Journal of Contemporary China (2011), **20**(72), November, 795–811 Routledge Taylor & Francis Group

Beyond the Four Percent Solution: explaining the consequences of China's rise

BRUCE GILLEY*

Downloaded by ["Queen's University Libraries, Kingston"] at 15:42 26 September 2011

Debates about the consequences of China's rise have focused mainly on China's foreign policy in security affairs and have been offered mostly within a realist framework; yet this limited approach to the problem ignores non-security issues, non-realist frameworks, and non-China sources of system-level outcomes. Policy-makers and scholars should significantly broaden their descriptive and explanatory frameworks in order to understand the consequences of a rising China. Using this broader approach will direct attention to systemic and ideational factors in explaining whether China's rise is peaceful or not.

Introduction

In 2003, China held a combined surface and deep-water naval drill with Pakistan off the coast of Shanghai. In the same year, South Africa, Brazil, and India began an effort to coordinate their foreign policies as major developing-country democracies. For those who study the consequences of China's rising power, the naval exercises attracted the most attention, yet from the standpoint of change and stability in the international system, the latter event may have been a more significant result of China's rise.

As China's power rises, policy-makers and scholars are struggling with the task of establishing analytic frameworks that are sufficiently broad to capture the momentous (and rare) phenomenon of a rising great power. So far, this task has been taken up primarily by students of China's foreign policy working in the security field and operating within a realist framework, yet a properly macroscopic approach to the problem requires a broader appreciation of the dimensions of China's rise.

In this essay, I seek to move beyond the 'four percent solution', as I will call it, to draw attention to the scope of inquiry that China's rise demands. The first and primary purpose is methodological—to investigate *how* to think about China's rise. I argue that a full solution to the question of China's rise will require an 'analytic eclecticism'[1] characterized by theoretical pragmatism, broadly formulated questions,

*Bruce Gilley is an Associate Professor of Political Science in the Mark O. Hatfield School of Government at Portland State University. His research centers on questions of democracy, legitimacy, and global politics. His books include *The Right to Rule* (2009) and *China's Democratic Future* (2004). He can be reached by email at gilleyb@pdx.edu

1. Rudra Sil and Peter Katzenstein, 'Analytic eclecticism in the study of world politics: reconfiguring problems and mechanisms across research traditions', *Perspectives on Politics* 8(2), (2010), pp. 411–431.

ISSN 1067-0564 print/ 1469-9400 online/11/720795–17 © 2011 Taylor & Francis
DOI: 10.1080/10670564.2011.604501

and complex answers. A secondary purpose is empirical—to apply this approach to the question itself. I argue that China's power is unquestionably rising and that its impact so far has been largely non-disruptive. I ascribe this to a complex array of interest-based, ideational, and actor-based variables. I conclude with theoretical and policy implications.

China's rising power

International power refers to the ability of a state to resist, change, or otherwise influence the international context in which it exists. China's rise (or revival) in the international system has been widely anticipated throughout the twentieth century,[2] but it is only in the period since the 1989 Tiananmen Massacre and its aftermath that there has been clear and sustained evidence of China's rising power.[3] Among the dimensions generally considered important are 'hard power' indicators such as demography, geography, economy, and military that relate to material capabilities; and 'soft power' indicators of technology, organization, culture, diplomacy, and values that relate to social or human capabilities.

Beyond its obvious demographic and geographic advantages in terms of hard power, China's share of global economic output (13% in 2010 using the IMF's purchasing power equivalent-based estimates) has closed-in quickly on that of the United States (20% in 2010), while its military spending (US$100–150 billion in 2009[4]), although only 15–20% of the US level, now far exceeds the combined spending of Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea. The Correlates of War Composite Index of National Material Capabilities gives China a 19.9% share of international power in 2007, compared to 14.2% for the US (in part because of its somewhat archaic emphasis on steel production).[5] RAND gave China a 14% share versus 20% for the US in 2005, but predicted that China would close that gap by around 2015.[6] An Australian measure concurs that China's power will surpass that of the US by 2015.[7] Johnston and Chestnut put the cross-over at between 2030 and 2040.[8]

China's impressive hard power is contrasted with its less-than-impressive soft power—its low position in the global value-added chain, poor human and social capital, lack of freedoms, and governance challenges.[9] China ranked just 34th out of

2. Brantly Womack, *China's Rise in Historical Perspective* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010).

3. Nicholas Eberstadt, 'Will China (continue to) rise?', in Gary James Schmitt, ed., *The Rise of China: Essays on the Future Competition* (New York: Encounter Books, 2009), pp. 131–154.

4. SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, United States Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China* (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, 2010).

5. Correlates of War, 'National material capabilities V3.02', in Correlates of War Project, *National Material Capabilities V3.02* (2005).

6. Gregory F. Treverton and Seth G. Jones, *Measuring National Power* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2005).

7. Dylan Kissane, '2015 and the rise of China: power cycle analysis and the implications for Australia', *Security Challenges* 1(1), (2005), pp. 105–121 at p. 117.

8. Sheena Chestnut and Alastair Iain Johnston, 'Is China rising?', in Eva Paus, Penelope B. Prime and Jon W. Western, eds, *Global Giant: Is China Changing the Rules of the Game?* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 237–260.

9. Shaun Breslin, 'Power and production: rethinking China's global economic role', *Review of International Studies* 31(4), (2005), pp. 735–753; Steve Chan, 'Is there a power transition between the US and China? The different

Downloaded by ["Queen's University Libraries, Kingston"] at 15:42 26 September 2011

48 developed and emerging economies for 2005 in the Global Innovation Scorecard, which includes business, human resources, and infrastructure capacities for innovation.[10] Kim calculates that China's 'structural network' power ranked only 24th in the world in 2000 (the US was first), behind the likes of middle powers like Poland and South Africa.[11] The *Economist*'s index of innovation performance and environment, published in 2009, ranked China 54th out of 82 countries.[12] However, a common finding of 'soft power' measurements is that China's internal and external capabilities are improving.[13]

Beyond these *objective* measures of power, there is an important and often neglected *subjective* measure. China is today widely *perceived* to be a rising power, especially in the West.[14] In the 2010 Pew Global Attitudes survey, 31% of respondents believed that China was *already* the world's largest economic power (versus 43% who cited the US). Analysts in Asia in particular take China's rise as a given.[15] Although some analysts have espied parallel processes of 'Japan rising' or 'India rising', it is the *subjective* belief in China's rise that makes it unique. While it may be socially constructed,[16] a rising China is no less real for all that.

Measuring the consequences

The international system can be defined as the 'rules of the game', namely the norms, procedures, agreements, and principles that guide world politics. An *effective* international system is one in which, in Ikenberry's phrase, 'rules, rights, and protections are widely agreed upon, highly institutionalized, and generally observed'.[17] It is important to adopt such a rule-based definition of world order rather than a power-based one because it does not presuppose any particular outcome

Footnote 9 continued
faces of national power', *Asian Survey* 45(5), (2005), pp. 687–701; Xuetong Yan, 'The rise of China and its power status', *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 1(1), (2006), pp. 5–33; Yangsheng Zhong, *The Economic Theory of Developing Countries' Rise: Explaining the Myth of Rapid Economic Growth in China* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010).

