STUDYING HISTORY TO GUIDE CHINA'S RISE AS A MARITIME GREAT POWER

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INTRODUCTION

After six hundred years of Western dominance on and Chinese retreat from the world's oceans, the tides of maritime history are returning to the East. While the US Navy is diminishing quantitatively and European naval powers are in substantial decline, the nations of northeast Asia—with China foremost among them—are prioritizing naval and commercial maritime development.

China's maritime potential, while clearly growing, is being debated intensively in Beijing. After almost six centuries of introversion, invasion, and quasi-colonization, that suppressed potentially advantageous developments in the maritime direction, China is reemerging as a commercial, military, and even ideational maritime power. Yet the dimensions, objectives, and course of this major phenomenon, which has significant implications for East Asia and the world, remain unclear. Mounting evidence suggests that purposes and prioritization of maritime development, particularly concerning the purposes and priorities of China's future military development, is the subject of major domestic debate. The People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) leadership and maritime industry players are naturally strong proponents of China becoming a major maritime power. Elements of the other PLA service branches and non-maritime interest groups, by contrast, tend to be less certain if not opposed. Representatives of all 'factions' of this debate seek historical lessons and present-day phenomena to bolster their arguments.

[1] The views expressed in this article are those of the authors alone. They do not represent the official policies or estimates of the US Navy or any other organization of the US government. Quotations and summaries in this article are derived from the film series China Central Television Large Scale Documentary No. 12, "The Rise of Great Powers," 2006; as well as the accompanying book series published simultaneously by China Democratic and Legal Institutions Press. This article draws on Andrew S. Erickson and Lyle J. Goldstein, "Chinese Perspectives on Maritime Transformation" and "China Studies the Rise of Great Powers," in *China Goes to Sea: Maritime Transformation in Comparative Historical Perspective*, eds. Andrew S. Erickson, Lyle J. Goldstein, and Carnes Lord (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2009), xiii-xxxvi, 401-25.

Rather than representing a definitive break with China's continental past, this is the first time in the history of the People's Republic of China (PRC) that a 'maritime faction' truly has a chance to influence national policy.

Clearly China is moving increasingly in the maritime direction, and many relatively low cost measures have been implemented. The real question is to what extent more ambitious (and potentially expensive and provocative) maritime and naval initiatives can prevail in an environment of scarce resources and competing policy priorities. At the center of this policy debate is the question of whether China, conventionally viewed at home and abroad as a continental power, can transform itself into a continental-maritime power.

Since Beijing is unlikely to issue definitive policy statements concerning these important issues, a broad range of documents and historical analogies must be examined for clues as to the complex interplay of the decisions that will shape China's maritime trajectory. One of the best sources to consider is a Chinese government study titled *The Rise of Great Powers* [Daguo Yueqi], which attempts to determine the reasons why nine nations (Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Japan, Russia, and the United States) became great powers; it is thus the subject of this article.

CHINA'S HISTORIC STUDY

The Rise of Great Powers was apparently inspired by a 24 November 2003 Communist Party of China CPC Central Committee Political Bureau group session, "Study of Historical Development of Major Countries in the World since the 15th Century," reportedly following a directive from Chinese president Hu Jintao to determine which factors enabled major powers to grow most rapidly.

Completed in 2006, the study draws on the analyses of many top Chinese scholars, interviews with several hundred international political leaders and scholars, and the producers' onsite research in all nine nations. Some of the scholars reportedly briefed the Politburo concerning their conclusions. As a twelve-part program twice broadcast on China Central Television (CCTV) and an eight-volume book series, *The Rise of Great Powers* has enjoyed considerable popular exposure in China. The first ten thousand copies of the book series sold out almost immediately. This article will analyze *The Rise of Great Powers* and other relevant Chinese writings for insights into the particular lessons that Beijing is drawing from other nations' previous attempts to master the maritime domain as well as the geopolitical results of those efforts.

