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Benjamin Miller with Ziv Rubinovitz. ***Grand Strategy from Truman to Trump.*** Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020. ISBN: 9780226734965 (cloth, $105.00); 9780226735016 (paper, $35.00).

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Introduction by Peter Dombrowski, Naval War College

This roundtable is a rarity, not for the H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable Review series, of course, but for roundtables published in many journals and online fora; it begins with a serious, well-written book and continues with three serious, well-written, critical review essays. There is not a clunker in the mix. The complete package is a model for academic discourse. Scholars and students alike can benefit from reading Benjamin Miller's and Ziv Rubinovitz's book and then engaging with its strengths and weaknesses with guidance provided by the H-Diplo/ISSF essays. This is especially pleasing because all four reviewers-- Paul C. Avey, Mariya Grinberg, Ionut Popescu, and Hilde Eliassen Restad – have made original contributions to international relations scholarship in recent years.[1] It is appropriate because Miller has been an original and provocative voice throughout his career, producing excellent books including, among others, *States, Nations and Great Powers: The Sources of Regional War* and *When Opponents Cooperate: Great Power Conflict and Collaboration in World Politics and Peace*.

As the reviewers make clear, Miller and Rubinovitz have written formidable book. Grinberg concludes that *Grand Strategy from Truman to Trump* undertakes "a very difficult task – understanding change …[that] sets us on the road to understanding how these changes occur and allows us to have some sense of how to anticipate them in the future." Avey judges that it has "provided a rich and thought-provoking analysis of the shape and sources of the last seventy-five years of US grand strategy." Popescu praises Miller and Rubinovitz for offering "a rigorous theoretical explanation of why grand strategy changes, rather than yet another book a 'new course' for Washington's path in the decades to come." Restad concludes in the same vein, noting that Miller and Rubinovitz should be "commend[ed] for their book's "analytic eclecticism and its innovative theory of great power grand strategy."[2]

Yet it is because the book is so well argued, and quite likely to be influential, that it is worth discussing and perhaps expanding on several of the more telling criticisms raised by the reviewers. One issue is how Miller and Rubinovitz interpret the US role in the world. As Popescu rightfully observes

> "another problem with the model lies in assuming that the United States is a liberal power generally looking to spread liberalism abroad where possible, given a permissive international environment. Since this is a rather common assumption in the literature, the authors are not necessarily outside the mainstream in making it, but nevertheless I think this book would have benefited from engaging more with some recent arguments that in one way or another challenge this assumption."

Popescu's criticism can be taken several steps further. Restad focuses on how American liberalism can, and should, be interpreted as a foundation for US grand strategy. She rightly points to the tension between Lockean liberalism as exemplified by Louis Hartz and critics who believe in James Morone's view that interpretations of American political traditions should give greater weight to internal "culture conflicts over race, gender, ethnicity, and religion." In a comparative sense, Restad also notes that "in the US context, its liberalism is infused with certain assumptions about itself that perhaps differs slightly from other great powers." If true, and I believe it is, the difference between the United States

[1] Paul C. Avey, *Tempting Fate: Why Nonnuclear States Confront Nuclear Opponen*t (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 2019); Mariya Grinberg, "Wartime Commercial Policy and Trade between Enemies," *International Security* 46:1 (Summer 2021): 9-52; Ionut Popescu, *Emergent Strategy and Grand Strategy: How American Presidents Succeed in Foreign Policy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press 2017); Hilde Eliassen Restad, *American Exceptionalism An Idea that Made a Nation and Remade the World* (New York: Routledge, 2014).

[2] Benjamin Miller, *States, Nations, and the Great Powers: The Sources of Regional War and Peace* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2007) and Benjamin Miller, *When Opponents Cooperate: Great Power Conflict and Collaboration in World Politics and Peace* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press; 1995).

and other powers, great and small, may be a source of tension within international institutions and international policy outcomes.

Further, Miller and Rubinovitz do not engage very directly more critical judgements about American foreign and security strategies, namely characterizations of US grand strategy from the left. Some of the most damning and coherent analyses of American grand strategy originate from scholars and proponents of more progressive politics and policies. For Van Jackson, Heather Hurlburt, Adam Mount, Loren DeJonge Schulman, and Thomas Wright, make the case for "re-scoping the size and shape of the US military, emphasizing political and democratic alliances, rebalancing how international institutions work, and pursuing mutual threat reduction where circumstances allow [the words of Van Jackson]."[3] What Jackson and company envision is a very different American domestic politics allowing the pursuit foreign and security policies that diverge substantially from the beliefs of mainstream liberals and realists. Somewhat farther to the left, scholars interpret American grand strategy and its architects as builders of a modern Empire serving both national power and global capitalism;[4] as well, an unusual convergence left, and libertarian sensibilities combine to provide a powerful analysis of American empire and its pathologies for American and global politics.[5]

More apropos to international relations scholarship, as Avey notes, "While incorporating insights from two 'isms' and levels of analysis, they challenge constructivist and first image explanations. The authors do not deduce a constructivist grand strategy because constructivists' focus on identity and discourse lacks the content specificity of liberalism (24-25)."

I am not entirely convinced that there should be a constructivist approach to strategy per se, in part because I am not sure that IR paradigms were ever meant to drive strategic positions in a prescriptive sense, and in part because there are other constructivism-adjacent ways to study grand strategy. Without addressing this approach in detail, it recognizes that "state policies have not only international bureaucratic and domestic roots but intellectual [emphasis in the original] ones as well."[6]

Another important issue, raised by Grinberg is that "the ideological dimension of the [Miller-Rubinovitz] typology is meant to be applicable to any ideology, not just liberalism" including "illiberal" belief systems. Given their focus on grand strategic change in the US, it is unsurprising that, as Grinberg notes, "the authors do not provide an example of how the offensive and defensive variants of ideology promotion." Examples do exist even amongst middle and smaller powers; see, for example, Ghiadaa Hetou on Saudi Arabia and Wendy Ramadan-Alban on Iran in *Comparative Grand Strategy: A Framework and*

[3]"Policy Roundtable: The Future of Progressive Foreign Policy," *Texas National Security Review* (December 4, 2018): https://tnsr.org/roundtable/policy-roundtable-the-future-of-progressive-foreign-policy/.

[4] Perry Anderson, *American Foreign Policy and Its Thinkers* (London: Verso 2015).

[5] See for example the volumes published by MacMillan in its American Empire Project which "leading writers and thinkers will mount an immodest challenge to the fateful exercise of empire-building and to explore every facet of the developing American imperium." https://us.macmillan.com/series/americanempireproject.

[6] Edward Rhodes, "Constructing Power: Cultural Transformation and Strategic Adjustment in the 1890s," in Peter Trubowitz, Emily O. Goldman, and Edward Rhodes, eds., *The Politics of Strategic Adjustment: Ideas, Institutions and Interests* (New York: Columbia University Press 1999): 29-78. See also the literature generated by Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, eds., *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs Institutions and Political Change* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1993).

Cases.[7] In both Saudi Arabia and Iran, confessional domestic politics play a substantial role in the ends, ways and means of each country's grand strategy.

Restad raises an important further criticism that is pertinent for scholars and students who are trying to categorize American grand strategies. Miller and Rubinovitz settle on a four-fold typology: offensive realism, defensive realism, defensive liberalism, and offensive liberalism. But Restad suggests that it is not clear that these categories are mutually exclusive and that they thus cannot be combined and recombined into different mixes. Even more, she takes issues with the meaning of "multilateralism." Is multilateralism more akin to coordination or is it a norm with constitutive implications for US leadership of the international order and its own strategic commitment to supporting international institutions including policy outcomes that run counter to the preferences of particular American presidential administrations. Restad's engagement with research with regard to the meaning of multilateralism in Miller's and Rubinovitz's book, not to mention a wide swathe of IR research, leads me to believe that much more needs to be done empirically and theoretically.

Theories and concepts of grand strategy aside, what does this back and forth mean for understanding the remainder of the Biden administration and the future of American grand strategy? Recent commentary suggests that there is more continuity between the Trump administration and the Biden administration despite very different ideological underpinnings and relations to mainstream thinking about American strategy.[8] On the surface, from the account of Miller and Rubinovitz, continuity seems plausible given the basic configuration of the international systems facing remains roughly the same. China is no longer rising, it has risen, to the point where it poses both long- and short-term threats to American interests not only in the western Pacific but globally.[9] The Russian invasion of Ukraine may, at least temporarily, have settled debates amongst experts about the nature and sustainability of the Russian strategic challenge.[10] Great power or strategic competition has re-emerged with the US facing two continent-sized, nuclear equipped, and conventionally well-armed foes. While China and Russia diverge in terms of economic prospects, both are implacable opponents of the US-led liberal international system. If Miller and Rubinovitz are right, American grand strategy will be interpreted by politicians and policy makers in a variety of ways, but the geostrategic environment will privilege specific strategic solutions.

In the strategy and policy debates within and between American presidential administrations, there is more continuity than is theorized by Miller and Rubinovitz. There is, of course, continuity in the "Blob," President Obama's former advisor Ben Rhodes' evocative and controversial term for "the foreign policy establishment."[11] But the Blob, which is broadly defined to include former officials moving into and out of administrations, media elites, a few prominent academics, and the think tank

[7] Thierry Balzacq, Peter Dombrowski, Simon Reich, eds., *Grand Strategy: A Framework and Cases* (New York: Oxford University Press 2019).

[8] Fareed Zakaria, "Is Biden normalizing Trump's foreign policy?" *The Washington Post* (September 17, 2021). https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/09/16/is-biden-normalizing-trumps-foreign-policy/.

[9] *US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 2021 Annual Report to Congress* (November 17, 20210; https://www.uscc.gov/annual-report/2021-annual-report-congress.

[10] Michael Kofman and Andrea Kendall-Taylor, "The Myth of Russian Decline: Why Moscow Will Be a Persistent Power," *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 2021): https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian-federation/2021-10-19/myth-russian-decline.

[11] Ben Rhodes, "The Democratic Renewal: What It Will Take to Fix US Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, 99:5 (September/October 2020): 46-83. For a strong, if not entirely convincing, rebuttal see Hal Brands, Peter Feaver, and William Inboden, "In Defense of the Blob: America's Foreign Policy Establishment Is the Solution, Not the Problem," *Foreign Affairs* (April 29, 2020): https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-04-29/defense-blob and, finally, Emma Ashford, "Build a Better Blob: Foreign Policy Is Not a Binary Choice Between Trumpism and Discredited Elites," *Foreign Affairs* (May 29, 2020): https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2020-05-28/build-better-blob.

denizens, is relatively open new voices and, far more important, infinitely flexible in its policy and ideological commitments. After all, relatively few unabashed supporters of the Iraq invasion have expressed regrets, much less incorporated that horrendous experience into current or future international prognostication or policy advice.

A far more significant source of continuity rests within the US government itself in the form of what members of an earlier generation on the left called "state managers," as defined by Fred Block as "those at the peak of the executive and legislative branches of the state apparatus.[12] In the case of grand strategy this includes not just the revolving door of civilian policy makers, but also members of the senior executive service, legislative committee staff, and, most notably, uniformed military leaders. Their views are shaped by the institutions they serve, socialization over decades, and professional success that rewards conformity or at least cautious incrementalism particularly in strategy implementation. For one example, even as President Donald Trump and his senior advisors cozied up to President Putin, senior strategists lumped Russia with China as great power challengers in the 2018 *National Security Strategy* and the 2019 *National Defense Strategy*.[13] Yet Congress continued to fund Department of Defense continued programs like the European Deterrence Initiative intended to counter Russian ambitions in the Baltic and southeastern Europe. In short, even has President Trump pursued a friendly relationship with President Putin, the legislative branch working with executive department continued to prepare for Russian aggression.

Finally, I would be untrue to my own scholarly commitments, as well as those of my long-time collaborators Thierry Balzacq and Simon Reich, if I did not raise several of our general criticisms of much of the literature on grand strategy including this contribution.[14] Studying grand strategy, including changes, must move beyond analysis of great powers including the United States. States of varied size, wealth, and regime type can and do develop grand strategies at the local, regional, and even the global level. Comparison can be typological, temporal, or spatial.[15] Threats are not just traditional military challenges (conventional or strategic); kinetic, anthropogenic and naturogenic threats are all the substance of a grand strategy. And elites do not just interpret the world simply in the terms of IR theory or stylized models of the interstate system; they reflect or interpret historical factors, strategic culture, and other ideational/cognitive dimensions, to define goals, prioritize threats and opportunities, and to marshal resources.

