

Thinking about an Indian Grand Strategy

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Abstract

This article is primarily a conceptual overview on the theme of a grand strategy for a rising power such as India. The objective is to promote a systematic and structural way of thinking on grand strategy—the dynamic art of relating ends and means. The author identifies and expounds on the major domestic and international variables that will shape India's grand strategy. Factors such as national ethos, domestic political economy, geopolitical context, nature of economic interdependence, the impact of the nuclear revolution, and the evolving structure of the international system all influence the environment in which Indian power is deployed. The author not only contextualises the impact of these variables but also offers select strategic responses to these multiple factors that will circumscribe an Indian grand strategy.

Introduction

It is now widely believed that the international system is in a state of flux. The rejuvenation of power centres on the Eurasian continent is creating a geopolitically plural order. Even as India's relative material capabilities have increased, the posture of its security and political elites lacks the purposiveness one would expect from a rising power. The absence of an overarching template to guide different parts of the state and strategic bureaucracy, dispersed across the system, has created a palpable inertia and an intellectual vacuum. Should such a trend persist, it is possible that disparate elements of the state's apparatus will begin pursuing incongruent bureaucratic agendas, thereby either remaining ambivalent to or even undermining national interest.

Perhaps more by accident than design, and given the legacy of a unique military-technical relationship with Russia, India's military capabilities will have dramatically changed by the end of this decade. It is likely that India will have attained strategic second-strike capabilities *vis-à-vis* all regional actors, conventional stand-off deterrent capabilities like land-attack cruise missiles (LACMs) and ordinance delivered by long-range land-based and carrier-based aircraft (45 MiG-29Ks), 4.5 generation (up to 270 Su-30MKI aircraft) and fifth-generation air power capabilities (up to 250 of the Russia-India fifth generation fighter aircraft (FGFA) with a range of up to 5,500 km) to undertake complex conventional and strategic missions in trans-regional theatres. A significant improvement in naval power projection is also expected via multiple carrier-battle groups, stealth frigates, multi-mission maritime aircraft, up to 24 diesel-electric and nuclear propelled submarines (including ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) to project power and maintain a second-strike capability at sea), enhanced surveillance capabilities via Airborne Early Warning and Control Systems and dedicated satellites for the three services, and expeditionary capabilities, whereby the Indian armed forces would be capable of sustaining a modest land fighting force in the Indian Ocean littoral.¹ Yet all these great power attributes are accumulating without a plan of use!²

India's relative rise is creating a unique situation, where its ideational preferences lag behind its enhanced economic and military capabilities. This is diametrically opposite to the dilemma in the early years of the Republic, when India's aspirations were not commensurate with its underlying power. Nehru bequeathed to India a normative template that was based on the premise that India stood apart from the West. This was natural; after 200 years of colonial rule, for India to readily rejoin and endear itself to the western geopolitical family would have undermined and made a travesty of the nationalist movement.

Thus emerged the philosophy of non-alignment. Indeed, as Nehru wrote, 'What does independence consist of? It consists fundamentally and basically of foreign relations. This is the test of independence'.³ A realpolitik perspective also informed such a policy, which was a structural response to the post-1945 global balance of power. The geopolitical division of the globe into two rival blocks implied that the only way to preserve India's preference to chart an autonomous path in its international life meant striving to manoeuvre between the superpowers.⁴ As Nehru observed, it was 'not a wise policy to put all our eggs in one basket ... purely from the point of view of opportunism ... an independent policy is the best'.⁵ While the historical record unequivocally shows that Nehru overplayed his hand, as exemplified in the debacle of 1962, the ideational and strategic preferences for autonomy and strategic flexibility were never discarded and continue to resonate widely, including within the security community.

Some Indian strategists occasionally draw lessons from the British Indian experience. The problem with invoking Curzonian or British India's conceptions of sub-continental security is that these are inadequate and sometimes even counter-productive as a cue to independent India's grand strategic goals. This is for two reasons.

First, Curzonian formulations were conceived to secure the 'sub-continental barrack' from an exaggerated Russian threat from the west and north-west by creating multiple rings of buffer states to deny territorial and commercial access to the Indian prize. In effect, India was closed to everybody else. That British imperial strategists presided over a systematic programme of massive de-industrialisation and the penury of India ought to rebut those who claim to draw strategic inspiration from our colonial masters. Contemporary India does not seek to isolate itself from the global system, and especially not from its smaller neighbours. Nor does it seek to position itself as an asset to buttress the geostrategic objectives of a foreign power. India seeks to position its influence, benevolence, and power, both regionally and globally, not for the 'defence of Asia' or British sea lanes but to bolster the prospects for its comprehensive national power.

Second, British India's grand strategy was underpinned by British military capabilities that heavily influenced the tactics and indeed the strategy itself that was adopted. Despite Britain's naval predominance, its relatively limited land power expeditionary capability and an even lesser inclination to expend blood on India's territorial security implied that diplomacy and 'great game' tactics would dominate attempts to address geopolitical questions. This, occasionally, even included making concessions to adversarial powers at the expense of India. Additionally, British India's security policies were framed in response to a balance of power where China was largely an emasculated actor (1842-1949). China's re-emergence as a sovereign actor after 1949 and its thrust into Tibet after 1951 implied that the geopolitical environment that independent India would face was far more complex and challenging than any British strategist would ever have confronted. Contemporary India seeks more durable solutions and is acquiring a more diversified mix of power resources to pursue sustainable goals.

Thinking about a grand strategy

Unlike much of political science literature, which uses 'grand strategy' largely in military-strategic terms (strategies for war fighting), grand strategy here is being used in the broadest sense of national security strategy: how the economic, political, military, diplomatic and normative means at the state's disposal can be mobilised toward a set of objectives.⁶

The relationship, however, is dynamic and two-way, rather than linear, from means to ends. For example, a country's economic base is a means (to influence external actors) *and* an end in itself (socio-economic development of the polity). Further, the types of objectives will determine the most suitable means required to attain them, and thus shape the power instruments that are honed and further developed. This latter point only underscores the significance of a grand strategy for emerging powers that are occupied in internal tasks (governance, economic development) and are closer to the embryonic stage of developing material capabilities. Having a grand strategy is also not axiomatically an argument to pursue maximalist goals, but rather to refine and coherently articulate minimalist ones. For India does not have the luxury to acquire power without purpose. Finally, changes in the international system and in patterns of interactions among the major actors imply that it is imperative for India to develop grand strategic thinking.

This paper aims to identify and expound on the major drivers that will impact Indian grand strategy, with a view to promoting a systematic way of thinking in the security community on this theme. Since grand strategy is essentially an effort at relating means and ends, Indian security elites can begin to debate the types of economic and military capabilities that seem most relevant to its core interests. Implicit in this exercise will be a better articulation of 'core interests' itself. I also highlight the implications and offer select strategic responses to the internal and systemic variables that appear to shape Indian grand strategy. Finally, I offer a theoretical and policy-relevant assessment of the emerging international system for India.

Unit-level factors

Nationalist ethos

It has been persuasively argued that India's contemporary material success and the confidence of the urban elite implies that the anti-imperial worldview has become stale and confined to the ideological moorings of the weakened left. What these arguments, however, fail to discern is that the anti-imperialist worldview has been displaced by a more durable nationalist ideology that now circumscribes the discourse over India's foreign policy and, it may be asserted, has bipartisan political appeal.

