

Military Planning for East Asia: A Clausewitzian Approach

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Abstract

Carl von Clausewitz's tome *On War* provides a rich, conceptual, logic-based, practical framework for addressing the challenges of military planning in East Asia. It remains relevant into the twenty-first century particularly for a protracted crisis defined by strategic maneuver or in a limited attritional war. US military planners must take great care to provide graduated, partial, and controllable options at the concrete level of campaigns and ultimately engagements and combat, thereby providing decision space to policymakers.

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In the Asia-Pacific, from the Straits of Malacca to the Taiwan Straits to the Sea of Japan, there are real and seemingly intensifying disputes over symbolic sovereign territory, resource rights on such territory, and questions of national cultural identity.¹ Meanwhile, the long-held status quo of allied socioeconomic hegemony and US forward military power is being challenged, in part due to organic economic and demographic trends in the region that have created the first ever "intra-Asian market."² Specifically, as Chinese wealth and military budgets increase, new military capabilities are supporting a legitimate wish to secure China's own interests as well as a more expansive vision for regional leadership.³ At the same time, the US armed services are facing a combination of unforgiving domestic budgetary trends, the exponential expense of new generations of weapons platforms in all domains, rising personnel and maintenance costs, and incremental mastery of technological trends by potential adversaries.⁴ These trends could harbor a destabilizing geopolitical agenda and challenge current US military planning.⁵ In the past, force

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planning faced fewer budgetary, foreign policy, or physical dilemmas, relying upon unquestioned preponderance of offensive forces and allies. More generically, the classic US focus has been on achieving absolute military victory delivered by “command of the sea and air” or preponderant offensive US forces using “precision strike” and “dominant maneuver” to secure early, comprehensive advantages on the battlefield.⁶

However, the highest level military leaders in today’s Department of Defense are explicitly, and repeatedly, making a very blunt point about this historical approach: the United States continues relying upon it at its own peril. The ability to use the threat of overwhelming force to compel de-escalation and political capitulation is steadily waning in both geopolitical value and physical and budgetary feasibility as the world and East Asia in particular become globalized and multipolar.

As luck would have it, a rich conceptual, logic-based, and practical framework exists for tackling these difficulties: Carl von Clausewitz’s classic *On War*. Clausewitz remains relevant into the twenty-first century because he purposefully employed a methodology that strongly avoided coming to rigid, universalistic, and “for all time” conclusions on applying the military art. Clausewitz focused on prosecuting battles or engagements only to the extent needed to achieve bounded policy goals. Today, the epitome of US operational art in the East Asian maritime environment would be to end a future militarized conflict via strategic frustration of the adversary’s will rather than strategic annihilation of its deployed forces or socioeconomic powerbase.⁷ This “frustration,” according to Clausewitz, would be based on designing operational campaigns that affect probabilities of ultimate victory or defeat in one’s favor while enacting as little battle damage as possible, so that the magnitude and duration of the conflict do not outstrip the limited (but still serious) conflicts of interest in play in the globalized, interconnected East Asian political economy. This article first draws out Clausewitz’s basic logical and conceptual framework for using discriminating judgment in campaign planning by military professionals. Clausewitz recommended and exemplified a cognitive approach based equally on the use of deductive reason alongside intuition, factual knowledge, and experiential knowledge, in the process creating an open interpretive framework for understanding and analyzing a given strategic situation that could involve open warfare.⁸ Second, given that Clausewitz focused above all on the central importance of interstate politics in a given historical era

and geographic area, the article explores the broad geopolitical characteristics of East Asia today and exemplifies those core “theater strategic” characteristics that will infuse and constrain US planning goals and methods in any given crisis. In brief, the primary finding here is that East Asia offers a challenging geopolitical context of mixed interests and limited disputes over both congruent and competing policy positions, defined principally by a complex array of purely bilateral interests that do not involve complete ideological enmity as in the earlier Cold War period. Finally, the argument shows that throughout his text Clausewitz differentiated between wars undertaken for purposes of comprehensive political occupation or destruction of standing military capabilities on the one hand and negotiated settlements based on reaching a balance of interests between the two contending sides on the other. Clausewitz sometimes dubbed the latter as either offensive or defensive war defined by a “limited aim” both politically and militarily.⁹ To deal with the growing complexity and fragmented geopolitics of a multipolar East Asian regional system, the constant input of regional, subregional, and country experts, or area experts, is absolutely required if the theoretical and practical mandates of Clausewitz’s *On War* are to be observed and met in the construction and implementation of military campaign plans.

Clausewitzian Logic and Military Planning

The more polished, refined, and edited first section of *On War* defined roughly two categories of military strategy at a theater level for those armed interstate disputes that might fall well short of regime change, homeland occupation, or comprehensive destruction of the enemy’s fielded military. At the low end of both political and military aims, Clausewitz described campaigns based mainly on skillful maneuvering to signal superior abilities for battlefield victory. At the higher end, he described a more decisive form of frontline “disarming” of the opponent’s currently fielded forces, but still well short of annihilation-based warfare. Notably, even in the case of serious frontline destruction of forces in one or more battles, the focus would not be either total political capitulation or complete military annihilation but instead the imposition of greater and greater costs through attritional destruction. The military objective would *not* be comprehensive defeat, in short, but rather a steady increase in the opponent’s estimation that this attritional cost imposition would likely continue well past the opponent’s own

break-even point for hostilities, leading to a newly accepted balance of interests between contending parties.

Political-Military and Strategic-Tactical Military Theory

Throughout *On War*, Clausewitz argued firmly for a dialectical view (pose, counterpose) of both the combined political-military and strategic-tactical tensions facing high-level political and military leaders—an approach useful for today’s East Asian dilemmas. In particular, he argued that neither high-level policy, or what we might today call national security strategy, nor military procurements, training, positioning, and employment tactics on the field could be cleanly separated from each other in either conceptual or practical terms; the very “logic” of war served to always bind them together.¹⁰ Furthermore, what one might today call theater strategy for an entire, holistic regional geopolitical environment could not, in Clausewitz’s mind, be separated from what today is called the operational level of war, or as US joint doctrine defines it, “how, when, where, and for what purpose major forces will be employed . . . to achieve operational and strategic objectives.”¹¹

His final logical and practical framework can be reasonably portrayed in figure 1.¹² While he never used the term “operational” as defined in US documents per se, he essentially accorded great importance to this middle level of combined political-military planning via his overwhelming focus on military “genius” at weaving together sets of campaigns, battles, and engagements to reach war goals. In his view, combat-intensive large battles and small tactical engagements alike would service larger theater campaigns and the ultimate, strategic-level “political object” or “political aims.”¹³ As shown in figure 1, for Clausewitz, adept strategic planning would not just concern itself with what he dubbed “the war as a whole” or what we would call today “grand strategy.” Instead, Clausewitz intentionally conceived of strategizing as a thought process in which real-time data on the socioeconomic and political contexts of both adversaries and allies alike would constantly infuse the production and execution of theater military campaigns against specific adversaries (their motives, goals, interests, socioeconomic limitations and vulnerabilities, and so on).¹⁴ And in partial contradiction with the extremely technocratic way that US operational campaign plans are bureaucratically produced in terms of specific bottom-up military mission sets such as close air support, air interdiction, air superiority, logistics, and so forth, he refused to isolate

what we today call tactical tasks and missions from the imperatives and constraints of strategic-level political intentions.

