

# A Realistic Vision of the Coming International Society : Illusion of American Dream and Actualization of Others' Dreams

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## Introduction

This thesis aims to envision how the international structure will be in the future, after “the American Empire.” My analysis focuses on how the change in the international system will be brought about on the basis of theories of structural realism. Since 1945, the United States of America has sought to achieve the global hegemony. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 transformed the international society from the bipolar world to an unipolar one where the United States holds supreme power, even though we cannot call it the “global hegemony.”

Now the next mission of the United States is to actualize perpetual peace by achieving global hegemony. The United States has risen from merely being one

of the colonies of Britain to what we now refer to as “the American Empire.” Truly it has achieved the impossible in its ascent to its present status.

But history shows us that the more power one state tries to accrue and maintain, the more enemies it has to face. As Christopher Layne said, “Overexpansion leads to ‘imperial overstretch’ and counter hegemonic balancing the combined effect of which is hegemonic decline.”<sup>1</sup> To put it simply, the Soviet disintegration compelled the United States to face a historical inevitability, not the world tranquility which Immanuel Kant dreamed.

Now some other countries are trying to balance against the United States by seeking the reinforcement of their own national power. Especially the acquisition of second strike nuclear capability is effective for them to immunize themselves from the physical domination by the United States. At the same time, the combination of building national power and the second strike nuclear capability unexpectedly seems to provide them with the necessary circumstances to attain hegemony in their region.

As Immanuel Kant said, “It is the desire of every state, or of its ruler to arrive at a condition of perpetual peace by conquering the whole world, if that were possible.”<sup>2</sup> History is a perpetual quest for the attainment of hegemony among city states, countries, nation states and empires. To take modern times as an example, such states as Hapsburg Austria, France under Louis XIV and Napoleon, mid Victorian Britain, and Germany under Kaiser Wilhelm II and Hitler sought out hegemony. However these European states could not hold even the regional hegemony over Europe, though they might have dreamed to achieve the global hegemony. This paper also provides one more example of another (coming) failure of realization of a dream named the global hegemony.

This paper is structured as follows. In the first chapter, I explain the concept of hegemony by using some key realists' definition of that. Then the reasons why states strive for hegemony will be argued. Neo realist theory seems to have a

good explanatory power as for the question. The second chapter focuses on why the pursuit of hegemony is unable to avoid self defeat by referring to the cases of France under Louis XIV and mid Victorian Britain. There the following mechanism will be revealed : unipolar system inevitably causes security dilemma, which compels other great powers to balance against themselves through emulation, and it finally transforms the unipolar system into multipolar one.

The third chapter is the attempt to apply what we will learn in the second chapter to our contemporary situation : the U.S. quest for global hegemony not only forces other states to balance against it, but also encourages them to achieve hegemony in their regions. Especially economical aspects will be argued : economical reemergence and challenge of the rest. The forth chapter will reveal how nuclear revolution and its proliferation among other great powers threaten the hegemony of the United States while it helps others attain hegemony in their own regions. Both the third chapter and the fourth aim to clarify what prevents the United States from being the only supreme power, and how it gives the other states a chance to attain hegemony in their own region. The conclusion will discuss what the future international structure will be whether the vision may be dark or bright. Will the post American world be the transition to chaos, or the resurrection of multipolarization that caused two world wars in the twentieth century, or some yet unknown another form.

## Chapter1

### What is Hegemony? Why Do States Pursue Hegemony?

Originally the word “hegemony” was used to describe the relationship of Athens to the other Greek city states when they leagued together to defend themselves against the Persian Empire. However, there is no academically established definition of the concept of hegemony despite attempts of many theorists. This

thesis is based on the definition of John J. Mearsheimer, who says that hegemony means that “a state is so powerful that it dominates all the other states in the system.”<sup>3</sup> Militarily, no other state possesses “the military wherewithal to put up a serious fight against it.”<sup>4</sup> Economically, “a hegemon occupies a position of economic supremacy in international system and enjoys a preponderance of material resources.”<sup>5</sup>

Immanuel Wallerstein notes that a hegemonic power is a state which is able to impose its set of rules on the international system, and thereby it creates temporarily a new political order.”<sup>6</sup> Therefore, “if one state achieve hegemony, the [international] system ceases to be anarchic and becomes hierarchic.”<sup>7</sup> Hegemony, the absolute dominance by one particular state, brings an order into the anarchic world; the hierarchy centered on the hegemony forms an organized system and makes international society.

In general holding some hegemony is easily regarded as having “global” dominance. However, in fact, hegemony should be divided into three different types :

- (1) Regional hegemony, meaning a state that dominates in a specific region.  
China and India in the pre modern era certainly achieved regional hegemony.  
In modern era, The United States is regarded as the only regional hegemonic state.
- (2) Extra regional hegemony, meaning a state that dominates more than two regions like today’s America, which has dominated in East Asia (Japan), Middle East, Western Europe, and Western Hemisphere.
- (3) Global hegemony, meaning a state that dominates all regions in the world.

These three kinds of hegemonic state are to be accomplished progressively, from regional to global hegemony. Before one particular state dominates the world and achieves the global hegemony, it must achieve regional hegemony in a certain region and then it must accumulate a number of political/economical/military dominance over other different regions until it cannot find the place it domi-

ates anymore.