Thus, while the nomenclature of *non-alignment* has perhaps become too contested to claim a dominant space in Indian strategic vocabulary, it has been updated by a *multivector* principle: a philosophy that seeks to forge an equiproximity with all the prevailing and latent poles in the international system. And, if India's ideational preference is to preserve her strategic autonomy and flexibility, then eschewing formal alliances is the logical outcome. This also implies that a policy of 'internal balancing' assumes a leading role in augmenting Indian security.

Another argument claims India should simply forgo its quest for great power status and material capabilities and instead rely on normative instruments to elevate itself. Such a response to India's status dissonance by engaging in 'social creativity' to seek to redefine the attributes that convey status in the international system⁷ is arguably more a response to the internal challenges in acquiring material power than to any great Indian philosophical or historical tradition that delegitimises the pursuit of power.

Further, such arguments are dubious, as they presume that a globalising international society has reduced the role of the state and made the notion of national power and military force obsolete. It may suffice to say that the empirical reality of globalisation and the density of inter-state interactions have been accompanied by an incessant quest for national power in all its manifestations, thus repudiating this utopian prescription. Thus, liberal theories cannot “explain how states can simultaneously view and treat one another both as valued trading partners and security threats”.⁸

Domestic political economy

The state is the ultimate authority in the domestic and international realm. Unlike the established great powers that can rely on extant state capacity to implement and sustain a grand strategy, for emerging powers, such as India, the process of internal generation of power resources itself cannot be taken for granted.⁹

A nation's aggregate potential can only be converted to material capabilities if the state exerts its influence upon the nation's latent resources (financial, industrial, scientific, natural, etc.). As Zakaria says:

State power is a function of national power and state strength ... one end of the spectrum lie those states that are cohesive, autonomous, wealthy, and maximal, and at the opposite end lie those that are divided, society-penetrated, poor, and minimal.¹⁰

Historically, a state's access to financial resources has determined all its other objectives. As Skocpol argues, 'A state's means of raising and deploying financial resources tells us more than could any other single factor about its existing (and immediately potential) capacities'.¹¹

Below is an empirical snapshot that captures the Indian state's relative fiscal power among its peer group:

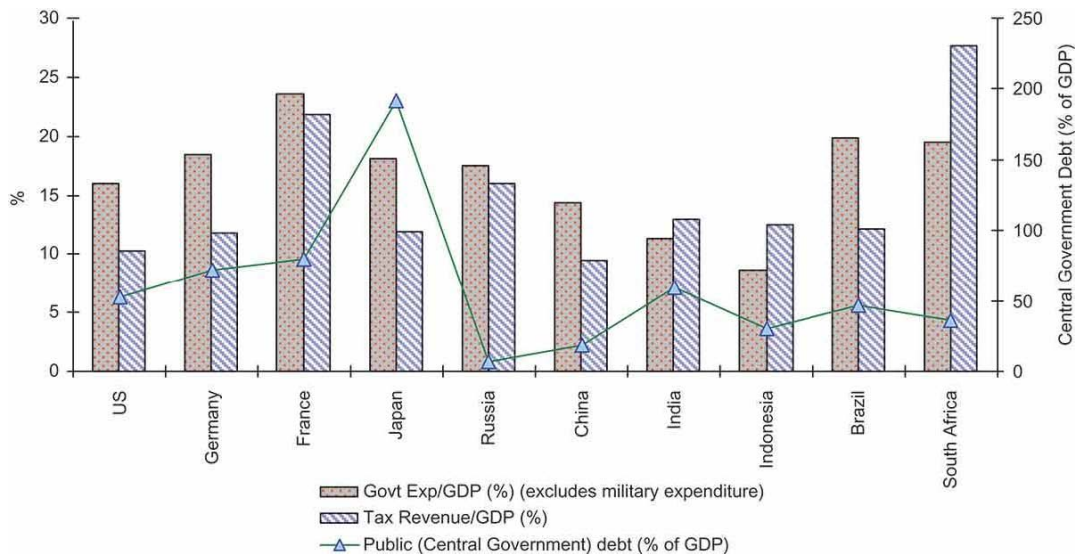


Figure 1. Comparing state capacity.

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit 2009, World Bank's World Development Indicators 2008. All metrics relate to only Central Government figures.

India's total tax revenue (including provincial governments) as a percentage of GDP has barely increased from 15.4 per cent in 1991 to 18.5 per cent in 2008.¹² This is among the lowest ratios in the world. It has also been pointed out that direct taxes are a useful measure to gauge the penetration of the state in society.¹³

The principal question then that deserves the attention of Indian strategists is why is the state's extractive capacity low or, put differently, why has the Indian state been slow in converting national wealth to power resources?

The main intervening variable is the state's extractive and goal-making capacity. If, in the process of its creation, wealth dissipates in a decentralised fashion (i.e., untapped because of a weak state) or after successful state extraction, wealth is appropriated by non-state interests (i.e., where an oligarchy penetrates the state for its own ends thereby diminishing or subverting the state's original goals), material power will remain unrealised. Globalisation has imposed additional

challenges on the state's ability to generate power. As Robert Gilpin observes, to 'retain domestic autonomy and possess valued industries in a world characterised by the internationalisation of production, global integration of financial markets, and the diminution of national control' is the contemporary challenge.¹⁴

Liberalisation and the transition to a market-based system (after 1991) brought about a redistribution of economic and industrial capacities within the Indian economy, and the extant and growing fiscal challenges before the state have diminished its capacity to extract and mobilise wealth.¹⁵ Yet, despite its diminished access to economic resources, the Indian state is still the only viable institution that can craft and implement strategic goals. For instance, high-technology and military research and development (R&D), energy security, buttressing linkages with resource-rich economies and international aid all presume a vital role for the state.

The challenge before Indian strategists is to put in place incentives and coordination mechanisms to align India Inc's objectives with national goals. This has become imperative as national and state objectives *vis-à-vis* economic development and India Inc's goals have not necessarily coincided in recent years. For example, the national interest would like to expand the depth and breadth of manufacturing industries not only to provide greater employment but also to produce indigenous innovation and technical skills that can feed into military-industrial sectors. India Inc, with its more globalising instincts and a search for profits, will deploy its entrepreneurial and financial capital in the most attractive destination.¹⁶

The state has an obligation to provide minimal investment prerequisites—governance, physical infrastructure, literate labour force, predictable property rights—to encourage the private sector to leverage domestic capital, labour and consumer markets.¹⁷ To shape private incentives, the state can employ diverse instruments (such as trade and investment policies) to induce the allocation of resources toward the domestic economy or encourage innovation in emerging high technologies. For example, India's export basket (especially to industrialising economies like China) includes a disproportionate share of natural resources, like iron ore, that should have been processed and exported as value-added products like steel. The policy challenge is to ensure the latter occurs; otherwise the notion of *national capabilities* becomes an empty slogan.

The notion that sustained GDP growth rates of 8-10 per cent will inevitably yield material capabilities at a future date is a widely prevalent presumption in Indian strategic discourse. The structure and quality of a national economy require a conscious strategic direction and sound public policies, if leading edge technologies are to be innovated and adopted and military-technical capabilities are to be autonomously developed. It may suffice to say the prevailing Indian approach of an unsystematic process of power generation will only produce *ad hoc* outcomes.