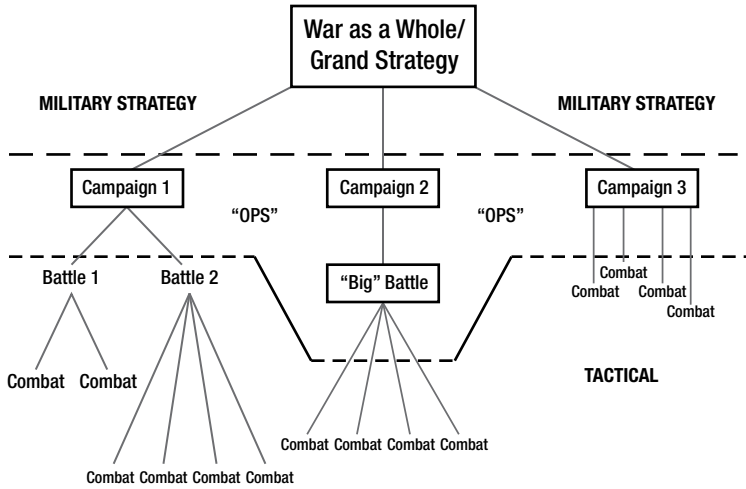


Figure 1. Levels of warfare planning and execution

Nonetheless, Clausewitz saw himself as creating a thoroughly combat-centric theory of war. As recent scholarship has amply shown, he was himself a battle-hardened veteran with firsthand experience in personal armed combat at the tactical level of warfare, and indeed, he sought out this dangerous battlefield experience with pride and relish.¹⁵ It is perhaps this very experience that led Clausewitz to admit that there was an innate “grammar” of warfare—an inner character—that was utterly defined by armed violence at the tactical level, focused on rendering the opponent defenseless so as to impose one’s overall aim or purpose upon them.¹⁶ As he wrote, “Engagements mean fighting. The object of fighting is the destruction or defeat of the enemy. The enemy in the individual engagement is simply the opposing fighting force. . . . [T]he complete or partial destruction of the enemy must be regarded as the sole object of all engagements. . . . By direct destruction we mean tactical success.”¹⁷

Indeed, the key point that guides all of *On War* is the “idea” of combat, whether or not it actually takes place: “However many forms combat takes . . . it is inherent in the very concept of war that everything that occurs must originally derive from combat. . . . [W]henver armed forces, that is armed individuals, are used, the idea of combat must be present. . . .

[T]he fact that only one means exists constitutes a strand that runs through the entire web of military activity and really holds it together.”¹⁸

The idea of combat carries a virtual weight in planning, even when designing fundamentally deterrent and defensive strategies based on limited policy goals.¹⁹ For Clausewitz, political results from military actions, or even threatened military actions,²⁰ could only be guaranteed in the end by individual force-on-force “duels,” which would take place as part of tactical engagements, themselves woven together by commanders as parts of larger battles and campaigns to achieve a strategic behavioral effect within a given theater. Thus he stressed that: “If the idea of fighting underlies every use of the fighting forces, then their employment means simply the planning and organizing of a series of [armed] engagements. *The whole of military activity must therefore relate directly or indirectly to the engagement.* The end for which a soldier is recruited, clothed, armed, and trained . . . is simply that he should fight at the right place and the right time” (emphasis in original, throughout, except where noted).²¹

In short, understanding high-level national policy in its entirety meant understanding the tactical meaning of those policies on the battlefield: “We maintain therefore that only great tactical successes can lead to great strategic ones . . . *tactical successes are of paramount importance* in war.”²²

But what exactly is “the right place and right time” for tactical successes, and what determines tactical success? In answering this fundamental question, Clausewitz logically ended in a different place than combat itself in his final determination of what drove the larger purpose of war, despite war’s inner character being defined by combat. This was in large part because he could not derive the actual historical variations in the types, intensities, durations, and outcomes of what he dubbed “real” warfare simply by focusing on the pure concept of tactical violence alone. Completely counterposed tactical violence was in his view a constant, always based on undiluted efforts to force the other side to submit to one’s will via one-sided victory between small units. But war as a holistic enterprise was obviously quite dynamic in pace, lethality, and consequences, with the final strategic result often being negotiated settlements and partial political outcomes between disputants.²³ As he argued, “Since war is not an act of senseless passion but is controlled by its political object, the value of this object must determine the sacrifices to be made for it in magnitude and also in duration. Once the expenditure of effort exceeds the value of the political object, the object must

be renounced and peace must follow.”²⁴ And this was because, in any given war, social and political groups are fighting for some sort of collectively defined cause, making interstate war fundamentally different from a personal duel in terms of the complexities of costs, benefits, and motivations.

Given his eventual focus on both domestic and interstate politics as the driving force of any “real” war, Clausewitz repeatedly balanced his strong emphasis on disarming battles with an appreciation for socio-economic and political limits. His signal contribution was perhaps the theoretical and empirical argument that the very nature of interstate war meant two things simultaneously: first, unvarnished battlefield disarming of the opponent’s fielded capabilities at a tactical or “theater strategic” level; and second, the organic reality of likely constraints and boundaries on the totality of that self-same destruction, so as to achieve a balance of interests both within one’s own polity and in relations with other powers, including the enemy itself. Indeed, he ended up dubbing the latter dynamic “Real War” in the concluding section and chapters of his work, so as to emphasize the distinction between purely theoretical absolutes and actual war in practice.²⁵ This is extremely important in the context of Asian strategic geopolitics defined by limited bilateral conflicts of interest, in which it is emphatically *not* the case—even in the Japan-China relationship—that bilateral and multilateral political relations are utterly defined by what Clausewitz called “pure hatred.”²⁶

East Asian Geopolitics: Mixed Interests and Limited Disputes

The most central interstate political reality that will constrain, bound, and channel US campaign planning in this arc of Asia is simple yet often glossed over or ignored in ongoing debates. From the Japanese main islands and the Yellow Sea in the farthest north, to the Malacca Straits and the Andaman Sea farthest southwest, this region is defined principally by limited conflicts of interest that exist in a globalized, interdependent economic setting. Furthermore, and just as importantly, these conflicts exist amidst a backdrop of extremely fragmented sovereign political interests represented by complex patterns in bilateral and trilateral ties. Territorial and cultural crises can be expected to erupt unpredictably based on shifting bilateral commitments rather than on strong, multilateral alliances and institutions as exist in Western Europe. In any given

such bilateral dispute, both the main disputants and their neighbors will want to limit hostilities below the level of comprehensive regional warfare between two contending blocks of states.²⁷

The end of warfare, in short—even involving attritional battlefield destruction of frontline forces—is unlikely to be the seeking of some sort of decisive political hegemony by one block of states over another.²⁸ Instead, such unpredictable flare-ups are much more likely to be based squarely upon sharp bilateral enmities fueled by overlapping combinations of negative territorial, ideological, economic, and strategic-security issues. However, simultaneous positive cultural or economic relations will generally predominate in foreign relations in most periods, with negative political-ideological or strategic-security divides taking over only in an unpredictable, up-and-down cycle dependent on domestic politics and economics as much as international events.²⁹

In this evolving context, US conventional force hegemony is on the decline not simply because of the rapid growth of long-range, surface-to-surface Chinese missile capabilities that could conceivably wrest control of the air and sea from the US Air Force and Navy.³⁰ US military preponderance is also undermined by evolving dynamics at the political level.

Something that remains underappreciated in purely defense-centric debates is the wide array of innate political constraints facing any likely operational planning process for East Asia. Even as the United States loses its relative military edge, it is operating amidst an exponential increase in common free-market interconnections and a continued inability of “friendly” regional states to come together behind common goals at a social and political level of relations.³¹ Across bilateral relationships in East Asia, there are markedly different mercantile, energy, fishery, sea lane, and symbolic-territorial concerns of highly varying intensities.³² East Asia is thus severely fragmented in its sovereign politics even as it is becoming more densely interwoven in the economic sphere. This means that any US military intervention will likely not be in support of a clearly shared and collectively defined political cause based in turn on an overarching sense of common values and territorial goals.³³ This of course flies in the face of Washington’s grand-strategic approach and presumption of “collective security” based on broadly and deeply shared liberal principals and treaty commitments.