According to Layne, hegemony is synonymous with unipolarization.<sup>8</sup> Therefore the concept of unipolarization can be used to describe each of regional hegemony, extra regional hegemony and global hegemony. Apparently the international system after the end of the Second World War was bipolarized, since the United States achieved extra regional hegemony in the three regions, while the Soviet Union also achieved regional hegemony in the Eastern Europe. Now we can safely say that the present international system can be called unipolar extra regional hegemonic system centered on the United States.

Next the reasons why states pursue hegemony have to be clarified. Although many scholars have tried to answer this question, neo realism school of political theory offers us the most persuasive explanations. Neo realism is composed of offensive and defensive realism. Offensive realism gives us the answer of the first question while defensive realism has the answer to the second.

Offensive realists explain as follows : states seek for hegemony, not only because states are led by human beings who have an *animus dominandi* (will to power), but also because the structure of the international system compels them to seek to maximize power until they obtain the utmost safety (hegemony) in the system.<sup>9</sup> Offensive realists argue this issue from the under mentioned premises :<sup>10</sup>

- (1) The international system is anarchic ; with the absence of a central authority that sits above them, states have to protect themselves from each other.
- (2) Great powers inherently possess some offensive military capabilities.
- (3) States can never be certain about other states' intentions.
- (4) Survival is the primary goal of great powers.
- (5) States are rational actors.

From these assumptions, offensive realists insist that power maximization and expansion at the expense of rival powers are the only strategies that allow great power to ensure their security, since great powers fear each other and rely only on

themselves. “Strength ensures safety, and the greatest strength is the greatest insurance of safety.”<sup>11</sup> Thus the best way to ensure their survival is to be the most powerful state in the system.

States try to maximize power as much as possible in order to be the only great power in the system. Yet no state attained global hegemony owing to “the stopping power of water” though it achieved regional hegemony in a specific region. Nevertheless states have been haunted by the need to ensure their security (the attainment of global hegemony) at all times. Therefore, if there is any chance, states take action to obtain power as possible as they can with rationality.

Offensive realists explain : international politics is an ongoing struggle among states for survival, and structural constraints of the system impel great powers to seek security by striving to attain hegemony. Defensive realists recognize : the great powers’ competition for the ultimate survival causes “security dilemma” and the attempt to be the only No.1 fails in the end because it necessarily provokes counterbalancing struggles from lesser powers. Here we recall Thucidides’ words, “What made [the Preponessian] war inevitable was the growth of Athenian power and the fear which caused in Sparta.”<sup>12</sup> One of history’s ironclad lessons is that the pursuit of hegemony is self defeating, because it provokes counterbalancing efforts of other states and because “the costs of expansion generally outrun the benefits before domination is achieved, causing extension to become overextension.”<sup>13</sup>

## Chapter2

### Why is The Pursuit of Hegemony Doomed to Failure?

After the birth of the nation state system in 1648 at Westphalia, there were two states that successfully obtained the dominant position as unipolar superpower : France under Louis XIV and Britain under Queen Victoria. But their preponder-

ance of power was smashed by the counterbalance of the other states. Christopher Layne notes that “unipolarity is likely to be short lived because new great powers will emerge as the uneven growth process narrows the gap between the hegemony and the eligible states that are positioned to emerge as its competitor.”<sup>14</sup> The following two cases show us unipolarity as only a transient phenomenon and how the pursuit of hegemony fails after all.

### France 's Case

By the time Louis XIV took the reins, France undoubtedly became the most dominant state in Europe. There are several reasons why France succeeded : (1) military revolution carried out by François Michelle Tellier (the introduction of then current bayonet, and the creation of national standing army) ; (2) economic revolution initiated by Colbert (financial reform and introduction of mercantilism) ; (3) administrative revolution (France has the most centralized administration under absolute monarchism). However France became less dominant in 1714 than in 1660. This is mainly because especially England and Austria, due to the French threat, firstly initiated to reorganize themselves militarily, economically, and administratively by mimicking that of France. By doing so, they became as powerful as France and balanced against it.

Both England and Austria restructured their administrative system. England strengthened financial institutions and reformed its military. As Henry Kissinger notes “with William [of Orange], England imported an ongoing war with Louis XIV over what later became Belgium.”<sup>15</sup> Thus England, which originally used to be a satellite state of France, became the hub of the counterbalancing coalitions under William III. If France would have dominated Holland, it could have dominated the whole of Europe including England. With the threat from rising France, England was awakened to struggle for security and survival through the realization that there was no choice but to smash the French ambition by forming the Grand

Alliance at the War of the Spanish Succession and the Nine Years War. Although France barely survived, the French preponderance of power came to end.<sup>16</sup>

### Britain 's Case

With the defeat of Napoleonic France in 1815, Britain became the only super-power in Europe. Britain's power was greater than any of the European states since Rome. Although Britain could not attain regional hegemony, Michael Doyle characterizes this era as the domination of the British "unipolar world peripheral system."<sup>17</sup> At the time the power and position of Britain was unchallenged owing to the supremacy of power by the development of technologies and through the attainment of non European hegemony. Britain, whose population was only 2 percent of world, monopolized approximately 50 percent of the world wealth, one fifth of total trade output. As well, its energy consumption was five times larger than that of the United States and Germany, and one hundred fifty five times larger than that of Russia.<sup>18</sup>

Britain's "unequaled dominance"<sup>19</sup> was based on (1) its naval power, (2) its colonial empire (3) and its economic and financial strength. The Royal Navy was the largest and strongest and "was at some times probably as powerful as the next three or four navies in actual fighting."<sup>20</sup> "Britain's level of per capita industrialization was more than twice that of next ranking power."<sup>21</sup> Britain became an ideal model for relatively backward states such as Germany, the United States, and Japan to imitate when they sought to become the great powers.

