

2012

## America's Challenge: Engaging a Rising China in the Twenty-First Century

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### Recommended Citation

Goldstein, Lyle and Swaine, Michael D. (2012) "America's Challenge: Engaging a Rising China in the Twenty-First Century," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 65 : No. 2 , Article 13.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol65/iss2/13>

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Swaine, Michael D. *America's Challenge: Engaging a Rising China in the Twenty-First Century*. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2011. 690pp. \$49.95

Since 2009, U.S.-China relations have lurched from crisis to crisis, jeopardizing the “long peace” that has enabled an extraordinary era of prosperity in East Asia and beyond. As Washington gropes for a new paradigm to structure this all-important bilateral relationship, diplomats, military strategists, and concerned citizens on both sides of the Pacific would do well to reflect carefully on Michael Swaine’s new treatise, which is a masterpiece that will set the standard in the field of policy analysis for decades to come.

Among the book’s many virtues are the balance and objectivity of its assessments. Swaine explores alternative strategies, such as a more zero-sum approach, on the one hand, that would rely on a “grand coalition of democracies” to balance China, as well as, on the other, the possibilities of a more positive-sum approach that would emphasize both compromise and joint action against common, nontraditional security threats. Ultimately, Swaine concludes that the above approaches are both “extreme . . . because they do not share many of the assumptions underlying America’s current strategic objectives.” The judgment is based on dozens of interviews with this country’s most esteemed Asia hands. He reports that a consensus exists on a mixed strategy, incorporating a delicate simultaneous balance between hedging and engagement.

Another key strength of this volume is the extraordinary attention to detail—a feature that will make this work, with

its more than two hundred pages of endnotes, an extremely valuable desk reference and a capable survey of what we collectively understand about U.S.-China relations. The fact that the book covers issues as disparate as naval strategy, trade negotiations, and energy cooperation—handling each of these complex topics and many others with admirable sophistication—is a tribute to the wide experience, intellectual depth, and solid research of the author. In this respect, the book is without peer.

What makes this work truly exceptional, however, is the bold and sober recommendations that flow from Swaine’s dense analysis. To be sure, he offers a panoply of practical solutions, such as advocating the creation of a genuinely strategic (vice policy) planning entity in the White House and promoting a much-needed regular, trilateral forum bringing together Tokyo, Beijing, and Washington around one table. However, he also directly challenges current conventional wisdom among U.S. policy makers, asserting that “U.S. maritime predominance in the Western Pacific is probably unsustainable over the long term . . . [and] attempts to sustain this predominance . . . are likely to prove . . . destabilizing.” Also, breaking with longtime U.S. policy, Swaine is critical of Washington’s “hands-off” approach to the Taiwan issue, an approach that has traditionally included a refusal to negotiate with Beijing regarding arms sales to Taiwan. Finally, Swaine also boldly declares (contrary to deeply embedded U.S. political culture) that “China’s democratization should not be a strategic objective of the United States.” Such conclusions collectively offer American strategists a new approach and much food for thought.

In short, this comprehensive volume offers a much-needed corrective to tendencies in American strategic discourse that significantly favor military solutions to the dilemmas posed by China's rise over the hard work of cooperation and compromise.

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Arquilla, John. *Insurgents, Raiders, and Bandits: How Masters of Irregular Warfare Have Shaped Our World*. Lanham, Md.: Ivan R. Dee, 2011. 336pp. \$27.50

Irregular warfare has been the topic du jour over the last few years. A search of any bookseller's website turns up literally hundreds of recently published titles on the subject. While not a bad thing, this makes it harder for nonspecialists to separate the wheat from the chaff. Much recent literature in the field centers on irregular tactics and techniques, especially U.S. efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, while a smaller portion focuses on armed groups. John Arquilla, however, takes a different approach in *Insurgents, Raiders, and Bandits: How Masters of Irregular Warfare Have Shaped Our World*, by focusing more on irregular warriors than on irregular wars. Like the figures he portrays, Arquilla attacks the conventional-war methods and heroes of military history. He laments continuing overreliance on traditional methods and classical theorists, given the evidence that the world is now far from conventional. As a Naval Postgraduate School professor, Arquilla has studied and taught this topic for over two decades.

At the time of this book's publication there were more than thirty ongoing conflicts worldwide, all irregular in nature, "primarily conducted through acts of terrorism or more classic guerrilla hit and run tactics." This supports the argument that "irregular is becoming the new regular." Arquilla asserts that we must now look closely at the masters of earlier times to understand the implications of this new age. The eighteen individuals chosen here come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Some, such as Nathanael Greene and T. E. Lawrence, will be familiar to most readers. However, warriors like Abdelkader and Christiaan de Wet are probably largely unknown to all but specialists in the field. Instead of trying to categorize each of them, he draws out common themes they exhibited, most notably their "sheer indomitability" and recurring encounters with advanced technology.

In addition to thematic threads of continuity, the author weaves connecting strands along national lines. The French appear in seven chapters, six times fighting against insurgents and once, during the American Revolution, on the side of the insurgency. The experience gained in these conflicts is another theme used by the author to bind several hundred years of warfare. A similar continuity exists among supporting actors. British involvement in multiple insurgencies provides several opportunities to study Winston Churchill's personal connections.

Of note, most of the irregular warriors highlighted in these chapters gained fame by opposing the conventional masters of their time. Commanders like Charles Cornwallis or Ulysses S. Grant usually found traditional methods insufficient when facing guerrilla or