Systemic factors

Systemic variables must be accommodated into a grand strategy, since these determine the actual environment in which a state interacts and both deploys and augments its power. First, I begin with India's geopolitical environment and briefly outline a corresponding geostrategy. I then discuss two systemic features that distinguish our milieu in which inter-state interactions occur. Finally, I offer a theoretical and policy-relevant assessment of the emerging international system for India.

Geopolitical context

The geopolitical context of southern Asia is one of those immutable factors that must be incorporated when conceiving an Indian *geostrategy*. As Jakub Grygiel says:

... geopolitics is the world faced by each state. It is what is 'outside' the state, the environment within which, and in response to which, the state must act ... A foreign policy that does not reflect the underlying geopolitics cannot increase or maintain the power of the state.¹⁸

The geopolitical division of the subcontinent in 1947 permanently altered India's potential to project power on its western frontiers and beyond. Partition, in the words of former imperial strategist Olaf Caroe, was the 'negation' of Indian power.¹⁹ And far from being a defensive stalemate, Pakistan and its benefactors have ensured that India's entire military posture and security institutions have been engaged in a policy of containing this threat to the Indian heartland. In post-nuclear conditions, Indian foreign policy has also flirted unsuccessfully with several constructivist and liberal arguments to re-alter the calculus of Pakistani rulers even as, during the same period, Pakistani rulers were exploiting innovative means to use force below the nuclear threshold!²⁰

India must take a broader and more far-sighted geostrategic perspective on the territory that lies west of the Radcliffe Line and the Line of Control in Kashmir, since this will remain an attractive bridgehead to influence, target and constrain a rising India that will possess competitive coercive capabilities.²¹ Both the US and China are likely to continue to influence the regional balance of power by virtue of arms transfers and by their multidimensional relationships with Pakistan, providing each of them with vital leverage *vis-à-vis* India. This will require India to remain more attentive and vigilant to the relationship between Pakistan and its two principle benefactors than has hitherto been the case.

India's long-term challenge lies in converting the Pakistani bridgehead into a buffer and finally to a conforming neighbour while simultaneously attempting to influence the cost-benefit calculus of Washington and Beijing. While India's political elite has voiced its frustration in being locked in a sub-conventional regional conflict, it has shown neither the skill nor the resolve to impose costs on its troubled neighbour or on its benefactors. It may suffice to say that only a policy of *internal* balancing can enable India to transcend the sub-system balance of power.

The geopolitical context of India's northern frontiers must also shape Indian strategy. China's absorption of the Tibetan buffer has, since 1951, provided it with the geostrategic upper hand, in that Chinese forces positioned on the Tibetan plateau have compelled India to stake a defensive position on strategically located passes to deny the people's liberation army (PLA) potential access

to and political leverage over the sub-Himalayan space. This also explains India's urgency to improve its logistical infrastructure in the eastern and western sectors of the Himalayan borders, and improve the tactical military balance on its frontiers. There is another geopolitical factor that India must account for: China's military-industrial and political heartland is concentrated largely on its eastern seaboard, several thousand miles away from the Indian heartland and the reach of most of India's offensive capabilities. This implies that India requires stand-off deterrent systems, such as LACMs and greater reach in air power, to buttress its diplomatic position in the event of a conflict.²² This geopolitical context will remain relevant even after a potential resolution of the boundary dispute.

Insofar as the sub-continent is concerned, India's security managers must enunciate a strategy of ensuring that great power interference in the neighbourhood remains minimal and develop those capabilities that can either deny or increase the costs of unilateral strategic involvement on the Indian periphery. Simultaneously, a policy of reassurance and actively shaping the political choices of India's neighbours by providing them with the intellectual and technological wherewithal to fulfil their developmental goals will preclude an invitation to extra-regional patrons to occupy that space.²³ To be sure, while official commentary has stressed on a vision for a 'peaceful periphery',²⁴ it is declaratory and too vague a proposition to serve as a grand plan; it also exudes a passive posture as if India is pleading to be left alone to pursue her developmental endeavours. Additionally, by making the notion of a pyrrhic peace an end in itself, the quest for a 'peaceful periphery' might imply making premature concessions to adversarial states, resulting in geopolitically adverse outcomes.

Perhaps, then, a qualification is in order: India's grand strategic objectives require a periphery that is ruled by regimes that at the very least follow policies (political, economic and military) that are not inimical to India. For this, India needs to exercise a level of influence, using all elements of its comprehensive national power to ensure that it plays the principal role in shaping the political choices of its neighbours, while dissuading extra-regional actors from pursuing unilateral agendas.²⁵ If successfully implemented, such a strategy will produce a peaceful and secure periphery, and ensure India's emergence as a regional power.

One abiding principle must, therefore, guide India's US and China policy: collaboration on global issues, whether security of the commons, reforms of the financial system or non-proliferation, cannot be substituted for an emasculated Indian presence in southern Asia. Cognisance of this dual aspect of collaboration and discord will help India prioritise and secure its core geostrategic interests in its neighbourhood from issues where India might find cooperation beneficial. Thus, only an unambiguous articulation of core interests will enable India's political leadership to evaluate the merits of strategic trade-offs with the major powers.

Geoeconomic context—interdependence and power

The diffusion of economic wealth from the centre to the periphery of the international political economy, a consequence of innovations in transportation and communication technologies, and the attendant fragmentation of manufacturing processes, has resulted in what may be called 'complex interdependence'.²⁶ The most pertinent point here is that unlike a century ago, when industrial structures for almost all industries were nationally concentrated, today's system, with the exception of core strategic sectors, is characterised by vertically integrated transnational production value chains for several industries. Technological innovations have stimulated a

division of labour, whereby several nation states contribute to different stages of a supply chain in a variety of manufacturing and service industries.²⁷

East Asia, for example, has become synonymous with such interactions. China's export juggernaut is actually underpinned by a web of trade and investment linkages with other East Asian countries that reroute their exports to western markets via China, with many of these transactions driven by US and Japanese multinational corporations.²⁸ This is an entirely new phenomenon, implying contemporary interdependence is more complex and entwined than in previous eras.

But has it altered the fundamental nature of international politics? For one, it has made targeted sanctioning of a state that participates in multinational supply chains difficult, since punishment of one can affect all the others. It may have also enabled late industrialisers like China to upgrade their manufacturing base more rapidly than was possible in the past. But it may also have laid the foundations of regional economic hierarchies, if the present phase of globalisation crumbles under its own weight.²⁹ While contemporary interdependence has certainly complicated the pursuit of economic security and statecraft, it has not altered the fundamental 'self-help' nature of our system that impels states to never lose sight of relative effects.