Whether individual states remained dead or alive, as Kenney notes "depended upon the increase of their manufacturing output."<sup>22</sup> Therefore Germany, the United States, and Japan emulated whatever Britain did in order to avoid being swallowed by Britain. That is to say, Anglicization made them achieve their own industrialization, reinforcement and modernization of naval power. Anglicization is carried out in the name of *Weltpolitik* in Germany, *Fukoku Kyouhei* (Rich



Country, Strong Army) in Japan, and Manifest Destiny in the United States.

Especially the economic growth of Germany and the United States were astonishing after 1860. In contrast to Britain's decreasing share of it, from 19.9 percent to 13.6 percent between 1860 and 1913, Germany's share of world manufacturing output rose from 4.9 percent to 14.8 percent and as for the United States, its share of world manufacturing put rose from 7.2 percent to 32 percent. Likewise, while Britain's share of world trade decreased from 23.2 percent in 1880 to 14.1 percent in 1913, Germany's share of it rose from 9.7 percent to 13 percent. By comparison in terms of share of wealth in world economy, while Britain's share accounted for 59 percent in 1860, German and U.S. share accounted for 9 and 21 percent. But until 1913 its share decreased to 14 percent while their share increased to 13 and 47 percent.<sup>23</sup>

As Christopher Layne says that "among three states, Germany's rise to world power status was a direct response to Britain's ascendance,"<sup>24</sup> rivalry between them caused Germany to lock itself into security dilemma. Unless Germany sought to rise to world power status by strengthening its export driven economy and developing countervailing military power, its independence and national interests would be threatened by Britain more and more. Whether or not Britain had no aim to become the master of Europe at that time does not matter. What matters is that the growth of Britain's power itself threatened Germany and stimulated it to balance against Britain.

The rise of American, German, and Japanese power forced Britain to give up its policy of maintaining global supremacy. By 1900 London had failed to meet the German challenge across the North Sea. Because at that time, Britain was forced to defend its imperial position in the Western Hemisphere and fight against Russia and France on the colonial competition. Finally Britain withdrew from the Western Hemisphere and partly from East Asia. Britain was compelled to admit its own lack of the resources to successfully compete against Germany, as well as

against rising new powers, the United States, Russia and Japan.

Thus studying these two historical cases leads us to a hypothesis that the appearance of unipolar hegemonic state [disparity of power balance] inevitably and simultaneously invites the emergence of several powers by provoking their security dilemma : lesser powers threatened by the super power try to balance against it by means of imitating dominant state's systems, and they try to obtain some powers at uneven growth rate enough to prevent the super power from maintaining its present position of superiority and from achieving the global hegemony. After all the pursuit of hegemony is doomed to failure ; it is destined to be self defeating.

In the following two chapters, we will investigate whether this hypothesis is applicable to the contemporary situation : some aspects of the relationship between “the American Empire” and lesser powers.

### Chapter3 The Present Situation : The Economic Re emergence of Masters

The United States has been the only state in the history to have achieved both regional hegemony in its own region, as well as extra regional hegemony : The United States has dominated three key regions ; Western Europe, East Asia, and the Middle East in addition to Western Hemisphere since the Declaration of Independence. There is no doubt that since 1945 till present, the United States has had a preponderance of an overwhelming power against other states. Economically the United States, at the end of the Second World War, monopolized approximately 49 percent of world's wealth (compared to Britain (11%), Germany (17%), France (4%), and Russia (13%)) and “possessed gold reserves of 20 billion, almost two thirds of the world's total of 33 billion.”<sup>19</sup> In addition, the United

States accounted for nearly the half of the world industrial output, one third of world total export. Militarily the United States not only dominated “command of the sea” and “command of the air”, but the only nuclear possessor until 1948.<sup>25</sup>

The U.S. pursuit for the global hegemony after 1945 resulted in making the Soviet Union fall into “security dilemma” that led to bipolar structure of the system. The hypothesis that the appearance of unipolar hegemonic state inevitably and simultaneously invites the emergence of other powers, which we have seen in the previous chapter, is applicable to what the world used to be after 1945.

Now, after the end of the cold war, majority of people around the world admit the United States as to be number one. But it does not ensure that the United States will be the most powerful in the future. Is it possible for the United States to achieve global hegemony, or for today’s U.S. led unipolar world to be sustainable? Viewing the contemporary situation, again the pursuit for global hegemony by the American Empire seems to have caused the emergence of great powers: the preponderance of U.S. power has forced such great powers as China, India, and possibly Russia again to face of the dilemma of “dead” or “alive.”

