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Rising Navies and New World Order

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Recent events suggest that long-term economic and military trends are leading to an imminent shift in the power structure of the international system. Trends suggest that China may replace the United States in its position as the world leading power. Over the last 50 years, China has established regional hegemony and become an economic and military power. China's growth and developing strength, especially within the naval sector, has created tension and a competitive relationship with the United States. China's politics and defense policy suggest an adoption of a more ambitious maritime agenda, centering on the construction of a power-projection navy (Ross, 2009). In April 2011, Xinhua, the state news agency of China, revealed pictures of an almost completed aircraft carrier, which is planned to set sail later this year (Wong, 2011). The achievement of constructing an aircraft carrier is a great advance for China's power-projection maritime agenda. "The advent of the aircraft carrier transformed the optimal land-power maritime strategy. For the first time, a naval power could threaten a land power's territorial security without coming ashore" (Ross, 2009). Having an aircraft carrier will facilitate the extension of naval presence further East in the Pacific, gaining more control of the ocean and also gaining an edge on the competition with the United States.

China's naval advancements have created concern and stirred fear in the United States. Policy makers, as well as the public, have identified China as an economic threat, and China's naval achievements have created an even larger fear. When a state realizes that it faces competition for its role in the international power structure, it is unsettling and, often, destabilizing. The point of realization of imminent change is so drastic because, "it is so apparently subtly, unpredictable, and definitive" (Doran, 2000). Looking at historical events, it seems that when one state usurps the role of power leader, it only comes about through conflict and weakening of the once powerful state; for many Americans, the rise of China is synonymous with the defeat of the United States. As a result, the public is demanding resistance to China's forthcoming rise to world leader.

The transfer of global leadership is not definitive of defeat of the established power, despite public perception. Chinese naval development does not indicate U.S. weakness, but rather a natural progression and transition of power that is inevitable in the international system. The power structure adheres to a natural course of ascension, maturity and eventual decline of established leaders leading to the rise of other states. This inevitable transition of the leadership role is explained by the power cycle theory. Rising states develop naval programs in order to protect economic growth, creating competition with established maritime leaders, resulting in the transition of power. This cycle is infinite and can be seen throughout history. The historical case of naval rivalry and supremacy between Britain and the

Netherlands, Britain and Germany, and Japan and the United States, reveal a pattern of power transition explained by the power cycle theory. Analyzing these historical rivalries and indentifying the stages defined by the power cycle theory is beneficial to understanding the current power structure and will aid in the transition of power from the U.S to China. Analyzing the historical cases of naval rivalry and supremacy between the Britain and the Netherlands, Britain and Germany, and Japan and the United States, a pattern of power transfer is evident. In each of these rivalries, especially those resulting in the transfer of naval supremacy, there is a natural course of ascension, maturity and eventual decline of established leaders, explained by the power cycle theory. The patterns of the rise and decline of historical naval powers indicate Chinese naval development not in terms of U.S. weakness, but rather as a natural progression and transition of power that is inevitable in the international system.

Power Cycle Theory

Naval power plays a large role in power projection and international relations. The ability to extend powers beyond the sovereign territory of a state greatly affects state actions as well as the actions of the other members of the international system. New technology plays a large role in the extension of power projection. For instance, the advent of the aircraft carrier allowed states to project naval power even further: naval air forces could perform outside of a state's territory without having an international land base. Although power projection is a means of protecting a state's interests, it is often perceived as a threat to the international system and the current power structure. States who exercise their ability to project power are often faced with repercussions from the international system who feel threatened, thus driving change in international relations.

Power Cycle theory contends that individual states follow a trend of ascension, maturity and dissension (Doran, 2000). According to Doran, the Power Cycle theory is based on two fundamental principles of power: (1) "A single state growing faster than the systemic norm will initiate momentum of change on state power cycles throughout the system;" (2) Even when the differing state's absolute growth rates remain unchanged throughout the system, a state's relative power growth will accelerate only for a time and then begin a process of deceleration, due to the bounds of the system which brings about peaking and a turn into relative decline" (2000). Individual states pass through the cycle of ascension and then into decline; other states within the international system pass through the same cycle, however at different rates. The different rates experienced by states results in the power structure of the international community, with one state being the lead power and other states rising to replace it.