Miller and Rubinovitz have written a fine book that is bound to be influential amongst scholars of national security, foreign policy and international relations. The reviewers have paid the two authors the ultimate scholarly compliment. They have engaged seriously with the arguments in *Grand Strategy from Truman to Trump* to find much that is valuable and a few contestable assumptions and arguments. I suspect that scholars will engage carefully with Miller and Rubinovitz in their future research.

Participants:

[12] Fred Block, "Beyond Relative Autonomy: State Managers as Historical Subjects," *The Socialist Register* (1980), 241, fn. 9.

[13] See the former at https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf and that latter at https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf.

[14] Thierry Balzacq, Peter Dombrowski, and Simon Reich, "Is Grand Strategy a Research Program? A Review Essay," *Security Studies* 28:1 (2019); Thierry Balzacq, Peter Dombrowski, Simon Reich, "Introduction: Comparing Grand Strategies in the Modern World," in Thierry Balzacq, Peter Dombrowski, Simon Reich, eds., *Grand Strategy: A Framework and Cases* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

[15] Peter Dombrowski and Simon Reich, *Across Type, Time and Space: American Grand Strategy in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2021).

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Review by Paul C. Avey, Virginia Tech

Benjamin Miller and Ziv Rubinovitz's important new book *Grand Strategy from Truman To Trump* provides a systematic explanation for when and why U.S. grand strategy shifts. They develop a novel typology of U.S. grand strategies that is rooted in international relations (IR) theory, explain when different approaches will be chosen, and apply that typology from 1945 to today. Scholars have previously pointed to the importance of theory in classifying foreign policy approaches.[1] Others have sought to explore specific strategic approaches and changes.[2] What Miller and Rubinovitz add is an innovative general explanation that accounts for both broad continuities and major changes across a sweeping period. There is more consistency in U.S. policy than is suggested by some but more variation than others allow.[3]

Miller and Rubinovitz provide a straightforward argument: international power dynamics filtered through the domestic system largely determines a state's grand strategy. When there is a peer competitor a state will adopt a realist grand strategy focused on influencing relative capabilities. In its absence a state will externalize its domestic values. In the U.S. case, liberalism. The degree of threat determines whether a state pursues an offensive or defensive approach (38-47). In Cold War bipolarity, the United States pursued an offensive realist approach when the Soviet threat seemed high and a defensive realist one when the threat appeared low. Absent a counterweight in the unipolar era, the United States was free to adopt a liberal approach, as realists such as Kenneth Waltz suggested (38). The United States unilaterally and forcefully pushed democratization in the heightened post-9/11 threat environment (offensive liberalism), but adopted a more multilateral and cautious approach otherwise (defensive liberalism). Shifting global capabilities and an uncertain threat environment in the 2010s contributed to the emergence of the Donald Trump presidency and its unorthodox approach (226-227, 235-246). A continued rise of China implies a return to realist grand strategies (251-255).

Miller and Rubinovitz are generally fair in their presentation of the IR theories, though readers may disagree with specific points. The offensive liberal category is original and intuitive, providing a fit for neoconservatives and others that are difficult to place within a realist/liberal dichotomy. The model can also travel to other countries; for instance, replace liberalism with communism (12).[4]

Miller and Rubinovitz's own theory of grand strategic change is best characterized as neoclassical realist. Neoclassical realism privileges international systemic pressures as the main source of state behavior but insists that "those pressures must be

[1] For example, Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy," *International Security* 21:3 (Winter 1996/1997); Paul C. Avey, Jonathan N. Markowitz, and Robert J. Reardon, "Disentangling Grand Strategy: International Relations Theory and U.S. Grand Strategy," *Texas National Security Review* 2:1 (November 2018), 29-51.

[2] John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy During the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Colin Dueck, *Reluctant Crusaders: Power, Culture, and Change in American Grand Strategy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006); Hal Brands, *What Good is Grand Strategy? Power and Purpose in American Statecraft from Harry S. Truman to George W. Bush* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014).

[3] In addition to the works cited in note 2, see, for example, Colin Dueck, *The Obama Doctrine: American Grand Strategy Today* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Barry R. Posen, *Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press); John J. Mearsheimer, *The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018); G. John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathon: The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011); Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, *America Abroad: The United States' Global Role in the 21st Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[4] This is consistent with the broader use of liberal in Andrew Moravscik, "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics," *International Organization* 51:4 (Autumn 1997): 513-553.

translated through intervening variables at the unit level," as Gideon Rose noted.[5] At the system level Miller and Rubinovitz's explanation shares much with Stephen Walt's balance of threat theory. For Walt, threat includes "aggregate power, geographic proximity, offensive power, and aggressive intentions."[6] Miller and Rubinovitz focus on aggregate power and then disaggregate threat into "offensive power-projection capability … [and] perception of the opponent's aggressive intentions" as well as the "degree of proximity of the region to the most powerful opponent(s)" (40-41). While "threat" has different components, the four variables are largely the same. It is simply used to explain grand strategy instead of alliance decisions. At the domestic level, the U.S. liberal-democratic system explains its penchant for promoting democracy and free-markets. Thus, Miller and Rubinovitz's approach does not fit within their offensive/defensive realist/liberal typology. Those theories seek to explain general patterns, identifying how certain factors – be it power or institutions – make outcomes more or less likely. By contrast, Miller and Rubinovitz seek to explain why an administration adopts a realist or liberal approach. Put differently, they are interested in foreign policy outputs rather than international outcomes or whether a policy succeeds.

While incorporating insights from two "isms" and levels of analysis, they challenge constructivist and first image explanations. The authors do not deduce a constructivist grand strategy because constructivists' focus on identity and discourse lacks the content specificity of liberalism (24-25). In other words, saying that ideas are critical does not explain what policies follow. As an explanation for grand strategy selection and change, Miller and Rubinovitz turn ideational arguments on their head. For those approaches, material reality is consistent with multiple choices. Individual and social ideas/identity/discourse determines which get selected and constitute the meaning of material facts.[7] By contrast, Miller and Rubinovitz note there are many grand strategy ideas and "the international material environment works as the *selector* of ideas" (4, emphasis in original). Turning to the levels of analysis, there has been renewed attention to the importance of individuals.[8] The authors provide space for individuals' ideas to matter, particularly when they first enter office. Yet systemic pressures can override those preferences and even select leaders that espouse a specific grand strategy.

Miller and Rubinovitz define grand strategy as "a set of ideas (or theory) informing the overall approach that a state pursues to maximize its security and protect itself against actual or potential threats to its values" (267, note 1). Their approach thus fits what Nina Silove labels grand principles as well as grand plans because their focus is on ideas, sometimes articulated in key documents, implemented in a purposeful way.[9]

Miller and Rubinovitz note that they explain "key changes" even if they "cannot explain all the details of the strategy" (2). Realist approaches aim to affect the balance of capabilities whereas liberal strategies focus on ideology promotion (9). Defensive approaches tend to be multilateral, offensive approaches unilateral (or with informal coalitions). Defensive realists

[5] Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," *World Politics* 51:1 (October 1998): 144-172, 146.

[6] Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances Origins* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987): 22.

[7] Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, eds., *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), esp. chap. 1.; Jeffrey W. Legro, *Rethinking the World: Great Power Strategies and International Order* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005).

[8] Elizabeth N. Saunders, *Leaders at War: How Presidents Shape Military Interventions* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014); Michael C. Horowitz, Allan C. Stam, Cali M. Ellis, *Why Leaders Fight* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Rachel Elizabeth Whitlark, "Nuclear Beliefs: A Leader-Focused Theory of Counter-Proliferation," *Security Studies,* 26:4 (October-December 2017): 545-574.

[9] Nina Silove, "Beyond the Buzzword: The Three Meanings of Grand Strategy," *Security Studies* 27:1 (2018): 27-57.

are cautious and pursue arms control for stability; offensive realists the inverse (9-49, 59-60, 262). The concentration on major policy approaches within their framework is substantively and practically sensible.

Yet Miller and Rubinovitz provide little guidance on what constitutes key issues in a given moment or how to weigh policies that point in opposite directions. This complicates coding and creates an ad hoc quality at times.

A brief discussion of their Cold War narrative can illustrate the point (38, 57-58, 258-259). The United States pursued a defensive liberal approach until 1946-1947 and then shifted to a defensive realist approach as Soviet capabilities grew.[10] The Korean War heightened the Soviet threat which generated an era of offensive realism until 1962. The Cuban Missile Crisis shifted threat perceptions again, ushering in defensive realism that lasted until 1978-1979. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was critical in a return to offensive realism, reversed again by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's ascension as Soviet leader.

Major policy initiatives by successive U.S. leaders complicates the picture. To begin with, President Dwight Eisenhower sought to reduce the U.S. military presence in Europe and supported the emergence of Western Europe as an independent power. That contributed to nuclear sharing initiatives with U.S. allies, particularly West Germany.[11] Eisenhower's tenure saw no new major military interventions. Many U.S. covert regime change efforts to undermine Soviet power in Eastern Europe predated the shift to offensive realism, were ill-conceived and executed, and/or ended by 1956.[12] Eisenhower certainly oversaw a nuclear buildup, but there were as many major policies that cut in a defensive direction as an offensive one.

The inverse is true of the defensive realist/détente era that followed. Brendan Green shows that the Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford and, beginning in 1978, Jimmy Carter administrations sought to use arms control for competitive advantage.[13] The United States also continued – more successfully than often realized – investments in targeting critical elements of Soviet nuclear forces.[14] True, the United States, Soviet Union, and others negotiated the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Yet key components for the superpowers along the way included changes in U.S. nuclear policies with West Germany, deepening troop commitments to Europe, and heightened U.S. proliferation concerns following China's nuclear test.[15] These were at least partially discrete from decreasing perceptions of the Soviet threat or themselves contributed to changing Soviet

[10] On the shift from a relatively accommodating to confrontational approach see also Paul C. Avey, "Confronting Soviet Power: U.S. Policy during the Early Cold War," *International Security,* 36:4 (Spring 2012): 151-188.

[11] Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945-1963* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), esp. chap. 5; Brendan Rittenhouse Green, "Two Concepts of Liberty: U.S. Cold War Grand Strategies and the Liberal Tradition," *International Security,* 37:2 (Fall 2012): 23-31.

[12] Lindsey O'Rourke, *Covert Regime Change: America's Secret Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018). Miller and Rubinovitz note (82-84) that rollback had offensive liberal aspects, but weakening the opponent fits with offensive realism.

[13] Brendan Rittenhouse Green, *The Revolution that Failed: Nuclear Competition, Arms Control, and the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020). See also John D. Maurer, "The Purposes of Arms Control," *Texas National Security Review* 2:1 (November 2018): 9-27.

[14] Austin Long and Brendan Rittenhouse Green, "Stalking the Secure Second Strike: Intelligence, Counterforce, and Nuclear Strategy," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 38:1-2 (2015): 38-73; Green, *The Revolution that Failed*.

[15] Trachtenberg, chaps. 8-9; Green, "Two Concepts of Liberty," 31-37; Francis J. Gavin, *Nuclear Statecraft: History and Strategy in America's Atomic Age* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), chaps. 3-4; Paul C. Avey, "The Historical Rarity of Foreign-Deployed Nuclear Weapon Crises," *Security Studies* 27:1 (2018): 98-103; Nicholas L. Miller, *Stopping the Bomb: The Sources and Effectiveness of US Nonproliferation Policy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018), chap. 4.

behavior. During the height of détente, U.S. policy sought to push the Soviets out of the Middle East.[16] The Nixon Doctrine signaled reducing U.S. ground forces in Asia. A bigger geopolitical shift was the United States engaging China in part to take advantage of the Sino-Soviet rift.[17]

Miller and Rubinovitz show that the largest military engagement of this defensive realist period – Vietnam – was not a liberal policy (127-128). It's not clear, however, why it should not be coded as offensive realist. The authors argue that Vietnam was not aimed directly at the Soviet Union, and that progress on European stability and arms control were more central to U.S. grand strategy. The U.S. intervention in Vietnam shares much with their discussion of NSC 68's logic, though, which they argue encapsulates an offensive realist approach (58). Miller and Rubinovitz explain that critical to the logic of NSC 68 was the idea that "interests are indivisible. Thus, it is imperative to respond to any challenge even in the periphery—otherwise the US would eventually sacrifice vital interests." Within that framework "any communist victory appears as a US loss" (69, 72). Vietnam also meets their criteria of a unilateral use of force (9-10). In sum, U.S. policies outlined in the last paragraph and Vietnam suggest an offensive as much as a defensive approach.

