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Stacie E. Goddard. ***When Right Makes Might: Rising Powers and World Order.*** Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018. ISBN: 9781501730306 (hardcover, $45.00).

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Editors: Thomas Maddux and Diane Labrosse | Production Editor: George Fujii

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Introduction by Ronald R. Krebs, University of Minnesota

Some 30 years have passed since signal constructivist insights entered the international relations canon.[1] In those three decades, scholarship informed by constructivism has shed light on fundamental questions of global politics—from the foundational principles defining international order, to the rise and fall of international norms such as human rights, to the sources and productive effects of the legalization of global politics.[2] In response to early critiques that constructivist scholarship focused on 'low' politics and 'good' norms, constructivists have shown how the politics of meaning—manifest in ideas, discourse, legitimation, rhetoric, narrative, and the like—have shaped, among other topics, international intervention, territorial conflict, alliance politics, and the making of national security policy.[3]

Yet, with notable exceptions,[4] great power politics has largely continued to be the province of realism. This is rather odd, since constructivists do not go so far as to argue that material power dynamics are of no consequence and that the rise and fall of great powers matter little to international order. Constructivism should have much to say about how rising powers orient themselves to the international system and about how declining powers respond to their rise. This is what makes Stacie Goddard's new book, *When Right Makes Might: Rising Powers and World Order*, so important and so challenging. Respectful of realism's powerful insights, but also deeply sensitive to its limits, Goddard strides onto realism's terrain and shows us what it has missed about the dynamics of power politics. How other states respond to rising powers, she contends, is a result not of the shifting distribution of power alone or even of the aims the rising power articulates and the interests it threatens, but rather also of how it legitimates, or justifies, its aims and ambitions.

The four distinguished reviewers, who are by no means all Goddard's theoretical allies, agree that *When Right Makes Might* is an important and valuable contribution to the literature, sure to be widely read and widely debated. Carla Norrlof calls the book "provocative, learned, and enthralling" and "a remarkable achievement." Michelle Murray describes it as "significant and thought-provoking" and particularly highlights Goddard's empirical work as a "model for how to do careful and precise

[1] Nicholas G. Onuf, *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989), Friedrich V. Kratochwil, *Rules, Norms, and Decisions: On the Conditions of Practical and Legal Reasoning in International Relations and Domestic Affairs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), Alexander Wendt, "The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory," *International Organization* 41:3 (1987), Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46:2 (1992).

[2] See, among many others, Christian Reus-Smit, *The Moral Purpose of the State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," *International Organization* 52:4 (Fall 1998), Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activist Beyond Borders: Activist Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

[3] A necessarily highly selective list includes Michael N. Barnett, "Identity and Alliances in the Middle East," in Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), Michael N. Barnett, *Dialogues in Arab Politics: Negotiations in Regional Order* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), Stacie E. Goddard, *Indivisible Territory and the Politics of Legitimacy: Jerusalem and Northern Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), Ronald R. Krebs, *Narrative and the Making of U.S. National Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

[4] Among others, Mark L. Haas, *The Ideological Origins of Great Power Politics, 1789-1989* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, *Civilizing the Enemy: German Reconstruction and the Invention of the West* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), Daniel H. Nexon, *The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe: Religious Conflict, Dynastic Empires, and International Change* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), Jennifer Mitzen, *Power in Concert: The Nineteenth-Century Origins of Global Governance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), Michelle Murray, *The Struggle for Recognition in International Relations: Status, Revisionism, and Rising Powers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

qualitative research." David Edelstein avers that the book is "a vital contribution" that is "neither naive nor Pollyannaish, but rather illustrative of how ideas, legitimacy, and rhetoric can be the currency of great power politics." Ali Wyne praises the "nuance, rigor, and depth" with which Goddard develops her argument.

However, as one would expect of a book that addresses a central question in the field, treads sometimes familiar empirical ground, and challenges existing accounts, the reviewers also raise numerous questions. First, with respect to theory, Murray asks about the status of state identity in Goddard's argument and questions her conception of legitimation strategy as both strategic and potentially constitutive. She wishes the book had embraced "a more robust theorization of identity" and suggests a path forward. Edelstein wonders whether Goddard takes sufficient account of the ambiguity surrounding the meaning of rhetorical appeals. The attribution of meaning to them is the result, he maintains, of "a political process of contestation," which he wishes had found its way into the case studies.

Second, not surprisingly, the more realist-inclined reviewers probe Goddard on the limits of a legitimation account. They take issue with her ontological starting point: that the meaning of events and foreign policies is often obscure, which is why states' legitimation strategies can be quite important in shaping how others make sense of things. But, as Edelstein puts it, "Can everything be legitimated through clever enough rhetoric, or are strategies of legitimation likely to fall flat when confounded by enough evidence of other motives or intentions?" Norrlof agrees with the latter. Drawing on a brief comparison of the two Schleswig-Holstein wars, she suggests that threats to the status quo are often quite obvious, and they offend the interests of the great powers, who respond in kind "whatever the rhetoric." Analyzing the recent deterioration in U.S.-Chinese relations, Edelstein similarly has doubts that "this reaction to China's rise is due … to a failure of China's ability to legitimate its rise around existing international norms." The problem, he suggests, lies with China's increasingly aggressive behavior in the South China Sea and elsewhere.

While the reviewers uniformly praise the nuance and depth of Goddard's case studies, they offer alternative explanations for some of her findings and claims. Norrlof, for instance, questions Goddard's argument centering on the resonance of Germany's appeals to norms of national self-determination. The real issue, she argues, was that many British policymakers shared the Nazis' racist worldview and thus did not view Nazism as threatening to global order—just the opposite. Wyne, meanwhile, wishes that Goddard had broadened the temporal scope of her U.S.-Britain case study, to include the end of the nineteenth century. Had she done so, he suggests, she might have given less credit to U.S. legitimation strategies, which were later often less than reassuring, and highlighted instead the rise of more pressing challenges around the world to British empire and hegemony.

The rise of China is among the most critical global developments of our time. Amidst realist warnings of the 'Thucydides trap,' Goddard's new book offers a fresh—although not necessarily more optimistic—way of thinking about the future of global order during a time of power transition. Not surprisingly, the reviewers in this roundtable all speak to Goddard's analysis of the issue. Edelstein wonders whether legitimating rhetoric is actually rather liberating—permitting U.S. policymakers to avoid expending valuable resources to confront the long-term threat posed by a rising China. "The politics of legitimation," he writes provocatively, "may also be understood as the politics of avoidance." Norrlof too suggests that U.S. restraint toward China had more to do with the Obama administration's "perceptions of U.S. decline, war-weariness, backlash, and the 2007 global financial crisis" than with China's legitimation strategy.

It is clear from the excellent and thoughtful reviews in this roundtable—to which Goddard replies equally thoughtfully in her concluding response—that *When Right Makes Might* is an unusual and unusually thought-provoking book. Rare is the text that advances a new theoretical argument, marries that theoretical innovation to careful empirics, and offers a new perspective on a vital, contemporary policy issue. Stacie Goddard's *When Right Makes Might* hits that trifecta. It is sure to be central to debates on rising powers for a long time to come.

Participants:

Stacie E. Goddard is Professor of Political Science and Director of the Madeleine K. Albright Institute at Wellesley College. Her book, *Indivisible Territory and the Politics of Legitimacy: Jerusalem and Northern Ireland,* was published by Cambridge University Press in 2010. Her articles have appeared in outlets such as *International Organization*, *International Security*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *International Theory*, *Security Studies*, as well as in the *New York Times*. Her new book is *When Right Makes Might: Rising Powers and World Order* (Cornell University Press, 2019).

Ronald R. Krebs is Beverly and Richard Fink Professor in the Liberal Arts and Professor of Political Science at the University of Minnesota. His most recent book is *Narrative and the Making of US National Security* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), and he is coeditor, with Thierry Balzacq, of the forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of Grand Strategy*.

David M. Edelstein is Vice Dean of Faculty in Georgetown College and an associate professor in the Department of Government, the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, and the Center for Security Studies at Georgetown University. He is a scholar of great power politics, military intervention, and the causes of war and peace. His most recent book, *Over the Horizon: Time, Uncertainty, and the Rise of Great Powers* (Cornell University Press, 2017) examines how states have responded to the rise of new great powers. He is also the author of *Occupational Hazards: Success and Failure in Military Occupations* (Cornell University Press, 2008). His work has also been published in *International Security, Security Studies, Foreign Affairs, and Survival*.

Michelle Murray is associate professor of Politics and director of the Global and International Studies program at Bard College. Her book, *The Struggle for Recognition in International Relations: Status, Revisionism and Rising Powers* was published by Oxford University Press in 2019. She is currently working on a book-length project on the role of status in the nuclear nonproliferation regime and a series of articles on trust and uncertainty in world politics.

Carla Norrlof is associate professor of political science at the University of Toronto where she is a senior fellow with Massey College. Her research is on theories of international relations and international political economy with a special focus on great powers in the areas of money, trade and security. Norrlof's recent work is available with Security Studies, Conflict Management & Peace Science, Foreign Affairs and International Affairs.

Ali Wyne is a Washington, DC-based policy analyst in the RAND Corporation's Defense and Political Sciences Department. He serves as a nonresident fellow with the Atlantic Council's Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security and a nonresident fellow with the Modern War Institute. He is a coauthor of *Lee Kuan Yew: The Grand Master's Insights on China, the United States, and the World* (2013); and a contributing author to *Our American Story: The Search for a Shared National Narrative* (2019); *Power Relations in the Twenty-First Century: Mapping a Multipolar World?* (2017); and the *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (2008). He graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with dual degrees in Management Science and Political Science (2008) and received his Master in Public Policy from the Harvard Kennedy School (2017), where he was a course assistant to Joseph Nye. He is a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a David Rockefeller fellow with the Trilateral Commission, and a security fellow with the Truman National Security Project.

Review by David Edelstein, Georgetown University

Few issues in international relations receive as much attention these days as the rise of China and its implications. Framed in comparative perspective, China's rise has generated a renaissance in the study of power transitions and great power politics in general. While much of this literature has approached the question using familiar rationalist approaches such as costly signaling, Stacie Goddard's *When Right Makes Might: Rising Powers and World Order* offers something different and new. As such, it is a vital contribution to these continuing debates. While others have looked at how rising powers behave toward declining powers, the grand strategic options for declining powers, or the factors that affect varying degrees of conflict and cooperation between rising and declining powers, Goddard is interested in explaining how states frame their rises so as to avoid aggressive, even combative, responses from other great powers.[1] She suggests that approaches focused on either the politics of 'harm' or 'interests,' which rely primarily on the now-familiar logic of costly signaling, are insufficient to account for the often subdued responses of existing powers to new and rising powers in international politics.