10. Daniele Archibugi, Mario Denni and Andrea Filippetti, *The Global Innovation Scoreboard 2008: The Dynamics of the Innovative Performances of Countries* (Rome: Italian National Research Council, CNR-IRPPS, 2009).

11. Hyung Min Kim, 'Comparing measures of national power', *International Political Science Review* 31(4), (2010), pp. 405–427; Hyung Min Kim, 'Introducing the new concept of national power: from the network perspective', *Peace Economics, Peace Science, and Public Policy* 15(1), (2009).

12. Economist Intelligence Unit, 'A new ranking of the world's most innovative countries', *Economist Magazine* (London), (2009).

13. Young Nam Cho and Jong Ho Jeong, 'China's soft power: discussions, resources, and prospects', *Asian Survey* 48(3), (2008), pp. 453–472; Yanzhong Huang and Sheng Ding, 'Dragon's underbelly: an analysis of China's soft power', *East Asia: An International Quarterly* 23(4), (2006), pp. 22–44; Jian Wang, *Soft Power in China: Public Diplomacy through Communication* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

14. Liang Zhang, 'The rise of China: media perception and implications for international politics', *Journal of Contemporary China* 19(64), (2010), pp. 233–254; Tao Xie and Benjamin I. Page, 'Americans and the rise of China as a world power', *Journal of Contemporary China* 19(65), (2010), pp. 479–501.

15. Jisi Wang, Ryosei Kokobun and Nihon Kokusai Kåoryåu Sentåa, *The Rise of China and a Changing East Asian Order* (Tokyo: Japan Center for International Exchange, 2004).

16. Michael Alan Brittingham, 'China's contested rise: Sino-US relations and the social construction of great power status', in Sujian Guo and Shiping Hua, eds, *New Dimensions of Chinese Foreign Policy* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007), pp. 83–108.

17. G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 36.

Downloaded by ["Queen's University Libraries, Kingston"] at 15:42 26 September 2011

from rising powers. Rising powers that adhere to existing norms and principles can be non-disruptive even as they change the balance of power. Paus and colleagues stress the increased economic competition and new power dynamics that are accompanying the rise of China,[18] but these are separate from the 'rules of the game' to which their book is addressed. The US rise to replace Britain, for instance, is today seen as largely non-disruptive since it carried on and expanded the liberal rules of the game that had been taking shape under the British empire.

By contrast, in power-based or relative position-based definitions of world order, rising powers are disruptive *by definition*. Power transition theorists make China's rise virtually synonymous with disruption because of the new constraints placed on US capabilities.[19] Indeed, by using disruption to measure rising powers, power transition theorists are prone to conclude that China's power is not rising because the US continues to project power relatively unconstrained.[20]

A second methodological point is that disruption must be treated as a continuous variable. While 'low disruption' would entail only marginal changes to the rules of the game (perhaps akin to the effects of the rise of the US), 'moderate disruption' would entail major changes in some issue areas, while 'high disruption' would entail major changes in all most areas. An undue emphasis on a dichotomous measurement—China has or has not disrupted world order—may distract us from the middle ground of partial disruption.

Third, analysts must strive for the most social scientific measurement of the degree of disruption as possible by engaging in serious conceptualization and measurement. This means considering evidence in all three broad issue-areas that together constitute most of the substance of world order: *security*, *political economy*, and *domestic governance*. An excessive focus on security issues, for instance, may lead to a mismeasurement of the dependent variable itself. Those who study the many admittedly disruptive trends in Chinese security policy, for instance, are prone to conclude that China's rise is disruptive overall.[21]

Within each issue-area, meanwhile, data should be 'mean-centered', which is to say that either it *constitutes* a central part of the issue-area or it is a close *substitute* or proxy for the issue-area as a whole. In measuring the consequences of China's rise, analysts need to offer explicit justifications for their data selection grounded in either a deductive theory of its constitutive nature or in an inductive, empirically grounded claim about its substitutive value. For example, much attention has been given to China's (disruptive) missile modernization but less to its (cooperative) sending of warships to the coastal waters of Somalia to combat pirates. For the mean-seeking

18. Eva Paus, Penelope B. Prime and Jon W. Western, 'China rising—a global transformation?', in Paus *et al.*, eds, *Global Giant*, pp. 3–28.

19. John Mearsheimer, 'China's unpeaceful rise', *Current History* 105(690), (2006), pp. 160–162; Schmitt, ed., *The Rise of China*; Avery Goldstein, 'Power transition, institutions, and China's rise in East Asia: theoretical expectations and evidence', in G. John Ikenberry and Chung-in Moon, eds, *The United States and Northeast Asia: Debates, Issues, and New Order* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008); Ronald Tammen and Jacek Kugler, 'Power transition and China–US conflicts', *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 1(1), (2006), pp. 35–55.

20. Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, 'American primacy in perspective', *Foreign Affairs* 81(4), (2002), pp. 20–33.

21. Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes, *Red Star over the Pacific: China's Rise and the Challenge to US Maritime Strategy* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2010); Richard D. Fisher, *China's Military Modernization: Building for Regional and Global Reach* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2008).

Downloaded by ["Queen's University Libraries, Kingston"] at 15:42 26 September 2011

social scientist (as opposed to the risk averse policy analyst), such attention must be justified on the grounds that missile policy is central to global security governance or that it reveals the 'true' nature of Beijing's security policy, whereas anti-piracy missions do not. Being explicit about data selection amidst the problem of 'multiple historical records'[22] will ensure more accurate measures of the consequences of China's rise.

Finally, in assessing the discrete consequences of a rising China, attention needs to be paid to the *other* factors affecting world order (control variables). These include actor-centered behavior unrelated to China's rise as well as structural and institutional contributors to change and stability in the world system. The problem of attribution error is acute in measuring global, systemic outcomes, in part because it forces analysts to consider evidence from outside their research areas. Ikenberry notes that the international order is, today, 'harder to overturn and easier to join' than ever before.[23] If so, then the discrete impact of China's rise will be small compared to the role of control variables. Measuring the consequences of China's rise demands a vision that goes far beyond China itself.

China's peaceful rise

For the last 20 years, fears of a 'disruptive rise' (perhaps '*weixiexing jueqi*' or 'threatening rise' in Chinese) of China have been widespread in the West.[24] However, across the three main issue-areas, evidence of such disruption remains limited. Early indications are instead of a 'peaceful rise' (*heping jueqi*), to borrow the term coined in China in 2003 but then dropped from official discourse as too presumptive.[25] China's rise has, so far, either modestly reinforced or not significantly undermined existing norms and institutions of world order.

In the security issue-area, the US-led hub-and-spoke system of security alliances in Asia is a core constitutive element of global order that is significantly affected by the preferences and actor interactions relating to a rising China (rather than by control variables). Thus far, all evidence points to the durability of this system.[26] While there has been some modest defense strengthening—'soft hedging'[27] or 'institutional

22. Ian Lustick, 'History, historiography, and political science: multiple historical records and the problem of selection bias', *American Political Science Review* 90(3), (1996), pp. 605–618.