For instance, sharpening Japan-China disputes include (1) the strategic security concern of keeping open access to key sea lines of communication

for external energy shipments and for outgoing trade; (2) the mercantile interest and security concern of energy and mineral exploitation in disputed areas of oceanic territory; (3) the issue of food security linked to rich fisheries; and (4) certainly not least, highly symbolic territorial disputes with strong “sovereign identity” aspects, often linked to very sensitive historical grievances over past war traumas and linked firmly to internal nationalist movements at elite and popular levels.³⁴ Yet, these quite specific Japan-China concerns are not shared or defined in exactly the same way by other bilateral dyads such as South Korea–China, Indonesia-China, Malaysia-China, and so forth, unlike for instance the fairly uniform, highly ideological, monolithic nature of the old Cold War division of Europe, and indeed, South Korea and Japan often have as much animus and distrust between each other as with China.³⁵

To give a South Pacific example: Australian active participation in multiple different “trilateral” Coast Guard visits and exercises with countries such as Japan, India, and the Republic of Korea could be seen as a grand linking of South Asia, Northeast Asia, and the Asia-Pacific to contain China. However, it is actually done by Canberra less to show a collectively united front towards Beijing than because (1) being “Western,” these are the nations that it has more organic social and political cultural ties with, and (2) Australia has a great fear of a US-Chinese standoff that catches it in the middle. These latter two factors have led to a “soft balance” approach via intraregional trilateral exercises not tied to any particular territorial dispute, rather than “hard balance” in more muscular Southeast Asian-centered patrols with the United States, where the most frictions are actually taking place.³⁶

In short: parties within both Southeast and Northeast Asia are experiencing widely varying degrees of cultural and political friction with a growing and newly assertive China as well as with each other, even as all states, simultaneously, are enriching each other in varying degrees.³⁷ The irony is that this is at least partially due to US design, based on a so-called bilateralist “hub and spokes” system in which, traditionally, the United States was the hub that provided development aid, very generous open-trade preferences (allowing protectionist policies by the bilateral allies), military equipment and training, and finally, basing of US forces and steady US deterrent threats to individual nations (spokes) rather than an overarching multilateral alliance or economic institution.³⁸ Not surprisingly, since the end of the World War II, East Asia has become

economically connected by a complex web of intensive, but still largely bilateral, free trade, expanded trade, and preferential trade agreements; transnational financial investments; and interstate development aid relationships. While multinational corporations and the opening of the Chinese market to investments and manufacturing have multiplied economic ties at a trans-state and interstate level, bilateralism remains the hallmark of sovereign state relations.³⁹

Meanwhile, a bevy of middle or rising middle powers (Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, South Korea) have become deeply reliant on the massive Chinese economy. For most Southeast Asian states, this means relying on China as a consistent buyer of both lower-end manufactured goods and extractive commodities; for more developed Northeast Asian polities such as South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan, as well as Singapore and Australia, it means that China is a choice destination for high-profit foreign direct investment and manufacturing deals.⁴⁰ East Asia is thus now geopolitically defined by a complex network of material interests involving the first-ever true “intra-Asian” market.⁴¹

What does this mean in the case of an escalation over symbolic, strategic, or resource-rich territories? Interviews of regional experts with extensive diplomatic track-II ties to officials, academics, and think tanks in the region, as well as interviews of operations research analysts and experienced war-game designers, have shown that it remains extremely context-dependent and ambiguous as to whether Southeast Asian and Northeast Asian states will come together in support of collective security goals either across subregions or even within their own subregion.⁴² In the South Pacific, for instance, even culturally western, highly developed Australia is keen for US support but equally keen to view matters of Taiwan, the East China Sea, or even a Vietnam-Philippines-China dispute as a distant affair in terms of its own core interests, being first and foremost concerned with the more nearby power of Indonesia.⁴³ Indeed, there is a low probability that even South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan will see eye to eye on territorial, cultural, energy, and commercial disputes with a rising China, including possible future armed disputes between Taiwan and China.

South Korea, for instance, has profound, millennia-old core cultural connections to mainland China that innately ease relations in comparison to either the tortured recent history of Japan or the increasingly independent, indigenous identity movement in Taiwan. Moreover, the

so-called “Greater Seoul Metropolitan Area” is just as much populated by transnational Chinese as indigenous Koreans, with the pro-China business community generally insistent on not letting ideological, security, and territorial issues undermine mutual profits.⁴⁴ At the same time, however, recent history has already shown that a sudden crisis with the North involving deaths of South Korean soldiers and sailors, in which China takes North Korea’s side or remains effectively neutral in both its regional diplomacy and in UN Security Council deliberations, can suddenly and dramatically dampen cooperative relations based on such foundations.⁴⁵ Elites remain strongly divided on whether Japan or China represents the greater long-term threat to the growth of a genuinely new South Korean polity, with conservatives worried more in a realpolitik sense of rapid Chinese growth (and Chinese lack of condemnation for the North’s volatile excesses), and with progressives focused on the human rights sufferings under both a US-supported series of military autocrats in the Cold War and Japanese abuses towards women and laborers during their 1910–45 occupation period. Conservatives tend to support very strict conditions for any cooperative economic, military, and cultural engagement of a hostile and distrustful North Korea, a position generally supported by Japan but opposed by China. In contrast, progressives are highly critical of their own conservative elites and of the United States, whether in regard to the role of past conservative leaders in the period of Japanese occupation, the causes of the Korean War (i.e., whether it was a true global ideological contest or an indigenous civil war exacerbated by external meddling), or a hard attitude towards the North today, thus calling for relatively unconditional engagement of the North to resolve conflict while distancing South Korea from Japan, in line with Beijing’s preferences.⁴⁶ However, even South Korea would be extremely concerned about a potential Chinese shutdown and blockade of the straits and super-container ports in and around Taiwan, given the reality of sea lines of communication.⁴⁷

Meanwhile, Japan remains extremely concerned about punitive missile attacks against vulnerable US bases on its territory, if the Japanese government and people should choose to allow base assets to be used in a Taiwan crisis. Domestic politicians would be especially concerned about a scenario where the Japanese navy and air force become involved in frontline operations with their ally’s services, as now allowed under new legislative guidelines for interpreting Article 9 of its Peace Constitution (e.g., missile

defense, ISR support, frontline destroyer protection of carriers, or even frontline logistical supply of ammunition, parts, and food for US ships at sea with Japanese logistics assets).⁴⁸ Japanese conglomerates, likewise, are heavily tied into the Chinese economy. Therefore, without substantial “horizontal escalation” of Chinese goals and methods that affect players beyond Taiwan itself, Japanese support in a collective security mission is far from preordained.⁴⁹

Because of such fluidity in relations, all parties desperately want the United States to come to their own quite particular defense and fear “abandonment” in this regard—but will try very hard, nonetheless, to view any bilateral crisis not directly involving them as a localized affair.⁵⁰ Thus multipolar competition in this region, unlike in the Cold War European theater, is fluid, opportunistic, and domestically dynamic, based on strictly limited and bounded conflicts of interest. Any one state is just as likely to sit out a crisis to preserve economic ties with China (or avoid China’s military wrath) as it is to come to the aid of another Asian party who is likewise a friend or ally of the United States.⁵¹ The onus of major military threats and military employment in a crisis rests squarely upon the United States.⁵²

At the same time, these factors taken together arguably also diminish the credibility of any US threats to undertake deep strikes against politically and symbolically charged homeland targets of the adversary. It is not just a competitor’s nuclear arsenal that makes such threatened strikes incredibly risky; it is also to an increasing degree against the interests of the United States and its key friends and allies in a globalized economy.⁵³ Also, threats of strikes on the Chinese mainland may butt up against the reality of large and increasing Chinese foreign aid flows to Southeast Asian nations such as Indonesia for sorely needed infrastructure investment in energy, roads, ports, and railroads, an increasing trend that divides these aid recipients from the United States on economic concerns even as US military cooperation increases.⁵⁴

One could therefore reasonably infer from the ongoing geopolitical circumstances that the overarching campaign goal would be to deny or frustrate another power’s attempts at aggressive maritime denial operations—but without escalation to a wider war.⁵⁵ The second part of this strategic and operational policy goal is often only implied in debates yet is central to the motivations and national interests of each of America’s commitments and bilateral understandings with East Asia powers.