Instead, Goddard focuses on the politics of legitimation. Whether a rising great power can avoid an aggressive response to its rise depends on its ability to legitimate that rise. That is, by framing its rise as consistent with understood and shared international norms, a rising power can--quite literally--disarm existing great powers. To respond in a preventive way to a rising great power that has framed its rise around certain norms and ideas would be to undermine not only the rising power but also those norms that existing powers presumably find worthwhile. Whether or not rising powers succeed depends on both their ability to successfully communicate to multiple audiences—'multivocality'--and how vulnerable the institutions of existing great powers are. When a rising power's multivocality is high and a great power's institutions are relatively vulnerable, legitimation is most likely to succeed. Legitimation is least likely to succeed when institutions are vulnerable, but the rising power is unable to employ rhetoric that assuages multiple audiences. Goddard crafts this original argument by drawing upon a rich array of literatures from both the rationalist and constructivist traditions.

After developing her theory, Goddard evaluates the logic of her legitimation argument against the alternatives through a series of well-executed case studies of the rise of Prussia, the United States, interwar Germany, and Japan. In each case, she makes the argument that one cannot understand how states responded to these rises without appreciating the politics of legitimation. She concludes the book by casting an eye at the contemporary rise of China and the role of the politics of legitimation in this ongoing and developing case.

Goddard's argument thus makes at least three significant contributions. First, it goes beyond platitudes about the importance of political rhetoric and demonstrates how that rhetoric can shape international politics among the most powerful states in the international system. Second, Goddard presents a constructivist argument that is grounded in the harsh realities of international politics. Her argument is neither naive nor Pollyannaish, but rather illustrative of how ideas, legitimacy, and rhetoric can be the currency of great power politics. Third, Goddard usefully identifies the ways in which states can communicate with each other through means other than the costly signaling approach that is so popular in rationalist accounts of international politics. Not all signals that shape international politics are either costly or behavioral.

All that said, I have three main critiques to offer of the argument presented in *When Right Makes Might*. First, the politics of legitimation may also be understood as the politics of avoidance. One of the reasons why rhetoric can be so useful in international politics is that it often allows political leaders to manipulate it to suit their own interests and agendas. The freedom to interpret rhetoric in any number of different ways makes it an attractive instrument for political leaders. For leaders who are disinclined to spend valuable resources to confront a rising power, interpretations of others' rhetoric may

[1] David M. Edelstein, *Over the Horizon: Time, Uncertainty, and the Rise of Great Powers* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017); Paul K. MacDonald and Joseph M. Parent, *Twilight of the Titans: Great Power Decline and Retrenchment* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018); Joshua R. Itzkowitz Shifrinson, *Rising Titans, Falling Giants: How Great Powers Exploit Power Shifts*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018).

provide the basis on which to avoid that confrontation. While so-called rhetorical traps may limit the ability of political leaders to respond without undermining the very norms that they have previously embraced, rhetoric may also be framed and understood in various ways so as to make possible a leader's preferred strategy, including simply avoidance.[2]

Second and, ironically given her argument, related, at times the book suggests that rhetoric speaks for itself. As Goddard's argument reminds us, rhetoric is powerful precisely because it can be used to frame political issues in a way to make them seem more or less legitimate. It seems, then, that the interpretation of political rhetoric ought to be similarly subject to a political process of contestation. In her discussion--especially her empirical discussion--the transmission of rhetoric comes off as too efficient, too clean, and too superficial. Everyday political life is replete with examples of rhetoric being interpreted in multiple different ways by political actors seeking to use that rhetoric to advance their own political interests.

Third, Goddard is careful to emphasize that she is not claiming that legitimation fully accounts for variation in state reactions to a rising power, but she also does not address the limits of legitimation. Can everything be legitimated through clever enough rhetoric, or are strategies of legitimation likely to fall flat when confounded by enough evidence of other motives or intentions? Not everything can be successfully legitimated, of course, but I am not convinced that Goddard's two variables of multivocality and institutional vulnerability fully capture the conditions under which strategies of legitimation are likely to be more or less successful.

Where, then, does this leave us with regard to the continuing rise of China? For Goddard, the reaction to a rising China is likely to depend, to a great extent, on China's ability to legitimate its rise, and that, in turn, will depend on how effectively China is able to communicate to multiple audiences about its rise and on the degree of U.S. institutional vulnerability. Can China communicate its intentions and interests in a way that simultaneously resonates with domestic audiences, regional neighbors, and global powers, or will it find that multivocality challenging? And to what extent is the United States confident in the norms and institutions that it has created to constitute the 'liberal international order?

On the first question, China appears to be struggling with multivocality. As Goddard notes, China attempted to legitimate its island-building in the South China Sea around the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), but an international tribunal in the Hague admonished Beijing for violating UNCLOS through its behavior.[3] If China's intent is to legitimate its new-found assertiveness, then it seems to have had difficulty locating an international norm on which it can legitimate its claims. Meanwhile, Chinese leader Xi Jinping appears to be tightening his hold on political authority within the country. China's imprisonment of its Uighur Muslim minority has provoked outrage, and Beijing's only attempts to legitimate that behavior by referencing anti-terrorism has lacked credibility. All of this suggests that multivocality is likely to be a continuing challenge for China.

As for the vulnerability of U.S. institutions, it sure seems that the 'liberal international order' and its supposed attendant norms have been under pressure from both international actors and from inside the United States itself. The deliberate undermining of institutions and alliances and the decay of democratic norms all seem indicative of high institutional vulnerability.

In such a context of low multivocality and high institutional vulnerability, Goddard's theory would expect confrontation and containment to emerge as the preferred strategies for responding to the rising power. Indeed, as China has become more assertive, voices calling for a more hawkish response have been increasing in volume, and there are some indications that those voices are gaining traction. But then the natural question that arises from Goddard's analysis is whether this reaction

[2] On "rhetorical traps," see Ronald R. Krebs and Patrick T. Jackson, "Twisting Tongues and Twisting Arms: The Power of Political Rhetoric," *European Journal of International Relations* 13:1 (2007): 35-66.

[3] "Two Years On, South China Sea Ruling Remains a Battleground for the Rules-Based Order," Chatham House, accessed 20 May 2019, https://www.chathamhouse.org/expert/comment/two-years-south-china-sea-ruling-remains-battleground-rules-based-order.

to China's rise is due, at least in part, to a failure of China's ability to legitimate its rise around existing international norms. Or do some forms of aggressive behavior challenge other states' interests so significantly that the reaction is less about a failure to legitimate than about the behavior itself? And to the extent that the United States and its allies have previously put off more aggressive reactions to China's rise, has this been due to successful legitimation or rather a desire by American and other leaders simply to avoid the short-term costs of confronting a long-term threat from Beijing?

It is a tribute to Stacie Goddard's work that it has provoked these and other questions. Even if one is not convinced that responses to rising great powers are significantly a product of how successfully those powers legitimate their rise, any scholar of great power politics will need to wrestle with her argument and practitioners will need to consider carefully the way their own rhetoric and the rhetoric of others may limit some options while enabling others.

Review by Michelle Murray, Bard College

Since the end of the Second World War the United States has been the indisputable leader of the liberal international order. As the system's preeminent great power, the United States constructed the rules and norms that order the system, embodied in the highly institutionalized *Pax-Americana*, to reflect American values and reinforce American power. The rise of China, however, has the potential to undermine this system. China is poised to become the leading economic power in the system in the near term, giving it the power and influence to reform or overturn existing economic institutions to better suit its interests. Likewise, the growing size and sophistication of the Chinese military, and in particular its power projection capabilities, will enable China to directly challenge the United States in the region and beyond. All of this portends a confrontation of some kind with the United States that has the potential to remake the world order. Thus, perhaps the most important questions for international relations scholars in the coming decades will be: as China grows more powerful, will its revisionist ambitions be limited or revolutionary? And how will the United States respond to the emergence of this peer competitor?

Stacie Goddard's *When Right Makes Might* offers a powerful new framework for understanding how established great powers discern the intentions of, and formulate a response to, the emergence of new great powers. Goddard argues that it is what a rising power says—that is, the legitimation strategies it uses to justify its ambition—that shapes the responses of the great powers. If a rising power can characterize its aims as falling in line with the international status quo, then its territorial assertiveness will be viewed as legitimate and the established great powers will accommodate its rise. When a rising power's justifications are seen as inconsistent with the prevailing rules and norms that define the order, its expansionist foreign policy will be viewed as illegitimate and as a threat that needs to be contained. The innovative theoretical framework of the book is supported with four well-chosen and meticulously researched case studies that highlight the explanatory reach of the argument and illustrate with precision the argument's causal mechanisms.

When Right Makes Might is noteworthy in that it places legitimation struggles at the center of power politics. Power transitions have long been considered principally as material phenomena, whose outcomes are preordained by shifts in the international distribution of military and economic power. The 'Thucydides Trap,' so the argument goes, is unavoidable as great powers necessarily view rising challengers with suspicion and fear and act swiftly to contain their growing power and influence, leading to an inevitable spiral of security competition. Goddard's framework, by comparison, tells us there is nothing predetermined about the outcome of a power transition. Rather, whether a rising power's behavior is understood to be threatening or benign is a social, primarily rhetorical, process, one that is dependent upon the rhetorical frames a rising power uses to justify its revisionism and whether or not they resonate with the established great powers. The contribution of this book is significant: it advances the theoretical study of power transitions, changes the way we understand and interpret canonical historical cases, and has the potential to offer important policy recommendations for contemporary international relations.

Goddard makes a powerful case that the politics of legitimacy is an important, if not the central, animating idea at the center of power transitions. For rhetoric to matter in this way, the framework assumes that states are 'social creatures' that are embedded in a rather thick social environment that "makes possible and constrains strategic action" (14). Yet, the role that state identity plays in these legitimation struggles is curiously underdeveloped. To be sure, identity is a crucial part of the argument. Rising powers strategically pursue legitimation strategies that appeal to the identities of the established great powers. Such legitimation strategies, if successful, raise the 'existential' costs of mobilizing against the rising power because containment policies would contradict the great power's own self-identity and threaten its ontological security. A successful identity appeal can signal a rising power's intent to support the international rules and norms that are essential to the established great power's identity. Conversely, if a rising power's rhetoric appears illegitimate, it will pose an existential threat to the great power, suggesting that "its survival is at stake if the new challenger is allowed to rise" (27). For example, by couching Nazi Germany's revisionist demands in the language of equality and self-determination, Adolf Hitler was able to persuade British leaders that a policy of containment would be antithetical to its identity as a liberal democratic state. Whereas after Munich Hitler's rhetoric turned unabashedly derisive in tone and substance of these same values, leading British leaders to believe that German aggression threatened not only its interests, but also that "the very presence of

totalitarian states threatened British identity and indeed the very existence of Western civilization" (146). In short, successful appeals to identity can abate or worsen a great power's concerns about the kind of challenge a rising power poses to the international order.