23. G. John Ikenberry, 'The rise of China: power, institutions, and the Western order', in Robert S. Ross and Feng Zhu, eds, *China's Ascent: Power, Security, and the Future of International Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), pp. 89–114 at p. 91.

24. Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro, *The Coming Conflict with China* (New York: A.A. Knopf, distributed by Random House, 1997); Martin Jacques, *When China Rules the World: The End of the Western World and the Birth of a New Global Order* (New York: Penguin Press, 2009); Bruce Cumings, 'America's perspective on China's rise', in Xinhuang Xiao and Zhengyi Lin, eds, *Rise of China: Beijing's Strategies and Implications for the Asia–Pacific* (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon and New York, NY: Routledge, 2009).

25. Bonnie S. Glaser and Evan S. Medeiros, 'The changing ecology of foreign policy-making in China: the ascension and demise of the theory of "peaceful rise"', *China Quarterly* 190, (2007), pp. 291–310.

26. Robert G. Sutter, *China's Rise in Asia: Promises and Perils* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), pp. 266–267.

27. Sukhee Han, 'The rise of China, power transition and South Korea's soft hedging', in Kok Kheng Yeoh, ed., *Towards Pax Sinica?: China's Rise and Transformation: Impacts and Implications* (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: University of Malaya, Institute of China Studies, 2009), pp. xi, 312.

Downloaded by ["Queen's University Libraries, Kingston"] at 15:42 26 September 2011

balancing'[28]—by Japan, India, Singapore, South Korea, and the Philippines—there is little evidence of 'deliberate force build-ups or other types of compensatory or anticipatory moves indicative of an arms race or security dilemma' among Asian nations.[29] The increased reliance on US security guarantees is certainly an effect of China's rise, but it is not a *disruptive* effect.

As a substitutive indicator, the consensus of experts is that China's proliferation has slowly come under control as Beijing has conformed to non-proliferation norms.[30] More broadly, China has been quickly integrated into multilateral security forums in which it maintains a neutral stand in disputes between the US and other powers.[31] In part, non-proliferation has strengthened due to (the control factor of) post-9/11 terrorism concerns, but China has conformed to the counter-terror response.[32]

In political economy, the World Trade Organization open trading regime is a core constitutive element of world order. Most analysts believe that the WTO system has emerged from China's inclusion and rise, both strengthened and with its Western dominance largely intact.[33] The WTO has accommodated China's inclusion and China has largely played by the rules, especially where the US is concerned.[34] 'China is asserting itself in this key area while supporting the procedures of the WTO', note three British scholars.[35] Expectations of a new North–South confrontation have proven unfounded, although China has defended long-standing developing country preferences.[36]

As a substitutive indicator, East Asian economic regionalism is useful because of its close symbolic association with the trade liberalization project. China's economic rise has fundamentally reshaped trade and investment patterns throughout Asia,[37] yet

28. Kai He, *Institutional Balancing in the Asia Pacific: Economic Interdependence and China's Rise* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009); Jun Tsunekawa, *The Rise of China: Responses from Southeast Asia and Japan* (Tokyo: National Institute for Defense Studies, Japan, 2009).

29. Michael Swaine, 'China's regional military posture', in David L. Shambaugh, ed., *Power Shift: China and Asia's New Dynamics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005), pp. 266–285 at p. 273.

30. Evan S. Medeiros, *Reluctant Restraint: The Evolution of China's Nonproliferation Policies and Practices, 1980–2004* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007); Wendy Frieman, *China, Arms Control, and Nonproliferation* (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004); Denny Roy and Asia–Pacific Center for Security Studies, *Going Straight, but Somewhat Late: China and Nuclear Nonproliferation* (Honolulu, HI: Asia–Pacific Center for Security Studies, 2006); Shirley Kan, *China and Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and Missiles: Policy Issues* (Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science Publishers, 2009).

31. Guoguang Wu and Helen Lansdowne, eds, *China Turns to Multilateralism: Foreign Policy and Regional Security* (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2007).

32. Paul J. Bolt, Changhe Su and Sharyl Cross, *The United States, Russia, and China: Confronting Global Terrorism and Security Challenges in the 21st Century* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2008).

33. Daniel Rosen, 'China and the impracticality of closed regionalism', in Kent E. Calder and Francis Fukuyama, eds, *East Asian Multilateralism: Prospects for Regional Stability* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008); Edward J. Lincoln, *East Asian Economic Regionalism* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2004).

34. Wei Liang, 'China's WTO commitment compliance: a case study of the US–China semiconductor trade dispute', in Ka Zeng, ed., *China's Foreign Trade Policy: The New Constituencies* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

35. Jing Gu, John Humphrey and Dirk Messner, 'Global governance and developing countries: the implications of the rise of China', *World Development* 36(2), (2008), pp. 274–292 at p. 284.

36. M. Sornarajah and Jiangyu Wang, *China, India, and the International Economic Order* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

37. Warwick J. McKibbin and Wing Thye Woo, 'The consequences of China's WTO accession for its neighbors', *Asian Economic Papers* 2(2), (2003), pp. 1–38; David L. Shambaugh, 'Return to the middle kingdom? China and Asia in the early 21st century', in Shambaugh, ed., *Power Shift*, pp. 23–47; Daniel Burstein and Arne J. De

Downloaded by ["Queen's University Libraries, Kingston"] at 15:42 26 September 2011

those changes have generally not disrupted the free trading norms of the post-war order. Overall, East Asia's 'open regionalism' has tended to complement rather than challenge the WTO-led liberalization regime.[38] Where it has clashed with WTO norms, this has reinforced existing incoherencies in world order.[39] In the rare cases where Asian regionalism has diverged from world order—over Asian financial cooperation, for example[40]—it is a result of the foreign policies of other Asian states. While China's rise has shifted the balance of power in Asian regionalism, in particular at the expense of Japan,[41] it has not *disrupted* the order on which global political economy is based.

Finally, in the area of domestic governance norms, Nathan and Scobell argue that 'China's rise, and its widening cooperation with a host of other regimes unfriendly to human rights, has brought a slowing, and even in some ways a retrogression, in the health of the international human rights regime',[42] yet, echoing Ikenberry, that regime remains remarkably resilient. A defining constitutive issue here is the question of humanitarian intervention to stop state-sponsored rights' abuses. The humanitarian intervention norm is today no weaker than it was in the 1990s, and arguably more institutionalized.[43] Fears of a corrosive impact from the 'Beijing consensus' that encourages the repression of civil and political rights in order to achieve economic growth and stability have proven premature.

Within Asia, the greater role of China within ASEAN whose treaty of Amity and Cooperation it signed in 2003 and whose link to ASEAN forms the core of the East Asian Community, has *not* made that body less rights or democracy-friendly. The region's governments are pursuing a modest liberal agenda alongside China's rising power.[44]

These measurement claims are, of course, uncertain: China's protection of North Korea and its expansive claims in the South China Sea may be disrupting East Asian security more than I am claiming, and its mercantilist approach to global economic expansion may be reviving a global closed trading regime. Moreover, even if

Footnote 37 continued

Keijzer, *Big Dragon: China's Future: What It Means for Business, the Economy, and the Global Order* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1998).