As this is already a long review, I'll conclude with a few comments on Miller and Rubinovitz's assessment of the second president in the book's title. There is a lively discussion on H-Diplo/ISSF on precisely what to make of Trump's presidency.[18] Miller and Rubinovitz document differences between Trump and liberal and defensive realist approaches. Yet elements of Trump's approach—unilateralism, suspicion of arms control agreements, engagement with authoritarians, and increased military spending—overlap with the authors' presentation of offensive realism (10, 25-28, 32, 34-36, 60, 226-246, 262). Indeed, they label part of Trump's policies as "offensive realist," but then add that the "power maximization is done without the liberal content—thus he [Trump] completely departs from the liberal approaches, in fact, pursuing offensive illiberalism" (244).[19] Power maximization without liberal content is consistent with Miller and Rubinovitz's basic discussion of offensive realism, though.

To make the distinction, then, Miller and Rubinovitz highlight that Trumpism makes several identity and conspiratorial claims that realists (and liberals) disagree with (233-234). Disagreeing with those claims as individuals is independent from the IR theories as presented, however. Put another way, one can be appalled by Trump's ethnonationalist policies and lies about the 2020 U.S. election but find a theory about the effects of polarity or joint democracy to be of little help in explaining or providing a blueprint to contest those arguments. By contrast, IR theory may still be useful in understanding the Trump administration's grand strategy. To the extent that analysts reject labeling that grand strategy as offensive realist, it may reflect an unwillingness to accept the theory's power maximization implications that are discussed in the previous paragraph. Alternatively, it could stem from an idiosyncratic interpretation of parts of offensive realism by Miller and Rubinovitz or challenges in weighing competing policies.

In the end, Miller and Rubinovitz have provided a rich and thought-provoking analysis of the shape and sources of the last seventy-five years of U.S. grand strategy. By weaving together an impressive array of theory and history, their book enables

[16] Galen Jackson, "Who Killed Détente? The Superpowers and the Cold War in the Middle East, 1967-77," *International Security* 44:3 (Winter 2019/20): 129-162.

[17] Gaddis, 292-297; Brands, 70-71, 80-81

[18] H-Diplo|ISSF Donald Trump and the World Series, https://issforum.org/tag/trump. See also Robert Jervis, Francis J. Gavin, Joshua Rovner, and Diane N. Labrosse, eds., *Chaos in the Liberal Order: The Trump Presidency and International Politics in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018).

[19] See also Barry R. Posen, "The Rise of Illiberal Hegemony: Trump's Surprising Grand Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* 97:2 (March/April 2018): 20-27; Ionut Popescu, "American Grand Strategy and the Rise of Offensive Realism," *Political Science Quarterly* 134:3 (Fall 2019): 375-405.

scholars and analysts to assess what is unique to the U.S. approach and what it shares with states in similar international environments.

Review by Mariya Grinberg, Dartmouth College

In *Grand Strategy from Truman to Trump*, Benjamin Miller and Ziv Rubinovitz pose the question of why the grand strategy of a nation changes. More specifically, they examine why leaders abandon the grand strategic approaches on which they campaigned and with which they entered office. The model assumes that there is a vibrant domestic debate about the best grand strategy of the state, with four ideal stereotypical positions supported by different members of the government, key intellectuals, and the public. However, it is the international system that chooses the winner of the contest. The authors' main claim is that the grand strategy of the state responds to changes in the international distribution of power and the threat environment.

Each incoming administration initially formulates a grand strategy that is rooted in the belief system of the new leader and his key advisers. The changes in that grand strategy, according to Miller and Rubinovitz, occur when the leader perceives a change in the international environment. If the distribution of capabilities shifts towards parity between great powers, the strategy concentrates on competition between these states. On the other hand, if the balance of power shifts towards unipolarity, the strategy takes on an ideological tint. When the perceived threat level rises, the strategy becomes more predatory towards the threat. But when the threat level decreases, the strategy can become considerably more cooperative. The proposed framework is applicable to any state; however, the authors focus their work on analyzing changes in American grand strategy.

It is important to note that while this book adopts a standard definition of grand strategy (1, footnote 1), it takes it in a new direction. Conventionally, grand strategy is considered long-term in scope, operating for decades or longer.[1] The approach taken in this book is considerably more nuanced. Instead of attempting to define one grand strategy for the entire Cold War period or the entire unipolar period, the authors show shifts away from grand strategies that have been operating for just a few years. Particularly, the authors identify two moments of change in the initial five years of the Cold War, arguing that the rapid changes in the international environment forced President Truman to take several different approaches to conducting the Cold War (50). Additionally, the concept of grand strategy that is presented in this work is more reactive than in the conventional literature. While some works take the position that the grand strategy of major powers affects the balance of power – offshore balancing seeks to prevent hegemony,[2] liberal internationalism works to maintain hegemony,[3] primacy seeks to establish hegemony[4] – this approach sees grand strategy as reacting to changes in the international system. Threats materialize and the leaders of the United States change their "theory about how [they] can best cause security for [themselves]" to address them.[5]

A major contribution of this book is the typology distinguishing possible grand strategies into four ideal types: offensive realism, offensive liberalism, defensive realism, and defensive liberalism. The first dimension of the typology distinguishes

[1] Nina Silove, "Beyond the Buzzword: The Three Meanings of 'Grand Strategy,'" *Security Studies* 27:1 (January 2, 2018): 27-57, here 46. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2017.1360073.

[2] Christopher Layne, "From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing: America's Future Grand Strategy," *International Security* 22:1 (1997): 86–124. DOI: https://doi.org/10.2307/2539331.

[3] G. John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan: The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

[4] Hal Brands, "American Grand Strategy and the Liberal Order: Continuity, Change, and Options for the Future" (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2016), https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep02400.

[5] Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014): 13.

strategies based on the identified source of threat to the state (16-18). Strategies labeled 'realism' find threats in the capabilities of adversary states. Strategies labeled 'liberalism' find threats in the domestic character of adversary regimes. In the more general version of the typology liberalism can be replaced by any ideological commitments of the state. The second dimension of the typology distinguishes strategies based on the approach they take to ensuring state security (19-28). Offensive strategies favor the unilateral use of force, arms races, and regime change. Defensive strategies favor the multilateral use of force and only when absolutely necessary, arms control, and leading by example.

Based on these distinctions, the authors define four ideal types of grand strategy. A brief summary, which does not do the full typology justice, is as follows. An offensive realist grand strategy emphasizes the need to overwhelm the adversary state with superior capabilities (25). Defensive realism, on the other hand, focuses on reducing the risk of miscalculation between states through arms control (25-28). On the ideological side, offensive liberalism prioritizes the spread of liberal values at the edge of a knife, if need be (23). However, defensive liberalism helps regimes transform socio-politically and economically by means short of war (21-22).

In addition to the conceptual work, the authors trace the voices that supported each of the four approaches through debates over American grand strategy. They emphasize that ideas for changing the grand strategy never come out of a vacuum. In each empirical chapter the authors summarize the views of key contemporary intellectuals supporting each of the four approaches. This serves the important function of showing that while the support for the specific grand strategies increases and wanes over time, there are constantly debates between the proponents of each approach. However, the voices that promote a grand strategy that does not fit with the international situation are not chosen as the winners in the marketplace of ideas. The secondary benefit of showing the full range of ideas – not just focusing on the winning strategy – is that the authors demonstrate the evolution of thought in each of the four ideal types. A particular example that stood out was how the different proponents of the various grand strategies in the Kennedy administration incorporated nuclear weapons into their calculations (107-112). Additionally, the authors capture the development of ideas on ideological promotion from the rollback of Communist states in Eastern Europe (62-63), to linking human rights changes with security negotiations (136), to economic development (170-173), and to regime change (193-195).

In making this contribution, there are two insights that the authors hint at, but which could have been expounded upon further. First, the ideological dimension of the typology is meant to be applicable to any ideology, not just liberalism (9). Yet the authors do not provide an example of how the offensive and defensive variants of ideology promotion could work with an illiberal ideology. The crux of the problem is that the logic behind spreading liberal values rests in the democratic peace and the economic peace theories (19-22). Based on these theories, a liberal state can have some expectation of a more peaceful world when other states are liberal free trading democracies. However, would the same expectation of a more peaceful world hold for Communist or fascist states? Or to make it relevant to grand strategy today – would it hold for Chinese-style authoritarianism? History has shown us that authoritarian states do not have many qualms about fighting each other, which leads to the question of what the theory of security production behind an offensive authoritarian or a defensive authoritarian grand strategy would be?

Second, the authors could have done more to map existing grand strategies onto their typology. Some of this work exists in the empirical chapters where they go through alternative explanations. They place off-shore balancing in the defensive realism camp (53). Liberal internationalism belongs in the defensive liberalism camp (59). Primacy lives in the offensive realism camp (189). Restraint seems to be in the defensive realist camp, as well (232). Deep engagement is not mentioned, but it will likely be a defensive liberalism strategy. Isolationism, on the other hand, is much harder to place. Given that there are more defined grand strategies in the literature and current policy debates than there are ideal types in the typology, some existing grand strategies end up in the same box. How should readers of this book think about this? Are the distinctions in these grand strategies overstated or irrelevant? Or are they simply overshadowed by the two key dimensions in the typology?

Finally, the framework that links the international system to the choice of grand strategy raises a few important questions. The first set has to do with the causal links in the framework. Specifically, why is it that in unipolarity states change their grand strategies towards ideology promotion? The explanation in the book discusses hegemony as a permissive condition (38). In unipolarity, there is a lack of restraints on state action. Yet this simply provides an opportunity to engage in ideology

promotion, but doesn't explain what drives it. This is a particularly important question for this book due to its focus on change. Something about unipolarity needs to compel states to change how they perceive threats from looking at the state level to looking at the regime level. The implication of the argument as it stands in the book is that states are incapable of stopping the search for threats, even when they are relatively free of them. This, in turn raises some questions which will be addressed a bit later. Alternatively, if there isn't anything specific to unipolarity that causes a switch to liberalism other than that the restraints are finally off, this implies that states are always seeking to engage in ideology promotion. But this raises the question of how and why the system would stop them. If the world is indeed safer when a state is surrounded by likeminded states, why would parity in capabilities stop the export of ideology? To make the question more concrete, why did we not end up with half the world covered with democracies and half with Communist states during the Cold War? If it is safer to live among similar states, would that not have made the system safer for both super powers?

Another question about the causal links concerns why certain grand strategies are not chosen under specific systemic conditions. The authors provide a rationale that explains why in a high threat environment states might choose offensive strategies and in a relatively benign environment states might choose defensive strategies. But they do not explain why under those conditions states do not chose the opposite strategy. Specifically, if the threat level is low, why not go for the offense. If it is the case that states have all sorts of desires to change the world and it is only the system that is holding them back, wouldn't this restraint be lower when the threat level is low? Why not seize the opportunity? At the same time, when the threat level is high, why not choose a more defensive strategy? When threats are high, taking actions that will be interpreted as threatening by the opponent seems like throwing gasoline on the fire. If survival and security are the main objectives for a state, does this not seem a bit counterproductive?

The next set of questions has to do with the systemic conditions driving the choice of grand strategy. In order for a state to switch to a strategy of offensive liberalism, the distribution of capabilities has to be unipolar but the external threat environment has to be high. Conventionally, a unipolar state is "preponderant in all relevant categories of capability."[6] If the capabilities of other states are used to identify threats, it is hard to see how unipolarity can coexist with a high threat environment. If balance of threat theory is used instead, it is hard to see how an American unipole can coexist with a high threat environment as it does not have geographically close aggressively intentioned enemies.[7] It could be said that only realism assesses threats in this way and that liberalism does not. But this creates a problem. If someone were to assess the system as being both unipolar and having a high threat environment, they would have to come from a liberal point of view – simply because a realist point of view cannot come to the same conclusion about the systemic conditions. Similarly, for a state to switch to a defensive realist strategy there needs to be parity in the balance of power and a relatively low threat environment. The offensive realist world view, according to this book, assesses intentions from capabilities (17). This means that parity in the balance of power always comes with a high level of threat. The same problem appears again; for a leader to perceive the system as both in bipolarity and in a low threat environment, the leader cannot be coming from an offensive realist world view. This suggests that leaders perceive the distribution of power and that they perceive the threat level – these factors are not objective measures of the international system. But if the system does not have objective markers for leaders to read, it is not the system that determines the changes in the grand strategy – it is the leaders who interpret the system in a specific way to make a certain grand strategy seem most appropriate. The puzzle then becomes why leaders interpret the system in the way that causes a change in grand strategy.

