that thinking of factors as technological innovation, strategic

orientation, and spatial domain, the inevitability of a change in systemic leadership will become much more evident and imminent; structural change may be inevitable, but a power transition is not.

In Chapters 7 to 10, the authors present a detailed analysis of the above-mentioned transition scenarios and provide relatively thorough reasoning and cross-nation social-impact projections. Yet, they show no favor whatsoever towards any scenario. The subsequent ‘scenario forecasts’ seem fascinating in the sense that even the exact time of year is projected, but also draws attention to an accuracy issue simply because not sufficient analysis is drawn upon. No relevant note is listed regarding their assumed transition scenes. The dynamics of the international power transition in the Asia-Pacific region where the US is struggling to maintain its hegemony in front of a rising China is not discussed. New factors such as the US’s pivot to Asia, the rise of the South China Sea territory disputes, and Japan’s efforts to normalize the state can easily change the dynamics of each of the scenarios the authors discussed.

Above all, the authors do an excellent job in explaining their US–China transition scenario forecasts in comparison to the existing ones. By going deeper into the drivers of conflict-constraint/inducement, they have given us a clear idea on how the historical, cultural, economic, political, military, geographical, and environmental elements interact for paving a trajectory for the future transition. The book is well structured and the language is intelligible, with adequate table/figure/map illustrations. It is a value-added endeavor for international relations studies.

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Evelyn Goh, *The Struggle for Order: Hegemony, Hierarchy and Transition in Post-Cold War East Asia*, Oxford University Press, 2012, xvii + 267 pp.

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Contemporary East Asia has attracted a plethora of international relations analyses from competing theoretical perspectives. Most prominent are realist studies that analyze the dynamics of power in the region, including coercive diplomacy, alliance politics, nuclear proliferation, and conflicts over sovereignty and territoriality. Evelyn Goh’s elegant work presents an important English School contribution to the realist dominated scholarship of East Asian politics. Relying on the international society approach developed by Hedley Bull and Andrew Hurrell, Goh focuses on ‘the fundamentally social nature of the international system’ in which shared norms, rules, and expectations constitute, regulate, and make predictable international life or order that contains primary goals of a society of states, behavioral limits, conflict management, and accommodation of change (p. 7).

Different from Amitav Acharya who stresses the region-specific order based on shared ideas among states, Goh views the regional order in East Asia as part of the global liberal order constructed by the United States or a social compact founded on reciprocal agreements between the hegemonic power and lesser regional states. The author notes that ‘(t)he core values and goals of East Asian regional society are deeply defined by liberal US principles’ (p. 9). While concurring with John Ikenberry’s conception of constitutional order, the author attempts to