

Empire, hierarchy, and hegemony: American grand strategy and the construction of order in the Asia-Pacific

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In February 2005, under the auspices of *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific: A Journal of the Japan Association of International Relations* (IRAP), a number of leading scholars convened to discuss the future prospects for regional order in the Asia-Pacific. In this introduction we summarize and synthesize the arguments contained in the most important papers that were presented to this conference. These papers will be published in the next two issues of IRAP, to celebrate both the fifth anniversary of the journal and the fiftieth anniversary of its sponsor, the Japan Association of International Relations. Four papers from the special conference that feature in this issue are G. John Ikenberry, 'Power and liberal order: America's postwar world order in transition'; Andrew Hurrell, 'Pax Americana or the empire of insecurity?'; Michael Mastanduno, 'Hegemonic order, September 11, and the consequences of the Bush revolution'; and William Tow, 'Regional security in Asia'. Papers from Qingguo Jia, Takashi Inoguchi, Hyug Baeg Im, and Amitav Acharya and Andrew Tan will appear in the next issue.

Participants in the conference focused on the nature of the international order that the United States envisions and seeks to construct in Asia and the ways in which Asian countries perceive and respond to American strategy. American global power is one of the most significant and enduring features of contemporary international relations. The world has entered an era of American unipolarity. During the cold war the United States used its hegemonic power to underwrite an international order, in partnership with

European and East Asian states. According to G. John Ikenberry, this US exercise of liberal postwar hegemony in Europe and East Asia was based on open markets, security alliance, multilateral cooperation, and democratic community. Both the Atlantic and East Asian regional orders were shaped by, and continue to bear the deep imprint of, US postwar liberal hegemony. It should be noted that the patterns of order construction in the Atlantic and Pacific regions were different. American relations with European states were based on multilateral economic and security cooperation, whereas the East Asian region was organized on the basis of bilateral security ties and loose multilateral economic relations.

However, in recent years, and particularly since 9/11, US foreign policy has come under fierce political and conceptual scrutiny both at home and abroad. A number of recent commentators have noted the possibility of an imperialist turn in the conceptualization and prosecution of US foreign policy. The aims of the conference were therefore twofold: to consider the interaction between liberal hegemonic and imperial logics in the construction of order in the Asia-Pacific and to offer a comprehensive and substantial empirical survey of regional responses to contemporary American foreign policy.

Some writers have argued that the postwar international order created by the United States is in crisis or breaking apart. The Bush administration's war on terrorism, the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, the significantly expanded military budgets, and the 2002 National Security Strategy have undermined some of the understandings that were apparent in the postwar order. Similarly, several of the factors that facilitated the construction of the old order have disappeared or eroded. These include the communist threat and the shared visions, political bargains, and communal bonds that were stimulated by this threat. Anti-Americanism and informed criticism of American foreign policy (not the same thing) are widespread. There is deep uncertainty and anxiety about how the new unipolarity will inform and transform American foreign policy and whether American power should be appeased, engaged, or resisted. Is American unipolarity consistent with multilateral, rule-based order, and if not, is the resulting American-led order imperial in nature? General uncertainties over US intentions and future foreign policy strategies have been reflected in a large and expanding literature on imperialism. This specific question is explicitly addressed by Ikenberry and Hurrell.

Ikenberry makes four arguments in his contribution. First, the American postwar order was a historically novel formation. It was emphatically not an empire, rather an open and democratic US-led international order. It was premised on rules, institutions, and partnerships and was built on the basis of liberal bargains, the general notion of diffuse reciprocity, and the provision of public goods. The result has been an unprecedented array of partnerships spread across global and regional security, economic, and political realms. The

advanced democracies now live in a security community within which the threat of violence is unthinkable.

Second, the world is changing in ways that make it more difficult to sustain some of the liberal features of this order. One of these changes has been the emergence of US unipolarity. Since the end of the cold war US power has increased considerably, at the same time as Westphalian norms of state sovereignty have been eroded. This means that US power currently exists beyond the reach of the balance of power logics that had informed the construction of previous international orders. The second change is the shift in the nature of security threats. This refers to the rise of nonstate terrorism and the possibility that private transnational groups and religious fanatics will soon be able to obtain a capacity for violence that was once the preserve of only the most powerful states. These new security threats are not uniformly shared by the partners in the US cold war alliance systems. As a result of this, the sense of solidarity and the indivisibility of threat perception that underpinned the postwar compacts no longer exist. It is easier for the United States to go it alone and for countries in Europe and Asia to depend less on the United States or, simply, to free ride. The postwar alliance system has become more fragile as a result.