From a foreign policy perspective, an individual state's policy is based on its position within the cycle in relation to other actors. An actor that is in the power ascendant stages has a very different approach to foreign policy than a state that has reached the peak of the cycle; similarly, a state that is at the peak of power has vastly different foreign policies than a state that is descending from its prime position. Foreign policy is directly affected by changes in power: power projection and roles fall out of sync because the international community does not readily adjust to power structure changes and the international community, especially the leading state power, is reluctant to yield to the ascending state or in some cases, the ascending state may choose to postpone of becoming the lead power (Doran, 2000). Despite the lag in adjustment to the constant changes of the power cycle, the international community must come to terms with the new power structure. "Long in the making, these power-role gaps are shoved to the fore of diplomatic consciousness in the crisis intervals when they can no longer be covered up. They then abruptly demand adjustment" (Doran, 2000). Prior to structural adjustments of the international community, states experience anxiety, doubt and fear of the imminent power shift as they struggle to maintain hold on to their global position. The decline of a global power and the rise of a new power occur simultaneously with conflict: "the dominant power establishes the status quo when it ascends to its premier position. This is usually in the wake of a global war from which the dominant power emerged victorious" (Kugler, 2000).

In respect to naval supremacy, Rasler and Thompson expand on the power cycle theory (Rasler, 2000). They deconstruct the cycle of power into four stages: agenda setting, coalition building, macrodecision, and execution. In order to do so, Rasler and Thompson define naval supremacy as a global power achieving a monopoly position within the international community, 50 percent or more of the global reach capabilities, and designate this state as a "world power to indicate its distinctive leading positions" (Rasler, 2000).

Rasler and Thompson break down the achievements of each "world power" as they pass through the four different stages (Table 1.1) (2000). Looking back to the 13th century, Rasler and Thompson track the naval power achievements of history's naval leaders, beginning with Portugal and ending with the present day naval leader, the United States.

Agenda Setting/ Delegitimation	Coalition Building/ Deconcentration	Macrodecision/ Global War	Execution/ World Power
1430-1460	1460-1494	1494-1516	1516-1540 (Portugal)
1540-1560	1560-1580	1580-1609	1609-1640 (Netherlands)
1640-1660	1660-1688	1688-1714	1714-1740 (Britain)
1740-1763	1763-1792	1792-1815	1815-1850 (Britain II)
1850-1873	1873-1914	1914-1945	1945-1973 (United States)
1973-2000	2000-2030	2030-2050	2050-? (?)

Table 1 Leadership Long Cycle Phases in the Modern Era (Modelski, 1996 and Rasler, 2000)

The destructed analysis of the stages of naval development and the attainment of naval supremacy indicate that as soon as a state reaches world power, competition develops from another state. This occurs as a result of economic development and the need for naval protection to defend economic growth. Evident through Rasler and Thompson’s analysis of world powers and power transition, the rise of individual naval powers occurs as the state becomes an economic power and the need to protect economic growth becomes a priority. Trade and shipping routes are key elements to economic growth and the protection of these routes is crucial to maintaining economic stability, thus, states develop naval forces as means to protect economic assets. The direct correlation of economic and naval development is evident not only in the rise of the world powers established by Rasler and Thompson, but also in the rise China. Deriving naval strategies from historical theorists, China associates closely with Alfred Thayer Mahan, a U.S. sea-power theorist who argued the positive relationship between the ability of a state’s navy to control sea-lanes and critical geographical points that facilitated commerce and state supremacy (Yoshihara, 2010). As a result, China has developed its naval program in order to defend its economic assets within in the region as well as to defend its economic power within the international system.

