



# ICAS BULLETIN

## Institute for China-America Studies

### A Survey of Scholarship on US-China Relations

*Twice a month, the ICAS Bulletin updates a global audience on American perspectives regarding the world's most important bilateral relationship. Research papers, journal articles, and other prominent work published in the US are listed here alongside information about events at US-based institutions.*

#### Publications

##### **Trumping Obama in US-Asia Economic Relations**

Derek Scissors  
AEI, January 1, 2017

To alter the “errors” made by the Obama administration and strengthen the American economy, Scissors suggests the Trump administration to take five actions: 1) withdraw from the TPP, 2) refrain from setting limits on free trade, 3) revise US trade and investment strategies in the Asia-Pacific, 4) propose commercial bans with regards to China’s violation of intellectual property and subsidies, and 5) take unilateral reforms on trade barriers and corporate tax.

##### **Russia and China: A New Model of Great-Power Relations**

Samuel Charap, John Drennan, Pierre Noël  
*Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, vol. 59, no. 1, January 31, 2017

The authors of this article examine the causes and trends behind recent developments in China-Russia relations. While much of the warm-up has resulted from the fracture between Russia and the West, it is also “natural outgrowth” of both countries’ common worldview and resistance to US unilateralism. The authors suggest that both sides have established an effective “relationship management” mechanism that help mitigate potential tensions between the two countries and prevent either side from taking aggressive actions.

##### **Canary in the Coal Mine? China, the UNGA, and the Changing World Order**

Samuel Brazys, Alexander Dukalskis  
*Review of International Studies*, February 20, 2017

This article discusses how China attempts to re-shape norms in the international system through platforms like the UN General Assembly (UNGA) and asks whether the Assembly might be the “canary in the coal mine” of China’s success in reshaping international norms. By analyzing statistics on vote

alignment with China, the authors find that China has met with some (likely limited) success in influencing other states to side with it on issues such as human rights, international order, sovereignty, and non-interference.

### **Book Review: Can China Expand without Limits?**

Walter Clemens

*Asian Perspective*, no. 41, January-March 2017

Clemens reviews several scholars' recent work on China's economic growth and military expansion, including that of Edward Luttwak, Mingqi Li, Henry Kissinger, and Odd Arne Westad.

### **The Chinese Learned that Trump Blinks**

*ChinaFile*, February 10, 2017

In this *ChinaFile* discussion, scholars including Taylor Fravel, Isaac Fish, David Wertime, Susan Shirk, Jorge Guajardo, Richard McGregor, and Daojiong Zha discuss the impact of Trump's call with Chinese President Xi on February 9, in which he walked back an earlier claim and that U.S. recognition of the "One-China" policy would be up for negotiation.

### **How America can Take Control in the South China Sea**

Alexander Vuving

*Foreign Policy*, February 13, 2017

Vuving suggests that the US should adopt a "cabbage" tactic against China's claims in the South China Sea – surrounding disputed islands with multiple layers of military and paramilitary ships, with civilian volunteers guarding the first layer. This proposal will persuade China to comply with international law without violating international law or escalating tensions in the region, but its success relies on coordination between the US and its regional allies as well as effective use of diplomatic tools.

### **The Good, the THAAD, and the Ugly**

Bonnie Glaser, Daniel Sofio, and David Parker

*Foreign Affairs*, February 15, 2017

The authors describe recent issues in China-Republic of Korea trade relations as forms of Chinese coercion intended to dissuade South Korea from going through with the planned THAAD deployment. They contend that such behavior—including singling out Korean firms involved in the THAAD planning process and shutting China's doors to some Korean products—fits into a broader pattern of economic coercion as a tool of statecraft which China has employed in various disputes with countries around the world. The article warns that acquiescing to such measures would set a worrying precedent. Korea, the US and other countries should resist these attempts and publicly condemn them.

**Can China Become a Leader of Innovation?**

Jost Wübbeke, Yu Zhou, Cong Cao, Yutao Sun  
*ChinaFile*, February 16, 2017

Multiple experts present their perspectives on China's growing high-tech strategy. Wubbeke argues that China's industrial policy will generate more innovation, but the long-term goal of this strategy is aimed at technology substitution. However, Zhou comments that such analysis exaggerates the role of industrial policies in China's technological dynamism. Sun and Cao suggest that it is too early to call China a leader in innovation because its current innovation lacks originality and explorative breakthroughs.

**Russia and China's Enduring Alliance**

Jacob Stokes  
*Foreign Affairs*, February 22, 2017

Jacob Stokes emphasizes that both China and Russia have tenuous relations with the United States right now than at any point since the end of the Cold War—in the case of China, primarily because of maritime disputes in the East and South China Seas. He evaluates the risks and opportunities that would follow from the United States establishing stronger ties with Russia to counter Beijing, which may in the short-term help balance power on the Eurasian continent. He proposes, however, that the United States work with both countries wherever cooperation is possible.

**Asia's Other Revisionist Power: Why US Grand Strategy Unnerves China**

Jennifer Lind  
*Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2017

Lind describes US policy in pursuit of a liberal international order in light of its transformational nature. She notes that to those "outside" this postwar order, American behavior can appear "revisionist." By courting relationships with Asian nations and pushing for NATO expansion, Washington has at times created a sense of insecurity among states like Russia and China. Lind observes that while an assertive expansion of this order might have made sense in the 1990s, the United States should balance principle with pragmatism and more carefully pick its battles in promoting liberalism and expanding its relationships abroad.

**Trump and China: Getting to "Yes" With Beijing**

Susan Shirk  
*Foreign Affairs*, March-April 2017

Shirk describes China's behavior as deriving both from its increased power but also from a sense of domestic insecurity. With this framework in mind, she identifies a number of policy recommendations for the Trump administration. Shirk advocates balancing firm American commitments to rule of law and its regional presence with proactive and subtle diplomacy in areas like maritime disputes, trade disagreements and North Korea. Overall, Shirk recommends that the new Administration preserve the stabilizing elements of the US-China status-quo while pushing harder for genuine reciprocity than past administrations have.

## Events and Discussions

### **The Resurgence of the State in the Chinese Economy?**

Caroline Freund, Nicholas Lardy, Rory MacFarquhar  
Peterson Institute for International Economics, February 7, 2017

Participants analyzed the continuing role of government in the Chinese economy. They examined the implications of Chinese state-owned enterprises (SOEs) for the global economy and noted the challenges that SOEs create for the Chinese government. MacFarquhar, drawing from his experience with working for the Obama administration, provided his perspective on negotiating with China over the impact SOEs have on bilateral economic relations.

### **President's Inbox: US-China Relations**

Council on Foreign Relations, February 13, 2017

Elizabeth Economy, Matthew Goodman, and Evan Medeiros discussed what the new administration can expect in its interactions with China. The panel covered US-China bilateral and larger regional issues from China's tensions with Taiwan to the future of trade agreements in the Asia-Pacific.

### **Paul Haenle on US-China Relations in the Trump Administration**

Paul Haenle  
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 17, 2017

In this podcast, Haenle discussed the Trump administration's reevaluation of the "One-China" policy and the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement. He examined the implications of this shift in American policy towards China, the domestic political environment facing Xi Jinping and consequent ramifications for US-China relations.

### **The New Asian Security Landscape**

Chicago Council on Global Affairs, February 23, 2017

Speakers speculated about the future of American policy towards Asia under the Trump administration, including whether Obama's Pivot to Asia would continue under the new administration. How possible Trump Asia policies might affect the geopolitical structure of the region were considered. Much attention was given to the future of the US-Japan alliance.



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