Ikenberry's third point is that these changing circumstances put both liberal hegemonic and neo-imperial logics of order in play. The liberal logic has been pursued most fully in the construction of the Atlantic community and has found expression in NATO and multilateral economic regimes. If the United States were to turn towards a neo-imperial logic, then this would take the form of a global 'hub and spokes' security system. It would be an order built around bilateralism, 'special' relationships, client states, and patronage-based foreign policy. America has pursued a 'hub and spokes' strategy in its creation of security ties with East Asia. Were the United States to turn to a neoliberal logic it could be expected that its global strategy would have structural similarities to that which it pursued in postwar East Asia.

Finally, both liberal and neo-imperial logics offer a mixture of costs and benefits for the American governance of unipolarity. However, on balance, Ikenberry believes that the United States will not and should not abandon its commitment to the construction of a rule-based international order. On the one hand, a neo-imperial system of American rule is too expensive and fraught with contradictions. It is also based on an overestimation of American power. On the other hand, there are a range of incentives and impulses that should persuade the United States to attempt to govern unipolarity through multilateral rules and institutions. The United States will want to renegotiate rules and institutions in some areas, but ultimately it wants to wield its power legitimately. It also makes sense for the United States to prepare in earnest for life 'after unipolarity' and to manage and shape

China's emergence as a regional and world power by constructing a rule-based international order. Accommodating the rise of Chinese and Indian power will, in Ikenberry's view, require new, expanded, and shared international governance arrangements.

Andrew Hurrell takes an initial step back from the immediate debate about the nature of US rule in his paper. He considers some of the enduring structural features of hierarchically organized international systems, and in so doing he locates the role and position of the United States in a broader conceptual and historical context. He argues that empire has long been central to conceptions of international order, both before and during the operation of the classical European state system. The logics of power in this state system gave rise to two persistent patterns, one of balance and one of inequality and hierarchy. International relations theory has neglected the link between inequality and order, despite the fact that the classical state system was clearly an international order whose second face was imperial and that colonialism has historically clearly been one of the principal institutions of international society. Hurrell makes the general argument that international order needs to be understood in terms of the interplay between balanced power and unequal or hierarchical power, an observation that remained relevant to the international relations of the twentieth century and is key to a more nuanced understanding of the governance dilemmas that the United States faces in institutionalizing unipolarity. US dominance of the post-cold war system refocused attention on US strategic choices and on the possibility of order through hierarchy, hegemony, or even empire.

Hurrell identifies three key issues that need to be addressed in any discussion of imperialism. The first is the distinction between formal and informal empire, between direct political control and informal economic control. American reluctance to exercise direct political control has always made it difficult to characterize the Pax Americana as an imperial order. The United States has long seen itself as an anticolonial champion of self-determination with a distaste for 'European' power politics. It is also true that the United States played a decisive role in the establishment of self-determination as a postwar norm and successfully placed direct pressure on European states to divest themselves of empire. But, as Hurrell also notes, the rhetoric has by no means always matched the reality. The modern United States is itself a product of colonial settlement and the subjugation of indigenous peoples. The United States was territorially expansionist throughout the nineteenth century, and when it did move away from territorial expansion and conquest, this was because domestic interests pushed towards an open-door policy rather than continued annexation. It is also true that the United States was willing to secure its interests rather than pursue its values on occasions such as the Yalta Conference, where it

negotiated territorial reorganizations and was prepared to dictate the fates of sovereignties and peoples to protect its geopolitical interests.