Analyzing the historic cases of the Anglo-Dutch, the Anglo-German, and the U.S.-Japanese rivalries establishes a pattern of naval development and naval competition. As Rasler and Thompson have established, as one state attains naval supremacy, another state is beginning its ascension to power. The transition of naval supremacy is inevitable and the identification of patterns seen in history provides the ability to predict the rise of new powers. The identification of historical patterns of power transition and the application of these patterns to the current international system help to identify the shift of naval supremacy and can aid in the formation of naval and foreign policy.

The Anglo-Dutch Rivalry

By the middle of the 17th century the United Provinces had risen to become one of the wealthiest states in Western Europe. The Dutch gained economic power through commerce, finance and industry, which in turn made a strong demand for naval forces to protect concentrations of merchant shipping. “The [Dutch] needed an effective navy to ensure the functioning of an economy dependent largely on overseas trade, on the import of industrial raw materials, the export of manufactures and fish, and the re-export of European and colonial commodities” (Jones, 1988). The need to protect trading convoys from privateers absorbed most naval resources, and as a result, the Dutch navy was primarily a defensive force (Jones, 1988).

Coinciding with the Dutch Golden Age, England was facing domestic turmoil. Civil War broke out between the Parliamentary forces and the royalists in 1642, attempting to dethrone King Charles Stuart I and ended with the king’s execution in 1649 (BBC, 2011). During the war, Parliamentary forces took control of the Royal Navy, and as a result had control of the customs revenue from overseas, which was used to fund the war and build up the navy. Once the royalists were defeated, Parliament claimed the naval build up “was to force a more favorable division of trade from the United Provinces,” in attempts to restore England’s role in the international community (Padfield, 2000). Post civil war, the English claimed sovereignty of the English Channel, capturing any Dutch ships in the waters, preventing Dutch economic activities.

Competition began to rise, not only from England, but from France as well, in response to Dutch maritime supremacy and trade monopoly. This resentment of Dutch control fueled England’s claims to sovereignty of the English Channel, justifying England’s continued practice of capturing Dutch merchant ships. After losing nearly thirty ships to the English in January of 1662, the Dutch began a naval build up in preparation for upcoming conflict, converting 150 merchant ships to warships. Formally, the First Anglo-Dutch war was sparked in May 1662 by English claims to sovereignty and subsequent actions (Padfield, 2000). Despite naval build up prior to the onset of war, there was acknowledgement that the Dutch plan to convert merchant ships to warships would not be sufficient enough: “The Dutch commander –in-chief, Maarten tromp, was to write ... undoubtedly we shall accomplish more with sixty ships properly built for war than with one hundred such as we have now” (Gardiner, 1889-1930; Padfield, 2000). The Dutch navy was just not strong enough to avoid defeat: “The smaller, more lightly gunned Dutch warships were battered in a series of confused running battles in the Channel and the North Sea and were driven home; hundreds of Dutch merchantmen were captured; convoys were held

up with the English fleet was at sea and trade was paralyzed for long periods” (Padfield, 2000). Facing defeat in the first Anglo-Dutch war, the United Provinces continue a naval construction program to in case of future conflicts on the sea.