For their survival, they have strived to acquire power at a differential rate by copying the successful system of the dominant state, which is what we call “Americanization.” During the period of the cold war, Japan and Germany achieved rapid economic growth through the emulation of the American system. This rising of Japan and Germany during 1950 to 1980 is quite different from that of China, India, and Russia during 1990 to the present. It is beyond the U.S. led sphere of influence that China, India and Russia have risen, while Germany and Japan have never counterbalanced against the United States because both of them got denationalized by the United States since 1945. In fact Japan and Germany have been tributary states of the United States as their suzerain state. On the other hand, today’s rising of China, India, and Russia developed outside the U.S. sphere of influence. Robert Gilpin tells us:

“It is the differential or uneven growth of power among states in a system that encourages efforts by certain states to change the system in order to enhance their own interests or to make more secure those interests threatened by their oligopolistic rivals. In both bipolar and multipolar, [and unipolar] structures, changes in relative power among the principal actors in the system are precursors of international political change.”<sup>26</sup>

Now, the process of the redistribution of power among states is occurring. Does this power transformation indicate the expiration of unipolarity? If so, what kind of geopolitical configuration will replace the present unipolarity and then shape the system? The National Intelligence Council's report, *Mapping the Global Future*, predicts that *déjà vu* will be taking place in the future constellation of the international system :

“The likely emergence of China and India as new major global players similar to the rise of Germany in the nineteenth century and the United States in the twentieth century will transform the geopolitical landscape, with impacts politically as dramatic as those of the previous two centuries. In the same way that commentators refer to the 1900s as the American Century, the early twenty first century may be seen as the time when some in the developing world led by China and India came into their own.”<sup>27</sup>

The tables cited below demonstrate that the law of uneven growth is redistributing relative power in favor of such states as India, China, and Russia. Of course if we compare them with the United States in the absolute terms, its power is still striking. However, if we compare the relative power gap in 1945 with that of today, a certain fact looms out of the data. That is, the relative decline of the United States and the rise of others. More importantly, the states which are rapidly rising are the states which had reigned as regional hegemony in their regional

area in pre modern era.

Table1. GDP growth rate (average value)

	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010s	2020s	2030s	2040s
U.S.A	3.06%	3.10%	2.60%	<i>3.15 %</i>	<i>2.40 %</i>	<i>2.73 %</i>	<i>2.59 %</i>
China	9.70%	10%	10%	<i>5.45 %</i>	<i>4.35 %</i>	<i>3.90 %</i>	<i>3.20 %</i>
India	5.57%	5.67%	8.10%	<i>5.80 %</i>	<i>5.80 %</i>	<i>6.05 %</i>	<i>5.40 %</i>
Russia	n.a	3.80%	7.90%	<i>3.60 %</i>	<i>3.45 %</i>	<i>2.55 %</i>	<i>2.05 %</i>

(Source : IMF World Economic Outlook 2008) (Italic number indicates Goldman Sacks' projected GDP after 2009) (n,a = not available)

Table2. Share of World Merchandise Exports

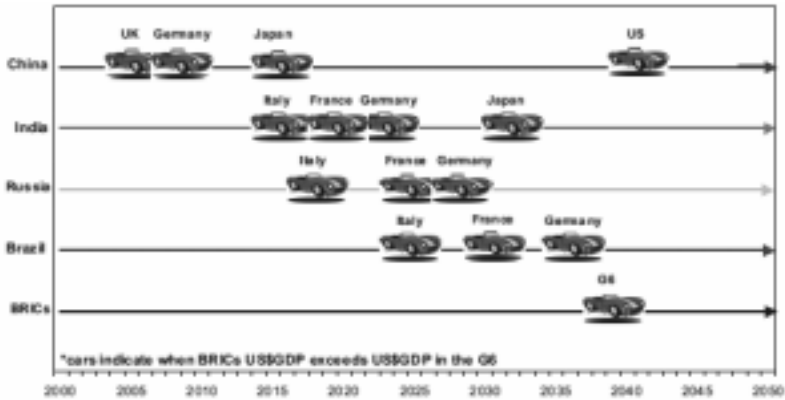
	1948	1953	1963	1973	1983	1993	2003	2007
U.S.A	21.1%	18.8%	14.9%	12.3%	11.2%	12.6%	9.8%	8.5%
China	0.9%	1.2%	1.3%	1.0%	1.2%	2.5%	5.9%	8.9%
India	2.3%	1.3%	1.0%	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%	0.8%	1.4%
Russia	1.9%	3.3%	4.3%	3.5%	4.3%	1.2%	1.7%	2.7%
Japan	0.4%	1.5%	3.5%	6.4%	8.0%	9.9%	6.4%	5.2%
Germany	1.4%	5.3%	9.3%	11.6%	9.2%	10.3%	10.2%	9.7%

(Source : WTO International Trade Statics, 2008, Table 1.6 world merchandise exports by region and selected economy, 1948, 1953, 1963, 1973, 1983, 1993, 2003, 2007.)

Today, especially the rise of China is astonishing. China's economy, as the Goldman Sachs and World Bank predicts, will overtake the U.S. economy and become number one in the world in the late 2010s on a PPP basis. Also, OECD said in 2005, "China could overtake the US and Germany to become the largest exporter in the world in the next five years."<sup>28</sup> In fact China's share of world merchandise exports became larger than that of the United States in 2007. Of course it does not mean that the China's standard of the living will catch up with that of OECD member states. However, in terms of the national power, China is highly likely to obtain considerably powerful economy due to the tremendous size of its

population. For example, if China succeeds in doubling today's GDP per capita (\$5,325 × 2), its total GDP will approximately be \$ 14 trillion, which slightly exceeds that of the U.S. Total GDP and is three times larger than that of Japan's total GDP.