The Rise of Great Powers is not the first popular Chinese production to raise the issue of maritime development to the level of national popular discourse. In 1988 CCTV broadcast *He Shang* (River Elegy), which used the theme of China's early development centering on the Yellow River to criticize "the mentality of a servile, static, and defensive people who always meekly hug to mother earth to eke out a miserable living, rather than boldly venturing forth on the dangerous deep blue sea in search of a freer, more exalted existence." This ethos, which was quite consistent with the initial "reform and opening up" ethic of the Deng Xiaoping era, challenged viewers to consider: "How can the 'yellow' culture of the earth be transformed into the 'blue' culture of the ocean?" Like *The Rise of Great Powers*, *River Elegy* suggested that China had much to learn from the West. *River Elegy* was later viewed by Chinese officials as having helped to inspire the 1989 Tiananmen Square demonstrations, however, and was subsequently banned. In this sense, it is significant that the far more sophisticated and intellectually nuanced *Rise of Great Powers* seeks to analyze the rise of foreign powers objectively, even citing the development of Western political systems

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and institutions as great national strengths rather than focusing on the harm caused by Western exertion of power, as has much Marxist-Leninist propaganda in the past. This seemingly daring act appears to have attracted a small amount of controversy, particularly from Chinese leftist hard-liners, but is understandable when one examines the purpose of the series: not to recount past wrongs but to guide China's great power development, which cannot plausibly be linked to slavery or colonization.

The Rise of Great Powers suggests that national power stems from economic development fueled by foreign trade, which can in turn be furthered by a strong navy. To see how the series' developers reached this conclusion, it is worthwhile to examine the initial and later sea powers detailed in the series, especially the land powers that attempted to become sea powers with varying degrees of success.

FIRST GLOBAL SEA POWERS

Iberian Empires

Portugal and Spain are assessed by Chinese scholars to have initially realized global power by achieving internal unity at a time when the rest of Europe lacked it, which enabled them to embark on naval expansion. When the land-focused Ottoman Empire blocked Iberian access to the spice trade, strong economic imperative emerged to develop a sea route. Portugal achieved technological breakthroughs by inventing new boats and developing navigation science, which helped it to wrest control of trade from Italy and circumnavigate the Cape of Good Hope in 1487, just as China's influence disappeared from the seas.

Spain likewise embarked on maritime expansion. Spain became a "strong enemy" for Portugal after Queen Isabella seized Granada, thereby ending Islamic attempts at control of the Iberian Peninsula and providing the requisite internal unity, "strength," and "determination." The ability of a unified Spain to value and support Columbus' efforts paid great dividends for national power.

By the late 1500s, however, Portugal and Spain are assessed to have squandered their great power status by waging wars in the defense of far-flung colonial empires, and importing expensive products, rather than focusing on their own intensive economic development and raising living standards at home. The obvious lesson for China is that naval development in the absence of robust maritime commerce and internal growth is unsustainable.

The Netherlands

The Rise of Great Powers pointedly notes that while Spain and Portugal depended on military force as a key element of their rise as maritime powers, Holland relied on commerce and became a "global commercial empire." It is quite possible that the authors of the series are using this parallel to frame China's rising maritime power as commercial rather than military in nature.

The Netherlands' rise was driven by commercial maritime development. Export of herring generated significant profits, thereby permitting the construction of canals and turning the loose coalition of city states run by feudal lords into a "key hub," with Rotterdam as the world's foremost port. This infrastructure renaissance, in turn, allowed the Dutch to serve as middlemen in trade. More than eighteen hundred unarmed Dutch ships—lighter, cheaper, and of higher capacity than their British counterparts—ferried goods throughout Europe. This commerce in turn fueled the ascendance to power of merchant elites who further supported maritime-oriented policies.

Were the Dutch experience to end here, the lesson for China might be to pursue trade to the exclusion of politics and naval development. But military technological innovations made it impossible for the Netherlands to escape intra-European power struggles. Later, with fifteen thousand branches and ten thousand ships, the Dutch East India Company captured half of world trade. Wealthy Amsterdam seized control of Taiwan and Indonesia (the latter as a colony) and monopolized trade with Japan. The ultimate lesson for China from the Dutch experience would seem to be that trade produces wealth and power but that some degree of naval forces is necessary to safeguard it.

SUBSEQUENT SEA POWERS

United Kingdom

"How did such a small island transform itself and influence the world?" asks The Rise of Great Powers. Britain, like the United States later, is assessed to have achieved this rapid accretion of power thanks to economic growth driven by innovation. "England . . . put great effort into developing a powerful navy, and defeated Holland through three wars," notes a Chinese military researcher. Elizabeth I helped to catalyze Britain's rise by encouraging privateers to attack Spanish shipping. Anglo-Spanish religious wars ended with British victory in 1588 when Spain's Armada was defeated by lighter ships with better firepower. Spain persisted for five more decades as a great power, but this naval victory clearly marked Britain's rise as a "maritime power."