Early in 1665, the second Anglo-Dutch war formally began, stemming from England’s New Navigation Acts, which controlled colonial trade, binding English colonial trade strictly to England and Dutch retaliation of recapturing African forts in order to sustain control of the Mediterranean Sea. During the second Anglo-Dutch War, England adopts a line-formation for battle. Although used in previously battles, the line-formation was abandoned, and the English were the first ones to reintroduce it in battle. Line formation allows for greater firepower advantage and protection of the fleet. With this new advancement in battle formation, and despite the Dutch naval construction, the English should have been able to easily defeat the Dutch. However, the Dutch defeated the British for three reasons: (1) The Dutch were able to stand its ground retaining most of its overseas positions and the British were unable to form a long standing blockade of Dutch coasts; (2) English victories were counterproductive, reinforcing French fears of English supremacy and resulting in stronger alliances between the French and the Dutch; and (3) England was defeated due to financial constraints, increasing the unpopularity of the new King and eventually leading to a tightened naval budget and the collapse of the naval administration (Padfield, 2000). English defeat was determined on June 12, 1667 after the Dutch were able to occupy the Thames and send a squadron up the river Medway, cutting out the *Royal Charles* ship and towed her back to the Netherlands (Padfield, 2000). The Dutch defeat of the English quickly resulted in a peace treaty, The Treaty of Breda 1667, which formally ended the war, but also, and more importantly, allowed each side to retain its captured lands. The Dutch were able to keep two islands in the West Indies, which later became trade centers for the slave trade. More importantly, however, was England’s retention of the New Netherlands, which completed a long string of English ownership on the eastern seaboard of North America (Padfield, 2000). Eventually, England’s position in North American leads to an expansion of English wealth through trade, but not until after the another Anglo-Dutch war.

Only five years after the end of the second Anglo-Dutch war, the English make a third attempt to not only defeat Dutch maritime supremacy but also to restore England’s wealth:

This time trade was not the primary motive –indeed the merchant interest and Parliament were strongly opposed to war, and had earlier called for an alliance with the United Provinces to curb the growing power of France. Charles II and a cabal of courtiers planned the assault in secret, as a means of restoring absolute power to the Crown and

removing what they say as a humiliating dependence on Parliament for money”(Padfield, 2000).

At this point, there is a triangle of competition for maritime supremacy between England, the United Provinces and France. Throughout the previous Anglo-Dutch wars, France achieved a territorial monarchy, strengthening not only its army but its navy as well. France had built a navy that could rival England’s, and for that England views France as its biggest threat. Louis XIV, King of France, becomes increasingly resentful of Dutch control of trade routes and Charles II uses France’s resentment to its advantage, to form an “offensive and defensive alliance directed against the Dutch- in effect...a continuation of the last war at sea with the aid of French subsidies and a French naval contingent, while the French army invade the enemy homeland” (Padfield, 2000). Charles II receives nearly £ 200,000 for annual naval expenses, 30 warships to aid English ships in war, and a £ 100,000 addition if Charles II converts to Catholicism (Padfield, 2000). Naval engagement with the Dutch provided enough distraction for the French to begin a land war in United Province territory. However, even with French support, England was still unable to defeat the Dutch. Charles II eventually falls further into debt, unable to cover naval expenses, he pulls out of the alliance with France. The Dutch, fighting both a land and a naval war fall into debt as well. As a result, the war ended in a stalemate due to the financial constraints of each state.

The third Anglo-Dutch war resulted in a stalemate; England was still on its path to maritime supremacy. The previous wars had eroded Dutch hold on maritime supremacy and control of trade, facilitating England’s rise. Following the third war, England experienced political change, resulting from the death of Charles II, and as a result expands trade through the growth of North American and West Indian colonies, increasing wealth as well as maritime presence and power. The merchant fleet had grown by 50% in the last three decades, and was still continuing to grow (Padfield, 2000). In 1689, William II, of the United Provinces, invades England, dethrones James II, accepts the English crown, and constructs a new parliament. “William could hardly have been aware of it at the time, but in retrospect it is clear that he was stepping from a maritime power whose golden age was past to a rival in the ascendant whose prime lay all before it” (Padfield, 2000).

At the turn of the century, England had yet to achieve maritime supremacy, continuing to compete for the role with the United Provinces and France. England’s expanding trade and sustained naval strength set the stage for maritime supremacy. France, facing financial extremity sacrificed naval

expenses, leading to an imminent naval collapse. The Dutch had lost its trading partners in North America, and had fallen into debt fighting the French in a land war:

For the Republic the most significant result of this culmination of the struggle with Louis XIV was the loss of naval supremacy. As its resources and men had been poured into defense against French armies on land, the trident had passed irretrievably to Great Britain... By 1717 the Republic had been rescued from a first-class to a middle ranking military power. It was never again to play the leading role in Europe (Padfield, 2000).