The final question concerns the initial choices for a grand strategy of incoming administrations. The framework allows for newly elected leaders to form their initial grand strategy based on their own preferences, even when these grand strategies are incompatible with the systemic conditions prevalent at the moment. For example, President Jimmy Carter began his term with a defensive liberal grand strategy when the systemic conditions pointed to a defensive realist grand strategy (136-142). Likewise, President George W. Bush preferred a defensive realist grand strategy when the systemic conditions suggested a

[6] Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, *World Out of Balance: International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 13.

[7] Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013).

defensive liberal one instead (186-188). But if the systemic conditions guide changes in grand strategies, why did these leaders not amend their preferred grand strategies to the ones more suited to the systemic conditions immediately upon entering office? It seems plausible that before entering the White House, these incoming leaders did not have access to key information and therefore developed inaccurate opinions about the system. But why did their initial grand strategic choices persist after the start of their administrations? Why did it take a shock in the international system before they adapted their choices to those that were more suitable to the international environment? Phrased differently, why does the system condition changes to grand strategy only in the middle of administrations and not at the start?

In sum, this book tackles a very difficult task – understanding change. The authors not only show the different changes that occurred in American grand strategy, they point to instances of change where we have previously assumed continuity. This sets us on the road to understanding how these changes occur and allows us to have some sense of how to anticipate them in the future.

Review by Ionut Popescu, Texas State University

The study of American grand strategy has elicited significant interest from scholars and commentators alike since at least the end of the Cold War in 1989, with many authors vying unsuccessfully for the so-called "Kennan sweepstakes" prize of laying out the contours of a new approach guiding U.S. foreign policy in the twenty-first century.[1] Benjamin Miller with Ziv Rubinovitz's book is refreshingly and admirably focused on offering a rigorous theoretical explanation of why grand strategy changes, rather than yet another book recommending a 'new course' for Washington's path in the decades to come.

Grand Strategy from Truman to Trump is one of the most carefully crafted political science studies of this topic to come out in a while, at least when it comes to the authors' efforts to apply the concepts of IR theory to the broad and often vaguely defined scholarship on American grand strategy. Almost to a fault, the authors provide over a dozen tables coding a variety of issues such as the similarities and differences among grand strategy paradigms, policymakers' perceptions of threats, or different balance of power configurations. The main strength of the book, therefore, lies in this effort to bring theoretical rigor to the study of grand strategy. Having said that, I will focus in the rest of this essay on four shortcomings of the book where I believe the authors' arguments are less than persuasive.

First, the book begins with a seemingly straightforward puzzle, yet one that is based on an understanding of "grand strategy" that is quite peculiar. The author's simple question, "why does the Unites States adopt a certain grand strategy in a certain period, and why does it switch from one strategy to another?"(p.1) inherently implies something that scholars of American grand strategy actually disagree about quite vehemently, i.e. the existence of clearly defined grand strategies that change on a regular basis. In other words, the first and most surprising assumption made by this book is that in the post-1945 era Washington leaders selected a grand strategy and implemented different grand strategies on at least eight separate occasions, with Trump's America First a potential ninth (Appendix, Table A2). In the authors' view, it seems useful to define certain patterns of behavior and associated plans and speeches during a period of time which can be as short as three years as a new "grand strategy," and they proceed to code every such foreign policy shift as a change from one paradigm to another. Most of the scholarship tends to think of grand strategies as requiring much longer time horizons; the long-term focus of it is often one of the defining characteristics of a grand strategy.[2] The nineteenth-century Monroe Doctrine or Cold-War Era containment are the two classical examples in the U.S. diplomatic history genre, with some recent scholarship even extending the duration of Cold-War containment into a longer "Global leadership of a liberal world order" paradigm stretching from 1945 to 2016.[3]

While I am sympathetic with the authors' instincts and judgements that there were was more than one paradigm dominating U.S. foreign policy between 1945-1989, and that despite many arguments to the contrary, one could even find some evidence for the existence of U.S. grand strategy after the Cold War, I nevertheless feel as though there needs to be

[1] See for example, Christopher Layne, "From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing: America's Future Grand Strategy," *International Security* 22:1 (1997): 86-124; Richard N. Haass, "Paradigm Lost," *Foreign Affairs* 7:1 (1995): 43-58; Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, and William C. Wohlforth, "Don't Come Home, America: The Case against Retrenchment," *International Security* 37:3 (2013): 7-51.

[2] Paul Kennedy, *Grand Strategies in War and Peace* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

[3] John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of* Containment, Rev. Ed (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Walter McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State* (New York: Mariner Books, 1998); Hal Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy? Power and Purpose in American Statecraft from Harry S. Truman to George W. Bush* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014); John Ikenberry, *A World Safe for Democracy: Liberal Internationalism and the Crises of Global Order* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020); Rebecca Lissner and Mira Rapp-Hooper, *Open World: How America Can Win the Contest for Twenty-First-Century Order* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020); John Mearsheimer, *Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities* (New Haven: Yale, 2018); Robert Kagan, *The World America Made* (New York: Vintage: 2013);

some clear separation between small adjustments to an overall initial grand strategy, and wholesale change of the basic principles of said grand strategy. Moreover, one needs to account for actions that do not fit a particular administration's grand strategy and hence it must be at least theoretically possible that a bureaucratic politics model of decision-making best explains some periods of time; hence, the lack of any grand strategy must also be part of the model.[4] One way to incorporate these possibilities is to rely on the *emergent strategy* literature, as I have done in my own work, in order to separate planned grand strategy from emergent strategic shifts, for example. [5] I am sure there are other ways to account for the incremental changes in grand strategy theoretically, but the decision made by the authors to code every change as a new grand strategy doesn't seem quite as convincing to me.

Second, the systemic model proposed by the authors to explain these changes in grand strategy has some problems both in terms of its own internal theoretical coherence, and also in how it compares in terms of explanatory power with the literature on U.S. grands strategy more broadly. At the core of the book lies the proposition that the interaction of two systemic conditions/variables (the global distribution of capabilities coded as either hegemonic or great power parity, and the degree of external threat coded as either high or benign) helps explain the dominance one of four ideal grand strategy types. The author offers offensive liberalism, defensive liberalism, offensive realism and defensive liberalism as the four possible grand strategic paradigms available to US policymakers (38). There are several theoretically confusing (or at least not helpful) issues with this "two-by-two" classification. The distinction between realist and liberal approaches to U.S. grand strategy is well established, and the authors are persuasive that within each camp one could find offensive-minded and defensive-minded scholars, but when one goes one step further and maps some of the most well-known figures in U.S. grand strategy debates, or influential policymakers for that matter, this model seems to needlessly muddle an already convoluted grand strategic literature, as described in the next paragraph.

For example, the offensive liberal category that the authors claim advocates for imposed democratization including by the use of force does not fit any of the current strands of literature I am aware of other than in media caricatures of Bush-era 'neoconservatives.' I also find the three examples offered in the book (Germany, Japan, Iraq in 2003) unpersuasive in making the point such a school of thought exists. Those three cases followed wars that were conducted for reasons not having much to do with democracy promotion (defeating Adolf Hitler's quest for world dominance, responding to Imperial Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, and removing Saddam Hussein's misperceived nuclear threat). As for the 2003 War in Iraq, this book spends too much time and effort on this war and the issue of regime change, something I see as unwarranted in a book about U.S. grand strategy given the unique circumstances of that unfortunate conflict, and the fact that "armed regime change" is for all practical purposes gone from the range of strategies that Washington leaders contemplated following the fiasco in Iraq and the only marginally better outcome in Afghanistan. This misguided focus on regime change also leads to authors to make another unusual theoretical argument, that offensive realists favor "democracy removal" (36). As systemic theorists, offensive realists like John Mearsheimer do not have a preference for the internal form of government of states, and given their focus on great power politics I find it odd to think of offensive realists as looking favorably upon such risky adventures (considering that such operations in peripheral theaters distract from a focus on Great Power Competition).[6]

Third, another problem with the model lies in assuming that the United States is a liberal power generally looking to spread liberalism abroad where possible, given a permissive international environment. Since this is a rather common assumption in the literature, the authors are not necessarily outside the mainstream in making it, but nevertheless I think this book would have benefited from engaging more with some recent arguments that in one way or another challenge this assumption. Colin

[4] For more on the so-called "garbage can" model of decision-making based on bureaucratic politics, see Stephen Krasner, "The Garbage Framework for Policy Planning," in Daniel W. Drezner, ed. *Avoiding Trivia*, (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2009): 159-172.

[5] For more on emergent strategy, see Ionut Popescu, *Emergent Strategy and Grand Strategy: How American Presidents Succeed in Foreign Policy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017).

[6] Mearsheimer, *Grand Delusion*.

Dueck's recent book *Age of Iron: On Conservative Nationalism* and Henry Nau's *Conservative Internationalism*, for example, offer two excellent arguments detailing long-standing conservative as opposed to liberal ideological traditions in U.S. foreign policy.[7] Most relevant given the recent Trump era, Walter Russel Mead's description of four schools of US foreign policy (Jeffersonian, Jacksonian, Hamiltonian and Wilsonian) in *Special Providence* could have provided the authors of this book with a much better answer to their apparent puzzlement at the end that Trump didn't fit in any of the four categories.[8] The Wilsonian and partly Jeffersonian schools have liberal ideological tendencies, although in the modern context most Jeffersonian have a lot more in common with defensive realists and hence are found in the *Restraint* school.[9] Meanwhile, the usual rivals of the restrainers, the *Deep Engagement* advocates such as G. John Ikenberry, William Wohlforth, Stephen Brooks, Hal Brands and others draw on a mix Hamiltonian and Wilsonian traditions.[10] Neither of these two approaches, or more recent alternatives such as the *Open World* approach proposed by Rebecca Lissner and Mira Rapp-Hopper, can be easily fit in the realist/liberal and offensive/defensive approach, which is unfortunate because it precludes this book from making an even more useful contribution to advancing the US grand strategy literature.[11] All that is to say that while ideology does have a role in U.S. grand strategy, it is not always or predominantly liberal, and it doesn't fit well with the two-by-two model adopted in this book.

Fourth, as we look at the present and future of US grand strategy in the Biden administration and beyond, the model proposed in this book actually poses an interesting dilemma. By the end of the Trump administration, and whatever the convoluted path that administration may have taken to get there, it is quite clear that its most significant legacy was instituting Great Power Competition (GPC) as the grand strategic framework guiding the government's national security apparatus, with a confrontational approach towards containing China's rise as the main priority.[12] If we assume that an era of bipolarity or multipolarity describes our security environment accurately, the model expects either offensive or defensive realism to prevail, based on the level of threat. Seemingly the Trump administration regarded that level as high, and hence their offensive realist orientation.[13] The new Biden administration, however, appears to have shifted in a liberal internationalist direction based on its priorities and preferences, including raising the fight against climate change and global pandemics to the first tier of national security priorities, and framing the competition with China increasingly as an ideological conflict between democracy and authoritarianism.[14] The new administration also reinforced U.S. desire to

[7] Colin Dueck, *Age of Iron: On Conservative Nationalism,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019); Henry Nau, *Conservative Internationalism: Armed Diplomacy under Jefferson, Polk, Truman, and Reagan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015).

[8] Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How it Changed the World* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

[9] Barry R. Posen, *Restraint: A New Foundation for US Grand Strategy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).

[10] Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, and William C. Wohlforth, "Don't Come Home, America: The Case against Retrenchment," *International Security* 37:3 (Winter 2012-2013): 7-51; Stephen Brooks and William Wohlforth, *America Abroad: The United States' Global Role in the 21st Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016); Hal Brands, *American Grand Strategy in the Age of Trump* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2018).

[11] Lissner and Rapp-Hooper, *Open World.*

[12] Elbridge Colby and Wess Mitchell, "Age of Great Power Competition," *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 2020): 23-33.

[13] Ionut Popescu, "American Grand Strategy and the Rise of Offensive Realism," *Political Science Quarterly* 134:3, Fall 2019: 375-405.

[14] William Mauldin, "Biden Defends Democracy at Summits With European Allies, Seeing China as 'Stiff' Competition," *Wall Street Journal,* February 19, 2020, https://www.wsj.com/articles/biden-defends-essential-democracy-amid-chinas-rise-at-summits-with-

engage in arms control by extending START and rejoined a number of global treaties like the Paris Agreement. Therefore, despite the lack of a change in systemic conditions from 2020 to 2021, the U.S. seems to be shifting its grand strategic orientation from offensive realism to one of the two types of liberalism, whether offensive or defensive it's hard to say so far. This development points to the difficulty of defining the "level of threat" as a systemic variable, given the subjectivity involved in making this assessment, and that is something that future theorizing on grand strategy changes need to take more into account. More broadly, it shows that the model itself need further refining to explain changes in grand strategic orientation of US administrations.

european-allies-11613753396; Hal Brand and Zack Cooper, "US-Chinese Rivalry is a Battle Over Values," *Foreign Affairs* online, March 16, 2021, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-03-16/us-china-rivalry-battle-over-values. For China's reaction to this ideological framing of the conflict, see Steven Lee Meyers, "An Alliance of Autocracies? China Wants to Lead a New World Order," *New York Times,* March 29, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/29/world/asia/china-us-russia.html.