These qualifications aside, however, the United States generally has turned away from formal conquest and territorial expansion. This classic distinction between direct political control and informal economic rule is useful, but it also has its limits. It overlooks the often highly formalized nature of informal empire. Hurrell notes that the practice of informal empire has always required a complex set of institutional norms and arrangements but that today the formal side of informal empire has become even more important to power projection. This is because the rules and institutions by which globalization is structured have become far more ambitious, far-reaching, and intrusive. For Hurrell, a substantial amount of US power is exercised through its influence on the emergence of core norms, through US influence on regimes and institutions that it often does not join, through US capacity to influence choices between market and political modes of governance, and through its attempts to create alternative types of governance, for example through the externalization of its own domestic law or the expansion of regulatory networks. It is therefore thoroughly misleading to seek to characterize the United States as either 'for' or 'against' international law. Rather, US power is exercised through its influence on the changing legal and normative structure of international society.

The second key issue is the distinction between coercive control and control that is exercised and negotiated through rules and institutions. Empire seems an appropriate term with which to describe the direct coercion of weaker subordinate states. But understanding power simply in terms of material capabilities and coercion is narrow and unhelpful. Power must be understood as a social relationship, and the quest for political power must be understood as a quest for authoritative and legitimate control. As Hurrell notes, 'stable hegemony rests on a delicate balance between coercion and consensus, between the direct and indirect power of the hegemonic state and the provision of a degree of autonomy of action and a degree of respect for the interests of weaker states'.

Hurrell, then, argues that the United States has mostly favored informal empire and that the mode of control that it currently uses is best captured by the term 'hegemony'. The third key issue is the depth of US involvement. The implication of the distinction between formal and informal empire is that informal empire implies a shallower and less intrusive engagement with subordinates on the part of the hegemon. Ikenberry would argue that this has certainly not been true of US postwar liberal hegemony in East Asia and Europe, which involved a complex set of bargains, alliances, and multilateral commitments. Moreover, Hurrell argues that there has been a further structural change in the age of globalization, where the promotion of US interests

involves deep intrusion into how societies are organized domestically and global economic regulation whose success depends on the degree to which it is internalized and implemented within domestic societies. If states want to develop effective policies on development, the environment, refugees, human rights, and terrorism, then they need to engage with a wide range of international and transnational actors. In a globalized world it is not enough to coerce governments. This fact has reshaped the debate about legitimacy and complicated the exercise of hegemonic power.

In the final section of his paper Hurrell discusses five of the most commonly cited reasons for end of empire. These are the declining utility of military force, resistance to alien rule, changes within the metropolitan core, changes in the international legal and moral climate, and the emergence of opponents and challengers. On the basis of this discussion, he concludes that, broadly, there are two strategic options that are available to the hegemon, and, in this particular case, the United States. The first is power based and rests on three propositions: that US dominance is stable because of the sheer extent of US power, and the impossibility of any serious foreseeable challenge; that enough deals can be done to secure support for US positions; and lastly, echoing the argument of Ikenberry, that US power is stable because it does rest on legitimate purpose. There are, however, three problems with this position. The first is that balance of power politics is conceived solely in terms of military challenges. The second is that other major states have responded to US preponderance by engaging in a modified form of balancing behavior, for example by raising the costs of US policies in some institutions and challenging US preferences in others. Lastly, and again in agreement with Ikenberry, Hurrell notes that US claims to legitimacy do not seem to have won over substantial parts of world opinion, even among those countries who share many values with the United States.

The second strategic option available to a hegemon is that of constitutionalizing its power, a process by which the hegemon gains acceptance of its preeminence. In order to gain acceptance a hegemon should accept the idea of strategic constraint and the role that institutions play in promoting that idea. Hegemons should act with self-restraint so as to prevent the emergence of potential rivals. Ikenberry, of course, has offered the definitive contemporary account of this logic. There are three important factors to consider with this line of argument. To what extent is the hegemon's attempt to engage with institutions genuine? Second, to what extent does enmeshment with the hegemonic state disempower rather than empower subordinate states? Lastly, how satisfied are all parties with the hegemonic deal? Is the balance of satisfactions such that the hegemonic order is regarded as legitimate by a sufficiently broad range of political opinion?

Hurrell's paper concludes on a downbeat note, with the observation that the United States has enormous power resources but is having difficulties translating this power into outcomes of a durable and desirable nature. If the United States pursues the first strategic option and seeks to develop an exclusivist and narrow conception of hegemonic order, then it will create an empire of insecurity, for itself and others. However, there may still be difficulties even if it pursues the second strategy. Hurrell argues that the legitimacy of the liberal multilateralism of the 1990s had already been called into question by many states and social movements, and that this was a top-down prescriptive multilateralism in which the substantive outcomes were stacked in favor of the most powerful. The success of any future liberal hegemony, Hurrell concludes, would require greater levels of real reciprocity and cooperation.