The defeat of the Dutch as a supreme maritime power and the rise of England to maritime supremacy was not the result of war weakening the Dutch state. The United Provinces had reached the position of world leader, and as a result of the Power Cycle Theory, could not hold on to that position for longer than they did: By the time the United Provinces had reached world power position, England was already on its rise to maritime supremacy. Prior to the first Anglo-Dutch war, England was testing its strength by claiming sovereignty of the sea as well as capturing Dutch vessels. England also formed coalitions with France, further showing the decline of the United Provinces. War was an inevitable outcome of the Dutch decline from power, and the multiple wars result from Dutch refusal to step down from the supremacy position as well as England's determined growth and rise to Maritime supremacy.

The Anglo-German Rivalry

There is a "lineage of democratic states an unbroken chain of world leaders, in which successive rivalries between members have been milder than the ultimate stakes of world leadership transition might predict. In this framework, the rapid rise of first-rank rivals outside this lineage produces a greater threat to world peace" (Modelski, 1994; Frederick, 1999). At the turn of the century, the successive lineage in the international community was speculated to include the United States and the established states of Russia and France. German's rise to power was not a calculated occurrence, and as a result threatened the international community, especially the dominant power, Britain. The Anglo-German naval race finds its beginnings in the German Naval laws of April 1898 and June 1900 "by which Germany announced to the world that it was going to break with its hitherto exclusive continental orientation and that it intended to build a substantial navy" (Lambelet, 1974); "Germany must have a battle fleet so strong that for even for the adversary with the greatest seapower [Britain, obviously] , a war against it would involve such dangers as to imperil its position in the world" (Hough 1964; Lambelet, 1974).

There is speculation that Britain was never initially concerned with Germany's naval construction plans, not realizing Germany was planning to build a navy to compete with Britain until approximately 1903 (Bury, 1898-1945; Lambelet, 1974). Between 1905 and 1906, English constructed the British *Dreadnought*. This new warship exemplified modern day technology, using modern turbines, allowing higher speeds and longer maintenance of higher speeds and also provided the ability to accurately determine and adjust the range of armaments (Lambelet, 1974). The construction of the *Dreadnought* not only embraced modern technologies but also had a large impact on the international community: "the advent of the *Dreadnought* meant that the numerous pre-dreadnought warships in the world's fleets became practically valueless almost overnight" (Lambelet, 1974). By constructing the *Dreadnought*, Britain was projecting its power to the international community:

It was calculated that this achievement would astonish the world, and prove to her rivals not only that Britannia was prepared to derate the whole of her battle fleet and start afresh with new super-battleships but also that she had the wealth and means to do so while her rivals were still recovering from the shock of *Dreadnought's* appearance. It was a gesture of splendid and characteristic arrogance and contempt for the lesser imperialists of the world (Hough, 1964; Lambelet, 1974)

Britain's announcement of the *Dreadnought* sparked the Anglo-German naval arms rivalry and the German naval leader of the period, Alfred von Tirpitz, continually blames Britain for causing the *Dreadnought* race between Germany and Britain (Tirpitz, 1919; Lambelet, 1974). However, Germany had laid out plans for a dreadnought type warship in 1905, but Germany's ship took approximately thirty-six months to complete due to technical constraints and the competition heightened in Britain's short construction period of one year and one day (Lambelet, 1974).

Germany's naval program was designed to achieve a desired ratio to Britain, not parity with the seapower, in order to create a naval deterrent for war with Germany. Due to recent economic growth, Germany perceived a strong naval force necessary to protect transoceanic trade from other nations; especially Britain whom they feared would impose preferential agreements against them. Tirpitz viewed naval power as world power and in order for Germany to continue on the path of growth, Germany needed to become a naval power:

A state which has sea interests or –what is equivalent –world interest must be able to represent them and to make its power felt beyond territorial waters. National world trade, world industry, and to a certain extent high-seas fisheries, world transportation, and colonies are impossible without a fleet capable of taking the offensive...only an offensive fleet forms a desirable alliance value (Lambi, 1984; Frederick 1999).