The precise relationship between state identity and legitimation strategies is, however, unclear and raises questions about whether the framework requires a more robust theorization of identity. First, do legitimation strategies reflect a state's identity or constitute it? The argument of the book is of two minds on this question. On the one hand, the theoretical framework and some of the case material presents legitimation strategies as a highly strategic endeavor, where a rising power astutely deploys 'identity talk' to force an established power to accommodate its rise. In this view rhetoric and legitimation matter, no doubt, but they matter in a socially thin way. Actors "shift their arguments, strategically framing and reframing them in order to persuade and coerce their audiences" (14). Talk is, in some sense, instrumental. For example, German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck was able to prevent confrontation with the other great powers of the time by smartly framing expansionism as limited and within the bounds of the international order. Especially important was his ability to appeal to both nationalist and conservative constituencies to legitimate Prussian expansion. We are left with the image of an adept statesman who was able to use rhetoric strategically to achieve his aims. On the other hand, Goddard also claims at points that legitimation strategies do something more significant; they constitute state identity itself. In this view, state identities are endogenous to the signaling process, "created and transformed through the legitimation process" (197). Along these lines, Bismarck's appeals did not just secure Prussia's place in the balance of power, but also laid the foundation for a militaristic nationalism to take root in the fledgling German state and become the basis for its aggressive and self-defeating policy of *Weltpolitik* at the turn of the century. The strategic signaling process also constructs state identity. This is an important point, especially since the limited revisionist of today might turn out to be the revolutionary revisionist of tomorrow. But the processes and mechanisms by which strategic signaling comes to have constitutive effects on state identity is not specified.

Second, what kind of identity is at stake in these interactions? On the one hand, it seems that the identities in question are a kind of 'type' identity: for example, a liberal democratic great power might be more willing to accommodate a democratic riser.[1] Goddard argues American rhetorical appeals to institutional norms and liberal values—ideas as the center of British identity as a liberal democratic great power—were crucial in getting Britain to accommodate the United States' rise in the Western Hemisphere in the early nineteenth century. While type identities have a social component—their salience is determined by the shared norms that govern a group—they are primarily self-organized or intrinsic to a state. That is, type identities do not require recognition to exist; Britain should be able to be a liberal democracy all by itself, regardless of whether or not the United States or Germany thinks so. If this is the case, why did British politicians find American and German identity appeals to Britain's liberal democratic character so persuasive and potentially undermining of their self-concept? How is it possible that such rhetorical moves posed an *existential* threat to British identity?

One answer to this question of how a rising power's rhetoric can pose an existential threat to an established power's identity is that perhaps what is at stake during these interactions is something more substantial, the *role identity* of "great power."[2] Role identities are wholly social; they require the cooperation and recognition of other states to come into being. Power transitions, insofar as they involve the emergence of a rising challenger that seeks to obtain a place alongside the established powers atop the international order, are first and foremost about struggles to obtain recognition and secure great power identity or status. A rising power is able to achieve the role identity of a great power when it follows the behavioral norms that are appropriate to its desired role and is recognized by the established powers as legitimately occupying that position. When evaluating a rising power's recognition demands—which are part of its legitimation strategy—the established powers will look to whether or not the rising power adheres to the behavioral norms that define the international order, which in turn will enable the established power to continue to enact the role of a great power in ways that are consistent with its self-

[1] Alexander Wendt, Social Theory of International Relations (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 228-229.

[2] Wendt, Social Theory of International Relations, 229; David McCourt, Britain and World Power Since 1945: Constructing a Nation's Role in International Politics (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2014).

concept. If we think about identity in these terms, then we can better see both how a rising power's legitimation claims can be an existential threat to the established power's identity and how a legitimation strategy might work to construct state identity in the first place. It does this by creating the conditions whereby a rising (or established) power is able to instantiate its identity in practice. What this requires, however, is a clearer exposition of the identity struggles that underlie a power transition and how they condition the success and failure of legitimation strategies. More specifically, it suggests that deeper contests over identity may be at the heart of the theory's two key variables—multivocality and institutional vulnerability—and that the interactions may be more structured than Goddard suggests.

Finally, how do legitimation strategies relate to the multitude of ways by which rising powers achieve ontological security and secure their positions in the system? Goddard's framework focuses primarily on the effects certain legitimation claims have on an established power. Legitimation strategies, however, also affect the rising power and impact its ontological security. For example, a key means by which legitimation strategies succeed is by making clear that a policy of confrontation would generate ontological insecurity for the established power. However, revisionism itself can generate ontological security for a rising power. Jennifer Mitzen argues that state identity is sustained primarily through relationships and that harmful or self-defeating relationships can provide ontological security.[3] Similarly, in my own work on power transitions I argue that a revisionist foreign policy, anchored in offensive military capabilities, can offer rising powers ontological security by allowing them instantiate their aspirant identities in practice.[4] And finally, can rising powers legitimate their foreign policies through appeals to less powerful countries? The focus of Goddard's book is on the interactions between the established great powers and a rising challenger. The relevant audiences in these struggles are fellow great powers and their publics. But, rising powers do not only interact with the other great powers, they also have substantial relationships with weaker countries. China is a good case in point. China recently refused to give up its status as a developing nation at the World Trade Organization, continuing to align itself with the world's developing countries, which has been an unusual feature of its ongoing rise. There are a number of ways to interpret this, not least of which is that China's position as leader of the developing world is an important source of recognition and ontological security for the rising power, which in turn may enable it to take greater risks in its interactions with the United States. Indeed, at the same time as it reasserted its status as a developing country, its foreign policy in the South China Sea has grown more aggressive. Put simply, if the rising power's audience is expanded, how does this limit (or enable) a rising power's ability to use multivocal rhetoric?

When Right Makes Might is a significant and thought-provoking book that makes a valuable contribution to the debates on power transitions, and the case studies serve as a model for how to do careful and precise qualitative research. It pushes its readers to think more deeply about the role of rhetoric and legitimation in world politics and will undoubtedly shape future debates on these questions.

[3] Jennifer Mitzen, "Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma," European Journal of International Relations 12:3 (2006): 341-370.

[4] Michelle Murray, The Struggle for Recognition in International Relations: Status, Revisionism and Rising Powers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

Review by Carla Norrlof, University of Toronto

When Right Makes Might mixes international relations theory with historical punch to discuss great power politics and is a remarkable achievement. Stacie Goddard's absorbing new book entreats us to consider how rising powers justify their actions using language. Rising and incumbent powers resemble legal adversaries duking it out in a courtroom, drawing on prevailing norms and principles to win their case. Sometimes these rising powers dissimulate. But if incumbent powers feel insecure about the prevailing order, rising power justifications nonetheless become socially acceptable. Put plainly, when rising powers talk circles around great powers, they gain *carte blanche* to carry out dreadful deeds without challenge.

For Goddard, rising powers almost by definition pose a challenge to incumbent great powers. Even when they do not invite major power war they tend to upset international hierarchy and world order. So, how do great powers manage and respond to rising powers? Great powers can accommodate, constrain or confront rising powers. Their choice of strategy depends on how they view the intentions of rising powers. Do rising powers have limited aims or revolutionary ones? Whether great powers view rising power intentions as threatening is not merely a function of the rising power's capability or foreign policy. What really matters is how they use prevailing norms to legitimize their actions vis-à-vis domestic and international audiences (their multivocality) and whether these norms are under attack (great power institutional vulnerability). If the conditions are ripe and the rising power wins on the rhetorical battlefield, great powers will not riposte regardless of how bloody their foreign incursion. However, rising powers' legitimation strategies do not always resonate with great powers.

Goddard skillfully provides conditions for her argument. The degree of success in legitimizing the rising power's foreign conquest depends on whether the rising power has high or low capacity for multivocality and whether the great power's institutional vulnerability is high or low, producing four possible outcomes. As mentioned, for rising power claims to resonate strongly, and thus for legitimation attempts to produce certainty about rising power intentions, the claims must be expressed multivocally and the norms coveted by the great power must be weakening (strong resonance). If the norms the great power supports are not deteriorating, the rising power's capacity for multivocality will not resonate, and significant uncertainty about rising power intentions will therefore persist (weak resonance). A rising power may have low capacity for multivocality, unable to simultaneously engage multiple legitimation principles to domestic and international audiences. If the norms coveted by the great power are weakening under these circumstances, rising power legitimatization attempts will not resonate at all; they will be strongly dissonant (strong dissonance). Because there is a tendency for rising powers that cannot speak across multiple audiences to prioritize their domestic audience in order to mobilize support for their foreign policy, they will be inclined to use revolutionary language that challenges existing norms. Such justifications will not go down well with institutionally vulnerable great powers. Thus, even when rising powers only have limited aims, Goddard suggests that they will use revolutionary language. That seems to be an odd assumption (I will return to this). The last case occurs when the rising power uses language to flout prevailing norms and the great power interlocutor feels secure about its preferred normative order (weak dissonance).

Despite the force of her analysis, Goddard's theoretical arguments and evidence can be queried in a number of respects. I will start with the theoretical framework and then turn to the empirical substantiation of the cases before closing with comments about the broader lessons to be learned from this commanding study.

As Goddard explains (31-2), speaking multivocally requires being plugged into different domestic groups, some of whom will be status quo-seeking and some who will be revolutionary. For example, Goddard notes that China can simultaneously claim to be a champion for liberal capitalism (with legitimate/limited status-quo intentions) *and* for post-colonial resistance (illegitimate/revolutionary intentions), precisely because China is well-positioned to make both these claims. But as stated above, Goddard argues that when rising powers do not have a capacity for high multivocality, they always reveal illegitimate/revolutionary intentions. I do not think this is the case. So, to determine what role multivocality plays, we should contrast high multivocality with all possibilities under low multivocality. The condition that rising powers with low multivocality must be revolutionary is perhaps due to the need to complete the 2x2 table over the "four worlds of rising power legitimation and great power strategies" (36), and the need for symmetry between the south-west (weak dissonance)

and south-east quadrants (strong dissonance). But leaving out the possibility for the rising power to make status-quo claims consistent with prevailing norms makes it impossible to fully establish the power of rhetoric against the evidence, and unnecessarily limits the framework's ability to capture change. Are there no differences between a non-multivocal rising power making claims consistent with prevailing norms, a non-multivocal rising power making claims inconsistent with prevailing norms and a multivocal rising power making claims either consistent or inconsistent with prevailing norms? If so, how might we account for such differences?