Michael Mastanduno agrees with Ikenberry and Hurrell that the defining feature of the new international system is the dominance of the United States. The United States is keen to preserve its preponderant position and has, since the end of the cold war, sought to maintain its global primacy and to shape international order in key regions of the world, including East Asia. Mastanduno offers three main arguments in his survey of the implications of US unipolarity for East Asian order. First, the United States has pursued a hegemonic strategy for the maintenance of order in East Asia. On Mastanduno's definition, hegemonic states do not simply want to dominate other states but rather seek to gain the acceptance of other major states for an international order shaped by them. US hegemony has made important contributions to East Asian order, but it remains 'incomplete' in the sense that it has been only partially accepted by other states in the region.

Second, the events of 9/11 have, in Mastanduno's view, had a profound effect on US foreign policy. Specifically, the 9/11 attacks refocused perceptions of threat and security in the United States and have led to a US foreign policy that is more moralistic in tone, more risk acceptant, and less wedded to particular institutional arrangements. These developments have significantly complicated the application of US hegemonic strategy in East Asia. These developments and other changes may combine to transform the security architecture that emerged in East Asia during the cold war and that persisted during the 1990s. Mastanduno believes that we cannot take for granted the fact that the 'hub and spokes' model that the United States has pursued in East Asia, with itself at the center of a set of bilateral alliances and serving as a regional stabilizer, will survive in the same form in which it has existed for the past few decades.

Third, economics is a vital aspect of US hegemonic strategy. Economic liberalization and interdependence have both been key elements of US hegemony and of regional order. However, although the United States was the key

engine of growth in the global economy during the 1990s, the management of economic issues will become increasingly difficult. As a result of financial strategies that the United States has pursued since 9/11, sizable fiscal and external deficits have been and will continue to be incurred. There is a distinct possibility of international economic conflict in the coming years, particularly if China experiences continued growth, and the United States experiences a protracted slowdown. Economic conflict would complicate American attempts to maintain the existing East Asian security order.

It is important to define and distinguish unipolarity and hegemony. Unipolarity refers to a distribution of material capabilities, whereas hegemony has both material and nonmaterial components. Mastanduno makes a similar point to Hurrell in arguing that hegemony incorporates both power and social relations. The term is correctly applied to a state of affairs where one actor has the power to shape the rules of international politics to meet its own interests but also where there is a reasonable degree of acceptance of or acquiescence to the hegemon's power on the part of other major states in the system. For Mastanduno, 'a durable hegemonic order requires some consensus on the desirability of the dominant state's leadership, and on the social purposes that it promotes. Hegemony, in this sense, is not simply domination but involves the legitimate exercise of power'.

After the cold war, the United States clearly sought to reinforce its hegemonic strategy in East Asia, seeking a special role for itself as the principal guarantor of regional order. The United States could have withdrawn in order to let a local balance of power emerge and undertaken the role of offshore balancer. It could also have promoted multilateral regional security organizations, or sought to construct a regional balance of power that contained China. However, it did none of these things. Mastanduno argues that the United States will retain its preponderant power status in the coming years but that the task of maintaining and completing US regional hegemony will become more difficult. The two biggest challenges that the United States faces are the global war on terror and the management of the rise of China, as a result of which the longer-term prospects for East Asian order are uncertain and problematic.

There are two key features of US hegemonic strategy in the region. First, the United States has cultivated a set of bilateral relationships with other key states in the region, the most important and enduring of which have been the ties with Japan and South Korea. Furthermore, the United States has reaffirmed its close partnership with Australia and sought to engage rather than contain China. This preference for a primary set of bilateral relationships is referred to as the 'hub and spokes' approach. The second institutional feature of US hegemony has been the US forward presence in the region, and the US

intention to maintain a substantial political and military commitment to the region for an 'indefinite duration'.