Review by Hilde Eliassen Restad, Oslo New University College

Authors Benjamin Miller and Ziv Rubinovitz have produced an engaging, stimulating, and theoretically novel book that I recommend to anyone interested in the study of grand strategy. The main question of the book is, "How do we account for variations and shifts in US grand strategy?" The premise is that since 1945, U.S. grand strategy has displayed more variation than other scholars allow for (2). The argument is that U.S. grand strategy varies between four ideal types (offensive realism, defensive realism, defensive liberalism, and offensive liberalism) and that two systemic forces broker the competition between these four strategies: the distribution of capabilities and the balance of threat (4). According to the authors, we know that systemic forces shape grand strategy because of "the variations between the initial views in the White House about the grand strategy and the eventual major changes that take place in this strategy" (247).

Specifically, the authors identify two causal chains (5): First, as a new administration takes office, it will be initially guided by the belief systems of the key decision makers. Yet major changes in the international system may compel the administration to change its initial foreign policy inclinations in order to adapt to the new threats/opportunities coming from a changed international environment. Examples include President Jimmy Carter's change to a more hawkish strategy toward the end of this term (chapter 5), and President Ronald Reagan's opposite change after Mikhail Gorbachev came into power in the Soviet Union (chapter 6). Second, systemic factors help determine the outcome of domestic battles among advocates of competing strategies. One mechanism for this can be elections (for example, the presidential election campaign of 1980 between Carter and Reagan) or the changing international environment between elections (such as the terror attacks on September 11, 2001, which are tackled in chapter 8).

The contribution of the book, according to its authors, consists of its introducing a new classification of competing grand strategies; presenting a novel and parsimonious theoretical model that accounts for the changes in grad strategy and examining this model by empirical evidence; and contributing to the IR debates over level-of-analysis and the explanatory power of material vs. ideational theories (37). In terms of theory development, their contribution is important and highly welcome. It allows for the interplay of material and ideational factors, on both the international and the domestic/individual level, introducing nuance and a certain degree of "analytic eclecticism."[1] They usefully separate between realist explanations based on material factors (independent variable) and Realpolitik policy prescriptions (dependent variable), a helpful passage that I will use in my classroom, as students have a hard time grasping this. The authors should therefore be lauded for lending "careful attention to processes that cut across different levels of analysis and transcend the divide presumed to exist between observable material factors and unobservable cognitive or ideational ones."[2]

In terms of contribution to the specific study of U.S. grand strategy, they argue that there are more variations in U.S. grand strategy since 1945 than other works allow for, and that their approach can explain these variations. Introducing nuance is welcome, and they are right to question the sweeping characterizations other authors have made about vast periods of U.S. foreign policy.[3] More nuance is needed, however in their treatment of the United States as a 'liberal power' and in the classification of the four grand strategies. I will focus the rest of the review on these two points.

[1] Rudra Sil and Peter J. Katzenstein, *Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics: Reconfiguring Problems and Mechanisms across Research Traditions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

[2] Sil and Katzenstein, 21.

[3] For instance, the term "liberal internationalism" is a common way of characterizing post-World War II U.S. grand strategy or overall foreign policy tradition (depending on how one defines these concepts), but it is a term that arguably obscures as much as it enlightens. See for example Charles A. Kupchan, *Isolationism. A History of America's Efforts to Shield Itself from the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

First, what is 'liberalism'? How do the authors define this important concept, and approach the extensive debate on what kinds of ideas have influenced U.S. foreign policy at various times? The answer is that they largely do not, given that creating a parsimonious theory entails certain trade-offs. They briefly state that defensive and offensive liberalism correspond to "exemplarism" and "vindicationism" (11) but do not engage any further in what is perhaps one of the biggest debates over U.S. foreign policy traditions and ideas.[4] The term liberal is only treated to a few pages of explanation (20-21). It is therefore unclear what they mean when they categorize the United States as a "liberal great power" (8) and what other great powers may qualify – or not. Are they basing their version of liberalism on a kind of Hartzian hegemonic liberalism?[5] In this view, the United States was a classic Lockean society, in which citizens were "born equal," without feudalism and with a fervent belief in individual opportunity and market economics; and therefore without any competing ideological traditions.[6] Of course, Hartzian liberalism is deeply flawed. As James Morone wrote in his critical review of Hartz, fifty years after the publication of *A Liberal Tradition in America*, "the liberal consensus is weakly rooted in American history. It overlooks the great American culture conflicts over race, gender, ethnicity, and religion."[7] The murky content of 'liberalism' in the book explains why the authors have a difficult time making sense of President Woodrow Wilson, who "exhibited a duality between 'liberal internationalism' (his term for 'defensive liberalism') and 'liberal imperialism' (corresponding to 'offensive liberalism')" (20) in the initial stages of his administration, but then manifested strong offensive liberal tendencies in the numerous interventions in Latin America. Here, one might imagine the avid intervention in Latin American countries to have something to do with a racialized view of states. Wilson did say, after all, that he was going to teach the Latin American republics to elect good men. Wilson's work on the League of Nations also produced a hierarchy of mandate states based on their levels of civilization.[8] In order to correctly understand Wilsonianism, a racialized view of states, peoples, and "civilizations" is as important as a generic kind of "liberalism."

Take a different historical era. The rhetoric employed by the George W. Bush administration during the war on terror tells us that something more than a generic liberalism was at work. Invading Iraq was not seen as a necessary, but evil, war. Whereas the rhetoric of another liberal power – that of Great Britain - on why it was fighting in Iraq conformed to the principles of just war theory, Bush's rhetoric conformed to the principles of a holy war.[9] This points to the fact that in the U.S. context, its liberalism is infused with certain assumptions about itself that perhaps differs slightly from other great powers. The war on terror could be understood as one of Morone's periodic "illiberal deliriums reaching back to the early seventeenth century," which center on "great American fears" focused on "images of gender, race, and aliens."[10] In other words, a deeper engagement with what an American 'liberal' tradition looks like would enhance our understanding of how American policymakers see the world, define threats, and filter material factors through this prism.

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[4] Here, I am referring to the debate over what American exceptionalism is; whether it comes in two variants; and how (if at all) such ideas have influenced US foreign policy through time. For a review of this debate, see Hilde Eliassen Restad, chapter 2: "Challenging the Identity Dichotomy," in Hilde Restad, *American Exceptionalism: An Idea that Made a Nation and Remade the World* (New York: Routledge, 2014): 27-55.

[5] Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1955).

[6] Hartz, 5.

[7] James Morone, "Storybook Truths about America," *Studies in American Political Development*, 19 (Fall 2005): 216-226, here 220.

[8] Michael Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea, 1815-Present* (New York: Penguin Books, 2012): 169.

[9] Susan Brewer, *Why America Fights: Patriotism and War Propaganda from the Philippines to Iraq* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[10] Morone, 219.

In conclusion, not grappling with the sources and content of which ideas make up – or contend for pride of place in – the category of 'liberalism' weakens the book' analytical purchase.

Second, the classification of grand strategies is not as clear-cut as the authors propose. They argue that all states will be offensive or defensive in their approach (the method), and the goals will be defined either by Realpolitik or that state's idiosyncratic ideology. Yet it is not entirely clear why the authors assume that a strategy will be either offensive and unilateral, or defensive and multilateral. Why can't a grand strategy be defensive and unilateral, and offensive and multilateral? I will illustrate this question by discussing how to define multilateralism, and how to classify the post-Cold War period.

According to the authors, defensive liberalism means that "strong limitations should apply to U.S. unilateralism" (19) whereas offensive liberals "doubt the effectiveness of international institutions in the absence of strong US hegemonic leadership" (20). But based on this, most U.S. grand strategy in the twentieth century has been offensive liberalist. More foundationally, would U.S. membership in the League of Nations and the United Nations count equally as engaging in defensive liberalism? What about the significant differences between the two organizations, and their implications for U.S. sovereignty?[11]

The answer to these questions depends on how one defines multilateralism. Is multilateralism a procedural activity, or a norm that signals deeper identity commitments on the part of the states engaging in this norm? The authors rightly reject nominal multilateralism, which would be the mere coordination of policies between three or more states and is not a high bar to clear.[12] According to John G. Ruggie, a more interesting concept is substantive multilateralism, which coordinates national policies "on the basis of certain principles of ordering relations among those states."[13] These principles are indivisibility, generalized rules of conduct, and diffuse reciprocity. G. John Ikenberry argues that multilateralism can be categorized based on what level of international order it operates: system multilateralism, ordering or foundational multilateralism, and contract multilateralism.[14] The authors seem mainly interested in whether actions are multilateral on the contract level, such as uses of force and arms control. In terms of uses of force, however, how would the authors define all the military interventions that the United States has conducted since 1945? To qualify as truly multilateral," the authors write,

> … it is necessary for a coalition not to be only a 'coalition of the willing' (that is, a coalition that follows the hegemon's lead), but to be able to impose institutional constraints on the hegemon's freedom of action (9).

What does this mean, specifically? They argue that working within the institutional constraints of the United Nations Security Council or NATO would qualify as "truly multilateral" (9). One could imagine a more detailed set of requirements, such as those utilized by Sarah Kreps.[15] Combining measures of procedural multilateralism (where a UN authorization would be the highest attainable IO sanction, but sanction from a regional organization could also be legitimate) with measures of operational multilateralism, Kreps argued that of the eighteen U.S. military interventions undertaken between 1945 and 2004, half of them were completely unilateral (Lebanon 1958; Dominican Republic 1965; Vietnam 1965;

[11] For more on this, see Restad, 153-194.

[12] For more on this definitional debate, on which the following discussion is based, see Restad, 111-117.

[13] John Gerard Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 106.

[14] G. John Ikenberry, "Is American Multilateralism in Decline?" *Perspectives on Politics,* 1:3 (2003): 533-550 here, 534.

[15] Sarah E. Kreps, "Multilateral Military Interventions: Theory and Practice," *Political Science Quarterly* 123:4 (2008-2009): 573-603.

Grenada 1983; Libya 1986; Panama 1989; Afghanistan/Sudan 1998; Iraq 1998; Iraq 2003), four were completely multilateral (Iraq 1990–1991; Bosnia 1993–1995; Kosovo 1999; Haiti 2004); another four were procedurally multilateral (Korea 1950; Somalia 1992–1993; Haiti 1994; Afghanistan 2001); and Lebanon 1982–1984 was operationally multilateral. There's no corresponding overview in the book under review and several interventions are not discussed, such as the interventions in Lebanon'58/'82, the Dominican Republic'65, Grenada'83, Libya'86, and Panama'89. This makes it difficult to assess how the authors' definitions of multilateral military intervention would correspond to others' classifications.

Focusing mostly on uses of force also obscures the deeper issue of what Ikenberry labeled ordering or foundational multilateralism. According to the authors, the George H. W. Bush administration's grand strategy went from defensive realism to defensive liberalism. And indeed, Bush's National Security Directive (NSD) 74 in November 1992 – the first policy statement since the Truman Administration advocating active U.S. support for UN peacekeeping missions – seemed to suggest a new commitment to multilateralism. But what would have happened if the UN and the United States disagreed? What if, for instance, the UN had not agreed with the U.S. assessment of the threat from Iraq? The memoir of Bush and his national security advisor, Brent Scowcroft, testify to a rather shaky commitment to ordering multilateralism as well as to contract multilateralism:

> While we had sought United Nations support from the outset of the crisis, it had been as part of our efforts to forge an international consensus, not because we thought we required its mandate. The UN provided an added cloak of political power. Never did we think that without its blessing we could or would not intervene.[16]

What, then, if Beijing or Moscow had decided to veto Resolution 678, which authorized the eventual military intervention against Iraq? Bush and Scowcroft explain that they:

> . . . would ask the council to act only if we knew in advance we had the backing of most of the Arab block and we were fairly certain we had the necessary votes. If at any point it became clear we would not succeed, we would back away from a UN mandate and cobble together an independent multinational effort built on friendly Arab and allied participation.[17]

This sounds a lot like what happened in 2003. Indeed, in December 1989, President Bush had not been very concerned with multilateralism on any of Ikenberry's three levels when intervening in Panama. As such, the line drawn between a defensive or offensively liberal strategy seems weak because of the administrations' tenuous commitment to multilateralism at the ordering level.