Namely, such parties want the United States to take a leadership role in successfully thwarting any belligerent Chinese efforts at undue regional hegemony, whether the latter takes the form of seizing sovereign territory, lionizing the riches of such territory, or closing off open access to trade and financial deals freely with all states.⁵⁶ However, all would prefer that the United States do the latter without causing a ruinous region-wide war that would have especially negative returns for those Asian parties not directly involved in the given escalating dispute of the moment.⁵⁷

Applying Clausewitz's Framework to East Asia

How should we apply Clausewitz's arguments, concepts, and logic to the mixed and limited aims of East Asian sovereign competition? Clausewitz wound down his epic tome by restating a core thesis: "That the political view should wholly cease to count on the outbreak of war is hardly conceivable unless pure hatred made all wars a struggle for life and death. . . . Subordinating the [strategic] political point of view to the [tactical] military would be absurd, for it is policy that has created war. Policy is the guiding intelligence."⁵⁸ Or in other words: the guiding intelligence of operations would only match the killing hatred of tactical combats in the field if war were truly unmitigated and unfiltered by economics, domestic politics, international politics (including those of allies), weapons technology, financial matters, or in short: "every sort of extraneous matter."⁵⁹ For Clausewitz, the latter all served to create "modifications in practice," so that a theoretically absolute form of warfare, based on regime change, occupation of the enemy's homeland, and/or true physical destruction of nearly all of their latent as well as currently fielded military capacity, was a scenario he viewed as unlikely in most actual historical cases of warfare planning and execution.⁶⁰ Looking back to the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 from his own perch in the early nineteenth century, Clausewitz warned his own leaders that the example of Napoleon could be ill-suited to many interstate wars, given that Napoleon's military rampages were first and foremost a direct reflection of specific social conditions emanating from the domestic French Revolution.⁶¹ "Only with the rise of Bonaparte have there been campaigns . . . where superiority has consistently led to the enemy's collapse. Before his time, every campaign had ended with the winning side attempting to reach a state of balance in which it could maintain itself. At that point, the progress of victory stopped. . . . This culminating point

in victory is bound to recur in every future war in which the [total] destruction of the enemy cannot be the military aim, and this will presumably be true of most wars.”⁶²

In this regard, the evolving military and economic balance of power in East Asia is not completely unique, as vexing and convoluted as it may seem when compared to the bipolar Cold War. Concern with achieving a balance of military power and national interests in a (hopefully limited) war, in a multipolar and fragmented regional system lacking in clear alliance patterns, has not only happened before but was the normal state of great power affairs prior to the totalizing ideological disputes of the twentieth century.⁶³

As Clausewitz took great pains to describe and explain throughout *On War*, not all political and territorial rivalries lead to wars over completely opposed political stakes. It is precisely the level and type of political stakes that should determine operational military means and goals, including the types of targets and the level of destruction leveled upon one’s opponent. As he noted, “Generally speaking, a military objective that matches the political object in scale will, if the latter is reduced, be reduced in proportion. . . . Thus it follows that . . . wars can have all degrees of importance and intensity, ranging from a war of extermination down to simple armed observation.”⁶⁴

Importantly for the East Asian political context of limited conflicts of interest, ideologically opposed and tightly bound enemy blocks of states remain extremely unlikely as a true geopolitical scenario. Clausewitz finally deduced that wars may be started, fought, and ended long before major battles take place because the attacking side—the side with the “positive purpose”—may be convinced, far short of sustained combat, of “the improbability of victory.”⁶⁵ Alternately, serious destruction could occur via far more intensive use of engagements in lethal ways, thereby destructively imposing costs that outstrip the aggressor’s policy goals. In both cases, notably, he argued that costs could still fall short of a major policy loss by one party based upon an equally lopsided physical victory: “The aim of disarming the enemy (the object of war in the abstract) . . . is in fact not always encountered in reality, and need not be fully achieved as a condition of peace. On no account should theory raise it to the level of a law. Many treaties have been concluded before one of the antagonists could be called powerless—even before the balance of power

had been seriously altered. Not every war need be fought until one side collapses.”⁶⁶

Victory at the strategic as opposed to the tactical level, in other words, was not for Clausewitz an unvarying entity that remained the same in definition from beginning to end of hostilities.

Such mixed, less-than-total outcomes are conceptually and factually possible because, in the absence of completely ideological hostility and enmity, “as soon as preparations for a war begin, the world of reality takes over from the world of abstract thought” so that “the interaction of the two sides tends to fall short of maximum effort.” In Clausewitz’s view, even in highly destructive wars, it would be rare that the “full resources” of both sides would truly “be mobilized immediately,” and indeed, “in many cases, the proportion of the means of resistance that cannot immediately be brought to bear is much higher than might at first be thought.” This is because war is never about the “fighting forces proper” alone, that is, that small percentage of the population and the national budget already mobilized for a war effort.⁶⁷ Instead, domestic politics would ultimately decide just how committed the populations and their leaders would be to drawing upon their own full efforts and the material bounty of their own country. Thus, beyond the “purity” of warfare at the tactical level, “War . . . always lasts long enough for influence to be exerted on the goal and for its own course to be changed in one way or another—long enough, in other words, to remain subject to the action of a superior intelligence.”⁶⁸ And in gauging a nation’s commitment to the continuance of mixed political and military efforts, the dynamic and evolving outputs of the hostilities themselves, in terms of both ongoing costs and benefits, would provide key data for decision makers: “Of even greater influence on the decision to make peace [than offensive success] is the consciousness of all the effort that has already been made and of the efforts yet to come.”

All of this led Clausewitz inexorably towards a conclusion perhaps at odds with the US reigning joint-doctrinal focus on “victory” via “full spectrum dominance”: “We see then that when one side cannot *completely* disarm the other, the desire for peace on either side will rise and fall with the *probability of further successes and the amount of effort these would require*” (emphasis added).⁶⁹ So in armed conflicts defined by limited and mixed interests between many contending parties, the core questions would be: How does one best raise actual costs for the adversary

short of major escalation? How does one best raise the threat of prospective large costs should fighting continue? Throughout hostilities, how does one impact perceived probabilities of adversary disadvantage?

In the first interpretation and description of the problem, limited war could conceivably be extremely limited in means, based on one side convincing the other of the improbability of victory through superior maneuvering and massing of forces for strategic effect. In the second interpretation, the high costs already sustained in attritional battle could lead one to quit the affair before yet more costly damage has occurred via the further mobilization of societies,⁷⁰ or as Clausewitz succinctly put it, wars can end short of actual strategic victory because of “unacceptable cost.”⁷¹ This second category of wars of limited aims meant “destroying enough of the enemy’s power to force him to renounce his intentions.” In such scenarios, “The . . . question is how to influence the enemy’s expenditure of effort; in other words, how to make the war more costly to him. The enemy’s expenditure of effort consists in the *wastage of his forces*, our *destruction* of them.”⁷² One would then use very clear offensive victories at the tactical level of combats and engagements to serve a more limited campaign goal of checking the adversary’s fighting power: “What is the concept of defense? The parrying of a blow. . . . A campaign is defensive if we wait for our theater of operations to be invaded. . . . In other words, our [operational] offensive takes place within our own positions or theater of operations. . . . But if we are really waging war, we must return the enemy’s blows. . . . So the defensive form of war is not a simple shield, but a shield made up of well-directed blows.”⁷³

But toward what operational campaign goal does one direct this “shield made up of well-directed blows”? Despite *On War*’s obvious focus on destruction of the opponent’s forces, Clausewitz still referred to such defensive campaigns as having a “negative aim,” in which victory simply meant convincing the opponent to give up the fight: “If a negative aim—that is, the use of every means available for pure resistance—gives an advantage in war, the advantage need only be enough to *balance* any superiority the opponent may possess: in the end his political object will not seem worth the effort it costs. He must then renounce his policy.”⁷⁴ The point is simply to make the opponent’s strategic geopolitical objectives too costly or perhaps even impossible to achieve within the bounds of their political will and attendant politically available resources.⁷⁵

Therefore, assuming that one gets the boundaries of adversary will and intent right, ongoing diplomatic negotiations should be helped, not hindered, by the threat and use of force at a campaign-level of warfare. In this regard, a viable concept of operations for wars defined by negotiable, limited aims would be based upon posing the credible threat of an operational stalemate that, while not winning per se, would produce a cost-benefit ratio unfavorable for escalating aggression.⁷⁶

Clausewitz and Limited Aims in East Asia

This finally brings us to a conclusion and prescription that may not sit well with the technocratic approach of the US military, which is focused perennially on a worst-case, capabilities-centric method of planning, with a focus on achieving overwhelming advantage at the tactical level of war. In the recent past, this has been appropriately referred to as an “effects-based” approach that relies on characteristics of “war-fighting domains” to supply one’s theory of war, for example “airpower theory” or “sea-power theory.” Such domain-centered theories of war have traditionally existed alongside associated micro-level, technology-driven tactics for acquiring the information needed to map the battlefield and skillful employment of the long-range weapons needed to leverage that information for destructive effect to decisively win force-on-force duels.⁷⁷