A consideration of the battle of Breitenfeld (1631) under the command of King Gustav II Adolf, the 'lion of the North' who fought Sweden's way to great power status could shed light on some of this variation and to potential indeterminacy in the framework. King Gustav II Adolf pushed back the Catholic League through appeals to norms of religious diversity in Europe particularly the legitimacy of Protestantism laid down in the Peace of Augsburg (1555) and by appeals to existing norms regarding the right to self-defense in light of the gradual displacement of the Thirty Years War to the southern tip of the Baltic Sea.[1]

Even in light of the cases presented in the book, it is not always clear to what extent the rising power's capacity for multivocality and the degree of great power institutional vulnerability explains great power reactions to rising power foreign policy. I will pick what I think is the most convincing case to illustrate my point. In the Second Schleswig War, Prussia fought against Denmark due to a long-standing conflict over Schleswig-Holstein, culminating in the battle of Dybbøl (1864). Denmark lost the war. By contrast, with the assistance of the great powers, particularly the interventions of Great Britain and Russia—Denmark had won the First Schleswig War. Goddard is right that the great powers already feared Prussian expansion during the First Schleswig War, and that they therefore ought to have been wary of Prussian continental designs in the run-up to the Second War (see for instance, 90-91). And she is right that if the fear of Prussian expansion caused the great powers to oppose Prussian aggression against Denmark during the First Schleswig War, they ought also to have intervened to protect Denmark's integrity in the Second Schleswig War. But they did not.

To answer why they did not—the starting points for the two wars were quite different (in terms of great power interests in preserving the status quo). The background to the Schleswig-Holstein question is complex, dating back to the Viking era of the twelfth century. But essentially, the Danish King served as Duke of the two duchies Schleswig and Holstein, a hereditary right confirmed at the 1814 Congress of Vienna. In the prelude to the First War, the inhabitants of Schleswig provoked Denmark by taking up arms in 1848. They demanded greater autonomy and wanted to become a part of the German confederation in order to achieve the same status held by Holstein with whom they wanted closer ties. Unsurprisingly, Prussia liked the idea. The great powers did not like the idea and managed to restrain Prussia. Consequently, Schleswig and Holstein were left to fend for themselves. Denmark won the war and the 1852 treaty of London established the terms of the settlement signed by the duchies and the great powers. The treaty confirmed the King of Denmark as duke of both duchies.

A decade later, in the overture to the Second Schleswig War, things were different. In November 1863, the Danish parliament issued a law, the November statute. The ordinance decreed a closer association between the duchy of Schleswig and Denmark, excluding the other duchy Holstein (as well as Lauenburg). The statute did not go down well with King Christian IX who nonetheless ratified it. A month later, Prussia issued an ultimatum declaring war unless the ordinance was withdrawn. The great powers too regarded the statute as a breach of the prior London treaty regulating their relations, which it was. All the great powers opposed the new Danish law. Austria actively sided with Prussia. Great Britain, Russia, and France submitted stern warnings to Denmark. None of the great powers wanted the war. Denmark's reluctance to withdraw the statute upon great power request meant it had to pay the price of defeat. Denmark's unwillingness to rescind the ordinance was a huge mistake and closed any lingering aspirations of great powerhood.

[1] Nils Erik Villstrand. Sveriges Historia: 1600-1721 (Stockholm: Norstedts, 2011), Carl Grimberg. Svenska Folkets Underbara Öden (Stockholm: P.A. Norstedt & Söners Förlag [1913] 1960).

In the first war, Prussia-sponsored Schleswig upset the status-quo. In the second war, Denmark upset the status-quo. We should expect great powers to be responsive to context. Great powers should respond differently depending on whether rising powers are status-quo seeking or revisionist, whatever the rhetoric.

The explanation for Nazi leader Adolf Hitler's appeasement is in my view the most problematic of the cases. I agree with Goddard that British politicians were committed to appeasement but not with the reasons she gives. I do not doubt that Germany made appeals to principles of equality and self-determination, as Goddard shows. But I do not think these pleas explain British appeasement. Rather, I think British sympathy for the Nazi project particularly the British aristocracy's support for another legitimizing principle, the racial ideology underpinning Nazism carried the day. Europeans especially in the higher ranks were enamored with Hitler's romantic nostalgia, which promoted German composers and playwrights at the expense of Jewish ones in an attempt at national purification.[2] The swastika was already in plain sight at the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin where the torch-run relay signaled imperial ambitions. Everyone knew about the official anti-Semitic German policy according to which Jewish athletes were not allowed to compete for the German team. To Hitler's chagrin, Jesse Owens won four Olympian gold medals (of course, the irony here is that Owens, an African-American athlete, had more rights while visiting Nazi Germany than he had in the U.S. and he might have had touring the British colony of Southern Rhodesia).[3] By 1936, there were concentration camps throughout Germany. In short, British appeasement was as likely due to ideas of religious and racial superiority resonating with key elements of the British establishment even though not everyone who believed in racial hierarchies was prepared to go all the way in their vicious implementation or ignore the consequences for Britain's national interest (e.g., Winston Churchill, the conservative politician turned Prime Minister 1940).

Goddard has consulted an impressive amount of material including "diplomatic documents, transcripts [of] a (sic) rising power speeches, diaries and memoirs, biographies and secondary historical sources" (see 44). She has produced a book in eloquent, lucid prose. To do justice to her work, the publisher should have proposed a few editorial fixes, making the material easier to evaluate. The first fix would have been a clean edit, correcting the many typos in the published version.[4] The second fix would have been greater emphasis on research design requirements for transparency regarding the balance of evidence favoring the legitimation strategies in each case. Perhaps, by including a table charting the amount, type and quality of the sources consulted for each case and the amount supporting the author's interpretation. This would make it easier for the reader to evaluate the supporting evidence for rising powers' high/low multivocality and great powers' high/low institutional vulnerability. In addition, what procedure did the author use to assess the degree of multivocality and institutional vulnerability? On pages 44-45, Goddard says she used qualitative content analysis and qualitative network theory to establish the appropriateness of the various legitimation strategies—though she does not say exactly what she did to adjudicate the evidence. Looking at the same material Goddard consulted, would another researcher reach the same conclusions? Would another researcher have consulted the same material in the first place?

Turning to my final comment, the objective of this book is to demonstrate that rising powers can "gain might by proving themselves right," a linguistic play on Count Bernhard von Rechberg's 'right before might' (102). As Goddard explicitly states, the aim is not to demonstrate the legitimacy of rising power claims but how the process of legitimation can empower rising states. The puzzle is therefore why legitimation strategies should impinge on great power politics at all. Goddard maintains that the manner in which rising powers justify their actions and how great powers hear those justifications matter. But for Goddard, how great powers hear rising power justifications only depends on how secure they feel about the norms they support, not on subjective understandings of who the rising powers 'are'. To the extent that identity matters, it matters

[2] For example, Zara Steiner, The Man Who Wouldn't Be King, New York Times, 10 February 1991; David B. Dennis. Inhumanities: Nazi Interpretations of Western Culture. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

[3] D.A. Kass. "The Issue of Racism at the 1936 Olympics," Journal of Sport History 3:3 (1976): 223-235.

[4] For example, the sentence quoted above or "as the foundation of Germany unification" (102) or "response to Germany aggression" (142) and others.

because rising powers appeal to great powers' identity. This seems a rather big limitation in a study of this nature. Expanding the possibilities of low multivocality to include status quo and revolutionary legitimation strategies, as discussed above, could help expose how prior beliefs frame the interaction.

Goddard sees her work as a challenge to three bodies of work, rationalist theories of 'signaling'; realist accounts; and great power politics. Criticizing rationalist accounts, she argues that signals have no objective meaning.[5] Signals backed by costly behavior have no inherent meaning because intentions cannot be inferred from behavior. What gives meaning to rising powers' intentions is how the behavior is interpreted, and rising powers can shape that interpretation by justifying their behavior. I have already voiced some skepticism about how 'meaning' is created in Goddard's account. Is it really the case that meaning is primarily defined by rhetoric (i.e., rising power legitimation strategies and great power receptiveness to them)? If rhetoric is indeed what is shaping the meaning given to rising power action, then how desirable is that? According to this book, rising powers' rhetorical success is hardly welfare-enhancing. It resulted in Prussia's unification of Germany through militarism (which some argue played into Nazi Germany's rise—the Sonderweg thesis—or at least made it hard to resist).[6] British openness to Hitler's legitimation attempts inclined Britain to appease Germany, contributing to Nazification and occupation of large parts of Europe including the genocidal Final Solution. If accepting rising powers' rhetorical justifications could end up crushing other states under an Iron Chancellor or get them into WWII-type situations—would it not be wiser to be vigilant at all times and to question what rising powers say their intentions are? Goddard intuits this (148).

Similarly, for the Realist account, Goddard opposes the neorealist structural version most closely connected with John Mearsheimer which argues there is no degree of certainty with which to assess a Great Power's intentions. Goddard argues the "path to conflict during power transitions might not lie in uncertainty about intentions … but in the certainty, however rational, that one's opponent is a revolutionary state (185)."[7] Her position is consistent with previous work on rhetoric in international relations (IR), notably the work of Ronald Krebs (Goddard's "intellectual companion" (xii) from graduate school at Columbia University who is introducing this roundtable) and Patrick Thaddeus Jackson.[8] Jackson and Krebs discuss how difficult it is to oppose action when appropriately justified. For reasons discussed in the above paragraph, Goddard's own analysis seems to suggest that Mearsheimer's logic is correct: one should remain deeply suspicious of rising powers and not listen to their legitimations. Since their justifications are so often insincere, we ought to conclude that the reasons any rising power gives for doing what it does should not carry much weight when great powers formulate their riposte. Goddard adopts the convention in the International Relations literature which equates legitimacy with social acceptance. In the realm of great power politics this translates into what *great powers* consider to be socially acceptable.[9] As

[5] For the game theory literature, see David M Kreps and Robert Wilson, "Reputation and Imperfect Information," Journal of Economic Theory 27:2 (1982): 253-279 and John C. Harsanyi and Reinhard Selten. A General Theory of Equilibrium Selection in Games. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1988). For intentions and the rising power literature, see Andrew Kydd, "Game Theory and the Spiral Model," World Politics 49:3 (1997): 371-400 and David M. Edelstein. "Managing Uncertainty: Beliefs about Intentions and the Rise of Great Powers," Security Studies 12:1 (2002): 1-40.