38. Rosen, 'China and the impracticality of closed regionalism'; Christopher M. Dent, *East Asian Regionalism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008); Ren Xiao, 'Between adapting and shaping: China's role in Asian regional cooperation', *Journal of Contemporary China* 18(59), (2009), pp. 303–320.

39. Yoshiaki Sato, 'Open regionalism: creating multi-layered orders in world governance', in Tamio Nakamura, ed., *East Asian Regionalism from a Legal Perspective: Current Features and a Vision for the Future* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. xxv, 286.

40. Injoo Sohn, 'Learning to co-operate: China's multilateral approach to Asian financial co-operation', *China Quarterly* 194, (2008), pp. 309–326.

41. Takashi Terada, 'The origins of ASEAN + 6 and Japan's initiatives: China's rise and the agent–structure analysis', *Pacific Review* 23(1), (2010), pp. 71–92.

42. Andrew Nathan and Andrew Scobell, 'Human rights and China's soft power expansion', *China Rights Forum* no. 4, (2009), pp. 10–23 at p. 20.

43. Richard H. Cooper and Juliette Voïnov Kohler, *The Responsibility to Protect: The Global Moral Compact for the 21st Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

44. Hiro Katsumata, 'ASEAN and human rights: resisting Western pressure or emulating the West?', *Pacific Review* 22(5), (2009), pp. 619–637; David Martin Jones, 'Security and democracy: the ASEAN Charter and the dilemmas of regionalism in South-East Asia', *International Affairs* 84(4), (2008), pp. 735–756; Maria-Gabriela Manea, 'How and why interaction matters: ASEAN's regional identity and human rights', *Cooperation & Conflict* 44(1), (2009), pp. 27–49.

Downloaded by ["Queen's University Libraries, Kingston"] at 15:42 26 September 2011

disruption is minimal so far, things may change. German relative power began to rise in the 1850s and 1860s but it was not disruptive until 1914. China is often seen as Germany redux.[45] A lack of disruption relating to China's rise may simply be a result of some functional form assumptions about the time lags between rising powers and system disruption. Many analysts believe that China is merely paying lip service to the status quo in order to build up its international power to challenge world order in future.[46] The idea that China 'could' disrupt becomes the focus of analysis.[47]

However, acting on the assumption that China *could* disrupt order, rather than on evidence that it is *not*, is dangerous. If one begins with a pessimistic null hypothesis that China's rise will be disruptive, a failure to act upon early measurements that this hypothesis is false could have worse consequences than acting upon the null hypothesis until it is proven false with a high degree of certainty. We must proceed on the basis of the most reasonable guess, whatever the uncertainty. Despite uncertainty, evidence thus far suggests that the 'null hypothesis' of a disruptive rising China is false. 'Indications of this worst-case passage do not exist', finds Ikenberry.[48] Explaining this outcome in a theoretically rigorous manner should be a primary objective of students of international affairs.

Explaining the consequences

Why has China's rise been non-disruptive so far? The connection between a rising power and the consequences for world order is made up of a complex system of linkages. Two sets of intervening or mediating mechanisms must be considered.

The first is a set of 'preference-centered' mechanisms that correspond to the three major schools of international relations theory. Each of these three can generate a hypothesis of a disruptive rise: realism because of the 'tragic vision' of states as identical and unitary actors acting amidst anarchy to maximize power in a zero-sum competition;[49] liberalism because of the preferences of non-state actors that could goad states and international institutions into conflict;[50] and constructivism because of the inter-subjective dissonance between China and status quo international actors about the appropriate norms, frames, and ideas for world order.[51] However, all three

45. Edward Friedman, 'The challenge of a rising China: another Germany?', in Robert J. Lieber, ed., *Eagle Adrift: American Foreign Policy at the End of the Century* (New York: Longman, 1997), pp. 215–245; Yoshihara and Holmes, *Red Star over the Pacific*.

46. Ashley Tellis, 'China's grand strategy: the quest for comprehensive national power and its consequences', in Schmitt, ed., *The Rise of China*, pp. 25–52.

47. Robert Sutter, 'China's regional strategy and why it may not be good for America', in Shambaugh, ed., *Power Shift*, pp. 289–305 at p. 292; C. Fred Bergsten, *China: The Balance Sheet: What the World Needs to Know Now About the Emerging Superpower* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006), p. 14; Mark Frazier, 'China's domestic policy fragmentation and grand strategy in global politics', *Asia Policy* 10, (2010), pp. 87–101 at p. 64.

48. Ikenberry, 'The rise of China', p. 91.

49. Richard Ned Lebow, *The Tragic Vision of Politics: Ethics, Interests, and Orders* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: Norton, 2001).

50. Susan L. Shirk, *China, Fragile Superpower: How China's Internal Politics Could Derail Its Peaceful Rise* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); R. P. Peerenboom, *China Modernizes: Threat to the West or Model for the Rest?* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Herbert S. Yee and Ian Storey, *The China Threat: Perceptions, Myths and Reality* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

51. Daniel C. Lynch, *Rising China and Asian Democratization: Socialization to 'Global Culture' in the Political Transformations of Thailand, China, and Taiwan* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006); David

Downloaded by ["Queen's University Libraries, Kingston"] at 15:42 26 September 2011

can also generate an alternate hypothesis of a peaceful rise: realism by dropping the zero-sum assumption and allowing for low signaling costs;[52] liberalism by assuming that the balance of interests or the structure of representation both in China and elsewhere will favor cooperation rather than conflict;[53] and constructivism because of the emergence of an inter-subjective consensus on the meaning and limits of world order.[54]

The second set of mechanisms is a set of 'actor-centered' variables that correspond to the major sources of behavior through which preferences (and the structural conditions that shape them) operate. This draws attention to the ways that preferences interact and are often transformed. It also draws attention to the wide range of actors involved.

Thus, the consequences of China's rise involve a *three-by-three-by-three* hypothesis matrix of preferences, actors, and issue-areas. In other words, due attention must be paid to no less than 27 distinctive causal linkages in order to explain the outcome in question, in addition to a consideration of the interactions among them and the specification of control variables. Given the enormity of this challenge, it is no surprise that many scholars have chosen to focus on a smaller subset of these 27 and to have largely ignored interactions and controls. In particular, the combination of realism applied to Chinese foreign policy in the security area (one of 27, or 4%, of the pathways) has been a common approach to explaining the consequences of China's rise.[55] This is what I refer to as the 'four percent solution'. While this selectivity is understandable, there is no reason to believe that this particular 4% holds the key to the other 96%. Indeed, it may lead analysts completely astray.

The alternative is to adopt a broader explanatory framework that touches upon a greater number of the 27 pathways. Friedberg, for instance, showed how realist, liberal, and constructivist interpretations of China's rise could all be integrated.[56] However, his analysis was limited to Sino-US relations and lacked attention to

Footnote 51 continued

L. Rousseau, *Identifying Threats and Threatening Identities: The Social Construction of Realism and Liberalism* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006).