Contemporary interdependence is also vastly different from the characteristics of the bipolar era, where interdependence was high but less symmetrical—in favour of the superpowers *vis-à-vis* their respective allies—and was restricted to each political bloc. Both the superpower blocs were self-sufficient and inter-bloc trade and investment was irrelevant.³⁰

Today, interdependence exists between politically relevant actors (like the US and China) that are not part of the same geopolitical bloc.³¹ And while, 'economic collaboration takes place, it is embedded in a competitive political framework'.³² This duality of cooperation, in an international realm of competition, has been described as a process where the surpluses and resources accumulated from economic interactions with one's adversary are being deployed to manage geopolitical competition with the same actor!³³

While interdependence might have mitigated the security dilemma between major actors, it has not altered the quest for relative power. The collective pursuit of transnational absolute gains has *not* trumped the logic of relative power among nations that emanates from structural anarchy. Thus, in the absence of a supranational authority, a specialised division of labour between states cannot arise and states continue to view interdependence as a means to augment national capabilities and influence other actors. The implications for India are clear: it should seek to develop *symmetrical interdependence* in its economic relationships by striving to maintain reciprocal leverages in its bilateral equations, thereby enhancing economic security.³⁴

Finally, interdependence has also affected the political economy within states. It has created a dichotomy between transnational corporations, which seek to buttress geoeconomics (access to markets, capital) irrespective of geopolitical imperatives, and strategic managers, who must strive to forge a policy that preserves the state's sovereignty, flexibility and geopolitical security.³⁵ It is perhaps not surprising that in a recent joint declaration between New Delhi and Moscow, both sides reaffirmed the Westphalian system of international relations:

... in spite of a diverse range of international stake holders and the interlinking effects of globalization, a modern state is the main tool for reconciling public interest with securing the rights, freedoms and interests of individual citizens, and continues to be the basic building block

of international relations.³⁶

Managing the dichotomy that results from interactions between the international and the domestic political economy is an essential element of the success of a grand strategy. If the non-security community (i.e., domestic interests groups, business lobbies, etc.) acquires a veto on geopolitical questions, it could impact the assessment of external threats, producing sub-optimal policy choices in the near term, undermining national power itself.³⁷ Thus, the *management* of interdependence has become a vital element of contemporary grand strategies and in India's case a dialogue between security elites and economic elites is necessary to resolve the diverging objectives of these two groups when they arise.³⁸

Military-technological context: impact of the nuclear revolution

The destructive capabilities of contemporary military technology, particularly nuclear and missile weaponry, have made unrestrained state action unviable.³⁹ As Waltz famously observed, 'With conventional weapons, the crystal ball is clouded. With nuclear weapons, it is perfectly clear'.⁴⁰ The logic of strategic nuclear deterrence has augmented the ability of major powers to ensure their own security autonomously, including in cases of overwhelming conventional asymmetries, and without resorting to the use of force. Nuclear weapons, with their enormous firepower, have created an extraordinary revolution and a counter-intuitive result: the offense-defence balance has been shifted toward the defence. Deterrence becomes the functional equivalent of defence. As Jervis writes, 'It is generally agreed that (nuclear) defence is impossible - a triumph not of the offense, but of deterrence'.⁴¹

Yet, as Edward Luttwak wrote, 'the nature of modern weapons requires that we avoid their use while nevertheless striving to exploit their full diplomatic potential'.⁴² Over the past decade, India has discovered first hand that the Clausewitzian notion of force has all but disappeared from the sub-continent. As Thomas Schelling argues, military strategy in the nuclear age is 'the diplomacy of violence' where the challenge is exploiting the threat of force toward well defined deterrence and compellence objectives rather than the pursuit of military victory on the battlefield.⁴³

For these same reasons, strategic weapons have also had another impact on the contemporary system that is often ignored. Nuclear weapons have made the historical notion of war as the ultimate mechanism for systemic change impossible. The system can no longer be overrun by a state or a coalition of revisionist states. And while systemic change or a redistribution of power within the system is occurring—via the diffusion of military technologies and economic wealth—the rising powers have fewer opportunities to employ their acquired capabilities to displace the extant great powers through use of force.

Thus, as Craig argues, because of nuclear weapons:

International politics could thereby approach the 'defensive ideal': a condition in which anarchy is not eliminated but rather adapted to by defensive-minded states so thoroughly as to make offensive wars exceedingly irrational and hence extremely unlikely.⁴⁴

The implication is that rising powers need to constantly search for useable system-shaping capabilities that will enable them to achieve political aims. This also implies that the growing prominence of economic instruments in statecraft has probably been a structural response to the un-usability of coercive power in many contingencies. And finally, the emergence of asymmetric

and sub-conventional threats such as terrorism emanates from the unviability of more organised forms of violence, and would require states to respond with newer capabilities (i.e. early threat warning through better intelligence, homeland security, etc.).

The present fad toward 'Global Zero'—complete nuclear disarmament—must also be placed in perspective. In an age of conventional asymmetries there are structural limits to strategic arms control. As a Russian analyst recently noted:

The disarmament of superpowers will not force the others to follow their lead; it is far more likely that the relatively small arsenals available to a number of countries will halt the Russian-US process. Neither the United States nor Russia can afford to find themselves in the same league in arsenal terms as China, for example. For Russia it would create a very serious security threat.⁴⁵

In a similar vein, another analyst says, '... it should not be forgotten that at present America's ability to solve strategic problems using conventional arms by far exceeds that of other countries, including Russia'.⁴⁶ This chain of logic, of course, extends to India.

Moreover, as Thomas Schelling recently observed:

Considering how much intellectual effort in the past half-century went into the study of the 'stability' of a nuclear-deterrence world, it ought to be worthwhile to examine contingencies in a nuclear-free world to verify that it is superior to a world with (some) nuclear weapons.⁴⁷

Rajesh Rajagopalan argues that a nuclear-free world could 'bring back traditional patterns of pre-nuclear inter-state behaviour'. It could also 'deepen unipolar dominance or intensify multipolar competition' leading to a conventional 'arms race spiral' with 'spillover effects' across the international system.⁴⁸ Surely, such potentially adverse structural consequences of a de-nuclearised world are worth avoiding?

Indian strategists, therefore, must formulate a grand strategy (and a nuclear doctrine), with the assumption that nuclear weaponry will remain a permanent feature of international politics and an integral element of Indian security for several decades. India's diplomatic energies would be better expended toward ensuring that the original spirit and intent of the India-US nuclear agreement and the attendant multilateral removal of embargoes in 2008 is pursued to its logical conclusion.

In other words, Indian diplomats need to ensure that India's *de facto* nuclear weapon status is reflected in future adjustments to the global non-proliferation and strategic arms control systems to enable India to ultimately acquire rule-making powers as a *de jure* partner in the global nuclear system. At home, resources would be better spent by investing in assured second-strike capabilities to deter present and future adversaries.

Structure of the emerging international system

Realists argue that force is the 'ultima ratio' in international politics and it is the distribution of coercive instruments of power that determines the balance of power among nations. Globalisation or economic interdependence, often cited as evidence for an altered conception of power, has not actually reduced the impulse for state power but merely complicated the quest for relative gain.⁴⁹ Empirically, the international system is still characterised by 'unipolarity', 'unbalanced multipolarity'⁵⁰ or 'uni-multipolarity',⁵¹ given the preponderance of the military and economic capabilities of the US *and* its alliance structure that together constitute a 'security community',⁵²

whereby US allies have forfeited their strategic autonomy for security under the American umbrella.⁵³ Moreover, the asymmetric interdependence between the US and its allies in the military-industrial sector is high. Indeed, it is promoted by the US. As Caverley argues, modern weapons' complexity and economies of scale tend to produce monopolies, and the value chain for the production of these weapons is dominated by the systems integration capabilities of US defence manufacturers (sustained by high military R&D budgets) while other US allies supply diverse sub-components for ultimate assembly in the US.⁵⁴ Thus, the US leverages its huge market power to 'lock in' its allies in a high-technology supply chain, making defection costly, and simultaneously pursues other geopolitical goals (i.e., maintaining an alliance-wide arms embargo on China), implying that this alignment is more robust than is generally recognised.⁵⁵