To compete in the modern world, especially against superpowers such as Britain, France and Russia, Germany needed to have a capable naval force to survive and continue its growth. "More generally, did not Germany's economic and political coming of age and the fact that it had passed Britain in a number of fields entitle it all the attributes of a great power, including a respectable blue-water navy?" (Lambelet, 1974) Continued growth created competition for England, which was heightened by Germany's anti-British approach to foreign policy, eventually leading to a naval arms race.

Germany threatened Britain's maritime supremacy, and Britain responded with a naval program that maintained a sixty percent superiority of the *Dreadnought* class, and a greater superiority of lesser vessels. This did not necessarily require naval expansion but Britain's actions would correspond to the actions of Germany (Langhorne, 1971). Britain continued to propose a naval holiday, in which both Germany and Britain, with the contingency that other powers would not pose naval competition, would put a hiatus on naval expansion in attempts to curb the growing conflict between the two states. The proposal of a naval holiday was not well received by Germany. Despite several attempts to create arms agreements, tensions between the two states increased. The Germans "may have believed that the naval race was bringing England to [them]: in fact [they] were watching [themselves] substitute a rigid policy where she had once shown flexibility and a determination not to be drawn where she had once wished to negotiate" (Langhorne, 1971). Germany was not able to achieve maritime supremacy due to political constraints resulting in a halt to the naval program and also the looming World War that Germany was a central actor in.

Even though Germany was not able to replace Britain as the world's sea power, the events of the Anglo-German directly apply to the Power Cycle Theory. At the turn of the century, Britain and Germany were economically dependent on one another ensuring peaceful relations between the two states. However, as Germany began a course of industrialization, the development of the navy seemed a natural course of events to protect their growing interests, setting an agenda against Britain. Germany constructed its coalition by developing a detailed naval program that would rival Britain. Despite the assertions that Germany never attempted to surpass Britain's naval power but only aimed to create a rival navy, Britain perceived Germany's naval build up as a threat to their maritime supremacy. Britain increased naval production, threatening Germany's strategies. As the tension in the international community heightened, Britain attempted to achieve détente with Germany by proposing arms agreements and a naval holiday. However, Germany perceived Britain's proposals as an attempt to further control them and limit their potential for growth and power. The heightened tensions between

the two states did not come to head in an isolated conflict for the fight for maritime supremacy. Germany was unable to achieve maritime supremacy due to political constraints and the onset of World War I.

The U.S. – Japan Rivalry

The U.S. and Japanese naval conflict begins during the interim war period and reaches its pinnacle in 1941 with Japan's attack on United States territory, Pearl Harbor. During the interim period, Britain was still the world naval power, however was struggling to recuperate fully from the naval race with Germany and the effects of World War I. The power structure was in position to pass naval supremacy from Britain on to another state. After World War I, the United States, who had proved itself as a major international actor, seemed to be the next world power, however, Japan's rise in the east, created competition for the role of naval supremacy.

Japan had recently established themselves as a large competitor within the power structure by surpassing China and the naval defeat of Russia in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904. After the battle of Tsushima, Japan determined that it was possible to win surface warfare through strategic tactics rather than capital. Despite having a less than superior navy, Japan thought it could successfully challenge the world's most powerful navies (Evans, 1997). The United States recognized Japan as a threat to its rise to power and took action in preventing conflict.

The Washington Treaty, signed in 1922, aimed to limit armaments of the five major naval powers in the international community, including Japan. Defined by the treaty, Great Britain and the United States would hold parity and the other signatories involved would be forced by the treaty to maintain a navy at 60% below Great Britain and the United States (Baer, 1994). The United States and Great Britain were able to achieve parity:

The United States and Great Britain argued that greater limits reserved for them were justified on the grounds that the former had security interests in both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and the latter country required sufficient naval strength to protect an empire that circled the globe. Japan's security needs, they argued, were limited to the western Pacific... [And] it was in the best interests of Japan to accept the proposals rather than face the prospect of an unrestricted naval arms race with the United States and possible economic collapse (Evans, 1997).