52. Robert Powell, *In the Shadow of Power: States and Strategies in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999); Charles Kupchan, 'After Pax Americana: benign power, regional integration, and the sources of stable multipolarity', *International Security* 23(2), (1998), pp. 40–79; Vesna Danilovic and Joe Clare, 'Global power transitions and regional interests', *International Interactions* 33(3), (2007), pp. 289–304.

53. Peter H. Koehn and Xiao-huang Yin, *The Expanding Roles of Chinese Americans in US–China Relations: Transnational Networks and Trans-Pacific Interactions* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2002); Shaochun Liu, 'Economic and political reform supports China's peaceful rise' ['Zhidu Chuangxin Zhiwo Zhongguo Heping Jueqi'], *Journal of Huanghe Science and Technology University* [*Huanghe keji daxue xuebao*] 8(1), (2006), pp. 60–63 at p. 63.

54. Hongying Wang, 'National image building and Chinese foreign policy', *China: An International Journal* 1(1), (2003), pp. 46–72; Ann Kent, 'China's international socialization: the role of international organizations', *Global Governance* 8(3), (2002), pp. 343–365.

55. Examples include: Avery Goldstein, 'Power transitions, institutions, and China's rise in East Asia: theoretical expectations and evidence', *Journal of Strategic Studies* 30(4/5), (2007), pp. 639–682; Robert S. Ross, *Chinese Security Policy: Structure, Power and Politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009).

56. Aaron Friedberg, 'The future of US–China relations: is conflict inevitable?', *International Security* 30(2), (2005), pp. 7–45.

Downloaded by ["Queen's University Libraries, Kingston"] at 15:42 26 September 2011

systemic factors. Carlson and Suh likewise draw attention to the contributions of all three paradigms, but limit themselves to security issues.[57] The most theoretically sophisticated work is the volume edited by Ross and Zhu,[58] which addresses both China and non-China, agent and structural, as well as control variables. However, it downplays liberal and constructivist approaches to preferences, often conflates China's impact on world order with its impact on US interests,[59] and gives scant attention to rights and domestic governance issues. Moreover as an edited volume, it does not seek to reconcile the diverse perspectives, although Ross and Zhu argue that the very complexity of the issue implies that there are multiple opportunities for a peaceful rise.

The security issue-area is a useful place to start because it illustrates most starkly the implications of shifting from a 'four percent solution' to a 'one hundred percent solution'. Without doubt, part of the explanation here concerns China's foreign policy. Beijing removed a central challenge to US preeminence by abandoning its calls for an end to the US security presence in Asia (which was contained in its defense white paper of 2000 and then dropped from subsequent papers). In manifold ways (the six-party talks over North Korea, the US–Taiwan relationship, US ship visits to Hong Kong, its support of the UN mission in Afghanistan, etc.), a rising China has adopted a foreign policy of accepting the US security architecture in Asia and beyond.

Moreover, it is beyond doubt that the central tenets of realism are an important explanation of this. Beijing has re-balanced its priorities in ways that produce cooperative rather than conflictual foreign policies, consistent with a complex realist theory that allows for learning.[60] The acceptance of the US security system helped to solidify Beijing's cooperative reputation in Asia, denied re-armament motives to Asian nations, and reflected China's economic reliance on US maritime security.[61] Territorial expansion is generally not in the national interest.[62] In other words, in explaining this part of China's peaceful rise, fair due must be given to the 'four percent solution' itself.

However, as one expands the lens, more factors come into play. Most obviously, realism is not the only way to understand China's foreign policy. It is true that liberalism fails as an explanation of Chinese security policy. Security is an issue thoroughly arrogated to state actors in China, even if they often act with domestic

57. Allen Carlson and J. J. Suh, 'The value of rethinking East Asian security: denaturalizing and explaining a complex security dynamic', in J. J. Suh, Peter J. Katzenstein and Allen Carlson, eds, *Rethinking Security in East Asia: Identity, Power, and Efficiency* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), pp. 209–234.

58. Ross and Zhu, eds, *China's Ascent*.

59. A mistake made elsewhere. See for instance Robert Art, 'The United States and the rise of China: implications for the long haul', *Political Science Quarterly* 125(3), (2010), pp. 359–391.

60. Charles L. Glaser, 'Realists as optimists: cooperation as self-help', *International Security* 19(3), (1992), pp. 50–90.

61. Avery Goldstein, *Rising to the Challenge: China's Grand Strategy and International Security* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), p. 35; David Lampton, 'China's rise in Asia need not be at America's expense', in Shambaugh, ed., *Power Shift*, pp. 306–326 at p. 37.

62. M. Taylor Fravel, 'International relations theory and China's rise: assessing China's potential for territorial expansion', *International Studies Review* 12(4), (2010), pp. 505–532.

Downloaded by ["Queen's University Libraries, Kingston"] at 15:42 26 September 2011

Downloaded by ["Queen's University Libraries, Kingston"] at 15:42 26 September 2011

considerations in mind.[63] Despite some evidence of a rising responsiveness to public opinion,[64] policy on security issues just as often flies in the face of public opinion.[65]

However, the continual and often dramatic shifts in Chinese security policy can strain the tenets of the most complex of realisms. Shambaugh documents how Beijing's abandonment of calls to oust the US from Asia resulted from discursive interactions with other Asian states that taught Beijing that the US presence was widely deemed in the region to be stabilizing and thus legitimate.[66] In countless other instances as well—the acceptance of *de facto* Taiwan independence,[67] say, or the abandonment of proliferation to Pakistan and Iran[68]—core Chinese interests have been compromised. As China's power has grown, Beijing's interest perceptions have become especially fluid. In contrast to Christensen's characterization of China as the 'high church of realism'[69] or Johnston's as 'a hard-realpolitik state',[70] China could as well be described today as the 'high church of constructivism' or a 'hard-constructivist state'.

As we move to other actors, the explanation of non-disruption in the security issue-area becomes even more complex. The benign security response of other actors to China's rise must be accorded a central place given the reactive and occasionally disruptive nature of Chinese security policy. In explaining this accommodation, realism must be given its due. Assuming a continued US security presence in Asia, Asian nations have a clear interest in incorporating themselves into China's benign regional hegemony.[71] More broadly, the failure of 'hegemonic stability theory' as evidenced in the trans-Atlantic rupture over the Iraq war have generated countervailing tendencies for a re-balancing of power in the international system.[72]

However, economic peace lobbies—the liberal economic networks and interests that have arisen from China's economic globalization—are a powerful constraint on a

63. David M. Lampton, *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978–2000* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001).

64. Guoli Liu and Su Hao, 'Civil society and Chinese foreign policy', in Yufan Hao and Lin Su, eds, *China's Foreign Policy Making: Societal Force and Chinese American Policy* (Aldershot, Hampshire and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 169–186; Denny Roy, 'China's democratised foreign policy', *Survival* 51(2), (2009), pp. 25–40; Michael Alan Brittingham, 'The "role" of nationalism in Chinese foreign policy: a reactive model of nationalism & conflict', *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 12(2), (2007), pp. 147–166.