Much is made of Britain's internal

consolidation facilitated by such political innovations as the Magna Carta, which sustained Britain's great power rise and facilitated rapid economic development. Overseas trade expansion, which fueled Britain's rise, was facilitated by Britain's subsequent use of both naval power and the eighteenth century "Navigation Acts," intended to give preference to British commercial shipping to eliminate Dutch and French maritime commercial competition. Britain thus prevailed in both "the competition for sea power" and "the competition between the great powers." This, in turn, enabled London to become a "world power."

The Industrial Revolution, scientific and technical innovation, patents (rule of law), and laissez faire capitalism made Britain the "workshop of the world" and enabled it to defeat rival Napoleonic France, whose military uniforms and other provisions were British-made. By the time Britain hosted the World's Fair in 1852, it produced more iron products than rest of world combined, two-thirds of world coal, and 50 percent of world textiles. This achievement marked Britain's zenith, however, and it had already begun slow decline as increasingly unprofitable colonial acquisitions produced imperial overstretch. Following World War II, Britain decided to relinquish its territories to improve national living standards.

Japan

Chinese analysts assess that, like Germany and Russia, Japan suffered from institutional defects that compromised its ability to succeed as a late-modernizer. As with Germany, a policy of external aggression is cited as a major reason for Japan's failure to realize its imperial ambitions. Rather than focusing on Japan's anti-Chinese atrocities, however, The Rise of Great Powers dwells instead on Japan's constitutional-monarchy-led internal modernization following the Meiji Restoration, which enabled it to avoid Western domination until imperial overstretch provoked war with the United States.

In its "one-hundred-year road to great powerhood," Japan became the first Asian country to resist Western colonialism, industrialize, and colonize others. In 1853, however, Japan's leaders ultimately decided not to resist the black ships of Admiral Perry when he came to open Japan for trade and to seize control of Pacific shipping routes. Perry believed that Japan might eventually come to rival the United States in terms of national power. This "pressure from abroad and chaos within" triggered the Meiji Restoration in 1868. Rapid, far-reaching internal reforms commenced. In 1871 forty-nine high officials (more than half Japan's government) joined the Iwakura Mission to visit America and Europe. In Germany they found the model system they sought, one in which the government led industrialization to catch up to earlier modernizers. Chinese analysts note that they listened intently to Bismarck, who declared that despite all the diplomatic niceties, the world was still a place where the strong oppressed the weak.

In addition to importing substantial commercial and military technology, Japan supported small businesses, notably Mitsubishi, which by 1875 had taken over the Tokyo-Shanghai shipping route. Despite rapid, wide-ranging internal reforms culminating in the "Constitution of the Empire of Japan," however, Japan still lagged behind the West. Accordingly, in 1889 Tokyo began to "develop through war." This "militaristic emphasis" occurred under the rubric of "Enrich the Country, Strengthen the Military."

The Rise of Great Powers emphasizes that naval development was central to Japan's expansionism: Following the 1895 war, in addition to colonizing Taiwan, the Chinese documentary asserts that Japan took four times as much from China in reparations as annual government expenditure and invested half of that into its own navy. This investment paid off in 1905 with victory in the Russo-Japanese War. Japan then colonized the Korean Peninsula. In World War II, Japan expanded into the Pacific and Indian Oceans. But this progress was short-lived, and the atomic bombing and surrender ceremony on deck of USS Missouri followed in 1945. A "Peace Constitution" demoted Japan's emperor to symbolic status and imposed categorical military limitations. Rapid economic growth, however, made Japan the world's third largest economy by 1968 and the second largest today.

United States

The Rise of Great Powers marvels at how the United States became a great power in only 230 years of history, built independently on base of European civilization enriched with subsequent immigrant contributions from all over the world, protected by a foresighted constitution, and driven by a culture of industry and self-reliance. By 1860 the US economy was already bigger than that of most European powers. The peaceful environment that the United States enjoyed following the Civil War is credited with providing the conditions necessary for it to develop into a superpower. A culture of invention during the second industrial revolution transformed the United States from a student of European technology to an innovator in its own right. By 1894, 118 years after its founding, the United States had become the world's largest economy.