US hegemonic strategy in the region has contributed to order in several ways. For China, the US presence effectively 'contains' Japan, and, similarly, for Japan, the US presence deters China from a bid for regional dominance. The US presence has helped to deter major powers from intensifying dangerous rivalries, and it has, in so doing, reassured smaller states whose security and autonomy would otherwise be threatened by these large states. East Asia is a dangerous neighborhood, in which smaller states must coexist with larger states that have geopolitical ambitions, territorial claims, and a history of enmity. The United States has also worked hard to manage and stabilize regional conflicts that have the potential to develop into local and possibly even systemic wars. In the 1990s, for example, the United States took initiatives in security crises between China and Taiwan, in North Korea, and in the Kashmir conflict. Finally, the United States has striven to discourage nationalist economic competition. It has pushed Japan over domestic economic reform, sought to integrate China into a globalizing world economy, and maintained access to sources of global liquidity and US markets in the wake of the Asian financial crisis.

US hegemonic strategy has, therefore, made a substantial contribution to regional order in East Asia, but it also has its limitations. The United States has not sought to definitively resolve the numerous long-standing conflicts in the region, such as those between China and Taiwan, North and South Korea, Japan and China, or Japan and Korea. Rather, the United States has sought to manage relationships and crises and avoid systemic conflict. US hegemony is also incomplete, in the sense that by no means all states accept or approve of US hegemony in the region. Japan does regard the dominant regional role of the United States as constructive and legitimate, but it is also the case that Japan gains more by cooperating with rather than challenging US hegemony. The most important issue, of course, is China's long-term reaction to the US attempt to dominate the region. At present, China is grateful for the benefits of integration, but in the long run it is likely to develop its own aspirations towards and strategies for the construction of regional order.

According to Qingguo Jia, if one analyzes the Bush administration's China policy, one can discern two significant and distinct voices. The first treats China as a potential partner to be cultivated, whereas the second conceives of China as a potential hegemonic rival. The first emphasizes the importance of engagement with China, and the second containment of China. The first recognizes the need for a constructive and cooperative relationship with China, whereas the second is resigned to the likelihood of conflict. Jia identifies four factors that are important in shaping the more positive approach towards China. These are increasingly shared interests, converging values,

the reduction of misunderstandings over respective policy priorities, and policy choices made by certain members of the Bush administration. Conversely, three factors have contributed towards the negative perception of China: a zero-sum perception of US interests with regard to China, differences in political values and political orientations, and general uncertainty and suspicion engendered by the rise of China.

A significant outcome of 9/11 is that it stopped the vicious cycle in United States–China relations. The US foreign policy priority shifted from changing and containing China to waging the global war on terrorism. The United States needed support from other countries, and China was happy to take the opportunity to improve its relations with the United States. This has helped to create a virtuous cycle of sorts in relations between the two countries. Jia argues that both countries share a number of significant regional objectives. China and the United States have an important stake in bilateral economic relations and in market reform and the rule of law. Both wish to maintain peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits and denuclearize the Korean peninsula. Both support existing regional security mechanisms and dialogues.

Jia concludes that the management of the bilateral relationship with China is going to assume ever-greater significance for both parties and for the world as a whole as time passes. Both countries would benefit greatly from the maintenance of a constructive and cooperative relationship. For this to happen, it is necessary for the Bush administration to decide whether it perceives China as a strategic competitor or a strategic partner, and the litmus test for this will be the way in which the Bush administration handles the Taiwan issue. If this is handled in a manner that China finds acceptable, then there is an unprecedented opportunity to construct an enduring cooperative relationship that would benefit everybody in the long run. There are interesting and important echoes in Jia's argument of Ikenberry's discussion of liberal hegemonic logic and the need for the United States to manage and shape China's rise by binding itself into cooperative multilateral institutions and arrangements. However, if the Taiwan issue is not handled sensitively, then Jia concludes that it is likely that relations between the two countries will remain cautious and limited.

Takashi Inoguchi argues that although there have been substantial continuities in Japanese foreign policy since 1945, a closer look enables one to discern clear 15-year phases. The first entailed an internal battle between pro-alliance and anti-alliance sections of Japanese society (1945–1960). The second period was characterized by adherence to the Yoshida doctrine (1960–1975). The third period saw Japan tentatively emerge as a systemic supporter of the United States (1975–1990). The fourth period saw Japan attempt to pursue the role of global civilian power (1990–2005), and the fifth will see a

gradual consolidation of Japan's emerging role as a global ordinary power (2005–2020).