Simultaneously, it is evident that the economic bases of power are being rejuvenated in Eastern Eurasia and are growing faster than those of the US-led alliance system. Moreover, the trend lines for relative growth indicate that such a trajectory can be sustained for a considerable period of time. While states such as India and China are in the process of converting their wealth into more useable instruments of economic and military power, the speed, purposiveness and timing of this transition from latent power into material capabilities is a matter of debate.⁵⁶ As latecomers, for India and China to make the technological leap, or as Waltz says, 'to exploit military technology on a large scale and at the scientific frontiers' has complicated the conversion of wealth to power.⁵⁷ The rate and quality of economic and technological diffusion is also not a linear trend, precluding a decisive judgement as to when the system will reach an inflexion point. Nevertheless, geopolitical opportunities have allowed these countries to become what Barry Buzan calls 'part producers' in high technologies, where support from a more sophisticated military-industrial complex has enabled them to keep pace with the leading-edge technologies of the day but, at the same time, also placing them in a position of 'semi-dependence'.⁵⁸

The future of balancing

Ever since the abrupt end of the bipolar system, realists have waged a theoretical feud over the nature of balancing in the post-1991 world. More recent literature has sought to equate the absence of traditional balancing (and instances of bandwagoning) with the durability of the unipolar world.⁵⁹

In order to understand the absence of balancing, we need to appreciate the unique structural context in which unipolarity first emerged. The sudden implosion of the Soviet Union created a vast imbalance in the global distribution of capabilities, to which, since it was unanticipated, second-tier states like India and China could not suitably respond.⁶⁰

This chance event created a bifurcated system, an American hierarchy (with its vast network of alliances originating from the bipolar era) coexisting with regional balance of power systems, which are themselves sustained by either extended US deterrence (East Asia) and/or forward deployment of US forces (North East Asia) or via buttressing the capabilities of strategically located states (i.e., Pakistan, Poland) to constrain the rise of a regional power.

Much of international relations literature has been trying to locate evidence for balancing (and the structural-causal mechanism that underpins it) by focusing on the hierarchy (unipole) portion of the global system.⁶¹ But is balancing absent in the *anarchical* realm of the system? Waltz's structural logic works as follows: ordering principle of anarchy (a fundamental assumption) creates a 'self-help' system (leading to security dilemmas), which must be addressed by internal or

external balancing or states will find their security (and autonomy) curtailed or even their survival threatened.⁶² This process creates a balance of power.

Since anarchy has been displaced in major portions of the globe by an American hierarchy, one unsurprisingly finds little evidence of balancing in that realm. Against this, all the three Eurasian continental powers are resisting the extension of hierarchy into their geopolitical space (to the extent that their capabilities permit: hence, Russia is more successful than India).⁶³ Thus, the post-Cold War security policy for these Eurasian powers has been one of essentially upgrading capabilities, albeit asymmetrically, to maintain a defensive security position.⁶⁴ Eurasian powers have also sought issue-based coordination to impede the unipole's preferences. Russia-China coordination on the Iran nuclear issue and India-China coordination on climate change are two recent examples.⁶⁵

To be sure, there are some persuasive arguments that explain the moderation of balancing. These are summarised below.

It has been argued that since the rising powers possess certain attributes of great power capabilities, especially nuclear weapons that have assured their basic survival and defence of vital interests from potential threats by the unipole⁶⁶ but also drastically reduced the options to militarily alter the unipole's international order, the system is more durable. Thus, as Craig notes, in a world with invulnerable nuclear arsenals, 'bipolarity, multipolarity - any kind of balance of power - would become much less important'.⁶⁷

It has also been argued that unit-level variables like status and prestige, and political economy imperatives (such as social development, nation building)⁶⁸ and system-level variables like interdependence (economic globalisation—which also affects the domestic political economy and thus indirectly shapes foreign policies) have made these states less inclined to single-mindedly pursue a 'balancing' strategy outside their regional sub-systems or amass and match the military forces of the unipole. For instance, despite being non-status quo powers, in that they played no role in the construction of the present international economic and security order,⁶⁹ the rising states have found opportunities to augment their power by cooperation with the unipole—whether for enhancing the legitimacy of the ruling regime as in China, or by seeking improved status and roles in extant and new great power arrangements as in China and India, or simply benefitting from the unipole's open trading system as exemplified by China's high economic linkages with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and now increasingly India's.⁷⁰

From the unipole's vantage point, it has sought to socialise and shape the foreign policies of potential poles and co-opt them into the international order by encouraging 'would-be challengers to accept subordinate but beneficial roles'.⁷¹ The latter have displayed varying degrees of receptivity to being co-opted, though not unconditionally.⁷²

Clearly, the nature of inter-state interactions has undergone some changes in response to the imbalance in the system. Existing balance of power theories that presume 'unconditional' balancing by rising powers are not underscored by recent empirical experience.⁷³ Unit-level variables can intervene and negate the structural logic of balancing against preponderant power.

The quality of the unipole's grand strategy will also determine both the timing and the nature of multipolarity that emerges. For instance, if US grand strategy were to revert from a defence of the

status quo to a maximalist strategy of systemic dominance,⁷⁴ structural pressures will initiate balancing (prompting rising powers to accelerate the conversion of latent power into military resources).⁷⁵ Thus, strategic interactions between the unipole and the rising power(s) will ultimately shape the actual structure of the future system.

However, if the durability of so-called 'unipolarity' is dependent on making concessions to the 'lesser great powers',⁷⁶ or emerging powers—as exemplified by Washington's more recent policies *vis-à-vis* Moscow, Beijing and New Delhi⁷⁷—and a rising ability of the latter to withstand coercion by the unipole,⁷⁸ then is it not indicative of the unsustainability of the present system?

Conclusion: implications for India

Firstly, the above analysis has shown that 'polarity of the system may become less important' (p. 213).⁷⁹ Going forward, a constant appraisal through a process of assessing and responding to other grand strategies, and to evolving patterns of interactions and alignments, will be a more fruitful path in navigating the system.⁸⁰

The policy of bandwagoning has also reached its limits. India's post-Cold War strategic adjustment of normalising and de-ideologising its relationship with Washington and other major powers has been largely achieved. For Indian strategists to believe that India can be accommodated within the US hierarchy on terms that preserve its core interests and strategic independence is an erroneous assumption, and ignores both the huge power asymmetry in the US-India relationship and the unipole's grand strategy. The present policy of accommodation will be better approached as a tactical window to augment domestic capabilities rather than as an end in itself. This only underscores the structural logic of pursuing a multivector foreign policy that will maintain strategic flexibility for India to exploit geopolitical and geoeconomic opportunities in the emerging system.⁸¹ Thus, as Rajagopalan and Sahni perceptively note, 'there is a point beyond which a large state like India cannot be accommodated within the Washington bandwagon' (p. 25).⁸²

The ongoing process of systemic change has also created a divide. The system is nearing a point where political and institutional power continues to rest with the unipole and its bloc-based alliance system, while nation states that are accumulating a growing share of the international political economy are excluded from the 'high table' of global governance. India, arguably, falls in the latter group of 'revisionist' powers even if the posture of its elites and the declarations of some of its policies appear to suggest a status quo bias.

Based on the above assessment, Indian security elites will need to revise their assumptions of change in the system and consequently evaluate and pursue different strategies to attain rule-making powers.⁸³ The impression that Indian elites are impatient in their quest to gain status and participation in global governance arrangements, though without seriously pursuing the arduous path of actually constructing the material and institutional capabilities that underpin a great power, may not be unfounded.