[6] See Hans Rosenberg, Bureaucracy, Aristocracy and Autocracy: The Prussian Experience, 1660–1815. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), and Jurgen Kocka, "German History before Hitler: The Debate about the German Sonderweg," Journal of Contemporary History 23:1 (1988): 3-16.

[7] John J. Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001).

[8] Ronald R. Krebs and Patrick Thaddeus Jackson,"Twisting Tongues and Twisting Arms: The Power of Political Rhetoric," European Journal of International Relations 13:1 (2007): 35-66.

[9] For example, see Ian Clark, Hegemony in International Society (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

discussed elsewhere, I am skeptical of this usage.[10] In Goddard's rendition there is additional slippage in the very last sentence of the book where rising powers' case for 'what is right' is conflated with rising power and great power "battles over rights" (198). Sliding from 'what is right' (in the sense of being socially acceptable) to having 'rights' moves the goal posts in using legitimacy as an analytical tool.

Goddard discusses the possibility of rising power intentions, rising power threats, the likelihood of major war between rising and incumbent powers as well as how some great power theories apply to U.S.-China relations, though she does not otherwise take on core arguments made in the great power literature.[11] Goddard hedges a bit when discussing U.S.-China relations. She predicts their interaction will be driven by how China justifies its rise. She also frames U.S. foreign policy decisions made by past administrations, specifically the Obama administration's policy of restraint, as evidence for her thesis (94). However, interpreting President Obama's restraint as having been driven by Chinese justifications and U.S. normative vulnerability seems a bit of a stretch given the administration's broader push for restraint in U.S. foreign relations, a move sparked by perceptions of U.S. decline, war-weariness, backlash and the 2007 global financial crisis. To the extent that legitimacy played a role, it was the U.S. who sought to legitimize its foreign policy through behavioral adaptation towards restraint rather than Chinese legitimation attempts causing restraint. Goddard's discussion of U.S.-China relations also raises questions about the utility of one of her predictors—the great power vulnerability variable. As she notes in her conclusion, it is unclear whether we should view the U.S. as institutionally vulnerable in the current context. On the one hand, liberal norms are eroding, and on this view, Goddard predicts confrontation. On the other hand, as Goddard rightly observes, the current U.S. president opposes those norms, and on this view, Goddard predicts containment (194). Due to the risks of major power war, this inconclusiveness seems rather problematic and is dismissed too lightly.

Goddard's provocative, learned and enthralling book makes a forceful argument for when rhetoric matters in international politics and should be read and debated for years to come.

[10] Carla Norrlof, "Review: Hegemony in International Society," Political Science Quarterly 127:3 (2012): 470-472.

[11] For an overview of some key debates, see Norrlof, "Hegemony, Hierarchy, and Unipolarity: Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Hegemonic Order Studies," in William R. Thompson, ed., The Oxford Encyclopedia of Empirical International Relations Theory (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

Review by Ali Wyne, RAND Corporation

Few issues preoccupy political scientists and scholars of international relations more than shuffles within the hierarchy of major powers. Recent years have produced several contributions on that topic: Daniel M. Kliman's *Fateful Transitions: How Democracies Manage Rising Powers, from the Eve of World War I to China's Ascendance*; Graham Allison's *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?*; David M. Edelstein's *Over the Horizon: Time, Uncertainty, and the Rise of Great Powers*; Kori Schake's *Safe Passage: The Transition from British to American Hegemony*; Paul K. MacDonald and Joseph M. Parent's *Twilight of the Titans: Great Power Decline and Retrenchment*; and Joshua R. Itzkowitz Shifrinson's *Rising Titans, Falling Giants: How Great Powers Exploit Power Shifts*.[1]

The newest addition is Stacie E. Goddard's *When Right Makes Might: Rising Powers and World Order*. Goddard characterizes the thesis of her book as "a straightforward one: great powers divine the intentions of their adversaries through their legitimation strategies, the ways in which rising powers justify their aims" (2). A straightforward one, perhaps, but a critical one; with some notable exceptions, including a late 2016 roundtable for this forum that she introduced,[2] the role of rhetoric in shaping the dynamics between preeminent powers and their principal competitors has yet to receive its due scholarly attention. With nuance, rigor, and depth, Goddard demonstrates that erstwhile narratives of those interactions would have been enriched by incorporating her analysis. She concludes that "whether a rising power's legitimation strategies resonate with a great power audience depends on two conditions: whether the speaker is multivocal, defined as having the ability to speak with authority across multiple audiences simultaneously; and whether the great power audiences are institutionally vulnerable, and thus believe the normative order it favors is fragile and under attack" (29).

I hasten to note upfront that I am not well-versed in three of the four case studies that furnish the core of Goddard's book: "the decision of the European powers to allow for growing Prussian power in the 1860s; Britain's appeasement of Hitler's rise in the 1930s, and its turn toward confrontation after the Munich crisis in 1938; and U.S. decisions to contain and confront the rise of Japan in the twentieth century." I will accordingly restrict my focus to the first of her case studies, concerning "Britain's decision to accommodate the rise of the United States in the early nineteenth century" (3), and to the implications of her analytical framework for contemporary U.S.-China tensions.

British Accommodation

Goddard examines the period from 1817 to 1823, when "British strategy underwent a fundamental transition, from one that emphasized containment and outright confrontation in the face of American revisionist demands, to one that accommodated and even encouraged growing U.S. power in the Western Hemisphere" (50). In his 2 December 1823 address to Congress, enunciating the doctrine that would come to bear his imprimatur, President James Monroe famously declared that "the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers." Goddard explains that "in framing their contest with Spain not as a fight for revolution but as a stand against illiberal practices in the Western Hemisphere, the United States had appealed to principles at the core of British identity. It was a language that resonated

[1] Daniel M. Kliman, Fateful Transitions: How Democracies Manage Rising Powers, from the Eve of World War I to China's Ascendance (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014); Graham Allison, Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap? (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017); David M. Edelstein, Over the Horizon: Time, Uncertainty, and the Rise of Great Powers (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017); Kori Schake, Safe Passage: The Transition from British to American Hegemony (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017); Paul K. MacDonald and Joseph M. Parent's Twilight of the Titans: Great Power Decline and Retrenchment (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018); Joshua R. Itzkowitz Shifrinson, Rising Titans, Falling Giants: How Great Powers Exploit Power Shifts (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018).

[2] Stacie Goddard et al., "Roundtable 9-6 on Narrative and the Making of US National Security," H-Diplo, 28 November 2016, https://issforum.org/roundtables/9-6-krebs.

strongly with the British public and set the stage, if not for partnership, then at least a march along [former President John] Adams's 'parallel lines' in the nineteenth century" (82). In Adams's envisioned parallelism, Goddard notes, the United States and Britain would be "champions of constitutionalism and international law in their respective hemispheres" (81).

She adduces substantial evidence to demonstrate that the Monroe administration, while assuring Americans that U.S. expansion into Spanish territory comported with the Republic's revolutionary ethos, also persuaded the British that America's enlargement would contribute to a more resilient Atlantic order. This legitimizing rhetoric was essential to assuaging Britain, an "institutionally vulnerable power" (69), which feared that "the revolutions of the Atlantic world" and the concurrent "conservative, European threat" posed by the Holy Alliance would jeopardize the order it undergirded (70). Britain did not facilitate the ascent of its erstwhile colony due to benevolence; rather, it "found it convenient to support the American Monroe Doctrine because that held in check French or Spanish exploitation of the Americas."[3] Kori Schake, whose recent account of the British-American transition begins when Goddard's ends, in 1823, concludes that this manner of pragmatism anchored a long-term campaign of British accommodation. Schake argues that London "saw the opportunity to shed its expensive maintenance of international order onto receptive American shoulders, hedging its bets against an assertive Germany, Japan, and Russia through the cultivation of an activist America."[4]

Goddard notes that "by 1815 British politicians were quite certain that the United States would eventually acquire the capacity to threaten British security"; indeed, "there were increasing signs that the United States would pose a revolutionary threat to Britain's security" (57). She concludes, however, that they decided to accommodate the United States by 1823, though acknowledging that that decision "did not quell all conflict"; to the contrary, she cites Jay Sexton's observation that "the diplomacy of 1823 kicked off what would be a near-century-long struggle for hemispheric ascendancy" (52-53).[5] One wishes Goddard had surveyed this broader interval, for while 1817 to 1823 played a crucial role in shaping the dynamics between imperial Britain and an upstart United States, it was not wholly determinative; the transition between the two unfolded over roughly a century, and it accelerated significantly between 1895 and 1905, the period that Aaron Friedberg examines in his seminal account.[6] Consideration of this wider aperture suggests not only that Britain vacillated on accommodation, but also that the convergence of challenges to its empire played an important role in its ultimate deference to U.S. ascendancy.

While the transition between the two countries was ultimately peaceful, it was highly fraught; indeed, they came to the brink of war in November 1861, after the commander of the *U.S.S. San Jacinto* intercepted a British vessel off the cost of Cuba, the *R.M.S. Trent*, and had his crew detain two Confederate diplomats who were on board.[7] Britain's Colonial Secretary warned shortly after its resolution that "we cannot count upon its safe continuance for any length of time in the present temper of the American people, and it is of great importance that our North American possessions should not again

[3] Rear Admiral J. C. Wylie (Ret.), "Mahan: Then and Now," chapter in John B. Hattendorf (ed.), The Influence of History on Mahan (Newport: Naval War College, 1991): 37.

[4] Kori Schake, Safe Passage: The Transition from British to American Hegemony (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017): 179.

[5] Jay Sexton, The Monroe Doctrine: Empire and Nation in Nineteenth-Century America (New York: Hill and Wang, 2011): 63.