Whereas the CCTV film series ignores naval strategist Alfred Thayer Mahan's contribution to the

rapid rise of American sea power, the book series devotes a section to it. Mahan's writings are reviewed in some detail, with a focus on his complaint that while England and Japan had powerful navies and "China also has a modern 'Beiyang' fleet . . . the US Navy stands twelfth in the world, and must pursue [the others] with force and spirit." Mahan is credited with inspiring Congress to appropriate funds for naval construction in 1890 such that within five years the US Navy was fifth in the world. By 1898, when the United States vanquished the Spanish fleet in Manila Harbor, thus capturing the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico, America's ascension to sea power dominance was indisputable: "500 years before, the Spaniards had found the new continent of America. Now, this rising New World country had defeated its discoverers by revealing its cutting edge battleships to the world for the first time. On the North American continent, this promising youth, obsessed with ambition, sized up the world, and its warships flying star-spangled flags frequently appeared in the world's five oceans. Already, the world could not ignore America's influence."

World War I further stimulated the US economy by generating large-scale European weapons and steel orders and left the United States with 40 percent of the world's wealth. Following President Wilson's subsequent failure to remake the international order, "the United States' geopolitical advantages that allowed it to advance or retreat freely were once again manifested. It shifted its focus back to the American continent and concentrated on its own matters." After World War II, whose naval battles are depicted only briefly, the United States emerged triumphant: "The participation of the United States, as the number one economic and military power, was undoubtedly decisive for the victory of the antifascist war." In the new world order that unfolded at Yalta, "the gross industrial output value of the United States accounted for more than half of the world total and a dollar-centric international financial system was established worldwide," giving the United States "leadership status." Washington "also sent troops to 50 countries and territories around the world and had them stationed there." It began to dominate the international order in a way that was beneficial to itself and, in the latter part of the twentieth century, eventually became a superpower.

CONTINENTAL POWERS

Continental powers are of greatest interest to China's maritime future because the question of how they are able or are not able to transition into maritime powers is most relevant to China's own historical situation. It is therefore worthwhile to examine these cases and see what insights can be gleaned from this comprehensive Chinese survey to gain at least a partial understanding of how the Chinese conceptualize sea power as an element in the rise of great powers and their prospects for transition.

France

In this discussion of French history, the continental nature of its power is emphasized from the start. Indeed, the title of the chapter on France in the main study compilation refers to France as a "continental power." Louis XIV is credited with building up France's science, technology, and national power to the point that it played a role in the international system at that time comparable to the role played by the United States today.

France's position vis-à-vis sea power arises primarily in the context of analysis of the Napoleonic wars. According to this analysis, Britain was gravely troubled in 1802 when France closed Dutch and Italian ports to British trade and set the shipyards to work with the goal of doubling the size of the French Navy. The Trafalgar victory for England in 1805, noted by the Chinese analysis to have occurred against superior numbers, spelled the end of France's quest to match Britain at sea. Neither Britain nor France could decisively defeat the other's strength, so the Chinese analysis observes that their war became one of blockade and counter-blockade—in essence, economic warfare.

In a dictum with resonance in contemporary Chinese strategy, Napoleon intended to "use the land to conquer the sea." In evaluating the Napoleon's intention to defeat Britain by cutting it off from crucial continental markets, the Chinese analysts do credit France with creating difficulties for Britain in 1807–8. Nevertheless, British sea power is viewed as being decisive in routing the so-called Continental System. By the Chinese account, Napoleon's strategy was defeated because England was a strong naval power that relied on its mighty fleets in the North Sea, the Mediterranean, and even along the French coast, for which France, despite its having conquered much of Western Europe with "military power," remained "without any option." It is recognized, however, that Britain's financial and industrial prowess were also key to its eventual victory.

There is no further mention of sea power in the discussion of France. Still, France once again found itself the dominant continental power in Europe after World War I. At that time, however, France's role was quickly surpassed because, the Chinese analysis contends, Paris no longer had the will to dominate as had Louis XIV or Napoleon. Likewise, its rapid defeat by Hitler's Germany is put down to a deleterious national sense of being "in no hurry to fight." Indeed,

the concept of appeasement has developed its own place in Chinese discourse concerning the use of force.

It is also noted that France and China have enjoyed somewhat similar modern histories and culture. Like Beijing, Paris has "[taken] an independent road" in the postwar years, developing "an independent industrial system" complete with "aviation and nuclear industries."

Germany

The discussion of German history in *The Rise of Great Powers* has little focus on Germany's shortcomings in the maritime domain. Nevertheless, the analysis is still noteworthy because of the lessons Chinese analysts appear to draw regarding the imperative of national unification, on the one hand, and caution regarding the use of force, on the other.