In chapter 7, the authors label the Clinton administration's grand strategy as defensive liberalism. I would argue that the Clinton grand strategy is probably better understood as an offensive, yet largely multilateral, approach. Certainly the United States was perceived as an offensive "hyper power" at the time. Buying into the interpretation of the end of the Cold War as the "end of [ideological] history,"[18] American policymakers could not imagine anyone fearing this "benevolent hegemon"[19] – the United States merely wanted freedom and liberty for all. Who could object? Lots of states, it turned out, to such a degree that at the end of the 1990s, Samuel P. Huntington labeled the United States the "lonely superpower." The United States was resented across the globe for its "intrusive, interventionist, exploitative, unilateralist, hegemonic, hypocritical"

[16] George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998): 416. See also Restad, 199-201.

[17] Bush and Scowcroft, 356.

[18] Fukuyama, "The End of History?" *The National Interest,* 6 (1989).

[19] William Kristol and Robert Kagan, "Toward a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 75:4 (1996): 18-33.

behavior.[20] As a British diplomat told Huntington: "One reads about the world's desire for American leadership only in the United States. Everywhere else one reads about American arrogance and unilateralism."[21] Indeed, it's possible to argue that what the authors characterize as the multilateral approach of the Clinton administration was not so different from the unilateralism of the George W. Bush administration; it was just dressed up in (much) nicer diplomatic garb. Both Clinton and Bush aimed at maintaining primacy, and would have resorted to unilateralism if needed.

In conclusion, while leaving more to be desired in terms of analyzing American foreign policy ideas and traditions, I commend this book for its analytic eclecticism and its innovative theory of great power grand strategy.

[20] Samuel P. Huntington, "The Lonely Superpower," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 1999): 35-50 here 43.

[21] Huntington, 42.

Response by Benjamin Miller and Ziv Rubinovitz, The University of Haifa

We would like to thank the four reviewers – Paul C. Avey, Mariya Grinberg, Ionut Popescu, and Hilde Eliassen Restad – and Peter Dombrowski, who wrote the introduction, for their insightful and very useful comments; we would also like to thank Andrew Szarejko for setting up such an excellent roundtable. We very much appreciate the time and attention they devoted to the book.

Before we address the various points raised by the reviewers, we will present the core argument of the book as we see it.

In accounting for the puzzle of variations and changes in US grand strategy, this book proposes a theoretical model for explaining great-power choices on grand strategy. The model is in principle applicable to any great power, but in this study it is applied specifically to all the key changes in the grand strategy of the United States, the key player in the international system since 1945 until today. The model makes the following arguments. First, we distinguish among four possible ideal-type great power grand strategies or approaches to security, according to the objectives and the means of security policy advanced by each approach. The grand strategies are offensive and defensive realism and offensive and defensive ideology-promotion. In the case of the United States, these approaches are offensive realism, defensive realism, defensive liberalism, and offensive liberalism.

In the case of illiberal powers, the ideology-promotion approaches will not be liberal; their content will be shaped according to the great power's ideology.

These approaches—both the realist and the ideology-promotion ones-- are sets of ideas shared by policy makers about how to maximize their state's security, and thus they are an ideational factor. Most of the contending approaches to security have been present in most US administrations, or at least in the influential foreign policy community. Their continuous presence under the same liberal political culture indicates that culture by itself does not determine the nature of US grand strategy. There are often domestic debates within the US administration or in the policy community over the "correct" approach to security. However, one approach usually emerges as the dominant one in a given period (which does not mean that the others fade away). The changes in the relative dominance of the four ideational approaches to security—the grand strategies—are the dependent variables, or the outcomes to be explained, of this study.

The second step of the argument addresses the question of what causal factors, or independent variables, determine which one of these contending approaches to security will win in the domestic debate and emerge as the grand strategy that a great power, or specifically the United States, pursues at a given time. Rather than arguing that the outcome of the debate depends on such domestic-ideational factors as the vagaries of domestic politics or leaders' beliefs, we advance a material-systemic explanation of US grand strategy. Namely, we argue that international systemic factors broker between competing ideas. In other words, the international material environment works as the *selector* of ideas, and it determines which approach to security is likely to emerge as the winner and dominate US security policy in a certain period. The two systemic factors are the distribution of power in the international system and the degree of external threat faced by the United States. Various combinations of these systemic factors are conducive to the emergence and dominance of various grand strategies, and changes in these systemic factors lead to changes in US grand strategy over time. This does not imply that any security strategy is correct in any circumstance, only that given a certain combination of systemic factors, it is likely to prove more attractive to the policy makers.

The model combines systemic-material and domestic-ideational factors in an integrated theoretical framework. Namely, while the ideational factors (the four contending approaches to security) are the dependent variables, the ultimate selection among them is made by the systemic conditions, and therefore it is these conditions that are the basic explanatory factors. Domestic politics and leaders' beliefs play a more limited, though still important, role as intervening variables which translate the systemic effects into the grand strategy.

The various chapters apply the model to all the key changes in US grand strategy from presidents Harry S. Truman to Donald Trump.

In terms of the points raised by the reviewers in the round-table, on the whole, they raise four major subjects: the typology of the four grand strategies; the explanatory model; some of the empirical cases: and finally, what looks like the emerging grand strategy of President Joe Biden's administration.

The Grand-Strategy Typology

This subject triggered quite a few comments: some specific and a few more general. Popescu raises an issue with offensive realism: do we argue that this grand strategy is in favor of democracy removal? Actually, we do not make that argument. We don't suggest that offensive realism prefers to remove democracy; we only suggest that offensive realists can potentially tolerate such actions in some cases of national security threats. The logic of offensive realism is that the great power advances its material national security interests irrespective of ideological considerations. Thus, according to this approach, the great power could under certain conditions engage in removing a democratic regime, even if the great power itself was a democracy—in case the removed regime seemed hostile to the great power and to its material interests and could potentially join the rival camp. Instead, the democratic great power could install a friendlier authoritarian regime contributing to its power and security. A somewhat weaker version of this logic leads to supporting an existing allied authoritarian regime, especially when it has strategic and economic importance, and avoiding exerting pressures on it to democratize and to protect human rights irrespective of its abusive behavior.

Empirical examples include Iran (1953), Guatemala (1954) and Chile (1973). These are cases of a US strategy of democracy-removal in accordance with its realpolitik interests in the framework of the Cold-War competition. US policy toward the Arab and Muslim world, especially Saudi Arabia and Egypt (also Pakistan during some periods and Iran under the Shah) fits the weaker version of supporting friendly authoritarian governments already in power and avoiding exerting pressures on them to democratize, despite their major human rights abuses– as long as they continue to serve US strategic interests-- such as supplying oil in affordable price and making peace with Israel which would stabilize the region (35-36).

The reviewers also raise some questions about the non-realist grand strategies, more specifically about liberalism. Popescu asks whether liberalism is the dominant ideology in the US while recent authors such as Colin Dueck and Henry R. Nau highlight the influence of conservatism.[77] Yet, the mainstream view is that liberalism is the leading set of beliefs and ideas in the US, including with regard to foreign affairs. Actually, according to Nau, his international conservatism highlights some key beliefs which are shared with liberals such as political and economic freedom.[78] Specifically, when we talk about the influence of liberalism on foreign policy, we refer to support for democracy, human rights, economic interdependence, free trade and international institutions. Even if not always dominating US behavior abroad—as we show in the book with regard to the dominance of realism during the Cold War—these positions are commonly viewed as guiding principles of US international behavior, at least until the age of Trump, but surely again in the age of Biden. The book's contribution is to show under what conditions these beliefs actually constitute a grand strategy. In this respect our argument is that this is more likely to happen under US hegemony, while great power parity compels the US to follow the realist logic when confronting great-power competitors.

Restad challenges us on some basic issues of the US and liberalism: she argues that more nuance is needed regarding the US as a liberal country, while citing the case of President Woodrow Wilson. The latter symbolizes the liberal school of US

[77] Colin Dueck, *Age of Iron: On Conservative Nationalism (*New York: Oxford University Press, 2020); Henry R. Nau, *Conservative Internationalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).

[78] Nau, *Conservative Internationalism*: 11-38.

foreign policy.[79] Yet, Restad highlights some of the illiberal elements in his policy toward Latin America and the US interventions there as well as Wilson's racism, which recently received much attention in the United States. These are serious concerns, though we rely on the conventional view of the US as liberal. Our key point is that its liberal character didn't prevent the US from following realpolitik during the Cold War, but that the liberal elements were powerful enough to inform the grand strategy when the opportunity came with the transition to unipolarity after the end of the Cold War. We agree that a deeper engagement with the American liberal tradition—and with more progressive views—could be helpful, but of course only so much could be done in one book. Our original contribution to the liberal grand strategy is to distinguish between offensive and defensive liberalism, which parallels the distinction between defensive and offensive realism. Defensive liberalism focuses on international institutions, the use of "soft power," and the spread of democracy and free trade by peaceful means. In contrast, offensive liberalism is willing to use force for imposing democracy and a market economy.

Restad asks why we link unilateralism and offensive strategy and multilateral and defensive strategy rather than multilateral and offensive and defensive and unilateral. We agree that this might be possible under certain conditions, but for the purpose of theory-building, analytical clarity, and a relatively parsimonious explanation, we think that combining the two, as we do so, makes sense even if it is not always the case in the real world. Our differentiation between multilateralism and unilateralism, as specified in the next paragraph, explains the logic behind the links we make between these two dimensions of strategy.

We could add more dimensions to the distinction between multilateralism and unilateralism but we develop an original and clear-cut distinction, which captures quite a bit, even if not all the potential complexity. We conceive of multilateralism as a coalition of states which institutionally constrains the freedom of action of all members, including the hegemonic power, by shared rules and norms. This is in contrast to a unilateral "coalition of the willing" in which the freedom of action of the hegemon is much broader and the other participants are subordinated to its decisions. Such a conception of multilateralism is more likely to be linked to a defensive strategy, while unilateralism is related to an offensive one (9-11).

Grinberg challenges the book's argument that ideology-promotion can be advanced by any great power. Specifically, she is not convinced that ideology-promotion can take place by an illiberal power. Our argument is that once such a power becomes the hegemon, and has an extensive freedom of action, it will promote its ideology. The logic behind this is based on enhancing the illiberal great power's control over its satellites—both their foreign policy and their domestic politics-- and thus reinforcing the power's security and influence. In addition, there might also be "true believers" in the great power's elite, at least in the early stages of the regime, who believe in the validity and attractiveness of their ideology.[80]

Regarding the offensive ideology-promotion, the book does suggest two major examples of illiberal powers (46): Nazi Germany imposing Fascist regimes in Eastern Europe during World War II, and the Soviet Union imposing Communism in that region after the war. With regard to defensive ideology promotion, we cite two liberal non-American examples (44-45): the EC and EU in different parts of Europe during the Cold War and in the post-Cold War eras, and Israel during the early 1990s (the Oslo peace process). It is indeed challenging to find an example of defensive ideology promotion by an illiberal state. But perhaps China's contemporary economic relations with developing countries and particularly the construction of the Belt and Road Initiative (the Chinese global infrastructure project) aim not only at economic considerations but also in spreading the Chinese model of capitalist authoritarianism, which will supposedly increase the 'soft power' of China and thus its influence in large parts of the developing world. When this strategy is implemented in its

[79] Lloyd E. Ambrosius, *Woodrow Wilson and American Internationalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Walter Russell Mead, "The End of the Wilsonian Era: Why Liberal Internationalism Failed," *Foreign Affairs* 100:2 (2021): 123-137; Tony Smith, *Why Wilson Matters: The Origins of American Liberal Internationalism and Its Crisis Today* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).

[80] On forcible regime change by great powers, see John Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

own region, it might also provide security benefits to China and at any rate the economic investment of China in various countries might produce security assets for China such as bases for increasing its power-projection capacity. In addition, such investment is likely to raise the Chinese influence on their foreign policy.

Grinberg raises a critical question, which is also shared, in various ways, by Popescu: does the grand-strategy typology reflect the current grand strategy debate, specifically whether it includes conservative internationalism, restraint, and deep engagement? Avey makes an opposite criticism regarding Trumpism, namely that it shouldn't be separate from the four-fold typology (as we present the Trumpist approach in chapter 10) but rather be represented by offensive realism.

Conservative internationalism is not included as such because we follow the mainstream view that the US is essentially liberal, including in its foreign policy. Moreover, as noted, this conservative approach shares some key beliefs with liberalism. Grinberg argues that quite a few strategies (off-shore, restraint, international liberalism, primacy) are actually subsumed in the book's typology.