[6] Aaron L. Friedberg, The Weary Titan: Britain and the Experience of Relative Decline, 1895-1905 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

[7] For a succinct account of that affair, see Chester G. Hearn, Gray Raiders of the Sea: How Eight Confederate Warships Destroyed the Union's High Seas Commerce (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996): 43-45.

allow themselves to be caught in a state of utter unpreparedness."[8] As the Civil War raged, Britain contemplated whether it could exploit that internecine struggle to prevent a unified, more capable union from forming; Prime Minister Lord Palmerston averred, for example, that if "the North and South are definitively disunited, and if at the same time Mexico could be turned into a prosperous monarchy I do not know any arrangement that would be more advantageous to us."[9]

While the United States largely tended to its internal resuscitation for the next quarter-century, it soon began eyeing a 'manifest destiny' beyond its territorial boundaries. It was more circumspect than Germany, whose naval advancement would soon come to preoccupy the British, but it did not always use rhetoric that legitimated its rise. Sometimes, in fact, it sounded notes that were anything but reassuring, as when it weighed in on a territorial dispute that had arisen between British Guiana and Venezuela. Republican Senator Henry Cabot Lodge warned that Britain might exploit the dispute to "covertly disregard the Monroe Doctrine, to seize territory, and establish her power in regions where it did not exist at the time the Monroe Doctrine was declared." [10] On 20 July 1895, Secretary of State Richard Olney sent a telegram to the U.S. ambassador in London, demanding that Britain submit the dispute to arbitration. He contended that Britain should have no objection to this proposal were it indeed merely concerned with resolving the matter, as opposed to furthering its dominion. Albeit belatedly, almost five months later, the British ultimately rejected Olney's injunction. In a 17 December 1895 address before Congress, President Grover Cleveland avowed the "duty of the United States to resist by every means in its power…the appropriation by Great Britain of any lands or the exercise of governmental jurisdiction over any territory which after investigation we have determined of right belongs to Venezuela." He implied that the United States would be prepared to go to war: "In making these recommendations I am fully alive to the responsibility incurred and keenly realize all the consequences that may follow." Prime Minister Lord Salisbury warned that "recent events have introduced a new element into the calculation. A war with America…has become something more than a possibility: and by the light of it we must examine the estimates of the Admiralty. It is much more of a reality than the future Russo-French coalition."[11]

The pace of America's naval modernization only heightened London's anxiety. In 1898, when the United States projected power outside of the North American mainland for the first time, in the Spanish-American War, it had six modern battleships; just seven years later, it had twelve.[12] And, unhappily for the British, the final years of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth produced a confluence of challenges to its empire. Russia's land power was growing rapidly, and Britain feared that Moscow might join forces with Paris to undermine its perch in India, which it considered the linchpin of its dominion. Japan, meanwhile, emboldened by its defeat of China in 1895, was impinging more heavily on London's East Asian equities. Finally, Germany's naval modernization and continued brinkmanship made it the most immediate threat to Britain's national interests. Confronted with this series of challenges, even the world's greatest power could not elide the necessity for choice: the Royal Navy decided that it would focus on maintaining supremacy in its eastern periphery, effectively ceding stewardship of its North American assets to the United States. Friedberg contends, in fact, that its final determination to accommodate the United States was "unavoidable" in view of "America's vast potential and

[8] John Martineau, The Life of Henry Pelham, Fifth Duke of Newcastle, 1811-1864 (London: John Murray, 1908): 305.

[9] Kenneth Bourne, Britain and the Balance of Power in North America, 1815-1908 (Berkeley: University of California, 1967): 255.

[10] Henry Cabot Lodge, "England, Venezuela, and the Monroe Doctrine," The North American Review 160:463 (June 1895): 653.

[11] Bourne, Britain and the Balance of Power in North America, 339.

[12] Paul M. Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery (London: Ashfield Press, 1986): 211.

Canada's extreme vulnerability to invasion."[13] The late British historian Kenneth Bourne thusly distilled Britain's predicament:

> The growth of American power in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, then, was at first by no means welcome to the policymakers in Britain; rather, its existence had to be accepted in a world where the crucial dangers loomed elsewhere. Sentiment rather than interest made that acceptance at least tolerable and ultimately even welcome; but it was a realistic assessment of priorities that dictated it.[14]

While this conclusion is widespread among historians of Anglo-American relations and scholars of international relations, they continue to debate why Britain acquiesced in its replacement as the world's preeminent power. Steven Ward notes the two countries' shared Anglo-Saxon identity: "British leaders were able to identify as members of an Anglo-Saxon civilizational 'team' that—along with Americans and other members of the English-speaking world—was competing for status against Teutons, Slavs, and Asians."[15] David Edelstein spotlights time horizons: "Short-term demands did not allow London to expend resources on the potential long-term threat posed by the United States. In the face of uncertainty about U.S. intentions, London confronted a difficult tradeoff between addressing the short-term German threat and responding to the potentially significant long-term U.S. threat."[16] Daniel Kliman highlights U.S. democracy: "Post-Civil War America could reassure Great Britain because its democratic institutions clarified intentions and created opportunities to engage powerful domestic actors."[17] Goddard enriches this debate by scrutinizing the role of rhetoric; one hopes that she and others will illuminate its role beyond 1817 to 1823.

A Resurgent China

Parsing the words that countries use to describe their actions can help illuminate their motivations. After all, Goddard explains, "[c]apabilities reveal only limited information about a state's intentions: it is not what a rising power has in terms of resources, but how it intends to use these resources that matters" (3). America's rise is a compelling testament to that proposition. William Gladstone, the four-time British prime minister, concluded in the fall of 1878 that "America is passing us by as if in a canter. The England and the America of the present are probably the two strongest nations of the world. But there can hardly be a doubt, as between the America and the England of the future, that the daughter, at some no very distant time…will be unquestionably yet stronger than the mother."[18] Though it had overtaken Britain in aggregate economic size by the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the United States would not become a central player in world affairs for several decades. In fact, "no ambassador-level diplomats resided in Washington [before 1892] because none of the European nations considered the United States sufficiently important to justify sending a diplomat of distinction."[19] It was

[13] Friedberg, The Weary Titan, 299.

[14] Bourne 342.

[15] Steven Ward, Status and the Challenge of Rising Powers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017): 172.

[16] David M. Edelstein, Over the Horizon: Time, Uncertainty, and the Rise of Great Powers (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017): 71.

[17] Daniel M. Kliman, Fateful Transitions: How Democracies Manage Rising Powers, from the Eve of World War I to China's Ascendance (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015): 58.

[18] W. E. Gladstone, "Kin Beyond Sea," North American Review, 127:264 (September/October 1878): 181.

[19] Feng Yongping, "The Peaceful Transition of Power from the UK to the US," Chinese Journal of International Politics 1 (2006): 107

not until after the Second World War that Washington emerged as the world's preeminent power—and even then, it did so more by default than design; the devastation that Europe and Asia incurred during that conflagration gave Washington an unexpected window of opportunity in which to fashion the system that would rise from its ashes.

Observers of world affairs are now debating how a resurgent China will use its rapidly growing resources. In 2005, when Zheng Bijian famously declared that China would pursue a 'peaceful rise,' Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew called the phrase "a contradiction in terms: any rise is something that is startling."[20] Perhaps, but it was easier for the United States to entertain the construct at the time: China's gross domestic product was only $2.3 trillion, compared to America's $13 trillion, and Beijing had yet to embark upon many of the policies—the militarization of the South China Sea, in particular—that would come to constitute its 'newfound assertiveness.' It had also yet to defy many of the orthodoxies that undergirded post-Cold War triumphalism; many U.S. observers believed that China would eventually experience the 'middle-income trap' and that the growing reach of the Internet would undermine the Chinese Communist Party's grip on power.

It is hard to overstate how significantly China's multivocality in the United States has declined in the interregnum, especially since Xi Jinping took power. While the decline has not been uniform across U.S. audiences, its overall momentum is growing apace. The regression has been most pronounced in the U.S. foreign policy establishment, which, in recent years, has widely come to doubt, if not reject, the judgment that sustained the country's policy towards China for some four decades: namely, that the best way to forestall, or at least temper, revisionism on its part would be to maximize its integration into the postwar order.[21] The White House's national security strategy puts the point bluntly: "Contrary to our hopes, China expanded its power at the expense of the sovereignty of others. China gathers and exploits data on an unrivaled scale and spreads features of its authoritarian system, including corruption and the use of surveillance."[22]

Once, and perhaps still, the greatest advocate of deepening Beijing's integration into the postwar order and strengthening economic interdependence between the United States and China, the U.S. business community has grown decidedly more pessimistic. In a statement accompanying its annual survey of China's business climate, the American Chamber of Commerce warned that the "U.S. business community…can no longer be relied upon to be a positive anchor. U.S. companies continue to face an uncertain operating environment in China amid decreasing optimism about their investment outlook."[23] A growing number of educational institutions, meanwhile, are shuttering their Confucius Institutes and/or refusing any further funding from telecommunications giant Huawei. There are even preliminary signs that the public is growing more apprehensive; the Chicago Council on Global Affairs notes that in surveys the organization "conducted in 2006, 2012, 2014, and 2018, respondents were nearly evenly split in viewing the United States and China as either mostly

[20] Graham Allison, Robert D. Blackwill, and Ali Wyne, Lee Kuan Yew: The Grand Master's Insights on China, the United States, and the World (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2013): 5-6.

[21] Incidentally, and separately from the book under review, Goddard has entered into this recalibration by suggesting that China's integration into the postwar order has given it the institutional resources to mount a gradualist challenge to that very system. See Stacie E. Goddard, "The U.S. and China are Playing A Dangerous Game. What Comes Next?" Washington Post, 3 October 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/10/03/from-tariffs-to-the-south-china-sea-beijing-is-pushing-back/. If excluding China from the postwar order may have yielded a more aggressively, fulsomely revisionist power, Goddard's proposition implies that America's longstanding 'engage but hedge' approach may have yielded a subtler, more selective one that is nonetheless better equipped to be revisionist over the long run. One wonders: is there an intermediate solution that would have forestalled the China challenge?

[22] National Security Strategy of the United States of America (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 2017): 25.

[23] Michael Martina, "U.S. Firms No Longer 'Positive Anchor' for Beijing Ties: AmCham in China," Reuters, 17 April 2019, https://in.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trade-china/u-s-firms-no-longer-positive-anchor-for-beijing-ties-amcham-in-china-idINKCN1RT0CA.

partners or mostly rivals….Now, 63 percent identify the countries as mostly rivals versus 32 percent as mostly partners."[24] The further that the present convergence among these different American audiences—policymakers, businesspeople, academics, and citizens—proceeds, the more likely it is that Washington will treat Beijing as an adversary.

China's multivocality has suffered for at least three reasons.[25] First, its rhetoric has grown more expansive, especially in the aftermath of the global financial crisis. Goddard notes, for example, that "references to 'core interests' as the justification for China's foreign policy went from being almost nonexistent in the first decade of the 2000s to appearing consistently in Beijing's defense of its claims. In 2015, China officially linked its claims in the South China Seas as a 'core interest' in an official security law" (192). China no longer hews to the famed advice of its former paramount leader Deng Xiaoping to 'hide our capacities and bide our time'; instead, Xi declares that he looks forward to an era in which China will move to 'center stage' in world affairs, promising that it will achieve its 'great rejuvenation' by 2049, the centennial of the People's Republic of China's founding.