65. Jean-Pierre Cabestan, 'Taiwan: an internal affair! How China's domestic politics and foreign policy interact on the Taiwan issue', *East Asia: An International Quarterly* 26(1), (2009), pp. 1–20.

66. Shambaugh, 'Return to the middle kingdom?', p. 28.

67. Jianwei Wang, 'Hu Jintao's "new thinking" on cross-Strait relations', *American Foreign Policy Interests* 29(1), (2007), pp. 23–34.

68. Medeiros, *Reluctant Restraint*; Wyn Q. Bowen, Ben Rhode and Shen Dingli, 'How China can strengthen international nuclear security', *Survival* 52(3), (2010), pp. 11–17.

69. Thomas J. Christensen, 'Chinese realpolitik', *Foreign Affairs* 75(5), (1996), pp. 37–52.

70. Alastair I. Johnston, *Social States: China in International Institutions, 1980–2000* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), p. 32.

71. Michael Hsiao and Alan Yang, 'Transformations in China's soft power toward ASEAN', *China Brief* 8(22), (2008); Muthiah Alagappa, *Asian Security Order: Instrumental and Normative Features* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003); Kevin J. Cooney and Yoichiro Sato, *The Rise of China and International Security: America and Asia Respond* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008); Mike M. Mochizuki, 'Japan's shifting strategy toward the rise of China', *Journal of Strategic Studies* 30(4/5), (2007), pp. 739–776; Jae Ho Chung, 'East Asia responds to the rise of China: patterns and variations', *Pacific Affairs* 82(4), (2009), pp. 657–675.

72. Raymond Hinnebusch, 'Hegemonic stability theory reconsidered: implications of the Iraq War', in Raymond Hinnebusch and Rick Fawn, eds, *The Iraq War: Causes and Consequences* (London: Lynn Reinner, 2006), pp. 283–322.

more aggressive response to China by Western and Asian nations.[73] A 'capitalist peace'[74] has emerged from China's rise to complement and reinforce the realist peace.[75] As for constructivism, Kang and others have traced the emergence of shared norms in which China's power in Asia is naturalized through reference to historical and cultural precedents.[76] In other words, the accommodation of a rising China is as much normative as instrumental. The failure of the US in particular to engage in more serious balancing, despite the frustrated appeals of realists,[77] is most notable in this regard. In other words, once we give due regard to the fluid nature of preferences with respect to a rising China and to the importance of non-China factors, the 'four percent solution' is not so much rejected as overwhelmed by broader explanations of China's peaceful rise in the security issue-area.

In global political economy, one must again begin with the realist account of China's largely non-disruptive policy. 'China's trade policies are broadly supportive of a rules-based multilateral trading order', concludes Lawrence.[78] As a clear beneficiary of economic globalization, the Chinese state has an obvious 'national interest' in preserving access to global markets even when they come at some cost to domestic production.[79] For Steinfeld, China is 'playing our game' because of these national interests.[80]

A main challenge to the realist account of such behavior has come from liberal accounts that stress the role of domestic lobbies,[81] yet such accounts remain unconvincing because the 'domestic' actors usually cited are in most cases agents of the state[82] while the absence of any *organized* or *visible* mechanisms of interest

73. Fabrice Lehmann and Jean-Pierre Lehmann, *Peace and Prosperity through World Trade* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Margaret McCown and Tongil Yonguwon, *Political Economy of the Northeast Asian Regionalism: Linkages between Economic and Security Cooperation* (Seoul: Korea Institute for National Unification, 2006).

74. Erik Gartzke, 'The capitalist peace', *American Journal of Political Science* 51(1), (2007), pp. 166–191; Erich Weede, 'The capitalist peace and the rise of China: establishing global harmony by economic interdependence', *International Interactions* 36(2), (2010), pp. 206–213.

75. Quansheng Zhao, 'Managed great power relations: do we see "one-up and one-down"?', *Journal of Strategic Studies* 30(4/5), (2007), pp. 609–637.

76. David C. Kang, 'Getting Asia wrong: the need for new analytic frameworks', *International Security* 27(4), (2003), pp. 57–85; David C. Kang, *China Rising: Peace, Power, and Order in East Asia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008); Amitav Acharya and Evelyn Goh, *Reassessing Security Cooperation in the Asia–Pacific: Competition, Congruence, and Transformation* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006); Steve Chan, 'An odd thing happened on the way to balancing: East Asian states' reactions to China's rise', *International Studies Review* 12(3), (2010), pp. 387–412.

77. Aaron Friedberg, 'Are we ready for China?', *Commentary* 123(10), (2007), pp. 39–43.

78. Robert Z. Lawrence, 'China and the multilateral trading system', in Barry J. Eichengreen, Yong-chol Pak and Charles Wyplosz, eds, *China, Asia, and the New World Economy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 145–167 at p. 147.

79. Gang Fan, 'Combining policies to benefit from globalization: the case of China', in Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León, ed., *The Future of Globalization: Explorations in Light of Recent Turbulence* (London: Routledge, 2008), pp. xvii, 410.

80. Edward S. Steinfeld, *Playing Our Game: Why China's Rise Doesn't Threaten the West* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

81. Zeng, ed., *China's Foreign Trade Policy*; Zhimin Chen, 'Coastal provinces and China's foreign policy making', in Yufan Hao and Lin Su, eds, *China's Foreign Policy Making*, pp. 187–207; Scott Kennedy, *The Business of Lobbying in China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Liu and Hao, 'Civil society and Chinese foreign policy'; Thomas Moore, 'Racing to integrate or cooperating to compete? Liberal and realist interpretations of China's new multilateralism', in Wu and Lansdowne, eds, *China Turns to Multilateralism*; Hongyi Lai, *The Domestic Sources of China's Foreign Policy: Regimes, Leadership, Priorities and Process* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

82. Frazier, 'China's domestic policy fragmentation and grand strategy in global politics', pp. 89, 97.

Downloaded by ["Queen's University Libraries, Kingston"] at 15:42 26 September 2011

Downloaded by ["Queen's University Libraries, Kingston"] at 15:42 26 September 2011

aggregation make the claims of liberalism speculative. While there are sprouts of organized domestic influence, the general picture, as Pearson shows with respect to Asian regionalism,[83] remains one of a dominant state in the making of China's foreign economic policy.

Instead, it is again constructivism that moderates the hard-realist position most effectively. Beijing's attachment to a rules-based global trade order and to Asian regionalism have often been 'irrational' from any reasonable realist perspective—its acceptance of Asian financial cooperation[84] and free trade with ASEAN,[85] say, or its role in the Group of 22 that held up WTO trade talks in the interests of the principle of reciprocity in 2003. Constructivist accounts show how engagement with regional and global trade institutions and actors have shifted Beijing's perceptions of its national interest and generated irrational commitments to liberalization and to a rules-based global economic order.[86] Thus, Beijing's support of world economic order is only partly a given. It is also a result of persuasion and norm diffusion that depends on the role of *other* actors.