Notes

1. 'Interview with Vice-Chief of Air Staff', *Force*, 7(6), 2010; Ajai Shukla, 'India to Develop 25 per cent of Fifth Generation Fighter', *Business Standard*, New Delhi, January 6, 2010; 'India Says to Have Fifth-Generation Jets in 2018', *Economic Times*, New Delhi, April 23, 2010; Indian Maritime Doctrine 2009; Rajat Pandit, 'India to Acquire New Undersea Cruise Missiles', *Times of India*, New Delhi, August 4, 2008; Manu Pubby, 'Navy Inducts Its Most Modern Fighters', *Indian Express*, New Delhi, February 20, 2010; Rajat Pandit, 'Carrier Battle Groups to Add Muscle to Navy', *Indian Express*, New Delhi, April 12, 2010; 'Russia Launches Second Stealth Warship for India', *Press Trust of India*, New Delhi, June 24, 2010; Gulshan Luthra, 'Indian Navy Buys 8 Boeing P8-I for \$2.1 + billion', *India Strategic*, January 2009; 'India Current Submarine Capabilities', February 2010, at <http://www.nti.org/db/submarines/india/index.html> (accessed April 5, 2010).
2. By 'plan of use' I do not imply that military doctrines do not exist. At the tactical level, the three armed services are evolving their own war fighting strategies. But these are being conceived and developed in a bottom-up and fragmented manner. What is lacking is a political-military strategy to relate military modernisation to national goals.
3. Baldev Raj Nayar and T.V. Paul, *India in the World Order: Searching for Major-Power Status*, Cambridge University Press, New Delhi, 2004, p. 127.
4. To be sure, India's geographical position on the periphery as opposed to the core theatres of the bipolar competition—Europe and East Asia—also allowed New Delhi to maintain a modicum of autonomy.
5. Srinath Raghavan, *War and Peace in Modern India: A Strategic History of the Nehru Years*, Permanent Black, New Delhi, 2010, p. 20.
6. Paul Kennedy (ed.), *Grand Strategies in War and Peace*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1991, pp. 5-6. According to Kennedy, grand strategy is 'the capacity of the nation's leaders to bring together all the elements, both military and nonmilitary, for the preservation and enhancement of the nation's long-term interests ... [Including] the constant and intelligent reassessment of the polity's ends and means'. I find the eminent Yale historian, John Lewis Gaddis's conceptualisation particularly appealing: 'Grand strategy is an ecological discipline, in that it requires the ability to see how all of the parts of a problem relate to one another, and therefore to the whole thing. It requires specialization to some extent - the mastery of certain parts - but it also demands generalization, for without that skill there can be no sense of how an entire system works, where it's been, and where it's going.' See John Lewis Gaddis, 'What Is Grand Strategy?', prepared as the Karl Von Der Heyden Distinguished Lecture, Duke University, for the keynote address for a conference on 'American Grand Strategy after War', February 26, 2009, at <http://www.duke.edu/web/agsp/grandstrategypaper.pdf> (accessed April 3, 2010).
7. William C. Wohlforth, 'Unipolarity, Status Competition, and Great Power War', *World Politics*, 61(1), January 2009, pp. 28-57.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

9. Indeed, conventional international relations theory treats actors as a given (states with great power capabilities). As Cederman notes, 'neither neorealists nor neoliberals have much to say about the origin of Great Powers'. See Lars-Erik Cederman, *Emergent Actors in World Politics: How States and Nations Develop and Dissolve*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1997, p. 214.
10. Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1998, pp. 38-39.
11. Theda Skocpol, 'Bringing the State Back In: Strategies in Current Research', in Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, *Bringing the State Back In*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985, p. 17.
12. C.P. Chandrasekhar, 'Meddling with Taxes', *The Hindu*, New Delhi, September 25, 2009; G. Srinivasan, 'Low Tax-GDP Ratio Daunts India's Quest to Join Developed World', *Hindu Business Line*, New Delhi, October 12, 2005.
13. Lewis Snider argues that, 'direct taxes are relatively more difficult to collect than indirect taxes because they require more effective infrastructural power. Taxes on international trade and transactions are the easiest to levy because relatively little infrastructural power is needed to collect them ... direct taxes require a more developed capacity to make the state's presence felt in the event of noncompliance than other forms.' Lewis W. Snider, 'Identifying the Elements of State Power: Where Do We Begin?', *Comparative Political Studies*, 20(3), 1987, pp. 325-326, 328. Historically, the major share of tax revenues came from indirect taxes in India, though recently the share of direct taxes has increased from 40 per cent in 2004 to 56 per cent in 2008.
14. Robert Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1987, p. 404.
15. For example, in contrast, China's state economic power has kept pace with non-state sectors and the internationalised portion of the political economy. See Mohan Guruswamy and Zorawar Daulet Singh, *Chasing the Dragon: Will India Catch up with China?*, Pearson Education, New Delhi, 2009, pp. 103-146.
16. For a brief analysis of how two competing economic groups (exporters versus importers of financial capital) can influence Indian foreign economic policies, see Arvind Subramanian, 'What Globalization Strategy for India?', *Business Standard*, January 27, 2010.
17. Despite being a capital scarce country, India has been a capital exporter in recent years. In 2006-07, India's gross exports of foreign direct investment (FDI) were a whopping 12 per cent of GDP, and much of this was destined for the OECD countries. See Arvind Subramanian, 'Precocious India', *Business Standard*, August 14, 2007. One of the reasons why this paradoxical trend is occurring is because India's domestic ecosystem has discouraged capital investment in a number of manufacturing industries.
18. Jakub J. Grygiel, *Great Powers and Geopolitical Change*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2006, pp. 24, 36.

19. Aside from introducing a geopolitical redistribution of economic and natural resources, partition permanently severed India's continental lines of communication with resource rich regions of West and Central Asia. Partition also complicated the territorial defence of a truncated India and the security of major industrial and population centres in the Indian heartland, challenges that have been alleviated in a post-nuclear environment.
20. For a recent survey of how Pakistan has used terrorist groups as an instrument of statecraft see Ashley J. Tellis, 'Bad Company—Lashkar-e-Tayyiba and the growing ambition of Islamist militancy in Pakistan', Testimony at the United States' House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia, March 11, 2010, at http://carnegieendowment.org/files/0311_testimony_tellis.pdf.
21. For an argument that India should realign its geostrategy to geopolitical realities (Pakistan) rather than expending resources in important but strategically less relevant and non-adjacent theatres (Afghanistan), see Zorawar Daulet Singh, 'Goodwill in Afghanistan: Geography Comes in India's Way', *The Tribune*, February 11, 2010.
22. Former Indian Navy Chief Suresh Mehta recently called for the creation of a 'reliable stand-off deterrent' vis-à-vis China. Manu Pubby, 'Don't Have Capability or Intention to Match China Force for Force: Navy Chief', *Indian Express*, August 11, 2009.
23. For an official enunciation of the concept of reassurance to India's smaller neighbours, see former Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran's speech on 'India and Its Neighbours', at the India International Centre (IIC), February 14, 2005, at <http://meaindia.nic.in/speech/2005/02/14ss01.htm> (accessed April 9, 2010).
24. Speech by former Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon on 'India and International Security', at the International Institute of Strategic Studies, at <http://meaindia.nic.in/speech/2007/05/04ss01.htm> (accessed April 9, 2010).
25. In order to dissuade or deter extra-regional actors from destabilising the heartland or sponsoring proxy states, India will need to adopt an 'anti-access' strategy that can impose costs on a great power that attempts to undermine India's core sphere of influence.
26. The term 'complex interdependence' was coined by Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane in *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*, Little Brown, Boston, 1977.
27. Such fragmentation of production has led to the slicing up of the manufacturing process where each economy is specialising in a particular stage of the production sequence of a single product. Sven W. Arndt and Henryk Kierzkowski (eds.), *Fragmentation: New Production Patterns in the World Economy*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001; D. Hummels, J. Ishii, and K.M. Yi, 'The Nature and Growth of Vertical Specialization in World Trade', *Journal of International Economics*, 54(1), 2001, pp. 75-96.