Table3. Overtaking the G8 : When BRICs ' US\$GDP Would Exceed G6



(Source : Dreaming with BRICs)

As for energy consumption, the U.S. rate of increase between 1980 and 2005 was approximately 1.3%, China's was about 3.8%. In 2006, China's oil consumption was the second largest next to the United States. International Energy Agency predicts that "China, with four times as many people, overtake the united States to become the world's largest energy consumer soon after 2010."<sup>29</sup> Considering that since the seventh century, China's material economy had been the world's largest by scale for 1200 years, it might be natural that today China is returning to its proper position.

Table4. Top World Oil Consumers 2006  
( thousand barrels per day )

Rank	Country	Consumption
1	U.S.A	20,687
2	China	7,201
3	Japan	5,198
4	Russia	2,811
5	Germany	2,692
6	India	2,572
7	Canada	2,297
8	Brazil	2,217
9	S.Korea	2,180
10	Saudi Arabia	2,139
11	Mexico	2,078
12	France	1,981
13	Britain	1,812
14	Italy	1,743
15	Iran	1,679

(Source : EIA Country Energy Profiles)

India, which had been the cultural center of the world in the pre modern era, is also reviving itself. India's economy is highly likely to overtake Germany's and France about 2020 and it will be the third largest by surpassing Japan's around 2032. As the report indicates that "India has the potential to raise its US dollar income per capita in 2050 to 35 times current levels", among BRICs, only India is expected to develop its economy by maintaining more than 5 percent economic growth rate until 2050.

Table5. World Total Primary Energy

	1980	1992	2000	2005
U.S.A	78.1	86	99	100.7
China	17.5	29.3	37.5	67.1
India	4	8.9	13.5	16.2
Russia	n.a	34.5	27.7	30.3
Germany	n.a	14	14.3	14.5
Japan	15.2	19.1	22.3	22.6

(Quadrillion Btu) (Source : EIA, International Energy Annual 2005, World Total Primary Energy Consumption 1980 2005)

Also, India's scale of economy is relatively small compared to that of developed countries but if compared to that of developing countries in its region, it is actually huge. As well, India's share of world trade volume is still very tiny. It accounts for only 1.5 percent. But in the long run, as Commerce and Industry Minister Kamal Nath said, India targets 5 percent share in world trade by 2020, its share in world trade will continue to increase more and more.<sup>30</sup>

A unipolar system inevitably generates inequality among its constituents: The more the United States pursues the apex in the system, the more pressures it puts on the others. The systematic oppression provokes other states to balance against it or stimulates them to change the system in favor for them. The first one of their tactics to cope with threat from a unipolar system is to achieve economic power, as we have seen in the cases of China, India and Russia. The next tactic they should take will be to increase military capacity which cannot be realized without economic development, as Kennedy says "The fact remains that all of the major shifts in the world's *military power* balances have followed alterations in the *productive* balances."<sup>31</sup>

Fundamentally, states try to protect their security and vital interests by preventing the dominant state through the expansion of their own military power (internal balancing) and by entering into "counter hegemonic" alliance with other states (external balancing). This thesis has to inquire further into this issue in the following section.

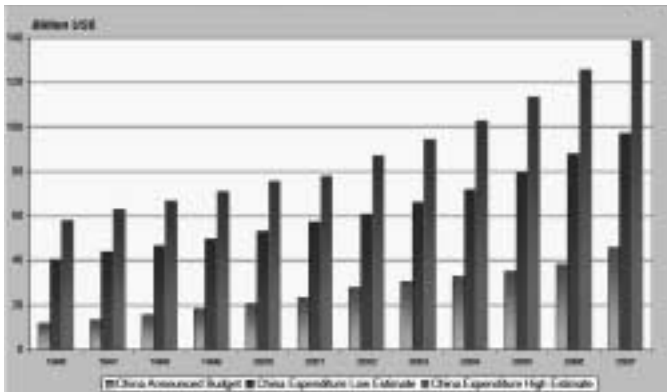


Chapter4  
The Present Situation :  
The Meaning of Nuclear Revolution and its Proliferation

Internal Balancing : Increase of Military Budget

While defense budgets of major states excluding the United States continue to decrease after the end of the cold war, China, and India, and Russia have increased drastically their defense budget in the response to their economic growth. China has increased its defense budget by more than 10 percent since 1996. In 2008, the Chinese government publicly announced that its military budget of this year was US 59 billion dollars which was approximately 18 percent increase on the previous year.

Table6. Defense Expenditures of the PRC : 1996 2007

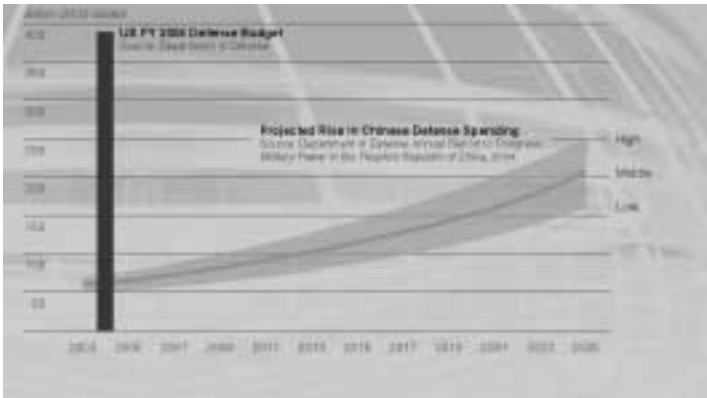


(Source : Department of Defense, Military Power of China, 2008)