Germans are depicted as a people who are courageous, tough, and skilled at warfare, owing largely to their history of continuous military conflict. The description of Frederick the Great relates his cold calculations to serve the national interest, noting that this logic could justify breaking any treaty and launching any attack. Indeed, the theme of Prussia's militarization is emphasized when the common adage appears noting that Prussia was not a state with an army but rather an army with a state. After a recounting of the wars of German unification in some detail, Bismarck is described in glowing terms as the principle architect of German unification. In a depiction with possible significance for Beijing's evaluation of Taiwan's future, it is emphasized that Bismarck succeeded with "iron and blood" where the peaceful revolutionaries of 1848 had failed.

The analysis then turns to explain how Germany turned toward a wayward and self-destructive path in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While Germany's "military focus" started with Bismarck, he preserved peace in Europe by preserving the balance of power and not over-expanding. In a shift with some echoes in contemporary Chinese foreign policy (at least from a Western perspective), Berlin under Kaiser Wilhelm is described in 1890 as altering its foreign policy from a "continental policy" to a "global policy." It is related that German leaders desired "living space," viewed their existing territory as being too small, and also sought a "place in the sun" for Germany. Meanwhile, "the German government continuously increased its military expenditures." The enormous naval building program of Adm. Alfred von Tirpitz is mentioned in this context.

The Chinese discussion of the world wars observes that the earlier wars of German unification had convinced Berlin (wrongly) that another war would also be short. In a thinly veiled critique of democratic norms, the analysis notes that the German decision for war in 1914 was intensely popular. Although Anglo-German commercial rivalry is mentioned as a cause of World War I, it is somewhat surprising that no mention is made of the extensive Anglo-German naval arms race that preceded this conflict. Little is said about German naval power before and during World War II except to note that German submarines "did not achieve their anticipated goal" of knocking Britain out of the war.

Ultimately, this Chinese discussion of Germany's rise as a great power concludes: "Germany's economic development, especially its education and technological development, provide a rich experience for us. However, once Germany had become powerful, it became an upstart, had difficulty in finding its place, and as a result its excess of power was channeled into a path of expansion, belligerence and destruction."

It is recognized that Germany's difficult geostrategic situation—located in the heart of Europe—rendered it subject to intense pressures. But the primary lesson for China of Germany's travails is to "always choose the path of peaceful development." *The Rise of Great Powers* draws a larger lesson for China from the German legacy: "So far there is yet to have any precedence of any emerging big power defeating a hegemonic power directly. The rise and decline of Germany was a historical legacy that all big powers must deeply contemplate. . . . When this emerging big power adopted the parity principle that big European powers were following, it developed rapidly in a peaceful environment and became the leading economic power in Europe. However, just when it attempted to assert its turf under the sun, it met disastrous defeat." Any contradiction between this point and the prior endorsement of Bismarck's belligerent unification policies is not addressed.

Russia

The Chinese discussion of modern Russian history provides the most focused assessment of maritime transformation by a traditional continental power. This analysis concentrates heavily on the leadership of Peter the Great, who is described as being fully dedicated to establishing Russia as a maritime power. According to this history of Russia,

Muscovy grew powerful because the city lay proximate to rivers that were crucial travel corridors for people and goods. Nevertheless, Russia's agrarian economy, as that of a "landlocked country," was restricted by limited transport routes and so remained backward. "The only way to alter this situation was to capture ports, and for this war was the only option." Indeed, during the thirty-six year reign of Peter the Great,

Russia fought fifty-three wars.

To reach the sea, Peter needed a strong military to confront the strong power on its northern flank, Sweden, as well as the strong power on its southern flank, the Ottoman Empire. The Chinese analysis observes admiringly that Peter achieved progress in military development at a rapid pace. Peter's time abroad was crucial to informing his perspective regarding Russia's relative weaknesses. In a description analogous to contemporary China, Peter is praised for insisting that Russia open itself to foreign ideas and influences. In particular, he stressed the imperative to study the development of foreign militaries, to import foreign military equipment, and to call upon foreign experts. Russian students were also sent abroad more frequently to study foreign military methods. The discussion also notes Peter's success in creating a foreign policy that complemented his military strategy. In 1709 Russia defeated Sweden. In 1713 Peter built his cosmopolitan, westernized capital of St. Petersburg on land captured in that war.