Japan has chosen to define itself as an emerging global ordinary power with Japanese characteristics. Japan is in the process of consolidating a role as an ordinary power that acts justly. First, there is greater support for the use of force, provided that this force is used for solely defensive purposes. To defend Japan effectively against terrorism requires a number of courses of action. In an incident that took place in 2002, the Maritime Safety Agency used force on the Sea of Japan against an unidentified vessel that resisted the Japanese coast guard's attempt to investigate its actions. Public opinion was broadly supportive of this use of force. Furthermore, the Self-Defense Force already has permission to use force once it is attacked, or once it detects that an enemy is about to attack, in the context of United Nations peacekeeping operations. This legislation was passed in 1991. The 2003 legislation that permits troops to be sent to Iraq also contains permission for the Self-Defense Forces to use force in self-defense. Second, the nonprovocative use of force needs to be developed. In other words, strictly defensive methods must be implemented. If it is necessary to use force to such an extent that this goes beyond strictly defensive purposes, then it will be necessary to revise the Constitution. Third, it should be recognized that terrorism can be reduced only with international efforts to eradicate extreme poverty, to end discrimination, and to enhance inclusive involvement of wider populations in the running of their own societies.

Movement towards the legitimation of the use of force allows Japan to consider a number of alternative foreign policy initiatives. Inoguchi examines three models of ordinary power provided by three key European allies of the United States, namely, Britain, Germany, and France. The three models are contrasted with each other to demonstrate their structural and stylistic affinities with the Japanese experience. Although these models are rooted in the historical experiences of Britain, France, and Germany, they also possess an ideal-typical quality, which makes them relevant to a consideration of Japan's future foreign policy choices. The British model is based on the idea of a special relationship, the German model is based on the idea of regional embeddedness, and the French model is based on the notion of autonomy.

It is likely that the Pax Americana will endure for some time to come. As such, any discussion of the extent to which Japan can regain ordinary power status must be located in the context of its relationship with the United States. Inoguchi concludes that Japan's role in East Asia is very important for the United States. Other than Japan, there is no country that the United States can count on as a key stabilizing power. China does not share core values and norms with the United States. Korea is too small for the United States to count on. ASEAN is not only too small but also too fragmented and vulnerable.

It is most likely that the United States will retain a substantial military presence in East Asia, given its indispensability to the maintenance of regional peace and security. Japan will maintain and perhaps intensify its alliance with the United States. Japan's 'normal state' or 'ordinary country' policy line might initially emphasize the use of force, to dramatize the sovereign state status that might be symbolically acquired through a revised constitution. But Japan is likely to assume responsibilities for the new kind of security missions tailored to meet nonconventional and nontraditional threats to global governance. This ordinary power policy line will also be pursued with reference to freedom, human rights, and democracy, together with other Asian states such as India, South Korea, and the Philippines. The ordinary power foreign policy line of Japan in the coming two decades will be different from the normal state foreign policy line that was envisaged at the end of the cold war.

Hyug Baeg Im argues that for the last half-century the US presence in Korea has contributed crucially to peace, prosperity, and democracy. The United States played a key role in building a modern state after the division of the Korean peninsula, rescued South Korea in the Korean War, protected South Korea from possible aggression from North Korea, facilitated compressed industrialization, and promoted democratization. Although there are problems in contemporary ROK–United States relations, Im argues that the alliance should be reinvigorated and strengthened, for a number of reasons.

First, the United States perceives Northeast Asia as the region with the greatest potential for large-scale military conflict and maintains a capability to intervene militarily in the region through the United States–Japan alliance. Growing Chinese military power may necessitate the strengthening of US alliances with Japan, the Philippines, Australia, and South Korea. This 'revised uni-bilateralism' initiated by the United States has obstructed the emergence of multilateralism, especially in the regional security sphere. In a geopolitical structure where the national interests of the United States and China could collide, Im argues that South Korea should seek to contain the expansion of Chinese influence in the Korean peninsula, by strengthening its alliance with the United States.