However, according to CIA and the US Department of Defense which notice China's lack of disclosing information, it is considered that China's military

budget amounts to three times larger than the official amount. Today China has already become the largest military spender and the only nuclear state in the region. According to the National Intelligence Council report, the future “China will overtake Russia and others as the second largest defense spender after the United States over the next two decades and will be, by any measure, a first rate military power” through modernization, sophistication, and innovation.<sup>32</sup> The U.S. Department of Defense predicts that among rising states, “China has the greatest potential to compete militarily with the United States and field disruptive military technologies that could over time offset traditional U.S. military advantages absent U.S. counter strategies.”<sup>33</sup> For the time being, China continues to pretend that it is just following Deng Xiaoping’s axiom, but it will undoubtedly try to balance against the United States and change the system in favor for its own.

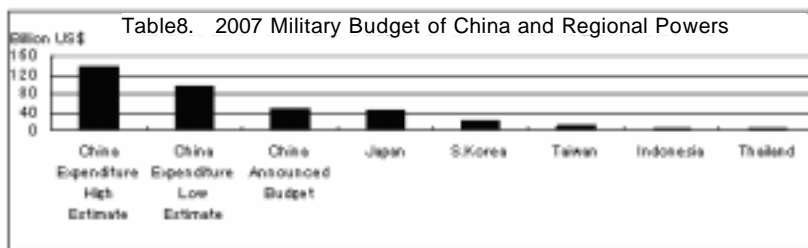
Table7. Projected Rise in Chinese Defense Spending, 2003-2025



(Source : the National Intelligence Council : Mapping the Global Future)

India also has increased its military defense budget since 1996. India’s aging weapons and its need for military modernization made it become the number one arsenal importers among developing countries by exceeding China and Saudi Ara-

bia in 2003. Yet India's military budget is still half of that of Japan and it seems meaningless to compare India with the United States at this point. Nevertheless, while its actual military power would not make sense when it tries to counterbalance against the United States, its budget is overwhelming that of Pakistan which is regarded as the second strong state in the region.

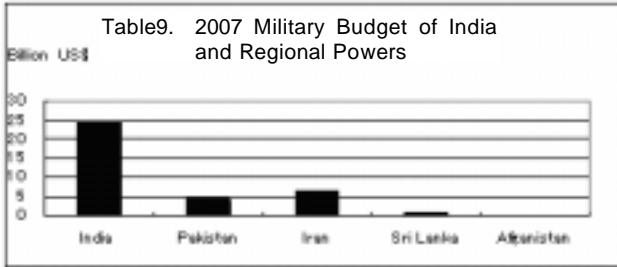


(Source : Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, and U.S. Department of Defense, Military Power of China, 2008)

**Table10. Military Expenditure of China, Japan, India and Pakistan 1999-2007**  
(Million US Dollars)

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
China	[21,530]	[23,778]	[28,010]	[33,060]	[36,552]	[40,278]	[44,322]	[51,864]	[58,265]
Japan	43,483	43,802	44,275	44,725	44,814	44,473	44,185	43,616	43,557
India	17,150	17,897	18,313	18,256	18,884	19,204	22,273	23,815	24,249
Pakistan	3311	3320	3553	3819	4077	4246	4412	4485	4517

(Source : Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database)  
China's Military Expenditure is based on the SIPRI's estimate



(Source : Stockholm International Peace Research Instiute, The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database)

This phenomenon is also applicable to the power relationship between China and its neighboring states in East Asia, as well as that between Russia and neighbors in Eastern Europe. These implications demonstrate one fact : Reinforcing national power for the purpose of counterbalance narrows the power gap between the United States and the lesser great powers while it leads them to obtain the preponderance of power in comparison with their neighboring states in their own region. Therefore, we have to pay attention that this indicates that India and China holding nuclear capability are likely to obtain the dominant military wherewithal in the region in the near future.

#### External Balancing : Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Since the end of the Second World War, the major states have attempted to balance against the United States, though “a balance of power” in the exact meaning has not been restored. Britain in 1945-48, France under the leadership of De Gaulle in the early 1960s, and the most notably, the Soviet Union challenged U.S. hegemony, but all attempts failed.

Today’s European Union’s efforts to create an independent military capabilities and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) can be considered as new challenges to balance against the United States. While the United States has a great leverage to discourage European Union from emerging as an independent pole in

the system, the emergence of SCO is quite menacing.

SCO was established in 2001. Its central members are China, Russia and four states in the Central Asia. The initial aim of SCO was to prevent the United States from obtaining rich material resources in the Central Asia and to build the new foundation to support the rise of China and Russia. SCO is steadily expanding into Middle East, Southeast Asia, by letting such states as India, Pakistan, Iran and ASEAN join the community. Considering that the core states like Russia, China and India often carry out joint military exercises, SCO is highly likely to develop anti U.S. military alliance. Moreover SCO has a great potential to make China and India become a launching pad for the acquisition of material resources that they need in order to sustain their economic growth.

#### The Meaning of Nuclear Revolution and Its Proliferation

We cannot overemphasize the fact that it is the birth of nuclear weapons that has altered the relations among great powers in the international system. However we cannot deny a paradox that nuclear weapons brought what we can barely call “peace” to the post the Second World War world.