Deep engagement is, in fact, also included and represented by defensive liberalism as reflected also in the Table overviewing the current debate (Table A3, Appendix 3, 264-265). In the same table we can notice that restraint is, in turn, included in the defensive realism category.

Still, Grinberg is absolutely right that we could add more distinctions among various grand strategies and that this could be quite useful for certain purposes. At the same time, there is an enduring tension in scholarship between being fully comprehensive and developing a novel theory. Beyond presenting a new grand-strategy typology, our key objective is to introduce a relatively parsimonious theory which explains and specifies under what conditions a certain grand strategy is likely to be the dominant one. For the development of such a theory, it is impossible to introduce all the potential differences among a multiplicity of grand strategies. This would have been a descriptive exercise (even if quite a useful one) rather than an explanatory one.

Should Trumpism (or the nationalist "America First" approach) be included in the offensive realist category? There are, certainly, some similarities with offensive realism as Avey notes: a focus on the material world and on relative gains (as we also note in chapter 10), though the realist focus is less on short-term gains than that of the Trumpists. However, the opposition of Trumpism to 'globalism,' free trade, and international institutions is normative as well as practical; for realists, even if they are skeptic about the real influence of such factors on international politics, esp. on the "high politics" of great-power war and peace, the attitude to these factors is much more instrumental based on what best serves the national interest in accordance with the specific situation.

Some additional differences between realist logic and Trumpism include the issues of migration and identity that Trumpists focus on while realists do not consider as security threats. Another difference is with regard to terrorism that Trumpists emphasize as a major security threat, whereas realists view terrorism as a low security threat compared with the threat posed by rival great powers. Trumpism focuses not only on cold calculations of hard-nosed diplomacy/realpolitik but also on the emotional/rhetorical aspects of nationalism and their domestic political implications. For Trumpism, protectionism is an ideology rather than being exclusively based on national interests. While aspiring for close relations with President Vladimir Putin's Russia, the Trump administration did not follow the realpolitik logic of forming an anti-China alliance with Russia.

Popescu asks whether the book addresses grand strategy or foreign policy. He argues that the many changes addressed in the book and the relatively short life-span of some of the strategies might suggest that what the book is dealing with is foreign policy rather than a long-term grand strategy. The answer to this challenge is the introduction at the outset of the book of four general types of grand strategies—each with its own expected patterns of behavior—based on the logic of competing IR theories. If patterns of behavior fit anyone of these four strategies, then we can identify the dominance of a certain grand strategy.

We empirically apply this typology while checking whether the behavior of certain administrations conform to one of the four grand strategies and whether those administrations change their behavior later to conform to another grand strategy. We indeed found in various administrations such conformity and then behavioral changes which conformed to a competing grand strategy. Our key task then was to apply the explanatory part of the model in order to account for the changes.

We claim that changes in grand strategy occur because it becomes evident – through the international systemic signals – that the strategy employed to that point was not working. Therefore, it is replaced. The events we identify as turning points were indeed significant – the North Korean invasion of the South, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Mikhail Gorbachev's rise to power toward the end of the Cold War – had dramatic and immediate effects and thus drew a quick American response. A key change occurred following the 1991 Soviet disintegration and the transition to unipolarity, which resulted in the major shift from realist to liberal grand strategies. An important change took place also following the 9/11 terror attacks and, perhaps to a lesser extent, the 2014 Russian invasion and occupation of Crimea and the growing Chinese assertiveness in the maritime disputes in the South and East China Seas.

Thus, the coherence and clarity of the grand strategy depend, at least partly, on the clarity and strength of the signals from the international system, particularly with regard to our two independent variables—the distribution of capabilities and the balance of threat. The more compelling they become, the greater the coherence of the grand strategy and vice versa. Accordingly, aside from individual and domestic-level accounts, our systemic explanation for the lack of coherence of the Trumpist strategy is related to the lack of clarity of the signaling from the international system. The second decade of the twenty-first century was a period of power transition (mainly due to the rise of China and to a lesser extent of other powers such as Russia and India). In that decade there were also rising disagreements on the identity of the key threat to the US (China—for the realists; Russia – for the liberals; and the issues of identity, migration and terrorism for the nationalists). As the signals from the system became more compelling with the continuous rise of China and its more aggressive behavior becoming much more obvious in recent years, the strategy became more focused on the China challenge toward the end of the Trump administration, and especially with the rise of the Biden administration as is discussed at the end of our response.

The Explanation

The degree of threat: From the two explanatory factors, as expected, the one which, raises more questions is the level of threat. Popescu argues that it is subjective. In order to address this important challenge, we advance two necessary conditions for the presence of a high-threat environment: the opponent possesses an offensive power-projection capacity which can inflict heavy damage on the state's key values and demonstrates the willingness to do it by pursuing an aggressive behavior. It is sufficient that one of these conditions is missing for the system to be seen as benign or at least relatively benign.

Thus, the degree-of-threat variable that we employ is based partly on a material component, namely offensive power-projection capabilities (which are distinctive from the overall aggregate balance of capabilities).[81] Accordingly, the presence of rivals who possess such capabilities is a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for producing a threatening environment. However, the threat variable is not a purely material one, because in addition to material power, it is also based on the state's perception of the opponent's aggressive intentions. The opponent's intentions introduce a perceptual component into the discussion of threat, but we assume that the state's perception of the rival's intentions is primarily influenced by the rival's own behavior—whether it is aggressive or benign. The perceptions of the rival's intentions are often shaped by a formative event such as a major international crisis, which may persuasively demonstrate its aggressive or benign intentions.[82] Thus, benign or cautious behavior in a crisis and a willingness to make concessions to avoid war may signal

[81] This factor combines two of Stephen M. Walt's material sources of threat: offensive military capabilities and geographical proximity. See Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987): 24-25.

[82] On the effects of major formative events, see Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976): 239-282.

benign intentions on the rival's part. Another costly signal to convey moderate intentions is by a willingness to implement a major cut in offensive weapons.[83]

In contrast, crossing international boundaries with military force in an offensive way by another great power or its allies is likely to signal a high level of threat even if it happens in remote regions. This is because boundaries are crucial elements of the international multi-state system, separating between the key actors in the system, the sovereign states. An offensive crossing of the international boundaries violates a key post-World War II international norm designed to maintain stability and to prevent wars—the nom of respecting states' territorial integrity.[84]

A similar signal is a major military build-up by the rival which focuses on first-strike, counter-force nuclear weapons, which are able to deny the second-strike retaliatory capabilities of the other side, notably by constructing multiple-warhead, high-precision land-based missiles. On the conventional level, a major build-up of power-projection capacity such as a blue-water navy may signal a threat. Unilateralist behavior—without taking into account the views of numerous other states, notably allies, or of international institutions—might also signal a threatening behavior (39-40).

Alternative explanations: bureaucratic politics.

The book shows very clearly that the key changes in US grand strategy were in response to changes in one or two of the causal factors: the balance of capabilities and the level of threat.

Two tables toward the end of the book—Table A1 and Table A2—overview all the key changes in US grand strategy from 1945 to 2020 (257-262). While bureaucrats, and what Dombrowski calls "state managers," played an important role in providing information, advice and implementation, as discussed in the various chapters, these were decisions made by the presidents in response to changes in the key systemic factors.

The Long Telegram by George F. Kennan (who was at that time the *chargé d'affaires* at the US Moscow embassy) and also NSC-68 were two major inputs by top bureaucrats. These documents seemingly affected US grand strategy in the early Cold War era and thus supposedly show major bureaucratic influence on policy-making. Yet as analyzed in Chapter 3, the influence of such factors was limited (96-97). Thus, the Truman administration changed its policies not because of these bureaucratic inputs but because changing circumstances had a compelling effect.[85] The key to the change in grand strategy was empirical: it became increasingly clear that Soviet unilateral behavior was not responsive to Western gestures of restraint

[83] On costly signals, see James D. Fearon, "Signaling Foreign Policy Interests: Tying Hands versus Sinking Costs," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41:1 (1997): 68-90.

[84] Mark W. Zacher, "The Territorial Integrity Norm: International Boundaries and the Use of Force," *International Organization* 55:2 (2001): 215-250.

[85] John Lewis Gaddis, *George F. Kennan* (New York: Penguin Books, 2012): 225-226; Wilson D. Miscamble, *George F. Kennan and the Making of American Foreign Policy 1947-1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992): 27-28; and Wilson D. Miscamble, *From Roosevelt to Truman: Postsdam, Hiroshima, and the Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 308.

and goodwill during and immediately after the war.[86] At any rate, the Long Telegram in no sense put an end to the floundering in US foreign policy.[87] Regarding NSC-68, it was not endorsed by Truman until the Korean War.[88]

One potentially recent challenge to our argument, as mentioned by Dombrowski and as also addressed in the book (245-246), is the discrepancy under the Trump administration between the president's friendly attitude toward Putin while the "deep state" (Congress and the Defense Department, in particular) continued the preparations to meet the Russian threat in Europe. However, the fundamental change in US policy toward Russia— under Biden and with bipartisan support-- took place only after a major *external* change, namely the recent Russian invasion of Ukraine, as discussed below-- toward the end of our response.

Still, we introduce the argument that domestic and ideological factors can play the role of intervening variables between the explanatory systemic factors and the outcome of the grand strategy (see, 97-98, for example, on the role of these factors during the Cold War, and 209-210 on the post-9/11 period, especially with regard to the rise of offensive liberalism and the 2003 invasion of Iraq).

Theoretical Questions

In terms of the causal links between unipolarity and ideology promotion, Grinberg argues that the book focuses only on the opportunity to promote ideology and not on the motivation. Yet, when we start to discuss the post-Cold War focus of the US on ideology-promotion (chapter 7), we do address the motivations for promoting and enlarging a liberal international order (which, was expected to include eventually, among others, also China and Russia). We mention three key motivations for liberal ideology-promotion (168-69):

One is security. By the time the balance of power changes, the rising powers are not expected to pose a security threat. This is because by the time they become peer great powers, they were expected to be democratic (according to what the US hoped). According to the democratic peace theory, there will be no danger of armed conflict between the democratic rising powers and the United States. This will be reinforced by the pacifying effects of economic interdependence. The second motivation is economic, meaning that free trade and globalization will be beneficial to the US economy and corporations and to American consumers (goods and services will be much more affordable).

Finally, an ideological motivation comes into play with many American liberals who truly believe in the universality of the liberal tenants. This became especially true after the end of the Cold War and the belief in the "end of history" when many liberals believed that there was a high likelihood of making the world in the US liberal image. This ideological belief was reinforced by the sense that the US victory in the Cold War was at least partly related to its liberal character. Under great-power parity such a promotion of ideology beyond one's own bloc is unlikely because of the balancing by the rival's counter-vailing coalition. The security dilemma and mutual fears under anarchy, in addition to their ideological rivalry, make it unlikely that both superpowers would jointly coordinate an agreed-upon division of the whole world into half democratic/half communist.

The choice of offensive vs. defensive strategies: Our model suggests that in a high-threat environment it is easier to mobilize domestic support and the resources for a costly offensive strategy than when the threat is low. It is important for every type

[86] John Lewis Gaddis, *The Long Peace* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987): 38-39, esp. ft. 82, 254.

[87] Miscamble, *George F. Kennan and the Making of American Foreign Policy*: 27-28; Deborah W. Larson, *Origins of Containment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985): 257, 301, 352, makes the same point.

[88] John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005, revised and expanded revision): 107-111.

of regime, not only democracies, to mobilize domestic support for expensive and dangerous operations, but certainly it is vital for a democracy. Moreover, going offensive under a benign system would cause an unnecessary escalation, while going defensive under a high-threat would signal weakness which could invite aggression by the rivals.

Identification of threats and their links with capabilities (in unipolarity but also more generally): we suggest two necessary conditions for a high-threat environment to emerge, as discussed above, while only one of the conditions is exclusively based on capabilities. Thus, under great-power parity, even though the capabilities necessary for a high-threat exist, the other power might still demonstrate unwillingness to use them against its rival. Thus, the Soviet Union demonstrated reluctance to resort to war during the Cuban Missile Crisis. That opened the way for détente and arms control as the crisis showed that the threat of inadvertent escalation is a shared threat to both superpowers, and thus allowed at least some level of cooperation (Chapter 4). In contrast, until 9/11 al-Qaeda showed a willingness to kill as many Americans as possible but it looked like it did not have the capacity to cause major harm to key American interests. Yet, 9/11 demonstrated that al-Qaeda had the power-projection capacity to reach American shores and to cause much damage. Assuming al-Qaeda could get hold of weapons of mass destruction, this created a high-threat environment. This was not a great-power threat but it showed the possibility of an asymmetric threat under unipolarity: a threat posed by a violent non-state actor which demonstrated a capacity to cause a major harm by killing so many people in two major American cities (Chapter 8).