Nearly eight years later, The London Naval Treaty was signed, modifying the Washington Treaty. For Japanese Admiral Kato Kanji who viewed the naval structure in aggressive Mahanian terms viewed the

two treaties as denial of equality. The United States who had no political control over Japan rested on hopes that Japan would agree to arms limitations in order to maintain influence in the Pacific (O'Connor, 1962).

The Great Depression of the United States (1930) led to a naval revival, “not because of its war plans or security forecasts, but because of the connection between arms and jobs, because of the effort to pull the country out of the Depression” (Baer, 1994). The United States planned for an eight year construction program of 119 new ships, and in 1934 alone, would produce 32 new ships as well as aircraft (Saville, 1913-1972; Baer, 1994). Proceeding the U.S. investment in naval construction, a second London Naval Conference was to be held, however it failed due to lack of Japan’s commitment:

The Second London Naval Conference failed because in January 1936 the Japanese delegation walked out. The government of Japan had seesawed between confidence and pessimism...And at the end of 1935, on the eve of the Second London Naval Conference, Japan’s Imperial Navy was under the control of the Mahanian fleet faction. It had offensive sea-power strategy for the defense of the empire which its proponents thought was certain of success (Baer, 1994).

Japan’s absence from arms limitation treaties created uneasiness in the western hemisphere. After blaming the United States and Great Britain for creating inequality, Japan became the most perceived foe of the United States due to the U.S.’s relative position to and influence in the Pacific. Tensions heightened between the two rising powers and the United States remained at post in Hawaii as deterrence. Despite increased presence in the Pacific, Japan continued to assert regional naval dominance. Playing the defiant role, Japan moved into Indochina in 1941, and despite U.S. oil embargoes, declared war would be imminent if there was not a diplomatic settlement. According to Japanese officials, there was no intention of defeat of the United States, rather it was thought that an initial victory in the West, in combination with the mounting problems in Europe would discourage a Pacific campaign (Baer, 1994). The United States reacted strongly to Japan’s threat of war:

If you attack us we will break your empire before we are through with you. While you may have initial success due to timing and surprise, the time will come when you too will have your losses but there will be this great difference. You not only will be unable to make up your losses but will grow weaker as time goes on; while on the other hand we not only will make up our own losses but will grow stronger as time goes on. It is inevitable that we shall crush you before we are through with you (Morton, 1962; Baer, 1994).

U.S. threats to Japan did little to deter Japanese plans, and On December 7, 1941 Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor led to a declaration of war and engaged the United States in a

two front war in the Pacific and in Europe. Japan and the United States battled for maritime supremacy, and the United States succeeded, fulfilling its threat to Japan.

The rise of the United States and Japan resulted in the establishment of a new maritime power, replacing Britain's longtime hold on maritime power. The success of the United States in achieving maritime supremacy was a result of the inevitable patterns of the power cycle theory. Britain, retaining naval power after World War I, was experiencing decline of pattern, and the United States seemed to be on the rise; Japan's naval expansions and dominance in the Eastern hemisphere after defeating Russia in a naval war. AS the international community began to see Japan's rise as a threat, the U.S. and Great Britain were determined to maintain their position as world powers. They formed a coalition, creating the Washington Treaty and the London naval Conference which proposed arms limitations, allowing the U.S. and Britain to achieve parity, forcing other powers to remain below parity. Although Japan did participate in the first attempts for naval limitations, the continued attempts to limit naval expansion angered Japan, creating tensions between the rising powers of Japan and the United States. The attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 broke the tension between the United States and Japan, erupting into war. The United States assumed maritime supremacy after the defeat of Japan in the Pacific, and further solidified its position by defeating the Axis on the European front.