Top officials continue to declare that China does not seek to and/or cannot displace the United States as the world's preeminent power. In July 2018, for example, China's ambassador to the United States explained that its "strategic goal is to develop itself rather than to challenge anyone else. China has no intention to challenge the international standing and interests of any other country or the existing international order and system."[26] Xi observed recently, moreover, that China must "fully appraise the objective reality of the long-term advantage Western developed countries have in the economic, scientific, and military fields."[27] Such statements, though, are increasingly the exception, not the rule. Ironically, in fact, as discussed below, the more marked the gap between a competitor's professed ambitions and observed actions, the more that its mollifying rhetoric can actually deepen the preeminent power's anxiety.

Second, there are occasions when Chinese officials veer from scripted declarations and betray more authentic—and worrisome—sentiments. In February 2009, for example, while in Mexico to tout China's contributions to mitigating the global financial crisis, then-Vice President Xi, who was not a well-known figure in world affairs at the time, expressed irritation when his hosts joined with their U.S. and British counterparts in calling for China to improve its human rights record, complaining that "there are a few foreigners, with full bellies, who have nothing better to do than try to point fingers at our country….China does not export revolution, hunger, or poverty; nor does China cause you any headaches. What else do you want?"[28] In July 2010, at the ASEAN Regional Forum in Hanoi, then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called for claimants to maritime disputes in the South China Sea to resolve them in accordance with international law. Her Chinese counterpart Yang Jiechi was incensed, replying that "China is a big country, and other countries are small countries, and that

[24] Karl Friedhoff, "Elite-Public Gap on China May Be Decreasing," Running Numbers (blog), Chicago Council on Global Affairs, 8 April 2019, https://www.thechicagocouncil.org/blog/running-numbers/elite-public-gap-china-may-be-decreasing.

[25] One wonders if the rapidity of China's resurgence also accounts for some of America's concern; it is hard to see how so dramatic an overall resuscitation of a country that was supposed to have been on the wrong side of history would not have jarred Washington, no matter what rhetoric China had adopted.

[26] "Remarks by Ambassador Cui Tiankai at the Reception Celebrating the 91st Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Liberation Army," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 1 August 2018, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjb_663304/zwjg_665342/zwbd_665378/t1581971.shtml.

[27] Ben Blanchard, "China's Xi Says West has Long-Term Economic, Military Superiority," Reuters, 1 April 2019, https://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFKCN1RD1EM.

[28] Malcolm Moore, "China's 'Next Leader' in Hardline Rant," Telegraph, 16 February 2009, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/4637039/Chinas-next-leader-in-hardline-rant.html.

is just a fact."[29] While China is not wholly unresponsive to international criticism, there is growing evidence, as an analysis from this past December contends, that it worries considerably less than it once did:

> Two Canadians detained in an apparent act of prosecutorial retaliation. A prominent pastor, an internationally renowned Chinese photographer, and China's top international police officer all held by the authorities. Hundreds of thousands of Muslims in the western region of Xinjiang locked up in camps for mass indoctrination.
>
> These and the detentions of many others—including billionaires, lawyers, even the American children of a Chinese fugitive—suggest that the ruling Communist Party no longer cares much about the risk to its international stature posed by harsh actions against its opponents.[30]

Third, there is a growing gap between the way in which China aims to portray itself and the reality of its resurgence. Consider, for example, its self-depiction as a developing power, which it often invokes when the United States exhorts it to assume greater responsibility for furnishing global public goods. While its per-capita income remains low (it was less than $10,000 in 2018[31]), it possesses the world's second-largest economy, soon to be the largest; despite the oft-noted cooling of its economy, it is still growing well above six percent annually; and it is the largest trading country and exporter. The pretense of being a developing a country is doubly difficult to maintain because China eschews that very designation when it (properly) seeks greater representation within postwar institutions.

China has long trafficked in pleasant-sounding abstractions to preempt concern over its resurgence; a partial litany would include 'harmonious development,' 'win-win cooperation,' and, more recently, 'a new model of great-power relations' and 'a community of common destiny for all mankind.' It also likes to remind outsiders that it is not a rising power, but a returning one. Before the Industrial Revolution and the ensuing period of Western preeminence, it notes, China possessed the world's largest economy and presided over an Asia-Pacific order that, in turn, was the fulcrum of world affairs. The distinction between 'rising' and 'returning' is critical; where the former disrupt equilibria, the latter restore them—at least in theory.

At least three preliminary notes are in order, lest I give the impression that China's rhetoric is wholly at odds with its actions. First, China makes important contributions to world order; it provides more peacekeeping forces than any other permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, accounts for roughly a third of global growth, and is supplying vitally needed infrastructure to underdeveloped countries along the trajectory of its Belt and Road initiative (though it is recalibrating that undertaking due to international pushback against aspects of its financing and governance). It played an important role in ensuring that the global financial crisis of 2008-09 did not turn into a depression, and it has furnished modest cooperation with the United States on global challenges including the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the spread of pandemics. Second, it stands to reason that the scale of China's ambitions would grow in proportion to the stock of its power. Third, having been a principal beneficiary of the postwar order and having learned from the mistakes of twentieth-century powers such as Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, China remains more of a selective revisionist than a frontal one.

Still, its conduct is inspiring growing concern abroad. Under Xi's rule it has militarized the South China Sea; made it harder for foreign companies to operate in China without transferring the crown jewels of their intellectual property; increased its

[29] John Pomfret, "U.S. Takes A Tougher Tone with China," Washington Post, 30 July 2010, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/07/29/AR2010072906416.html.

[30] Steven Lee Myers and Chris Buckley, "An Emboldened China No Longer Cares What Its Critics Think," New York Times, 14 December 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/14/world/china-detentions-canadians-human-rights.html.

[31] "GDP per capita (current US$)," World Bank, 2019, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=CN.

use of economic coercion to secure acceptance of its strategic preferences; intensified its crackdown on foreign nongovernmental organizations; and detained upwards of one million Uighurs in 'reeducation camps.' Even some of the most esteemed, longstanding proponents of U.S. engagement with China have grown pessimistic. The Asia Society's Orville Schell and UC San Diego's Susan Shirk, for example, lament that Xi "has sought to use China's new wealth and power in ways that are inimical to the very global order that fostered China's rise, as well as to the interests of the United States and many other nations." That reality, they continue, "has precipitated a deep questioning—even among those of us who have spent our professional careers seeking productive and stable U.S.-China ties—about the long-term prospects of the bilateral relationship."[32]

China's declining multivocality unfortunately coincides with America's growing institutional vulnerability, with the postwar order it has undergirded for nearly three-quarters of a century under growing duress from within and without. Goddard notes that "the current administration has shown less interest in the liberal international order and might prove less likely to react to illiberal claims" (194). Even so, that sentiment may well prove to be an aberration if President Donald Trump is not reelected in 2020, and perhaps even if he has one more term, provided that his successor hews to a more traditional course of U.S. foreign policy. The good news is that the United States and China are not in a new Cold War; the extent of economic and cultural exchanges between them is vastly greater than it was between the United States and the Soviet Union, middle countries have far more room for maneuver, and China does not (yet) evince aspirations to be a superpower in the U.S. mold. Still, Goddard's analysis leaves one uneasy about the long-term relationship between the two giants.

[32] Orville Schell and Susan L. Shirk (cochairs), Course Correction: Toward an Effective and Sustainable China Policy (New York: Asia Society Center on U.S.-China Relations, 2019): 10.

Response by Stacie E. Goddard, Wellesley College

I am immensely grateful to H-Diplo/ISSF for organizing a roundtable on my book, and to the four reviewers who have engaged with it so thoroughly and so thoughtfully. Over the last few years, there has been an explosion of excellent work on rising and declining powers, which is not surprising given the state of contemporary global politics.[55] Each of the reviewers here has made significant contributions to this literature. The usual caveats apply, of course; while the reviewers made a number of comments, for the sake of space and coherence, I will only respond to a few of them.

Both the reviewers and introduction to this forum give some overview of the book, but to summarize the main question and argument, *When Right Makes Might* asks why great powers accommodate, even facilitate, the rise of some challengers, while others are contained or confronted, even at the risk of war. What explains a great power's strategic response to rising powers in the international system? The conventional wisdom suggests that a great power's response to a rising power rests on how it perceives the challenger's intentions.[56] When a rising power has limited ambitions, it is unlikely to pose a threat, and great powers will choose to accommodate the new power's rise. A rising power with revolutionary aims, in contrast, poses a significant threat, and thus great powers must do anything they can to check the emerging challenger, even if doing so risks war.

Yet less clear in the literature is how great powers know the intentions of rising challengers. How do great powers decide that they are certain enough about their potential adversaries' ambitions to commit to a strategy of containment, confrontation, or accommodation? I argue that great powers divine the intentions of their adversaries through their legitimation strategies, specifically, the ways in which rising powers justify their aims. If a rising power can portray its ambitions as legitimate, it can make the case that, far from being a revolutionary power, it will use its power to preserve the prevailing status quo, making accommodation likely. In contrast, if a rising power's claims are illegitimate—if they are inconsistent with existing international rules and norms—then great powers will see its actions as threatening, and containment and confrontation will be likely.

All of this is pretty straightforward but, as I demonstrate through historical case studies of the United States, Prussia, Germany, and Japan, making legitimate appeals is not an easy process. Because rising powers must placate multiple audiences at home and abroad, they must engage in multivocal legitimation strategies, appeals that can be heard differently by different

[55] A sample of this literature includes Evelyn Goh, *The Struggle for Order: Hegemony, Hierarchy, and Transition in Post-Cold War East Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); David M. Edelstein, *Over the Horizon: Time, Uncertainty, and the Rise of Great Powers* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017); and Paul K. MacDonald and Joseph M. Parent, *Twilight of the Titans: Great Power Decline and Retrenchment* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018) Carla Norrlof, "Hegemony, Hierarchy and Unipolarity: Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Hegemonic Order Studies" in William R. Thompson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Empirical International Relations Theory*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017; Joshua R. Itzkowitz Shifrinson, *Rising Titans, Falling Giants: How Great Powers Exploit Power Shifts.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018; Michelle Murray The Struggle for Recognition in International Relation: Status, Revisionism, and Rising Powers (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018); Steven Ward, *Status and the Challenge of Rising Powers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Ali Wyne, American Power and Influence in the New Century: Taking Stock and Looking Forward," chapter 3 in William H. Natter III and Jason Brooks (eds.), *American Strategy and Purpose: Reflections on Foreign Policy and National Security in an Era of Change* (Lexington: Council for Emerging National Security Affairs, 2014): 60-80.