Second, China has been pursuing a 'two Koreas' strategy through which it maximizes economic and diplomatic influence over South Korea by preserving the division of the Korean peninsula and using North Korea as leverage. In addition, China makes use of North Korea as a shield against potential US expansionism in Northeast Asia. China also tries to check the massive inflow of refugees from North Korea into Manchuria and worries about the instability in Manchuria caused by potential Korean nationalism. Thus, according to Im, China has a definite stake in ongoing tension in the Korean peninsula

and the maintenance of a divided Korea. China is currently actively seeking a peaceful resolution to the North Korean nuclear issue, but in the long run it has conflicting interests with South Korea, which wants to become a hub state in Northeast Asia after Korean unification. Therefore, beyond its conventional role as a deterrent against North Korean threats and aggression, a strong ROK–United States alliance would also give South Korea important leverage against China in economic as well as political matters.

Third, another geopolitical reason why a strong ROK–United States alliance is critical for the South Korean national interest is that the ROK–United States alliance prevents Northeast Asian order from being realigned too clearly along a United States–Japan alliance versus China axis, leaving no space for South Korea. The strengthening of the United States–Japan alliance also allows for the expanding role of the Japanese Self-Defense Force. Considering the extent of historical animosity and rivalry between Japan and China, it is highly possible that a United States–Japan alliance versus China axis will emerge in the near future and that South Korea would be forced to make a choice as to whether to side with the United States and Japan or China. In this eventuality, only a strengthened ROK–United States alliance could deter the threat of Chinese regional hegemony and the threat that could emanate from a rearmed Japan. South Korea should therefore seek to bandwagon with American power rather than seek to become independent from it. There is a danger that a weakened ROK–United States alliance and the withdrawal of American troops could provoke both China and Japan into revealing their territorial ambitions.

Fourth, a strong ROK–United States alliance is also necessary for the pursuit of an effective policy of engagement with North Korea. South Korea needs US cooperation because the United States has the power to guarantee North Korean regime survival and to solicit economic aid for North Korea from the international community. National cooperation between the two Koreas could not be realized without prior cooperation between South Korea and the United States and international cooperation in the matter of restoring peace in the Korean peninsula.

Im concludes that South Korea should therefore respond to the changing security environment by strengthening the ROK–United States alliance. Cooperation with the United States is required for peaceful resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue, the establishment of a durable peace in the Korean peninsula after unification, and the rise of South Korea as a hub of peace and prosperity in Northeast Asia.

William Tow argues that since their formalization with the creation of ANZUS in 1951, Australia's security relations with the United States have been characterized by a need to strike an appropriate balance between global and regional priorities. Australia's history is replete with threat perceptions

shaped by both global and regional forces that were ultimately assuaged by its association with a ‘great and powerful friend’. More often than not, however, global and regional strategies have intersected in Australian security behavior even when the country’s policy planners and analysts have debated over which level should be prioritized. Throughout much of the cold war, the United States regarded Australia as an ally whose historical and normative loyalties were initially divided between Britain and the United States but which was ultimately in the American strategic camp. America’s containment posture towards the Asia-Pacific—in which ANZUS played a fundamental role—was an integral part of its global containment strategy directed against the Soviet bloc.

Tow examines the extent to which Australia and the United States have succeeded in striking a ‘regional–global balance’ in their recent security relations. The policy balance issue intensified during the Hawke/Keating government. During this time, Australia pursued a number of multilateral policy initiatives in Asia and cultivated stronger bilateral ties with key regional actors such as China and Indonesia. The future viability of ANZUS became more uncertain, with the United States–New Zealand nuclear dispute leading to the latter’s de facto extrication from the alliance in 1986. The Howard government moved quickly to repair alliance relations with Washington, initially with mixed results and at some cost in its dealings with its Asian neighbors. Although John Howard had already found the Bush administration far more congenial to Australian agendas than was its predecessor, 9/11 changed the complexion of international security politics and intensified Australia–United States strategic collaboration in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere.