That offers an extra reason to accord particular weight to the non-China sources of economic policy in response to China's rise. Obviously, other states and economic actors have their own self-interests in accommodating the rising economic power of China (consistent with realist and liberal interdependence theories),[87] but in their manifold ways foreign actors have helped Beijing to *rethink* its policies of national protection (in favor of liberalization) and legal particularity (in favor of legal universalism). For instance, widespread global protests led Beijing to back down on a proposed government procurement strategy in 2009 that would have locked foreign technologies out of the Chinese market. Likewise, Beijing ended a threat to cancel Google's business license in China shortly after the company shut down its search engine in the country because of domestic censorship laws. In both cases, the diffusion of norms to persuasive domestic voices led to an about-face.

Those same norms have also constrained disruptive policies by Washington. For instance, attempts by the US to use the IMF's revamped Country Surveillance Framework of 2007 to sanction China were rejected by other leading economic powers as unfair.[88] International actors, the European Union members in particular, have pressed for norms of fairness in the treatment and behavior of China.[89] While

83. Margaret Pearson, 'Domestic institutional constraints on China's leadership in East Asian economic cooperation mechanisms', *Journal of Contemporary China* 19(66), (2010), pp. 621–633.

84. Sohn, 'Learning to co-operate'.

85. Rosemary Foot, 'China's policies towards the Asia–Pacific region: changing perceptions of self and changing others' perceptions of China?', in Xiao and Lin, eds, *Rise of China*, pp. xiv, 312; Lampton, 'China's rise in Asia need not be at America's expense', p. 341.

86. Shaun Breslin, 'Understanding China's regional rise: interpretations, identities and implications', *International Affairs* 85(4), (2009), pp. 817–835.

87. Giovanni Facchini, Marcelo Olarreaga, Peri A. Silva and Gerald Willmann, *Substitutability and Protectionism: Latin America's Trade Policy and Imports from China and India* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2007).

88. C. Fred Bergsten, 'A partnership of equals: how Washington should respond to China's economic challenge', *Foreign Affairs* 87(4), (2008).

89. Michael Smith and Huaixian Xie, 'The European Union, China, and the United States: complex interdependence and bi-multilateralism in commercial relations', *European Studies* 27(1), (2009), pp. 167–185; Feng Zhu, 'China's rise will be peaceful: how unipolarity matters', in Ross and Zhu, eds, *China's Ascent*, pp. 34–54 at pp. 53–54.

China's rise was expected to disrupt global economic order because of its non-market economy and its non-transparent legal and political system, global order has instead been strengthened.

Finally, in the area of rights and domestic governance, the explanation of non-disruption most strongly suggests the need to move beyond the four percent solution, for not only has this issue become more prominent in inter-state relations, but attaching heavy weight to China's foreign policy and to realist explanations of it are most strained here. Since the late 1990s, China's foreign policy has progressively abandoned absolute notions of state sovereignty in favor of an acceptance, however muted, of the importance of rights and broader domestic governance norms in international order.[90] Particularly notable have been those instances where Beijing has supported international efforts to build or restore democracies—in East Timor, Cambodia, Sudan, and Afghanistan, for instance.

Of course, Beijing's responses to humanitarian crises[91] in Zimbabwe, Sudan, Myanmar, and North Korea have not always been to the liking of Washington, but those responses have been consistent with the consensus of regional actors. Beijing remains squarely in the center of Asian debates on humanitarian intervention[92] and of global debates on the 'right to protect'.[93] Johnston concluded that China's policies on rights were only borderline revisionist,[94] a finding reaffirmed by Chan's study of China's engagement with global health governance.[95]

Again, the lack of any system of domestic representation makes the liberal explanation of this unsustainable. While realist explanations can be mustered, they are difficult to square with the fact that such engagement remains an unalloyed threat to the ruling Chinese Communist Party. Realism can explain Beijing's default position towards the global rights regime, but not changes in that position. Instead, one must see China's rights turn as a result of the state's changing perceptions of the domestic[96] and international utility of rights. Several authors have documented the 'identity transformation' that has overcome the Chinese state in which it has rethought international human rights as largely consistent with its 'national interests'.[97] In Carlson's account 'the diffused reinterpretation in the international

90. Wenhua Shan, 'Redefining Chinese concept of sovereignty', in Gungwu Wang and Yongnian Zheng, eds, *China and the New International Order* (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2008); Jeremy T. Paltiel, *The Empire's New Clothes: Cultural Particularism and Universal Value in China's Quest for Global Status* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Jihong Mo, *Guo Ji Ren Quan Gong Yue Yu Zhongguo* [*International Conventions on Human Rights and China*] (Beijing: World Knowledge Press, 2005).

91. Lai-Ha Chan, Pak K. Lee and Gerald Chan, 'Rethinking global governance: a China model in the making?', *Contemporary Politics* 14(1), (2008), pp. 3–19.

92. Koji Watanabe and Nihon Kokusai Koryu Senta, *Humanitarian Intervention: The Evolving Asian Debate* (Tokyo: Japan Center for International Exchange, 2003).

93. Gregory Chin and Ramesh Thakur, 'Will China change the rules of global order?', *Washington Quarterly* 33(4), (2010), pp. 119–138.

94. Alastair Iain Johnston, 'Is China a status quo power?', *International Security* 27(4), (2003), pp. 5–56 at pp. 21–22.

95. Lai-Ha Chan, *China Engages Global Health Governance: Responsible Stakeholder or System-Transformer?* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

96. Scott Kennedy, 'The myth of the Beijing Consensus', *Journal of Contemporary China* 19(65), (2010), pp. 461–477.

97. Dingding Chen, 'Explaining China's human rights foreign policy: an identity-based approach', paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, 2007, Chicago; Dingding Chen, 'Opening the black box: domestic sources and China's human rights foreign policy', paper presented at the annual meeting of

Downloaded by ["Queen's University Libraries, Kingston"] at 15:42 26 September 2011

Downloaded by ["Queen's University Libraries, Kingston"] at 15:42 26 September 2011

arena of the legitimate intersection between state's rights, individual rights, and multilateral institutions … *reframed* how Chinese leaders approached sovereignty-related issues'.[98]

Still, China's foreign policy remains 'conservative' on the rights issue, not 'progressive'. To understand the resilience, even advance, of rights and domestic governance agendas in world politics despite steady pushback from authoritarian regimes and only lukewarm support from great powers like China, one must pay attention to the ways in which liberal states and liberal international actors have purposively responded to the threat of a backlash against rights and democracy from a rising China by *strengthening* their commitments in these areas. Foreign actors are 'betting on the long term'[99] that by building up the importance of rights in the world order, China's deleterious impact will be minimized and China itself will be transformed, much akin to the operation of the 'Helsinki effect' on the Soviet Union.[100] India, for instance, slowly embraced democracy promotion after 1999 because it 'was aware that being part of an international club built around the idea of political pluralism would help to differentiate it from two of its principal adversaries, China and Pakistan'.[101] While it is often difficult to know whether these are control variables (not attributable to China's rise) or interaction variables (attributable to China's rise), the larger point is that other state and system-level behavior has overwhelmed the much-feared[102] Beijing Consensus on rights and domestic governance.