Nuclear weapons have not been used since the United States dropped them on Hiroshima on August 6 and Nagasaki three days after in 1945. The reason is simple. Nuclear weapons are too revolutionary. They are revolutionary not only in terms of their capability to destroy societal function of states at once, but also in the terms that possession of second strike capability practically makes conquest impossible. Nuclear weapons make Carl von Clausewitz’s famous words, “War is not merely a political act, but also a real political instrument” obsolete, because this instrument is beyond just a mere instrument in that it can destroy all things including politics. As Robert Jervis says, “it is mutual second strike capability and not nuclear weapons per se that has generated the new situation.”<sup>34</sup>

Now whether the world will be transforming from unipolarity to multipolarity

or U.S. led unipolar system depends on the birth of nuclear weapons and nuclear proliferation. The U.S. grand strategy since 1945 has sought to be global hegemony by preventing the emergence of great powers in key regions of Eurasia. Nuclear superiority, according to Mearsheimer, means that “a great power has the capability to destroy an adversary’s society without fear of major retaliation against its own society.”<sup>35</sup> In short, to attain nuclear superiority enables states to achieve hegemony as the only great power in the system. To attain nuclear superiority is the ultimate necessary condition for states to achieve global hegemony.

Although the United States had monopolized nuclear weapons since 1945 until 1949, it could not achieve nuclear superiority even during the period due to the fact that it only had a very small number of nuclear weapons and did not have the effective means for delivering it to the appropriate targets. It will be also practically impossible for the United States to achieve global hegemony. It is because the acquisition of the second strike capability through the proliferation of nuclear weapons makes it impossible for the United States to attain nuclear superiority within a MAD system. Robert Jervis makes a good explanation about Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) ;

“Mutual second strike capability has drastically altered the ways in which states can use force to reach their goals. In the past, successful armies could simultaneously seize desired territory, punish the other side, limit or diminish the effectiveness of the other side’s arms, and, most important in this context, keep the adversary from doing these things to the state. Strategic nuclear weapons can inflict punishment, they can decrease the other side’s military capability ; they can even facilitate the taking of territory. But as long as the other side has a sufficient number of well protected nuclear weapons [second strike capability], they cannot prevent the adversary from destroying what the state values.”<sup>36</sup>

Additionally “nuclear possession offers assurance to the weaker great powers that their existence as independent powers will not be directly challenged by the hegemony.”<sup>37</sup> We should notice that power relations among great powers tend to be equalized under the situation created by MAD. Kenneth Waltz says :

“Because nuclear weapons alter the relation between economic capability and military power, a country with well less than half of the economic capability of the leading producer can easily compete militarily if it adopts a status quo policy and a deterrent strategy. Conversely, the leading country cannot use its economic superiority to establish military dominance, or to gain strategic advantage, over its great power rivals.”<sup>38</sup>

The United States can not make other states obey to itself and can not conquer them without total destruction, whatever overwhelming power it may have, as far as it is limited in terms of military, economy and technology in the MAD system. So long as a country can retaliate after being struck, or appears to be able to do so, attacking to any country by nuclear weapons is just like committing suicide. This power parity generated by nuclear weapons makes others possible to become a polar in the system.

As a result, the proliferation of nuclear weapons makes the dominance of the world by one single super power impossible. Such a situation leads the international society to be multi polarized. A state can not achieve global hegemony by acquiring nuclear superiority in the contemporary world where some of other major states possess the second strike nuclear capability. The nuclear proliferation paradoxically might function as peacemaking.

Yet it is still possible for one state to achieve nuclear superiority, if we assume one region as a small independent world. Holding nuclear weapons makes it possible for one state to achieve hegemony in its own region. Owing to its nuclear superiority, the United States is able to hold regional hegemony in the Western

Hemisphere. So is China in East Asia. Each of India, Russia, and possibly Iran can attain its own regional hegemony by holding nuclear weapons, while they with second strike capability prevent the United States from obtaining the global hegemony over themselves.

Anyway it is absolutely impossible for conventional weapons to fight against nuclear weapons. It means that states need to have their own nuclear weapons in order to invalidate the omnipotence of nuclear weapons. As a matter of fact, the nuclear possessors (China in East Asia, Russia in East Europe, India in Central Asia, and possibly in the future, Iran in the Middle East) are trying to be regional hegemony and create a certain order by standing at the apex of regional dominance just as the United States has been so. The attainment of nuclear superiority is synonymous with that of hegemony. The states without nuclear weapons in one region are compelled to follow what one state with nuclear weapons decides.

Thus, ironically and paradoxically, it may be that nuclear superiority of a state in one region brings not only law and order there, but also peace and prosperity. Indeed it is if we can assert that the peace and order of the whole world depends on the stability of the system in individual regions, since the world consists of individual regions. Who has ever wondered if nuclear weapons could transform anarchy into hierarchy? Who has ever imagined that the perpetual peace, Kant's dream, could be realized under the proliferation of nuclear weapons?

#### Conclusion :

#### From Unipolar Hegemonic System to Multipolar Hegemonic System

This thesis has argued that the preponderance of U.S. power and its ambition for global hegemony has caused the simultaneous emergence of China, India and Russia, which were used to be empires in their own regions. The rise of the rest



in economy and military is resulting in smashing the U.S. ambition and eventually transforming the international system from uni polarity to multi polarity.