Tow notes that more than a decade has now passed since various observers deemed East Asia a ‘potential cockpit of great power conflict’. Regional crisis points such as the Korean Peninsula and Taiwan still exist, although no general war has erupted. Asia remains comparatively benign, even in the aftermath of a major economic crash and notwithstanding the prospect of a great power hegemonic rivalry looming just over the horizon. Asia’s destiny will be shaped by the twin forces of globalization and regional identity. Asian economies are among the most interdependent in the world, highly susceptible to the oscillations of global trade and finance. Tow argues that the legitimacy of many Asian governments and elites is now tested by forces largely unanticipated by those predicting classical state-centric confrontations at the end of the cold war: radical Islamic movements, transnational phenomena such as natural disasters and pandemics, and the convergence of poverty and technology.

However, although they represent a promising long-term vision, regionally indigenous initiatives to confront these dynamics have thus far fallen short. It

appears that classical state-centric mechanisms such as alliances and coalitions, power balancing, and diplomacy will remain central to addressing problems of Asian security for some time to come. The United States will continue to orchestrate much of this activity. Accordingly, the ANZUS alliance and its future role in the regional and international security environments must continue to be an important part of both US global strategy and Australia's East Asian security posture. It is therefore imperative that Australia endeavor to 'get the balance right' between regional security and its global strategies involving the ANZUS alliance. The key policy challenge for Australia will be to ensure that it is perceived as a legitimate regional security player rather than as an unwanted deputy sheriff.

In their article Amitav Acharya and Andrew Tan contest the influential argument that a US-led balance of power has been the chief provider of security and prosperity for Southeast Asia. This assumption has often led to a policy proposition that the maintenance of a balance of power framework centered upon US bilateral alliances in the region is the most effective guarantee for security and prosperity in Southeast Asia. Alternatives to this, such as the emergence of a multilateral security order, would be not only weak but also harmful. Multilateralism, so this argument goes, would play into the hands of China, which is showing a growing diplomatic assertiveness in the region.

Acharya and Tan find these arguments problematic. They do not suggest that US bilateral alliances have had no positive impact whatsoever on regional order in Southeast Asia. Rather, they argue that the influence of the United States in contributing to the stability of Southeast Asia is often exaggerated, particularly at the expense of the contributions made by multilateral security dialogue and regional community formation. Although US strategic dominance and security alliances have undeniably functioned as collective public goods in Northeast Asia, whether the same can be said of Southeast Asia is somewhat less certain. If anything, the polarizing impact that the US approach to the war on terrorism has had on Southeast Asian regional audiences since 9/11 has served to reinforce that uncertainty.

Acharya and Tan offer three arguments to counter the 'US-led balance of power' narrative. First, the place of Southeast Asia in America's overall grand strategy has not been particularly salient relative to that of Northeast Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, and of course Europe. Second, the US strategic presence in Southeast Asia has not shielded Washington's allies and partners in the region from low-intensity and internal conflicts; in some instances, it may even have contributed to them. Third, contrary to the conventional understanding of great powers as principal if not sole public goods providers in establishing and maintaining international order, the Southeast Asian experience reveals a more ambiguous story, namely, weaker regional states

and institutions that function equally as providers of security for the region and whose problematic and partial provisions have in fact benefited the United States.

Acharya and Tan further offer four arguments for the improvement of regional security relations. First, a US-led balance of power approach is unsuitable for dealing with the problem of terrorism in Southeast Asia. Second, on its own the balance of power approach may be equally suspect for dealing with a rising China, despite claims to the contrary by advocates of balancing strategies. Those twin concerns lead to a third point: that the United States ought to support and facilitate further regional efforts at multilateral security collaboration. Fourth, Southeast Asia is a region in transition. As a result of these changes, it may no longer be possible for ASEAN and the great powers to adopt a balance of power approach to regional security.

Together, the foregoing points argue against any undue exaggeration of the US contribution to Southeast Asia's peace and stability. If anything, American involvement in the region can be characterized as ambivalent, even erratic. Acharya and Tan do not claim that the security of the region is better attributed to the existence of an inclusive and cooperative multilateral order centered upon ASEAN than to a regional balance of power centered upon US strategic dominance. Nevertheless, absent the region's incipient yet increasing fluency with 'soft' multilateral practices and processes, the security of Southeast Asia would likely have been far worse off than it was and is. Acharya and Tan conclude by arguing that for years to come, balancing mechanics and multilateral dynamics will continue to coexist in Southeast Asia, at times comfortably and at other times uncomfortably.