Overall, this analysis suggests that China's foreign policy is an important part of the explanation of China's so-far peaceful rise. 'China today shows most of the markers of a conservative great power accepting the basic principles of the existing international order', notes Legro.[103] However, in terms of issue-areas and preference theories, the 'four percent solution' is wanting. China's biggest contribution to non-disruption has come in the realm of political economy, where it is a cooperative great power, and perhaps secondly in rights, where the gap between its traditionally conceived (anti-rights) interests and its actual (rights-acknowledging) behavior is greatest. In security, perhaps because of the tragic mind-sets that wrack that issue, China's contribution to non-disruption has been less, yet that is only a reminder of the challenges to interest-

Footnote 97 continued
the International Studies Association, San Diego, 2006; Ming Wan, 'Democracy and human rights in Chinese foreign policy', in Yong Deng and Fei-Ling Wang, eds, *China Rising: Power and Motivation in Chinese Foreign Policy* (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), pp. 279–303; Chengqiu Wu, 'Sovereignty, human rights, and responsibility: changes in China's response to international humanitarian crises', *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 15(1), (2010), pp. 71–97.

98. Allen Carlson, *Unifying China, Integrating with the World: Securing Chinese Sovereignty in the Reform Era* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), pp. 247, 231, 231.

99. Rosemary Foot, *Rights Beyond Borders: The Global Community and the Struggle over Human Rights in China* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 224.

100. D. C. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights, and the Demise of Communism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001); T. Risse, S. C. Ropp and K. Sikkink, *The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

101. C. Raja Mohan, 'Balancing interests and values: India's struggle with democracy promotion', *Washington Quarterly* 30(3), (2007), pp. 99–115 at p. 104.

102. Stefan A. Halper, *The Beijing Consensus: How China's Authoritarian Model Will Dominate the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Basic Books, 2010).

103. Jeffrey Legro, 'Purpose transitions: China's rise and the American response', in Ross and Zhu, eds, *China's Ascent*, pp. 163–190 at p. 167.

based frameworks of Chinese behavior. Liberalism remains generally unconvincing in the case of Chinese foreign policy. Meanwhile, while realism and constructivism are generally seen as polar opposites, the study of China shows how closely linked they are. Great powers that have a strong core of objective national interests, as does China, are almost by virtue of that bound to be highly ideational in their foreign policies, so numerous are the potential conflicts and competitions they face. Great powers like China that are realist by nature become constructivist by necessity. Like rising great powers before it,[104] China has been forced to rethink its interests and to rethink the world order in which they compete. In doing so, it has been socialized by many influences—learning from post-War Europe,[105] from Asian neighbors,[106] and from its interactions in international institutions.[107]

The responses of international actors, meanwhile, driven by both voluntaristic and systemic factors, are not *all* mediated by China's foreign policy. Instead, they are often unmediated sources of stability as China rises. Interdependence and anticipation have generated constituencies as a result of China's rise that reinforce the liberal world order irrespective of Beijing's foreign policy.[108] A full appreciation of the consequences of China's rise directs attention to these non-China factors, reminding us of the dangers of specialization in understanding the contours of world order.

Conclusion

The rise of great powers in the international system is sufficiently rare that it is doubtful that homogeneity assumptions could ever be met in establishing a general theory of peaceful or disruptive rises. However I have argued here that in all cases, including that of China, it is necessary to move beyond the 'four percent solution' of focusing on the *realpolitik* of the rising power's security policy. Other issue areas, competing preference theories, and multiple actors and their interactions need to be taken into account in order to understand the consequences of rising powers.

Theoretically, it is worth noting that these findings represent a strong affirmation of the nuance and flexibility of existing international relations theory. While China's rise will certainly contribute to a deepening of that theory,[109] it does not support the contention[110] that existing theory is unable to handle China's rise. Claims that

104. Jeffrey Legro, *Rethinking the World: Great Power Strategies and International Order* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).

105. Xinning Song, 'European "models" and their implications to China: internal and external perspectives', *Review of International Studies* 36(3), (2010), pp. 755–775.

106. Kok Kheng Yeoh, 'China's rise and transformation', in Kok Kheng Yeoh, ed., *Towards Pax Sinica?*.

107. Kent, 'China's international socialization'.

108. Kelly Erickson, 'Rising powers and system stability: the determinants of peaceful versus conflictual rise', paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, 2006, San Diego.

109. William A. Callahan, 'China and the globalisation of IR theory', *Journal of Contemporary China* 10(26), (2001), pp. 75–88.

110. Xinning Song, 'Building international relations theory with Chinese characteristics', *Journal of Contemporary China* 10(26), (2001), pp. 61–74; Xiao Ren, 'Toward a Chinese school of international relations?', in Wang and Zheng, eds, *China and the New International Order*; Kang, 'Getting Asia wrong'; James C. Hsiung, 'The changing intellectual and political climate in the China debate and the future of international relations theory', *American Foreign Policy Interests* 30(1), (2008), pp. 1–12.

Downloaded by ["Queen's University Libraries, Kingston"] at 15:42 26 September 2011

existing international relations theory is 'Eurocentric' usually reveal a shallow understanding of that theory by its critics.[111]

In policy terms, the obvious implications are that strengthening the liberal foundations of international order is as important as engaging China in order to ensure China's peaceful rise. In many ways, China policy should be non-China centered. In engaging China, meanwhile, special attention needs to be paid to the role of the ideational transformation of the Chinese state. Too often, China policy is premised on implicit realist assumptions of 'bargaining' and 'balance'. Instead, assumptions about persuasion, learning, and the importance of ideas should be at the forefront. The *idea* that China can only rise if it disrupts the international system is probably more of a threat to world order than China's military modernization.

Legro has emphasized the importance of being ready to respond to 'potential replacement ideas circulating in China and their backers—ones that may someday be conceptual kings'.[112] The same could be said of dangerous replacement ideas circulating outside of China. Friedberg, for instance, called the idea that a rising China could be socialized into peaceful co-existence with the US 'laughable, if not downright dangerous'.[113] Understanding and managing China's global resurgence will require both an appreciation of the multifaceted nature of the issue as well as an attention to ideas both inside and outside of China that could transform its peaceful rise into a disruptive one.

Downloaded by ["Queen's University Libraries, Kingston"] at 15:42 26 September 2011

111. See for instance the critiques of Chu and Huang in Yun-han Chu and Min-Hua Huang, 'Exploring theoretical implications of the rise of China: a critique on mainstream IR perspectives', in Quansheng Zhao and Guoli Liu, eds, *Managing the China Challenge: Global Perspectives* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008), pp. 48–49.

112. Jeffrey Legro, 'What China will want: the future intentions of a rising power', *Perspectives on Politics* 5(3), (2007), pp. 515–534 at p. 527.

113. Friedberg, 'The future of US–China relations', p. 41.