In possible contrast, Clausewitz argued that a correct assessment of relative political conditions should be given the utmost, defining role in creating the foundation for all combined political-military planning efforts. And as our brief examination of regional dynamics has shown, even between stiff competitors, support for the overall international system in place is still a defining attribute of East Asian geopolitics. It is within this larger context that Scott Weaver of the US Army’s Strategic Studies Institute has cautioned, “[L]ong range strike and precision attack Air-Sea Battle tactics should not be mistaken for an effective military solution. Taking down [Chinese regional] anti-access systems, if not integrated into a [politically informed] theater campaign, would be wasteful at best, and at worst could lure the U.S. into a broader conflict it did not intend nor have the political will to sustain.”⁷⁸ Or as Clausewitz himself more generally stated nearly 200 years ago: “[A]n attacker can overshoot the point at which, if he stopped and assumed the defensive, there would still be a chance of success—that is, of equilibrium. It is therefore important to calculate this point correctly when planning the

campaign. An attacker may otherwise take on more than he can manage and, as it were, get into debt.”⁷⁹

This calls for devising limited operational campaigns that reflect as closely as possibly Clausewitz’s mantra of correctly assessing the true “policy object” in play between two disputants: “If you want to overcome your enemy you must match your effort against his power of resistance, which can be expressed as the product of two inseparable factors, viz. *the total means at his disposal* and *the strength of his will*. . . . But the strength of his will is much less easy to determine [than his available means] and can only be gauged approximately by the strength of the motive animating it. Assuming you arrive in this way at a reasonably accurate estimate of the enemy’s power of resistance, you can adjust your efforts accordingly.”⁸⁰

The key sentence in this quotation is the last one. “Adjusting your efforts accordingly” depends on, as Clausewitz notes, a complex combination of both the adversary’s means and the “strength of his will.”

Remember that Clausewitz divided his logical, conceptual, and practical attention between wars focused on extreme goals of complete adversary political-territorial capitulation (and probable decimation of the other side’s standing forces) versus wars that were about a new negotiated settlement based on partial conflicts of will. For the latter, Clausewitz admonished would-be military planners that rather than focusing on “a maximum [operational] effort, if a maximum could be defined,” they should instead “adopt a middle course,” in which a commander “would act on the principle of using no greater force, and setting himself no greater military aim, than would be sufficient for the achievement of his political purpose.” And again, referring back to the driving importance of politics and policy at what we would call a “grand strategic level,” Clausewitz cautioned that a prudent planner in a situation of mixed and limited interests “must renounce the need for absolute success in each given case [of combat or battle],” because shooting for a “maximum effort” in every force-on-force clash might easily create a situation in which “all proportion between action and political demands would be lost: means would cease to be commensurate with ends.”⁸¹

This is especially challenging when one considers the literally byzantine array of bilateral interests between and among southeast and northeast Asian nations, all of which themselves have strong ties with mainland China.⁸² As Clausewitz argued, even in the best of circumstances, each

side's actual strategic intentions and motivations during a militarized crisis or limited war are often hazy despite intelligence reports, the statements of diplomats, and military actions in the field,⁸³ a reality that game theorists today argue endlessly about.⁸⁴ "The degree of force that must be used against the enemy depends on the scale of political demands on either side," Clausewitz wrote. "These demands, so far as they are known, would show what efforts each must make; but they seldom are fully known."⁸⁵

In today's world, this naturally brings one into the realm of real-time crisis bargaining, which will innately be infused by political judgments and contextual area expertise. The question for campaign planning (and procurement strategies to support such plans) is thus how to use combined forces in a crisis to bring about adversary responses that supply as much "political data" as possible for the benefit of decision makers, particularly on actual rather than theorized adversary strategic intentions, motivations, and goals.⁸⁶

This, in turn, points to the importance of regional, country, and area experts in both peacetime contingency planning and during "crisis action planning" at an operational level—something not yet done consistently at lower levels of operational design. For instance, this might be done via concerted staffing of geopolitically savvy experts in the operational assessment teams of the strategy division of theater-level air operation centers that are overseeing all combined air operations for a given theater campaign or set of campaigns. Such experts would work with more technically focused officers to immediately assess the likely, evolving political, economic, and social effects of ongoing strikes in the 48–72-hour "joint air tasking cycle" that the Air Force currently uses for planning and executing discrete engagements under a campaign plan.⁸⁷ In terms of immediate operational military objectives, this would be especially pertinent for optimal linking of the achievement of purely tactical measures of combat performance to larger theater-wide military objectives and, ultimately, the commander's overall "intent" that is based on national strategic policy objectives underlying all campaign plans.⁸⁸

To revisit the primary theme of interdependence between the grand-strategic "war as a whole" and tactics on the field (refer back to figure 1): Clausewitz did not conceive of this relationship as a static form of interdependence, with high-level guidance, assumptions, and requirements being irrevocably set in stone for the duration of hostilities. Rather, the

dictates of both levels of thought and action were unavoidably in dynamic, fluid tension with each other, constituting for him a core facet of the nature of war.⁸⁹ Thus, the best “pol-mil planners” (to use today’s terminology), whether civilian or military, would show their brilliance in how they dynamically managed the tension between the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war—again pointing toward the presence of diverse area expertise to continually re-evaluate campaign strategy during not just higher-level operational design but even during its tactical-level, iterative execution. As argued by Air Force doctrine itself, ideally: “Strategy evolves over time in a continuous, iterative process; there is no static, single, or ‘final’ strategy or plan. Commanders and strategists should never assume the plans they create will remain static or be executed as conceived. . . . Therefore, strategy creation should be cyclic and iterative.”⁹⁰

In this regard, the following point of Clausewitz’s bears close scrutiny, as it describes a very cautious, incremental approach to the operational threat and use of force that will likely motivate future US political decision-makers toward a rising China in militarized crises: “If war consisted of one decisive act, or of a set of simultaneous decisions, preparations would tend toward totality, for no omission could ever be rectified. . . . But if the decision in war consists of several successive acts, then each of them, seen in context, will provide a gauge for those that follow.”⁹¹ A linear, step-by-step decision-making method is likely in a militarized dispute in East Asia even in the midst of lightning-quick information and strike technologies, due to the need to dynamically assess the enemy’s strength of will during a complex crisis with attached globalized economic costs. Or as described again by Clausewitz himself: “When we attack the enemy, it is one thing if we mean our first operation to be followed by others until all resistance has been broken; it is quite another if our aim is only to obtain a single victory, in order to make the enemy insecure, to impress our greater strength upon him, and to give him doubts about his future. If that is the extent of our aim, we will employ no more strength than is absolutely necessary.”⁹²

Of great importance in this part of Clausewitz’s argument are the perceived probabilities of success or failure, with the latter being dynamically influenced as maneuver and combat take place. While recognizing combat as war’s “only effective force in war,” with its aim of destroying enemy forces at a tactical level as a means to an end, he immediately

added the caveat: “That holds good even if no actual fighting occurs, because the outcome rests on the assumption that if it came to fighting the enemy would be destroyed.” Thus, prospective destruction could take the place of actual destruction, assuming that the combined political-military estimates of decision makers were influenced accordingly: “[A]ll action is undertaken in the belief that if the ultimate test of arms should actually occur, the outcome would be favorable.”⁹³ As put by Clausewitz himself, “Thus there are many reasons why the purpose of an engagement may not be the destruction of the enemy’s forces, the forces immediately confronting us. Destruction may be merely a means to some other end. In such a case, total destruction has ceased to be the point; the engagement is nothing but a *trial of strength*. In itself it is of no value; its significance lies in the outcome of the trial.”⁹⁴

As Clausewitz argued, adversary morale will or could ultimately be affected not only by battle damage in and of itself but also by a steady wearing down of their confidence that they could ever realistically achieve their aims through force. Their dynamic, ongoing, perceived “probabilities” of victory would wear down because their forces at an operational level in the theater literally would be outmaneuvered and checkmated, whether by serious physical destruction of frontline forces, via more low-intensity engagements involving geographically contained destruction of units, or even via threats of armed engagements in dynamic campaigns of strategic maneuver that serially presented the opponent with likely losses, if combat were to actually take place.⁹⁵ This would successfully demonstrate to the side overturning the status quo that in the event of fuller hostilities, it could not probabilistically achieve its objectives at an acceptable cost—that is, within the desired sovereign bounds of both resources and time. As the Air Force has noted for its own operations, “Direct effects trigger additional outcomes . . . [that] are often assessed or evaluated in qualitative terms . . . [and] reflect that the principal purpose of military operations is to influence the *behavior* of the adversary. . . . Even pure attrition does not seek a decrease in the size of an enemy force for its own sake. The real purpose of attrition is a weakening of resistance and resolve within the enemy force and its commanders, seeking to incline them toward ceasing resistance altogether.”⁹⁶