28. Currently, about 50 per cent of China's total exports are accounted for by such processing or assembly-related manufacturing. In 2009, Foreign-Invested Enterprises (FIEs) accounted for 56 per cent of total exports, contributing two-thirds of China's trade surplus. Zorawar Daulet Singh, 'Goeconomics of East Asia: Implications for India', *World Affairs*, 13(4), 2009, pp. 36-46.

29. Ibid.

30. Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1979, p. 159.

31. Indeed, Waltz had admitted that 'only if the politically important nations are closely coupled' can it be asserted that interdependence exists. Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, no. 30, p. 159.

32. John Gerard Ruggie, 'Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity', in Robert O. Keohane (ed.), *Neorealism and Its Critics*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1986, pp. 137-138.

33. See Ashley J. Tellis, 'Trade, Interdependence, and Security in Asia in Strategic Asia 2006-07', in Ashley J. Tellis and Michael Wills (eds.), *Trade, Interdependence, and Security*, National Bureau of Asia Research, Washington DC, 2006, pp. 2-25.

34. The term 'interdependence' is used far too loosely in contemporary security discourse. Interdependence should only be used in those equations where two actors have sufficient reciprocal leverage over each other (that is both sides value their economic exchange enough to negate any political leverage that either actor might seek to derive from its interlocutor). However, if symmetry is absent in a dyad, then it should be referred to as 'asymmetrical interdependence'. Another idea behind economic interdependence and power is that if a state's international transactions have a low opportunity cost (implying the existence of alternative domestic or other reliable external options) relative to others, its political flexibility and ability to withstand external pressure or shocks is greater (i.e. its ability to absorb a sanction, naval blockade, limited military conflict or natural disaster is greater). For a conceptual survey, see David A. Baldwin, *Paradoxes of Power*, Basil Blackwell, New York, 1989, pp. 174-215; Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, no. 30, p. 143.

35. As Lobell writes, '*Societal elites* (i.e. socioeconomic leaders) maximize their sector or factor's economic welfare, and the *foreign policy executive* devises grand strategy and maximizes national security'. See Steven E. Lobell, 'Threat Assessment, the State, and Foreign Policy: A Neoclassical Realism Model', in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (eds.), *Neoclassical Realism, The State, and Foreign Policy*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2009, p. 57.

36. Joint Declaration between the Russian Federation and the Republic of India on Deepening the Strategic Partnership to Meet Global Challenges, Moscow, December 7, 2009.

37. It has been argued that more research attention needs to be focused on 'how interdependence interacts with domestic institutions, leaders' preferences, and the interests of societal actors to influence inter-state violence'. Edward D. Mansfield and Brian M. Pollins, 'The Study of Interdependence and Conflict: Recent Advances, Open Questions, and Directions for Future Research', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 45(6), December 2001, pp. 834-859. Also see Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *Between Power and Plenty: Foreign Economic Policies of Advanced Industrial States*, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1978, p. 19.

38. Interdependence has created a situation where it is possible for sectoral coalitions in one state to find common ground with economic elites in an adversarial state. For instance, in US-China relations, Wall Street's incentives to export US federal debt implied a *de facto* bargain with Chinese elites who found it attractive to recycle their export surpluses into US debt. The financial crisis of 2008 has questioned the future sustainability of this symbiotic relationship. For an empirical analysis on how domestic economic coalitions affect foreign policy in a globalised world, see Etel Solingen, *Regional Orders at Century's Dawn: Global and Domestic Influences on Grand Strategy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1998.

39. That the nuclear revolution is a structural variable rather than a unit-level feature is argued by Daniel H. Deudney, 'Regrounding Realism: Anarchy, Security, and Changing Material Contexts', *Security Studies*, 10(1), 2000, pp. 1-42. While Waltz's *Theory of International Politics* (1979) had placed nuclear weapons as a unit-level variable, Deudney shows that nuclear weapons have altered the material context. However, Deudney's principal argument that nuclear weapons have shifted states from a 'state of war' to a 'state of nature' anarchy posing a revolutionary challenge to the state and hence requiring an alternative conception of political order (a world state) is empirically unfounded. Nuclear weapons, as it is argued in this section, have in fact pacified the effects of anarchy and enhanced the security-providing functions of the state.

40. Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate Renewed*, W.W. Norton, New York, 2003, p. 114.

41. Robert Jervis, 'Cooperation under the Security Dilemma', *World Politics*, 30(2), 1978, p. 198; Robert Jervis, *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution: Statecraft and the Prospect for Armageddon*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1989, pp. 1-45.

42. Edward N. Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire: From the First Century A.D. to the Third*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1976, p. xii (preface).

43. Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1966, p. 34.

44. Campbell Craig, Glimmer of a New Leviathan: Total War in the Realism of Niebhur, Morgenthau, and Waltz, Columbia University Press, New York, 2003, p. 160.

45. 'Russia and US Run Out of Nuclear Disarmament Steam - Expert', *Vremya Novostei*, March 29, 2010.

46. Vagif Guseinov, 'On the Nonproliferation Policies of the US and Russia', *Ria Novosti*, April 12, 2010.

47. Thomas C. Schelling, 'A World Without Nuclear Weapons?', *Daedalus*, Fall 2009. Schelling even goes on to speculate on the underlying drivers behind the disarmament debate: 'Some of the motivation ... is to fulfill, or appear to fulfill, the “commitment” undertaken by the official nuclear-weapons states in the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) “to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.” The underlying motive would be to renew and strengthen the Treaty itself, by removing an objection often voiced by non-nuclear governments about unacceptable discrimination. Some of the motivation is evidently to spur an overdue drastic reduction in Russian and American nuclear warheads, especially those on high alert.'

48. Rajesh Rajagopalan, 'The Realist Case against Nuclear Disarmament', *Strategic Analysis*, 34(2), March 2010, pp. 171-179.

49. See the earlier section on 'Goeconomic context' for an elaboration of this point.

50. John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, W.W. Norton, New York, 2001, p. 381. Mearsheimer's definition is fairly straightforward and logical: in the absence of a nuclear monopoly the system *cannot* be classified as unipolar because the potential unipole cannot exercise unrestrained power (as its conventional superiority cannot be employed freely).

51. Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Lonely Superpower', *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 1999.

52. Karl Deutsch first described a security community as a group that chose not to fight each other. Karl Wolfgang Deutsch, Sidney A. Burrell and Robert A. Kann, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1957, pp. 5-6.