[56] See, e.g., Charles L. Glaser, *Rational Theory of International Politics: The Logic of Competition and Cooperation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); Glaser, "Political Consequences of Military Strategy: Extending and Refining the Spiral Model," *World Politics* 44:4 (July 1992): 497-538; Glaser, "The Security Dilemma Revisited," *World Politics* 50:1 (October 1997): 171–201; Andrew Kydd, "Game Theory and the Spiral Model," *World Politics* 49:3 (April 1997): 371-400; and Kydd, "Sheep in Sheep's Clothing: Why Security Seekers Do Not Fight Each Other," *Security Studies* 7:1 (Autumn 1997): 114-155; Randall Schweller, "Managing the Rise of Great Powers: History and Theory," in Alastair Iain Johnston and Robert S. Ross, eds., *Engaging China: The Management of an Emerging Power* (London: Routledge, 1999), 1-31.

audiences. Moreover, legitimation strategies only resonate when the great power audience is institutionally vulnerable, when the great power believes the normative system it favors is under attack. Institutional vulnerability makes a great power more likely to listen to and accept a rising power's reasons for its aggression, to hear a rising power's reasons as a credible signal of limited and revolutionary aims.

While the substantive focus of the book is on rising power politics, the theoretical wager is that rhetoric really matters in international politics, and that it shapes how states understand and react to their environment, even when the stakes are high. Talk, contrary to what much scholarship suggests, is not at all cheap.[57] It is not surprising, then, that all of the reviewers push me on the question of whether talk is really all that important. David Edelstein, for example, asks whether the real driver here is not rhetoric, but rather the preferences of the leaders of great powers, who would rather put off confronting the rising power to another day. As he writes, "rhetoric may also be framed and understood in various ways so as to make possible a leader's preferred strategy, including simply avoidance."

I think Edelstein rightly argues that leaders are hesitant to act in face of a rising power. Both of us agree that balancing and confrontation are costly and that leaders are thus likely to put off these strategies for as long as they remain uncertain about a challenger's intentions. Our disagreement lies in how it is that rising powers maintain that uncertainty and, moreover, why and when it is leaders become certain enough to decide to accommodate or confront a rising power. My work suggests that rhetoric is key in either creating or eliminating uncertainty. Indeed, one key finding of my research is how quickly leaders will turn to containment and confrontation in the face of what they see as illegitimate *rhetoric* even if, as I suggest in the book, a rising power's *actions* suggest no clear signal of revolutionary intentions. It may seem completely obvious, for example, why the United States would have reacted so strongly to Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931. In retrospect, it was the beginning of Japan's campaign of imperial expansion and uncontrollable militarism. But as scholars have long noted, the American leaders' interpretation of Japan's intentions in Manchuria is a puzzle: since leaders in the United States had long seen Japan has having 'special interests' in Manchuria, Japan's actions in 1931 were not particularly surprising. It was Japan's changing rhetoric, its explanations that it was going to build a new order in the Asia Pacific, that led leaders in the United States to see Japan as an expansionist threat.

Like Edelstein, both Norrlof and Murray push me on the importance of rhetoric, but in another direction, asking why I did not make identity central to my theory. Murray suggests, for example, that both how rising powers deploy legitimation strategies and how these strategies are interpreted by the great powers depends upon "role identity"—how the rising power and great power identify themselves, and how that identity is recognized by others. Much of the friction of power transitions stems from rising powers who are attempting, with more or less success, to enact the identity of a great power, and seeking recognition from the existing great powers about their status claims. In her review, Norrlof hones in on a particularly

[57] Most rationalist literature suggests that talk itself is cheap, and that its power only comes when it is tied to costly signals. There is a large literature on discourse and rhetoric that challenges this, however, which draws inspiration from many sources. From Ludwig Wittgenstein's language games, see K.M. Fierke, *Changing Games, Changing Strategies: Critical Investigations in Security* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998); Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, *Civilizing the Enemy: German Reconstruction and the Invention of the West* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006); from Louis Althusser's mechanisms of articulation and interpellation, see Jutta Weldes, *Constructing National Interests: The United States and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999); from Jacques Lacan's writings on representational force, see Janice Bially Mattern, *Ordering International Politics: Identity, Crisis, and Representational Force* (New York: Routledge, 2005); from Jürgen Habermas's model of communicative action, see Thomas Risse, "'Let's Argue!': Communicative Action in World Politics," *International Organization* 54:1 (Winter 2000): 1-39; Jennifer Mitzen, *Power in Concert: The Nineteenth-Century Origins of Global Governance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013); from Erving Goffman and symbolic interactionism, see Michael N. Barnett, *Dialogues in Arab Politics: Negotiations in Regional Order* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); from Charles Tilly and relational analysis, see Daniel H. Nexon, *The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe: Religious Conflict, Dynastic Empires, and International Change* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009); Stacie E. Goddard, *Indivisible Territory and the Politics of Legitimacy: Jerusalem and Northern Ire- land* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); from rhetorical pragmatics, see Markus Kornprobst, *Irredentism in European Politics: Argumentation, Compromise, and Norms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

important question—the role of racial identities in creating affinity or disunity between rising and existing great powers. She makes the provocative claim that much of appeasement was driven by British sympathy for Nazi ideology. As she explains, "British appeasement was as likely due to ideas of religious and racial superiority resonating with key elements of the British establishment even though not everyone who believed in racial hierarchies was prepared to go all the way in their vicious implementation or ignore the consequences for Britain's national interest." Likewise, as Wyne notes, much of the scholarship on the peaceful transition between United States and Britain emphasize the sense of racial affinity underpinning the Anglo-American relationship.

Like these authors, I agree that identity is important and, indeed, that it is central to my theory of legitimation. Identity is implicated in both the rising power's ability to deploy norms and rules to justify its actions, as well as in how the great power hears a challenger's claims. Perhaps most notably, a rising power can only use multivocal rhetoric if its identity itself is multivocal.[58] Multivocality is not simply about dissembling; it requires a deep uncertainty about the identity of rising power. Chancellor Otto von Bismarck's multivocal rhetoric worked, for example, because Prussian identity was conflicted and fragmented. From the early 1860s onward, Prussian elites—Bismarck in particular—straddled conservative aristocratic and revolutionary nationalist coalitions. The Hohenzollern dynasty was firmly embedded in dynastic political networks, but at the same time, actors within the Prussian monarchy held strong ties to the nationalist movement, which Bismarck exploited to fulfill his program of a unified German state.

If identity is so critical, why focus on rhetoric? One of the reasons, I think, is to try to avoid the trap of turning 'identity' into an essentialist attribute, something that states 'have' that is static and unchanging, as opposed to being constructed and reinterpreted through the discursive process itself. To focus on rhetoric is not to play down the importance of state identity. Certainly, one cannot tell the story of a rising Japan and the reaction of the existing (largely 'western') great powers without discussing the role of race. By the 1930s Japan believed there was "an Anglo-American conspiracy to isolate Japan" in an "attempt to oppress the non-Anglo-Saxon races, especially the coloured races, by the two English-speaking countries, Britain and the United States."[59] In the United States, officials in the State Department and the British Foreign Office warned of a "'Yellow Peril" that threatened to impose "a Japanese Monroe doctrine on China, and a cry of 'the Far East for the Far Easterns'."[60] Race shaped critical discussions at Versailles when the European powers rejected the racial nondiscrimination clause, cementing Japan's status as a "second-tier" power in world politics.

But what a focus on rhetoric allows is an understanding of the fluid way in which Japan presented its racial identity to the great powers, as well as the changing ways in which the United States and Britain understood Japan's racial identity and what that meant for its position in the international order. As powerful as the role race played in U.S.-Japanese relations was, it neither had a determinative effect on U.S. policy toward Japan nor doomed these two states to confrontation and conflict. Indeed, in the early twentieth century and especially after Versailles, American officials often spoke of Japan as a kindred spirit in institution building, a partner in creating a civilized, liberal order in East Asia. Japan's adherence to Western diplomacy and industrialization had made it "the pioneer of progress in the Orient."[61] As I outline in the book, it was the rhetorical presentation and interpretation of racial categories that shaped how the United States understood Japan's position as a challenger.

[58] See, for example, John F. Padgett and Christopher K. Ansell, "Robust Action and the Rise of the Medici, 1400-1434," *American Journal of Sociology* 98:6 (1993): 1259-1319.

[59] W.G. Beasley *Japanese Imperialism, 1984*-1945 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 167.

[60] This specific quote comes from the British Foreign Office. See Minute by Alston, TNA, FO 371/2323, 3 April 1915.

[61] Quoted in Frederick Dickinson, *War and National Reinvention: Japan in the Great War, 1914-1919* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 205.

Finally, each of the reviewers catches a tension in the book's argument and its prescriptions for policy: it may be that rhetoric plays a significant role in a great power's response to a challenger, but should it? Norrlof suggests that one of the possible take-away points of my book is that John "Mearsheimer's logic is correct: one should remain deeply suspicious of rising powers and not listen to their legitimations." To apply this to the current case of China, one could argue that the United States paid close attention to China's multivocal legitimation strategies in the first decades of its rise, and took all too seriously its leaders' appeals to norms and rules as signals that it would uphold the liberal international order. And it might be that the United States will now pay the price of listening to China's cheap talk, and facilitating that state's rise.

But listening to a rising power's rhetoric is not irrational. Where my argument differs from that of a neorealist like Mearsheimer is in its skepticism that there is an objective, material world that provides a clear signal about either capabilities or intentions. For example, how should we understand China's behavior in the South China Seas, or its efforts to build up infrastructure through its Belt and Road initiative? Certainly both are 'costly' signals. But should these actions in the South China Seas be seen as an attempt to challenge American dominance in the Asia Pacific? Or is it the return to the nineteenth century territorial status quo, as China claims? It is not simply the case that the United States lacks information about China's behavior; it is that China's behavior can be reasonably read in a number of different ways: there is no inherent, objective meaning. And this is hardly unusual: most signals are indeterminate, subject to multiple understandings.

For this reason, leaders *must* listen to rhetoric in order to divine the intentions of other states. My theory's prescription, then, is not to believe that there is some other route to interpreting the ambitions of a rising power. It is, rather, to provide more guidance as to why rising powers speak the way they do, to outline the pressures they face in accommodating and mobilizing multiple audiences, and to highlight the common mistakes that leaders of great powers make in interpreting a challenger's rhetoric. It is, in the classical realist tradition, an attempt to provide a guide for the prudent interpretation of rhetoric in international politics.

Again, I realize that I have only scratched the surface of the reviewers' comments. Their trenchant and insightful remarks not only productively challenge many of my own claims, but also point out numerous areas for expansion in the study of rising power politics. I'm grateful that *When Right Makes Might* can be a part of this serious and significant conversation.