Closing

What final conclusions can be drawn from this? Based on deductive application of Clausewitz's conceptual framework to broad East Asian geopolitical realities, whatever the final operational definition of what is now artfully called "joint assured maneuver in the global commons," military planners would be wise to devise as many modular, flexible contingency plans as possible that are geared toward selective but persistent denial of adversary advantage over sustained periods of diplomatic bargaining. In short, the United States military posture in East Asia should be structured for holding key sea lanes, territories, and/or symbolic geopolitical issues "in dispute" on a running, fluid, and opportunistic basis so as to wear down adversary will—if necessary, including the imposition of limited but significant attritional costs alongside the promise of yet more costs to come. This would include plans (or aspects of larger plans) that would deviate substantially from what *Joint Vision 20/20* has dubbed the annihilation-oriented military attainment of full-spectrum dominance via a comprehensive offensive victory at the operational level of war.⁹⁷ Whether in a protracted crisis defined by strategic maneuver or in a limited attritional war of frontline combat, military planners must take great care to provide graduated, partial, and controllable options at the concrete level of campaigns and ultimately engagements and combats, thereby providing decision space to policy makers. **SSQ**

Notes

1. Bruce Overholt, *Asia, America, and the Transformation of Geopolitics* (New York: Cambridge University Press and The RAND Corporation, 2008), 33–41; Zhang Tuosheng, "Disputes over Territories and Maritime Rights and Interests: Their Political-Economic Implications," 120–43, and Danielle F. S. Cohen and Jonathan Kirshner, "The Cult of Energy Insecurity and Great Power Rivalry Across the Pacific," 144–76, in *The Nexus of Economics, Security, and International Relations in East Asia*, ed. Avery Goldstein and Edward D. Mansfield (San Jose, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012); and David Lai, *Asia-Pacific: A Strategic Assessment* (research monograph; Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2014), 25–30, 34–52, 57–69.

Multiple research interviews by the author, all unattributed, including: East Asia geopolitics expert/former official 1, 31 May 2016; East Asia expert 2, 13 July 2016; Southeast Asia experts 1 and 2, 2 June 2016; Southeast Asia expert 3 (nongovernmental organizations and academic analyst), 25 August 2016; Northeast Asia expert, 1 June 2016; Japan foreign and domestic politics experts 1, 31 May 2016, and 2, 2 June 2016; China domestic, foreign affairs and national security analysts 1, 2 June 2016, and 2, 13 July 2016; and Operations research and war game design analyst 2, 11 July 2016. These and subsequent individual sources in turn are part of

ongoing research interviews on East Asia geopolitics and US military force posture, involving former officials and independent experts on both East Asia geopolitical realities and trends as well as expert respondents on naval war gaming, operations, and campaign strategy in the evolving anti-access/area denial environment. Interviews are being funded by the Department of Defense (DOD) MINERVA Initiative, a research grants program launched by the secretary of defense in 2008. Focusing on areas of strategic importance to US national security policy, its goal is to improve DOD's basic understanding of the social, cultural, behavioral, and political forces that shape regions of the world of strategic importance to the United States.

2. See, for instance, Naoyuki Iwatani, Gordon Orr, and Brian Salsberg, "Japan's Globalization Imperative," *McKinsey Quarterly*, June 2011, <http://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/japans-globalization-imperative>; *The Asahi Shimbun*, "Japan's Population Posts Largest Yearly Decline since Records Kept," 29 August 2013; Carl Weinberg, "Japan's Deflation Is a Product of Shrinking Work Force, not Policy," *The Globe and Mail*, 9 April 2013, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/economy/economy-lab/japans-deflation-is-a-product-of-shrinking-work-force-not-policy/article10887636/>; Chester Dawson and Jason Dean, "Rising China Bests a Shrinking Japan," *Wall Street Journal*, 14 February 2011, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748704593604576140912411499184>; Overholt, *Asia, America*, 27–29, 65–91; Willem van Kemenade, *China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Inc.: The Dynamics of a New Empire* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), 3–7, 113–17, 125, 193–205; Kent Calder, *Pacific Alliance: Reviving US-Japan Relations* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 19–22, 96–97, 100, 111–12, 161–74; G. John Ikenberry, "A New Order in East Asia?," and Francis Fukuyama, "The Security Architecture in Asia and US Foreign Policy," in Fukuyama, *East Asian Multilateralism: Prospects for Regional Stability*, ed. Kent Calder and Francis Fukuyama (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins, 2008), 217–33, 234–53, respectively; and China domestic, foreign affairs, and national security analyst 3, interview, 14 July 2016.

3. Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes, *Red Star over the Pacific: China's Rise and the Challenge to U.S. Maritime Primacy* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2010), 14–90.

4. Richard Kugler and Linton Wells II, *Strategic Shift: Appraising Recent Changes in U.S. Defense Plans and Priorities* (Washington, DC: Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, 2013), vii–xiii, 53–66, 77–86; Evan Braden Montgomery, "Contested Primacy in the Western Pacific: China's Rise and the Future of U.S. Power Projection," *International Security* 38, no. 4 (Spring 2014): 115–49, <http://doi.org/bvhr>; Richard A. Bitzinger, "Military Modernization in Asia," in *Strategy in Asia: The Past, Present, and Future of Regional Security*, ed. Thomas G. Mahnken and Dan Blumenthal (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014), 162–81; Toshi Yoshihara, "Japanese Bases and Chinese Missiles," in *Rebalancing U.S. Forces: Basing and Forward Presence in the Asia-Pacific*, ed. Carnes Lord and Andrew Erickson (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2014), 37–65; Lyle J. Goldstein, "The Real Military Threat from China: Anti-Ship Cruise Missiles," *The National Interest*, 22 January 2015, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-real-military-threat-china-anti-ship-cruise-missiles-12085>; Andrew F. Krepinevich, *Maritime Competition in a Mature Precision-Strike Regime* (Washington, DC: CSBA Reports, April 2015); and Henry Holst, "Essay: China's Submarine Solution for the Taiwan Strait," USNI website, 16 July 2015, <https://news.usni.org/2015/07/08/essay-chinas-submarine-solution-for-the-taiwan-strait>. In turn, the latter is based on US Office of Naval Intelligence, *The PLA Navy: New Capabilities and Missions for the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2015).

5. Susan Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2007), 35–104 and 140–254; David Shambaugh, *China's Communist Party: Atrophy and Adaptation*

(Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and University of California Press, 2009), 161–82; Daniel Lynch, “Securitizing Culture in Chinese Foreign Policy Debates: Implications for Interpreting China’s Rise,” *Asian Survey* 53, no. 4 (July/August 2013): 629–52, <http://doi.org/bvbm>; Suisheng Zhao, “Foreign Policy Implications of Chinese Nationalism Revisited: the Strident Turn,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 22, no. 82 (2013): 535–53, <http://doi.org/bvbk>; Haiyang Yu, “Glorious Memories of Imperial China and the Rise of Chinese Populist Nationalism,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 23, no. 90 (2014): 1174–87, <http://doi.org/bvhj>; East Asia geopolitics expert/former official 1, interview, 31 May 2016; East Asia expert 2, interview, 13 July 2016; and China domestic, foreign affairs, and national security analysts 2 and 3, interview.

6. Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), *Joint Publication 3-0: Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 11 August 2011), I-13, http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp3_0.pdf.

7. Notably, this goes against the grain of US culture, which some have characterized as a “US Way of War” implicitly premised upon decisive, overwhelming battles; see Russell F. Weigley, “American Strategy from Its Beginnings through the First World War,” 408–43, in *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, ed. Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986); Beatrice Heuser, *The Evolution of Strategy: Thinking War from Antiquity to the Present* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 113–19, 137–52, 171–75; Bernhard Brodie, *Strategy in the Missile Age* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1959), 6–70; and Antulio J. Echevarria II, *Clausewitz and Contemporary War* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2007), 133–35, 141–44, <http://doi.org/dsbm9g>.

8. Joint Staff, Director for Strategic Plans and Policy (J5: Strategy Division), *Joint Vision 2020: America’s Military—Preparing for Tomorrow* (Arlington, VA: Department of Defense, June 2000).

9. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Peter Paret and Michael Howard (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989, First Edition 1976), 601–2; Donald Stoker, *Clausewitz: His Life and Work* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014), 91, 261–67; Echevarria, *Clausewitz and Contemporary War*, 55, 71, 96.