53. That alliances function beyond instruments of aggregating capabilities and are valuable instruments in maintaining intra-alliance conformity and discipline is argued in a brilliant essay by Paul W. Schroeder, 'Alliances, 1815-1945: Weapons of Power and Tools of Management', in Klaus Knorr (ed.), *Historical Dimensions of National Security Problems*, University of Kansas Press, Lawrence, KS, 1976, pp. 230-231.

54. Jonathan Caverley, 'United States Hegemony and the New Economics of Defense', *Security Studies*, 16(4), October-December 2007, pp. 598-614.

55. At a more general level, such a US-dominated military-industrial supply chain is able to control and calibrate the level of military diffusion in the international system. Only the Russian military-industrial complex has the capability to compete with US exports across major conventional weapon systems. According to Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) data, for the period 2005-2009 the US accounted for 30 per cent of global arms exports, followed by Russia at 23 per cent.

56. Russia's case is unique in that it has already accomplished the conversion path toward sophisticated military-industrial capabilities because of its early industrialisation and first-mover advantage during the Cold War. Russia's contemporary challenge is more confined to political and demographic stability in the domestic realm.

57. Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, no. 30, p. 181. Also see Barry Buzan and Eric Herring, *The Arms Dynamic in World Politics*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, London, 1998.

58. Barry Buzan and Eric Herring, no. 57, p. 44. For instance, Russia and Israel are playing a vital role in India's military modernisation. Whether India's military-industrial complex (Defence Research and Development (DRDO), Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Department of Atomic Energy (DAE)) can leverage these geopolitical options in augmenting indigenous innovation (via technology transfers) and production and attaining self-sufficiency in vital parts of the supply chain remains unclear.

59. Stephen Brooks and William Wohlforth, 'International Relations Theory and the Case against Unilateralism', *Perspectives on Politics*, 3(3), September 2005, pp. 509-524.

60. As Robert Jervis writes, 'balance of power theory argues that states will unite in the face of a potential hegemon, it does not speak to what to expect once unipolarity is established'. Robert Jervis, 'Unipolarity: A Structural Perspective', *World Politics*, 61(1), January 2009, pp. 188-213.

61. As alluded to earlier, the military integration and division of labour within this hierarchical 'security community' is very robust and managed by the alliance leader, the US. David Lake argues that, 'although the fact of anarchy remains a truism for the system as a whole, it is a fallacy of division to infer that all relationships within that system are anarchic'. David Lake, 'Escape from the State of Nature: Authority and Hierarchy in World Politics', *International Security*, 32(1), 2007, pp. 47-79. Paul K. MacDonald and David Lake, 'Correspondence: The Role of Hierarchy in International Politics', *International Security*, 32(4), 2008, pp. 171-180.

62. Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, no. 30, pp. 100-101, 111.

63. Russian use of force in the Southern Caucasus in August 2008 explicitly demonstrated a case of balancing by a regional great power as its core interests were challenged by the unipole.

64. For instance, China has sought to develop asymmetric military capabilities (i.e. anti-access technologies like anti-ship cruise and ballistic missiles) to negate the superior power projection capabilities of US forces in the Western Pacific. Russia is successfully modernising its strategic arsenal and undertaking an ambitious programme for conventional modernisation.

65. Whether these actions classify as balancing or bargaining or 'hard' balancing or 'soft' balancing should be less relevant than the impact on political outcomes. For instance, Walt defines soft balancing as 'the conscious coordination of diplomatic action in order to obtain outcomes contrary to US preferences, outcomes that could not be gained if the balancers did not give each other some degree of mutual support'. Stephen M. Walt, 'Alliances in a Unipolar World', *World Politics*, 61(1), January 2009, pp. 86-120.

66. Nuno P. Monteiro, *Three Essays on Unipolarity*, PhD thesis, University of Chicago, 2009. Also see Campbell Craig, 'American Power Preponderance and the Nuclear Revolution', *Review of International Studies*, 35(1), January 2009, pp. 27-44. Also see Kenneth Waltz, 'The Emerging Structure of International Politics', *International Security*, 18(2), 1993, pp. 44-79.

67. Campbell Craig, *Glimmer of a New Leviathan*, no. 44, p. 161.

68. As Brooks and Wohlforth argue, '... hemming in the United States is not the only motivation of other states. They seek economic growth, local security, and other objectives that may be compromised by attempts to constrain the United States, especially if they provoke retaliation'. Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, *World Out of Balance: International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2008, p. 63.

69. To be sure, China's status as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council and its membership of the five nuclear weapon states in the non-proliferation treaty system states place it closer to the global governance arrangements that, so far, possess significant rule-making and rule-enforcing capacities. Of course, the authority and legitimacy of these archaic arrangements is constantly being challenged.

70. Wohlforth argues that 'humans appear to be hardwired for sensitivity to status and that relative standing is a powerful and independent motivator of behavior ... if the material costs and benefits of a given status quo are what matters, why would a state be dissatisfied with the very status quo that had abetted its rise? The rise of China today naturally prompts this question.' William C. Wohlforth, p. 31, no. 7.

71. G. John Ikenberry, Michael Mastanduno, and William C. Wohlforth, 'Unipolarity, State Behavior, and Systemic Consequences', *World Politics*, 61(1), January 2009, pp. 1-27.

72. For instance, the Chinese political leadership has repeatedly reiterated that the US should respect its 'core national interests', implicitly signalling that efforts to challenge Chinese authority in those areas will prompt balancing. In India's case, the decades-long ability to resist attempts to eliminate and roll back its strategic weapons programme and uphold territorial interests such as on Kashmir suggests a resolve to preserve its core interests.

73. Daniel Nexon, 'The Balance of Power in the Balance', *World Politics*, 61(2), April 2009, p. 337. A new research paradigm that incorporates the impact of structure on unit-level variables might offer greater insights on this theme. Structural realism with its parsimonious assumptions cannot alone confront contemporary empirical reality. Neoclassical realism, which acknowledges structural pressures and their interactions at the state level, might be better equipped to approach this research problem.

74. One that found prominence in the post-9/11 phase of US foreign policy.

75. G. John Ikenberry, Michael Mastanduno, and William C. Wohlforth, no. 71.

76. Randall L. Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler's Strategy of World Conquest*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1998, p. 17.

77. Arguably a structural rationale for the Indo-US nuclear agreement was a response by the unipole to an emerging power's policy to preserve a core interest (its nuclear deterrent) and also to shape the posture of New Delhi and produce a cooperative foreign policy. Signs of accommodation of regional powers can also be found in US-Russia relations and US-China relations.

78. Compellence has always proven harder than deterrence. The threat that compels rather than deters often requires that some sort of action be taken by the initiator until the other acts, rather than if he acts. See Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, no. 43, pp. 70-80.

79. Robert Jervis, 'Unipolarity', p. 213, note 60.

80. A classic example for India would be in monitoring the implications of US-China interactions in general and on issue areas in particular, and consequently crafting policies in response.

81. Zorawar Daulet Singh, 'All Options Open to India', *Asia Times*, April 20, 2007.

82. Rajesh Rajagopalan and Varun Sahni, 'India and the Great Powers: Strategic Imperatives, Normative Necessities', *South Asian Survey*, 15(1), 2008, pp. 5-32.

83. That some Indian strategists have openly despaired the declining capacity of the unipole suggests the absence of a grand strategy for India other than an intellectually lazy attempt to preserve an unsustainable international status quo—one that, ironically, has yielded few tangible benefits for India's great power aspirations.