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From the Editors

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FROM THE EDITORS

The Russo-Ukrainian war, the largest war in Europe since World War II, has become a testing ground for contemporary and emerging military technologies. Less obviously, but perhaps more fundamentally, it has created the preconditions for a rethinking of operational concepts guiding possible future wars between states possessing comparably sophisticated military capabilities. In “The Future of Precision-Strike Warfare: Strategic Dynamics of Mature Military Revolutions,” John D. Maurer offers a rethinking of precision-strike warfare within the framework of the theory of “military revolutions” that came into such prominence in the last decade of the Cold War. In the early years of the nuclear era, he argues, the full implications of the appearance of nuclear weapons for modern warfare were not recognized immediately, given the very limited nuclear arsenals then available; it was assumed that nuclear exchanges would occur within the context of a conventional war—something often referred to as a “broken-back war.” Just as the proliferation of nuclear weapons on both sides made this scenario seem increasingly fantastic, so, Maurer suggests, the wide availability of precision-guided weapons among major (and even minor) powers today forces us to rethink the efficacy we have tended to associate with them (e.g., in the U.S. interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan). As in the Russo-Ukrainian war, such weapons are unlikely to deliver quick victories through “shock and awe” but rather protracted conflicts that will call for new methods of employing them. John D. Maurer is a professor at the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, Air University.

Over the last decade, Sino-Russian security cooperation in the maritime domain has become a seemingly permanent fixture of the contemporary strategic environment. In “Smart Balancers Kill Many Birds with Few Stones: Sino-Russian Security Cooperation in the Maritime Domain,” Maximilian Ernst and Tongfi Kim analyze the ways in which Russia and China use this cooperation as a balancing tool in great-power competition with the United States and its allies. They argue that these two powers have been relatively adroit in advancing their respective interests (which do not always coincide perfectly) to firm up their own defense-industrial and alliance relations while at the same time creating “negative external balancing” through exploiting differences between the United States and its allies, as well as among various of those allies themselves. As an example

of the latter, the authors point to the joint Sino-Russian overflight of Dokdo/Takeshima in 2019, which exacerbated friction between South Korea and Japan, both claimants to the islands. Maximilian Ernst and Tongfi Kim are researchers at the Centre for Security, Diplomacy, and Strategy at the Brussels School of Governance, Belgium.

In this era of great-power competition and the reemergence of “hard power” in relations between states, it is important to keep in mind other dimensions of global order, especially global order at sea. In this context, the European Union (EU) is a strategic actor of greater consequence than generally seems to be recognized. In “The European Union’s Quest to Become a Global Maritime-Security Provider,” Christian Bueger and Timothy Edmunds provide a detailed overview of the EU’s maritime activities around the world, including in places far from its own shores, such as the Gulf of Guinea and the western Indian Ocean. The most important of these activities are the suppression of piracy and human trafficking, enhancing maritime domain awareness, environmental protection, and capacity building with Third World partners. These efforts form a complex web of partly overlapping missions carried out by varying groupings of states and a wide variety of civil and military organizations. Bueger and Edmunds acknowledge the many challenges and shortcomings with which the EU has contended in executing these missions, including command and control, interoperability, and coordination with the United States and (now) the United Kingdom, but their case for a better appreciation of these valuable contributions to global maritime security is a compelling one. Christian Bueger is a professor of international relations at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark; Timothy Edmunds is a professor of international security at the University of Bristol, United Kingdom.

As the war in Ukraine enters its second year, it is well to remember that Ukraine was scarred by war twice in the last century—not only in World War II, but in the Russian Civil War following the Bolshevik seizure of power in 1917. In all three cases, war in Ukraine has constituted a struggle for control of what the geopolitical theorist Halford Mackinder called the Eurasian “heartland.” In “‘Confining the Enemy’: Halford Mackinder’s Theory of Containment and the Conflict in Ukraine,” Michael Hochberg and Leonard Hochberg explore possible implications of Mackinder’s classic geopolitics for today. Of particular interest is the fact that Mackinder himself went on an official mission to Ukraine in 1919–20 to advise the British government on the prospects of Denikin’s White Russian army and whether Britain should continue to support it materially. The report he produced laid out a vision of a Ukraine–East European–Baltic alignment against the Soviets that is highly reminiscent of the situation today. Michael Hochberg is president of Luminous Computing; Leonard Hochberg is a senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute.

Finally, it is always well to be reminded of the phenomenon of “the fog of war.” In “The Cuban Missile Crisis at Sea: Avoidance of Nuclear War Not Left to Chance,” Theodore Voorhees sifts through the various eyewitness accounts of the incident of 20 October 1962 involving the forced surfacing of a Soviet attack submarine by the U.S. Navy, during which, we often have been told, it was only by a lucky accident that the sub did not launch its nuclear torpedo and thus initiate World War III. In this careful and (one hopes) definitive analysis, Voorhees shows that the view lacks any serious foundation—in particular, that the American side did not engage in any of the provocative actions that Soviet participants sometimes have alleged. Theodore Voorhees Jr. is the author of *The Silent Guns of Two Octobers: Kennedy and Khrushchev Play the Double Game* (2020).

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(Preceding volumes were published by the Naval Institute Press)		Studies in Chinese Maritime Development	SCMD 8, Erickson, Kennedy, and Martinson, eds., <i>Taking Taiwan by Force? Chinese Amphibious Warfare in the New Era</i>
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