10. Stoker, *Clausewitz: His Life and Work*, 267.

11. JCS, *Joint Publication 3-0*, I-13.

12. See, for instance, Robert Citino, *Blitzkrieg to Desert Storm*, in *Historical Perspectives of the Operational Art*, ed. Michael D. Krause and R. Cody Phillips (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, US Army, 2005); Peter Paret, “Napoleon and the Revolution in War,” 123–42, Hajo Holborn, “The Prusso-German School: Moltke and the Rise of the General Staff,” 281–95, Gunther E. Rothenberg, “Moltke, Schlieffen, and the Doctrine of Strategic Envelopment,” 296–325, “Russian Military Thought: The Western Model and the Shadow of Suvorov,” 354–75, and Russel F. Weigley, “American Strategy from Its Beginnings through the First World War,” 408–43, all in *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, ed. Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986).

13. Clausewitz, *On War*, 80–81, 100–112, 260–61, 605–8.

14. *Ibid.*, 585–86.

15. Indeed, Clausewitz felt passionately that he could never receive his due honor, status, and sociopolitical standing from the Prussian state and society without being a central part of at least one major battlefield victory, central to the ongoing war effort against Napoleon, an intensely held belief and desire that would repeatedly embitter him throughout his career, given the penchant for the complex alliance system to appoint him often as an administrator, logistical planner, or on the battlefield, as tactical commander of pitched battles generally on

the flanks of major movements and in a series of rear-area retreats, outside the main area of major offensive hostilities. Nonetheless, despite these professional frustrations, his flank and rear-area defense efforts repeatedly put him in the thick of quite deadly tactical engagements throughout the wars with Napoleon. See Stoker, *Clausewitz: His Life and Work*, particularly the ebb and flow of major campaigns, and battles therein, 53–222.

16. Echevarria, *Clausewitz and Contemporary War*, 62–65, 84, 133–34; Stoker, *Clausewitz, His Life and Work*, 266, 274.

17. Clausewitz, *On War*, 227–28.

18. *Ibid.*, 95–96.

19. *Ibid.*, 97, 386; see also the analysis and interpretation of Clausewitz on this point, Echevarria, *Clausewitz and Contemporary War*, 126, 136–38.

20. Clausewitz, *On War*, 97.

21. *Ibid.*, 95.

22. *Ibid.*, 227–28.

23. *Ibid.*, 529–616.

24. *Ibid.*, 92.

25. *Ibid.*, 579–616.

26. This is seen in repeated admissions by officials and businesspersons, during times of economic downturns involving either power, that the other large economy is needed for technology sharing, labor, trade in finished products, and/or financial capital inputs for new ventures, even given recent tensions since 2009. See, for instance, Tetsushi Kajimoto and Izumi Nakagawa, “Japanese Business Mood Subdued on Uncertainty over China,” *Reuters Business News* (21 July 2015); Bruce Einhorn, “Awkward Timing for China’s Memorial of Japanese Atrocity,” *Bloomberg Business* (12 December 2014); and Michael Schuman, “China and Japan May not Like Each Other, but They Need Each Other,” *Time Magazine Online* (1 December 2013).

27. East Asian geopolitical experts/former officials 1 and 2 and Asia-Pacific analyst 1, interviews.

28. Northeast Asia expert and East Asia geopolitical experts/former officials 1 and 3, interviews.

29. South Korea experts/US former officials 1 and 2, Japan foreign and domestic politics experts 1 and 2, Northeast Asia expert, China domestic, foreign affairs, and national security analysts 1 and 2, East Asia geopolitical expert/former official 2, and Asia-Pacific analyst 1, interviews. For concrete examples of this “gray area” of constrained competition, see, for instance, Tuosheng, “Disputes over Territories,” 120–43, Cohen and Kirshner, “The Cult of Energy Insecurity and Great Power Rivalry,” 144–76, and Yuan Peng, “The China-U.S. Handshake in Northeast Asia: The Key to Dual Stability in Bilateral Ties and Regional Equilibrium,” 236–49, in *The Nexus of Economics, Security, and International Relations in East Asia*, ed. Goldstein and Mansfield; Il Hyun Cho, “Democratic Instability: Democratic Consolidation, National Identity, and Security Dynamics in East Asia,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 8, no. 2 (November 2011): 191–213, <http://doi.org/cfdrkf>; Chung-in Moon and Chun-fu Li, “Reactive Nationalism and South Korea’s Foreign Policy on China and Japan: a Comparative Analysis,” *Pacific Focus* 25, no. 3 (November 2010): 331–55, <http://doi.org/b4m78f>; Ben Blanchard, “China Just Gave Japan an Ominous Warning,” *Reuters Business Insider*, 22 July 2015, <http://www.businessinsider.com/r-china-says-japans-east-china-sea-pictures-provoke-confrontation-2015-7>; Jane Perlez, “Chinese Oil Rig Near Vietnam to Be Moved,” *New York Times*, 15 July 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/16/world/asia/chinese-oil-rig-near-vietnam-to-be-moved.html>; David Lai, *Asia-Pacific: A Strategic Assessment* (monograph; Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute and US Army War College Press, May 2013), 35–50; Einhorn,

“Awkward Timing for China’s Memorial”; and Schuman, “China and Japan May not Like Each Other.”

30. Operations research and war game design analyst 2; Yoshihara, “Japanese Bases”; Montgomery, “Contested Primacy,” 131–39; Goldstein, “The Real Military Threat from China”; Krepinevich, *Maritime Competition*; Holst, “China’s Submarine Solution”; US Office of Naval Intelligence, *The PLA Navy?*

31. Asia-Pacific analyst 1, Expert on Japanese foreign and domestic policies 1, East Asia geopolitics expert/former official 1, and Expert on Japanese foreign and domestic policies 2, interviews.

32. See, for instance, in the case of Southeast Asia, Sheldon Simon, “Southeast Asian International Relations: Is There Institutional Traction,” and N. Ganesan and Ramses Amer, “Conclusion,” in *International Relations in Southeast Asia: Between Bilateralism and Multilateralism*, ed. N. Ganesan and Ramses Amer (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2010), 38–54 and 313–37, respectively; and across both Southeast and Northeast Asia, Tuosheng, “Disputes over Territories,” 120–43.

33. Christopher Hemmer and Peter J. Katzenstein, “Why Is there No NATO in Asia? Collective Identity, Regionalism, and the Origins of Multilateralism,” *International Organization* 56, no. 3 (February 2003): 575–607, <http://doi.org/fqqdpq>; Benjamin Cohen, “Finance and Security in East Asia,” 39–64, and Miles Kahler, “Regional Economic Institutions and East Asian Security,” 66–68 and 75–90, both in *The Nexus of Economics*, ed. Goldstein and Mansfield; David Hundt, “South Korea between China and Japan: Lifting the Cold War Lens,” in *China-Japan Relationships in the 21st Century: Creating a Future Past?*, ed. Michael Heazle and Nick Knight (Cheltenham, UK: Edward-Elgar Publishing, 2007), 222–39; Simon, “Southeast Asian International Relations”; and Ganesan and Amer, “Conclusion.”

34. Richard Bush III, *The Perils of Proximity: China-Japan Security Relations* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute Press, 2010); James Manicom, *Bridging Troubled Waters: China, Japan, and Maritime Order in the East China Sea* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2014); Expert on Japanese foreign and domestic policies 1, East Asia geopolitics expert/former official 2, China domestic politics expert 1, and Japanese foreign policy and domestic politics expert 2, interviews.

35. In regard to vast differences in bilateral relationships between South Korea, China, and Japan: East Asia geopolitics expert/former officials 1 and 2, and South Korea expert 3, interviews; in regard to Southeast versus Northeast subregional interests, Southeast Asia expert 3 (nongovernmental organizations and academic analyst), interview.

36. Asia-Pacific analyst 1, interview.

37. China domestic, foreign affairs, and national security analyst 2, interview; see also footnote 35.

38. Bruce Cumings, “Japan and the Asian Periphery,” in *Origins of the Cold War: An International History*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and David S. Painter, (London: Routledge, 1994), 215–238; Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 20–27, 30–36, 110–19, 180–89; Calder, *Pacific Alliance*, 32–36, 41–44, 49, 52–53, 62–63, 78–83, 90–92; Ikenberry, “A New Order in East Asia?,” 219–22; Overholt, *Asia, America*, 11–27, 43–44.