The lack of compatibility between the president's initial grand strategy and the systemic conditions: We indeed allow for a limited level of such an incompatibility so long the signals from the system are somewhat ambiguous and allow the president to follow the preferences derived from his worldview. However, when the systemic conditions change in clear-cut ways, the compelling effects of the system are able to affect a major change in the grand strategy. This indeed was the case, for example, during both the Jimmy Carter (Chapter 5) and the George W. Bush (Chapter 8) administrations as well as the Ronald Reagan (in an opposite direction to Carter's—see Chapter 6) and also the Harry Truman administrations (Chapter 3) and the post-Cuban Missile Crisis Kennedy administration (Chapter 4).

Empirical Cases

The 2003 Iraq War—Popescu argues that we spend too much time on this case. We strongly disagree. This war is the largest post-Cold War US military intervention and it is also the key example of the regime-change strategy by imposing democracy through the use of force. It is the key legacy of the George W. Bush presidency, and had major effects on the region and on the West to this day. It produced a failed state engaged in a civil war, thus aggravating the Sunni-Shiite sectarian conflict in the whole Middle East.[89] The collapse of the Iraqi state changed the balance of power in the Gulf in favor of Iran and also enabled Iranian penetration into the Arab world by exploiting the trans-border Shiite connection, notably in Iraq itself. This penetration affected a growing rivalry between Iran and its Shiite coalition against a coalition of Sunni Arab states (in collaboration with Israel). Moreover, the US occupation and the rising sectarian conflict affected the rise of large-scale terrorism, which prepared the ground for the formation of the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq in the following decade.

Yet, the effects were not limited only to the region. The postwar turmoil in Iraq and its de-stabilizing regional effects affected the rise of migration inside the region and outside of it, notably to Europe. This migration, reinforced by the Arab Spring in the following decade, together with the spread of terrorism, influenced the rise of nationalist-populism in Europe, challenging liberalism domestically and also challenging the EU itself.

[89] Benjamin Miller, *States, Nations and Great Powers: The Sources of Regional War and Peace* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Miller, "Does Democratization Pacify the State? The Cases of Germany and Iraq." *International Studies Quarterly* 56:3 (September 2012): 455-469.

The disenchantment from the war also influenced rising opposition in the American public to the US leadership of the liberal international order.[90] The centrality of the war and the puzzle it poses is indicated also by the considerable literature trying to explain it. The book offers a novel explanation of this war in a theoretical and comparative perspective. We place the war in a larger perspective of offensive liberalism—forcible regime change in order to fight terrorism (a security threat) by transforming the societies from which this terrorist threat came. The conditions for such a strategy to emerge are hegemony and a rising threat (Chapter 8). Addressing US grand strategy from Truman to Trump without explaining the Iraq War does not make sense and misses a key development of the post-Cold War era that has many implications for the current era as well.

Eisenhower: Offensive or Defensive Realist?

Avey argues that some policies of the Dwight D. Eisenhower administration fit defensive realism. The book's argument, however, is that following the North Korean invasion of South Korea in June 1950, and the rising threat environment, NSC-68 informed American grand strategy until the Cuban Missile Crisis.[91] NSC-68 viewed Soviet international behavior as aggressive and dangerous to American vital interests. Accordingly NSC-68 prescribed a strategy of responding to the Soviet threat with massive rearmament and rebuilding of American military forces, alongside firm standing behind any anti-Soviet regime or movement in order to prevent the USSR from spreading its Communist ideology across the globe. The view of the Soviet Union as an aggressive, revisionist power, bent on world domination, also led to some ideas of preventive war starting in the late 1940s and becoming more serious in the 1950s, in accordance with offensive realist logic. In a note to Secretary John Foster Dulles, Eisenhower asked whether "our duty to future generations did not require us to initiate war at the most propitious moment," and raised the issue several times at NSC meetings during 1952-54.[92]

While the Eisenhower administration avoided resorting to a preventive war, it was much keener in endorsing the philosophy of superiority which was behind NSC-68 than the Truman administration had been, although Truman adjusted his policy toward the logic of NSC-68 following the compelling events of the Korean War. Eisenhower went a further step and threatened the Soviets with massive nuclear retaliation for any challenge they might pose to the US, especially if it was in the American sphere of dominance (105-106). Eisenhower also presided over the first US military intervention in the Middle East under the doctrine bearing his name—in Lebanon, 1958—which initiated the controversial series of US military interventions in that area, even if much larger interventions took place only much later.[93] In addition, the Eisenhower administration also exhibited a pattern of behavior which we associate with offensive realism, democracy-removal, which is discussed above.

At the same time, Avey suggests that there were elements of offensive realism during the supposedly (according to our book) defensive realist era of detente, aiming at unilateral advantages in arms control and targeting Soviet nuclear weapons. Indeed, we admit that during the Cold War there was always an enduring tension between offensive realism and defensive realism and thus we point out and explain a number of shifts between the two grand strategies. Still, the ideas of arms control, confidence-building measures, and deterrence through MAD/parity rather than superiority were innovative ideas, informed

[90] Miller, "How 'making the world in its own liberal image' made the West less liberal" *International Affairs* 97:5 (forthcoming, September 2021).

[91] For a detailed analysis of the gradual emergence of the American grand strategy of preponderance vis-à-vis the Soviet Union during the years 1946-1950 and of its dominance from 1950 until 1962/3, see Ch. 3.

[92] Mark Trachtenberg, "Preventive War and US Foreign Policy," *Security Studies* 16:1 (2007): 1-31; and Jack Levy, "Preventive War and the Bush Doctrine," in *Understanding the Bush Doctrine*: *Psychology and Strategy in an Age of Terrorism*, Edited by Stanley A. Renshon, Peter Suedfeld (New York: Routledge, 2007)*:*185-186 and the citations therein.

[93] George Lenczowski, *American Presidents and the Middle East* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990): 57-64.

by defensive realist logic, which were influential in shaping the strategy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union during the détente era. These ideas were influenced by the defensive realist fears of an inadvertent escalation as was dramatized by the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Another indicator of offensive realism that Avey raises is the US policy to exclude the Soviet Union from Middle East diplomacy. Indeed, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger conducted a unilateral-exclusionary strategy in the region in the aftermath of the 1973 Arab-Israeli War.[94] Still, there were some important episodes of superpower cooperation in the Middle East in bringing the 1973 war to an end and in co-chairing the two-day Middle East Peace Conference in Geneva in December 1973. Most importantly, when the Carter administration came to power, it initiated cooperation with the Soviets in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict, culminating in the October 1, 1977 joint statement on this issue. This cooperation failed because of the resistance of the regional powers (Egypt and Israel) to Soviet participation in the peace process. This resistance led back to unilateral US peacemaking between the two regional states.[95]

Avey also raises the similarity between the Korean and the Vietnam wars as both are supposedly cases of offensive realism. We argue that a limited war on the periphery such as Vietnam, which the US worked hard to contain as much as possible so that it would not involve the Soviets or the Chinese, did not challenge fundamentally the defensive realist logic of the strategy vis-à-vis the key opponent, which was the Soviet Union. Importantly, the enduring relationships of these two wars to the grand strategy were almost the opposite: Korea led to the various components of offensive realism -- global forward deployment, US-led alliances in many regions and rising defense budget—in order to deter the Soviets from a position of US superiority. In contrast, Vietnam influenced the opposite process, namely an acceleration of defensive realism regarding military interventions. Thus, Vietnam led to an era of (partial) disengagement from global military involvements starting with the Nixon Doctrine. This doctrine called for transferring security responsibility to regional powers and an overall reluctance to go forward with major military deployments and interventions in different regions. This so-called "Vietnam Syndrome" lasted until the end of the Cold War and the rise of unipolarity.[96] The 1990-91 Gulf War was the first manifestation of the post-Cold War growing willingness of the hegemon to resort to force under a unipolar international system.

The Current and Future Grand Strategy

Finally, an important test for a theoretical model is its ability to account for current and future processes (251-55). In this case, the key question is about the ability of the book's model to address the emerging grand strategy of the Biden administration. A key point in this respect is to show how changes in the international environment affect major changes in Biden's positions on the key international issues. Here we can note the major difference between Biden's orientation as the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee and as vice president versus his current strategy. The key issue is China. In his earlier roles Biden was part of the bipartisan consensus influenced by liberal views under US hegemony that integrating China into the US-led international order would moderate Chinese foreign behavior and would also initiate a (long) process of some democratization in China, even if that would take a while. Such views shaped the dramatic step of admitting China into the World Trade Organization in 2001, which accelerated China's huge economic growth and exports.

[94] Miller, *When Opponents Cooperate: Great Power Conflict and Collaboration inworld Politics*, 2nd ed. (Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 2001), ch. 6.

[95] Gerald M. Steinberg and Ziv Rubinovitz, *Menachem Begin and the Israel-Egypt Peace Process: Between Ideology and Political Realism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019): 77-78; Kenneth W. Stein, *Heroic Diplomacy: Sadat, Kissinger, Carter, Begin, and the Quest for Arab-Israeli Peace* (New York: Routledge, 1999): 214-219; Daniel Strieff, *Jimmy Carter and the Middle East: The Politics of Presidential Diplomacy* (New York: Palgrave, 2015): 67-73.

[96] On the Nixon Doctrine, see Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*: 295-296.

In contrast, Biden as president seems to be adopting much more of a realpolitik strategy toward China, focusing on the rivalry with it in the strategic, economic, and technological fields.[97] This change is clearly the result of the changing balance of power in the international system, specifically, the rise of China as the major great-power competitor of the United States. The book's model expects that while hegemony enables an ideology-promotion strategy (liberal in the case of the US), in contrast, under great-power parity, we should expect competition informed by realist considerations. Whether this realist strategy will be defensive or offensive depends on the second systemic factor—the balance of threat— as it evolves in the next few years, especially in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine might, however, play an important role here, at least for the short term, if not beyond. This invasion, leading to a major inter-state war in Europe for the first time since 1945, raises the level of threat confronting the US and its allies, at least on this continent if not much beyond. The rising level of threat is expected to lead, according to the book's theoretical model, in the direction of an offensive realist strategy. This strategy might include rising defense spending, increasing forward deployments in Europe, expanding and strengthening NATO, arming allies and clients and trying to weaken Russia. Indeed, Biden has already managed to consolidate the western allies for unprecedented heavy economic sanctions on Russia. The President seems to have solidified NATO much more quickly than anticipated after Trump cast serious doubts about the US commitment to the Western alliance. Even the traditionally neutral countries of Sweden and Finland seem now to be interested in joining the alliance. While not engaging American troops directly in the fighting, the administration embarked upon major arms shipments to Ukraine and on sharing real-time battlefield intelligence with a country at war with a great power rival.[98] Thus, one might suggest that the US is, in fact, conducting a "war by proxy" against Russia. Indeed, according to the American Defense Secretary, Lloyd Austin, the US wants to see "Russia weakened to the degree that it can't do the kinds of things that it has done in invading Ukraine."[99]

Finally, we agree with Dombrowski that there are many types of grand strategies beyond those of the great powers. As the recent war in Ukraine and the US response to it shows, however, great-power grand strategy is especially critical for the key field of war and peace with huge implications in numerous other areas. Thus, in order to get a better understanding of such grand strategies, we wrote this book on the sources of American grand strategy from Truman to Trump.

[97] Robert J. Lieber, "Biden Foreign Policy: Sobered by Reality or Condemned to Repetition," *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs* (2021), early view (https://doi.org/10.1080/23739770.2021.1938843); Xiangfeng Yang, "US-China Crossroads Ahead: Perils and Opportunities for Biden," *Washington Quarterly* 44:1 (2021): 129-153.

[98] Nigel Gould-Davies, "Putin's Strategic Failure," *Survival* 64:2 (2022): 8; Christina L. Arabia, Andrew S. Bowen and Cory Welt, *US Security Assistance to Ukraine*, Congressional Research Service, In Focus IF12040, April 29, 2022 (https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF12040); Julian E, Barnes, Helene Cooper and Eric Schmitt, "US Intelligence Is Helping Ukraine Kill Russian Generals, Officials Say," *New York Times*, May 4, 2022 (https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/04/us/politics/russia-generals-killed-ukraine.html).

[99] Matt Murphy**,** "Ukraine War: US Wants To See A Weakened Russia," *BBC News*, 25 April.