Conclusion

The historic cases of the Anglo-Dutch rivalry, the Anglo-German rivalry and the U.S. - Japanese rivalry follow the pattern set forth by the Power Cycle Theory. As one state achieves maritime supremacy, another state begins its ascension to world power. The rivalry between the established naval power and the rising power heighten as a result of the innate drive to hold power; this may lead to war as in the case of the Anglo-Dutch Rivalry and the U.S.-Japanese rivalry, or in the case of the Anglo-German rivalry, it may lead to an arms race. It is evident from these historic cases that the established naval power never maintains its position indefinitely; it is inevitable that a new power will achieve maritime supremacy.

Since the end of World War II, the United States has held maritime supremacy; however as the power cycle theory contends, the U.S. will not be able to retain its naval power. Within the international community, several states have emerged as naval competition, and the state that poses the largest competition is China. Not only has China established itself as an economic power and competitor, it has also developed a naval program to rival that of the U.S.

The relationship of the United States and China largely resembles the Anglo-Dutch relationship prior to the Anglo-Dutch Wars. Even though China has not political structural change as Britain had in the 17th century, China's economic growth resembles that of Britain's. Economic development lead to the development of a navy in order to protect China's economic interests: China "will apply its energies to guarding its interests in the Indian Ocean, the wellspring of much of China's economic lifeblood" (Yoshihara, 2010). Not only will China apply its energies within the Indian Ocean, but China's naval development program will increase China's ability to protect its global interests. The United States perceives China's naval program as a threat to maritime supremacy as well as economic power, just as the Dutch perceived Britain's rise. Similar to Britain's claim to sovereignty of the English Channel increased tensions with the Dutch, China's growing assertiveness as a regional hegemon and rising world power has heightened tensions between with the United States. The rivalry between the Dutch and the British resulted in naval conflict, as the Dutch tried to defend its maritime supremacy and the British attempted to establish naval power. Established by the power cycle theory, the Anglo-Dutch rivalry resulted from the inevitable decline of Dutch supremacy and the transition of power to Britain.

The resemblance of U.S-China relations to the Anglo-Dutch relations prior to the outbreak of conflict is indicative of the inevitable transition of power. If the U.S. follows in the footsteps of the Dutch dealing with the rise of another state, physical conflict seems imminent. Attempting to hold on to maritime supremacy will only heighten tensions, increase the risk of naval conflict and prolong the transition process, further harming the U.S. The Anglo-Dutch rivalry demonstrates the negative consequences of attempting to retain supremacy; doing so left the Dutch in worse state, facing economic instability and the loss of its assets. Learning from the results of a rivalry that resembles current state relations provides valuable lessons, which could lead U.S.-China relations on a different path: U.S.-China relations do not have to follow suit and result in naval conflict.

The United States has devoted many of its resources towards competing with China's rising naval program. Many assume that the loss of naval supremacy is synonymous with a weak state; however as history and the Power Cycle theory contends, the transition of power from one state to another is not a result of a weakening state but an inevitable event. Through the realization that the U.S. will ultimately have to step down from its position as a naval power will be beneficial for the transition of the international power structure: It will prevent the United States from expending its resources only to be defeated by the cycle of power.

The United States and its decision makers must plan a course of action that will allow the United States to not be defeated in the transition to a new world order. It is impertinent that the United States comes to the realization that China will be the next naval power, and all U.S. naval relations with China must create and foster a responsible naval power. By trying to limit power and creating conflict with China, the United States may be prolonging its hold on naval power, but at the same time is creating negative relations with China. Rather, the United States needs to ensure a power alliance with China post power transition. Doing so will avoid the eruption of war that, as historical cases show, leave the declining maritime power in a vulnerable state. The United States must encourage open dialogue and ensure positive relations with China in order to secure its position in the changing power system. It is important to note, however, that just as naval powers before the U.S. have faced the inevitable decline from maritime supremacy, those who hold maritime supremacy after the United States will also be forced to face the rise of new naval powers.

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