39. Research Interviews, *op cit.*, *Asia-Pacific Analyst 1*, 12 July 2016; see also, for instance, Peng, “The China-US Handshake”; Hemmer and Katzenstein, “Why Is there No NATO”; Benjamin Cohen, “Finance and Security”; Kahler, “Regional Economic Institutions”; Ganesan and Amer, “Conclusion”; and Simon, “Southeast Asian International Relations.”

40. See, for instance, Murray L. Weidenbaum, *The Bamboo Network: How Expatriate Chinese Entrepreneurs Are Creating a New Economic Superpower in Asia* (New York: Free Press, 1996); China domestic, foreign affairs, and national security analyst 3, interview.

41. Asia-Pacific analyst 1; Northeast Asia expert; East Asia geopolitics experts/former officials 1 and 2, May 31 and June 3, interviews; Dawson and Dean, "Rising China Bests a Shrinking Japan"; Overholt, *Asia, America*, 27–29, 65–91; van Kemenade, *China, Hong Kong, Taiwan*, 3–7, 113–17, 125, 193–205; Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower*, 13–20, 24–25; Calder, *Pacific Alliance*, 19–22, 96–97, 100, 111–12, 161–74; G. John Ikenberry, "A New Order in East Asia?", and Francis Fukuyama, "The Security Architecture in Asia and US Foreign Policy," in *East Asian Multilateralism: Prospects for Regional Stability*, ed. Kent Calder and Francis Fukuyama (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins, 2008), 217–33 and 234–53, respectively.

42. Southeast Asia experts 1 and 2, East Asia geopolitics expert/former official 2; Operations research and wargame design analyst 2; Naval policy analyst 1, 12 July 2016, interviews.

43. Asia-Pacific analyst 1, interview.

44. Naval policy analyst 1; South Korea expert 2, South Korea expert 3, 14 July 2016, interviews.

45. Japan foreign and domestic policy expert 1, South Korea expert 3, interviews.

46. South Korea experts 2 and 3, interviews.

47. Operations research and wargame design analyst 2, interview.

48. Matt Ford, "Japan Curtails Its Pacifist Stance," *The Atlantic Monthly*, 19 September 2015, <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/09/japan-pacifism-article-nine/406318/>; Ayako Mie, "Security Laws Usher in New Era for Pacifist Japan," *The Japan Times*, 29 March 2016, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/03/29/national/politics-diplomacy/japans-contentious-new-security-laws-take-effect-paving-way-collective-self-defense/>; and Adam Liff, "How Specifically Does Japan's LDP Want to Revise the Constitution?," *The Diplomatic Online*, 14 July 2016, <http://thediplomat.com/2016/07/how-specifically-does-japans-ldp-want-to-revise-the-constitution/>.

49. Naval policy analyst 1, interview.

50. Southeast Asia experts 1 and 2, Japan foreign and domestic politics expert 1, Operations research and war game design analyst 1, Naval policy analyst 1, Operations research and war game design analyst 2, Asia-Pacific analyst 1, interviews; see also Il Hyun Cho, "Democratic Instability"; Chung-in Moon and Chun-fu Li, "Reactive Nationalism."

51. Southeast Asia experts 1 and 2, June 2, Operations research and war game design analyst 2, Asia-Pacific analyst 1, interviews.

52. Southeast Asia experts 1 and 2, South Korea expert 2, Operations research and war game design analyst 1, interviews.

53. East Asia experts/former officials 1 and 2; Northeast Asia expert, Asia-Pacific analyst 1, interviews.

54. Southeast Asia experts 1 and 2, China domestic, foreign affairs, and national security analyst 3, interviews.

55. Operations research and wargame design analyst 1, interview. For a definition and explanation of sea denial versus control and command, see Ian Speller, *Understanding Naval Warfare* (London: Routledge, 2014), 45–51, 96–111.

56. Southeast Asian expert 3 (NGO and academic analyst), interview.

57. Southeast Asia experts 1 and 2, Operations research and wargame design analyst 2, Asia-Pacific analyst 1, interviews.

58. Clausewitz, *On War*, 606–7.

59. *Ibid.*, 580; see also 87–88.

60. *Ibid.*, 579–80; see also 75–77, 87–89.

61. Ibid., 609–10, 580–94.
62. Ibid., 570.
63. Michael Kraig, *Shaping U.S. Military Forces for the Asia-Pacific* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), 31–57.
64. Clausewitz, *On War*, 81.
65. Ibid, 91.
66. Ibid., 91
67. Ibid., all quotes taken from 79.
68. Ibid., 87.
69. Ibid., 92. Note that all of these conclusions have been borne out by more contemporary political science and historical research. See, for instance, Fred Ikle, *Every War Must End*; R. Harrison Wagner, “Bargaining and War,” *American Journal of Political Science* 44, no. 3 (July 2000): 469–84, <http://doi.org/c247qq>; Catherine C. and Jean-Pierre P. Langlois, “Does Attrition Behavior Help Explain the Duration of Interstate Wars? A Game Theoretic and Empirical Analysis,” *International Studies Quarterly* 53, no. 4 (1 December 2009): 1051–73, <http://doi.org/d3jhwk>; and Dan Reiter, *How Wars End* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).
70. On the fact that most wars in fact start with only a fraction of societal assets mobilized for destructive action in the field, with the implication that more can be brought to bear in terms of both people and material assets, see Clausewitz, *On War*, 79–80; and separately, Ikle, *Every War Must End*, 17–22.
71. Clausewitz, *On War*, 91.
72. Ibid., 93.
73. Ibid., 357.
74. Ibid., 94.
75. Ibid., 77, 82.
76. Jonathan F. Solomon, “Demystifying Conventional Deterrence: Great Power Conflict and East Asian Peace,” *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 7, no. 4 (Winter 2013): 118–22, http://www.au.af.mil/au/ssq/digital/pdf/winter_13/2013winter-Solomon.pdf; on naval war gaming and naval campaign strategy in the evolving anti-access/area-denial environment, East Asia geopolitics and US military force posture expert respondent, interview, 1 June 2016.
77. Yoshihara and Holmes, *Red Star Over the Pacific*, 73–82; Kraig, *Shaping U.S. Military Forces*, 1–7, 29–30, 224–41; see also Speller, *Understanding Naval Warfare*, 40–71.
78. M. Scott Weaver, “The Limits of Air Sea Battle,” *RealClearDefense*, 12 June 2013, http://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2013/06/12/the_limits_of_airsea_battle_106648.html.
79. Clausewitz, *On War*, 572.
80. Ibid., 77, 82.
81. Ibid., 585.
82. Ganesan and Amer, “Conclusion,” 313–37.
83. Stoker, *Clausewitz: His Life and Work*, 266–69.
84. See a summary of several such efforts in Kraig, *Shaping U.S. Military Forces*, 160–70.
85. Clausewitz, *On War*, 585, also 583–84.
86. See “General Considerations for Strategy,” in Air Force Doctrine Annex 3-0: *Operations and Planning* (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University, 9 November 2012), 6–7, <https://doctrine.af.mil/download.jsp?filename=3-0-Annex-OPERATIONS-PLANNING.pdf>. On the importance of perceived and real strategic intentions (interests, motivations) in militarized disputes, including crises and limited wars, see Kraig, *Shaping U.S. Military Forces*, 193–98.

87. Air Force Instruction (AFI) 13-1AOC, *Volume 3: Operational Procedures, Air Operations Center*, 2 November 2011, 22–28, and especially 27–28.

88. Curtis E. LeMay Center for Doctrine Development and Education, “General Considerations for Strategy,” “Basic Implications of Strategy on War and Other Operations,” and “The Effects Based Approach to Operations,” in *Air Force Doctrine Annex 3-0: Introduction to Operations and Planning*, 9 November 2012, 5–7, 13–15, and 20–21, respectively.

89. Echevarria, *Clausewitz and Contemporary War*, 94–95, 126, 140–41, 143.

90. LeMay Center, “General Considerations for Strategy,” 5–7.

91. Clausewitz, *On War*, 79.

92. *Ibid.*, 92.

93. *Ibid.*, 97.

94. *Ibid.*, 96.

95. *Ibid.*, 91.

96. LeMay Center, “An Effects Based Approach to Planning,” 82–83.

97. JCS, *Joint Vision 2020*.

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