The first chapter examined the concept of hegemony and the structural cause of the international system : states inevitably strive for hegemony. In the second chapter, I focused on explaining why the pursuit for hegemony is doomed to failure by referring to two historical precedents : France under Louis XIV and Britain under the Queen Victoria. The third chapter focused on the economic rise of China and India, which have succeeded in developing their economy at differential rate by Americanizing their system : transformation from socialist state planned economy into capitalist market economy.

The fourth chapter demonstrated that the overwhelming military power imbalance between the United States and others has repelled and led the rest to balance against it by expanding their own military wherewithal and entering into counter hegemonic alliance with other states for their survival and for the protection of their vital interests. Shanghai Cooperation Organization was taken as its good example.

Furthermore, in the fourth chapter we have seen an ironical and paradoxical aspect in the contemporary world : the stability of the system in one region depends on whether the region has nuclear superiority within ; if people in one region wish to keep peace there, people have to allow one particular state to hold nuclear superiority. This paradox offers us a polemical assumption that we have to recognize the positive, assertive peacemaking functions of satanic, evil, destructive nuclear weapons, because the peace and order of the world is based on the stability of the international system created by the fear and threat of nuclear weapons in each of individual regions.

The next, last task is to envision what the coming world will be in the situation we have seen in the previous chapters. What will be after the relative decline of the United States in economics and military?

Since 1945 the United States has achieved extra regional hegemony and has challenged to attain global hegemony. Although the U.S. pursuit for global hegemony has provoked security dilemma in the international system, it was after the demise of the Soviet Union that people around the world has become strongly aware of the U.S. global hegemony. Since 1991 the international society which used to be bipolarized in the cold war era has transformed into an uni polarized one centered on the United States. Today, security dilemma is occurring again. This time, however, is totally different. The simultaneous rising empires such as China, India and Russia, which sit outside the U.S. sphere of influence, will counterforce against it, while the United States is dealing with wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and has to continue preventing the default and checking the re emergence of Germany and Japan. As we have seen in the second chapter, un ipolarity is destined to collapse when the dominant state faces imperial overstretch and counterbalance at one time.

Today's systemic change is resulted from the fact that the United States has become degraded from unipolar extra regional hegemony to regional hegemony. As a matter of fact, the U.S. pursuit for global hegemony has stimulated other states to try to grasp regional hegemony, because security dilemma has forced them to build up both national power and nuclear second strike capability for their survival. Holding both of national economic power and military one as well has made them achieve the preponderance of power in their region where they are located, as we have seen in the third chapter and the fourth one.

Now the international system has transformed from unipolar hegemonic system to a multi polar hegemonic one. What will a multilaterally polarized global world be like? How is it different from the multi polarity which Europe experienced in the nineteenth century? Today's multi polar structure might overturn our common knowledge that multi polarity is tremendously unstable compared to other structures.

As the fourth chapter pointed out, regional hegemonies will succeed in establishing regional order due to the nuclear superiority. Replacing anarchy with hierarchy makes the region stable and peaceful. On the other hand, in the global stage, the international system is still anarchic. However the nuclear second strike capability makes any war irrational among regional hegemonic states, as mutual destroying possibility has created the balance of power among them in the MAD system. These facts tell us that the vertical dominance by regional hegemonic states and horizontal power parity among them make the international society stable and peaceful despite of its multi polarity causing a potentially unstable system.

But one problem remains. How about when one particular region lacks its regional hegemonic state with the nuclear superiority? As a matter of course, such regions will highly be likely to become the center place of conflicts in the global world. For example, one particular state in EU may seek for regional hegemony ; states in such regions as the Middle East, Africa, South East Asia, are likely to fight against each other for the establishment of regional hegemony. This may happen also in Latin America if the United States retreats from this area.

What matters is that some political, economical, military vacuum may invite unexpected visitors, political crises. Then regional hegemonic states in other regions are likely to absorb such power vacuum for the expansion of their sphere of influence. The states without their own regional super power may compete against each other for the slice of the profits, as history saw in Asia and Africa before the Second World War. Nobody can deny that this case will be repeated, more or less. Already China is absorbing power vacuum in South East Asia. There is some apprehension that China is also likely to integrate Japan into its sphere of influence in the near future if the United States evacuates its troops from East Asia. Similarly India and Russia will try to extend their sphere of influence into both the Central Asia and the Middle East.

After all, great powers like China, India, Russia and the United States will be never satisfied with current positions until they achieve global hegemony, though historical facts have proved the impossibility of their dreams as we have seen in the second chapter. From the standpoint of the political realism school this thesis belongs to, human beings and states are destined to struggle to balance against each other.

This thesis concludes as follows : the coming international society will be the multi polarized one where regional hegemonies will succeed in establishing regional order due to the nuclear superiority and the overwhelming power gap with potential rivals in the region. However ironical and paradoxical the future vision may be, this kind of “assorted cold wars” may be the peace that mankind with the will for power and impetus to survive, can acquire. The problem is that such regions where no state achieves regional hegemony will be highly likely to become powder kegs. Needless to say, this conclusion never hints that letting one particular state of any region all over the world have the nuclear superiority is any effective way to create global peace. This thesis only offered a vision of the coming international society deduced from real facts.

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