A critical component of Peter's broadly successful strategy, according to the Chinese analysis, was the building of Russia's first navy, with its own academy. After his return from Holland, where he personally observed how the European powers were "prosperous and strong," Peter was utterly determined to seize a port on the Baltic Sea to open Russia to commercial and cultural interaction with Western Europe. To this end, Peter emphasized the importing of modern shipbuilding and navigation technology. Between 1706 and 1725, Russia launched forty full-size battleships in addition to almost one thousand smaller vessels. With naval power, it is suggested, the Russian state was no longer dependent on a single hand but rather had two hands (land and sea power) with which to fulfill its ambitions. While amply crediting Peter for modernizing Russia and establishing it as a sea power, the Chinese analysis also observes that the Russian navy all but disappeared after Peter's death because its capabilities were not maintained.

The role of sea power in Russian history after Peter is not seriously explored in the book series. It is noted that Russia emerged as the dominant European continental power in the wake of Napoleon's demise. Catherine, who assumed power in 1762, embraced much of Peter's ideology as a proponent of the "Western faction" over the "Slavic faction." Like Peter, she turned to military conquest to expand Russia's power and influence, seizing a Black Sea port, Poland, and even Alaska. It is implied that the emancipation of serfs enabled industrialization and military expansion. In the 1856 Crimean War, however, Russia is said to have been forced to confront the powerful armored fleets of Britain and France with mere wooden sailing ships, thereby ensuring its defeat. Russia's "catastrophic defeat" at the hands of the upstart Japan in 1905 is likewise mentioned, but not described in any detail.

Like Russia, the USSR is described as a power that was continuously striving toward the sea. In the years following the Revolution of 1917, Moscow used not "military power" but "national power" to further internal development. As this Chinese analysis indicates, however, the Soviet Union reached the apex of its power in the 1970s but failed at that time to pay adequate attention to its own people's standard of living, preferring instead to lavish resources on its military rivalry with the United States. A wide body of scholarship and policy statements indicate that China is determined not to repeat this mistake.

Not only did the USSR reach parity with the United States in nuclear weapons, it also exceeded the United States in numbers of tanks. As for the Soviet Navy, the analysis notes that it was active on all the world's three major oceans and began to hold global exercises that demonstrated its strength. Cumulatively, the Russian case is especially interesting for Beijing because it is a case of land power making a major effort to transform into a maritime power.

Conclusion

The Rise of Great Powers project is an ambitious, timely, sophisticated, and surprisingly objective study of one of China's greatest challenges: accomplishing the rise of China without precipitating devastating conflict in the international system. Indeed, Rise of Great Powers reflects China's new technocratic society at its best because it demonstrates a new will and capability to look outward for lessons applicable to China's new situation. And this project does so in a deep and integrated way (over the course of several well-edited volumes prepared by disciplined and focused research teams), rather than a shallow and subjective approach. The overall findings can be summarized as emphasizing the importance of (a) internal unity; (b) market mechanisms; (c) related ideological, scientific, and institutional innovation; and (d) international peace.

Rather than attempt a comprehensive summary of the findings of *The Rise of Great Powers*, this article surveys the study's notions of sea power to gauge how this project might affect a future Chinese transformation into a full-fledged maritime power. Although *The Rise of Great Powers* does not itself assert direct findings related to sea power (which is in itself an interesting conclusion), the case studies that comprise it nevertheless do make ample observations with respect to maritime power that have been revealed in this research effort.

In studying the rise of Britain, the United States, and Japan, any historical study is likely to

question of the role of sea power, which we define here to mean not only explicit naval strength but also the commerce and shipping that underpin it. Sea power is not an end in itself but a medium for trade and a source of national security. In some cases, maritime power is useful primarily as a means to trade (as when Portugal's land trade route was cut off by the Ottomans). Yet, as the commercially proficient Dutch discovered painfully, trade must be secured from foreign threats. In this sense, naval power is necessary even if it is not needed for trade per se.

In reviewing British history, for example, it is not surprising that the study emphasizes London's use of the Navigation Acts, coupled with naval power, to eliminate Dutch and French maritime commercial competition. With respect to the United States, the authors of *The Rise of Great Powers* observe that Washington enjoyed "the geopolitical advantages [and by inference the necessary naval power] that allowed it to advance and retreat freely." Similarly, the major investment in naval expansion made by Tokyo after the Sino-Japanese War is described as paying major dividends during the Russo-Japanese War, and especially at the all-important naval victory of Tsushima Straits. The role of sea power is even more pronounced in other historical case studies. For example, regarding Portugal, *The Rise of Great Powers* notes that just as China's influence disappeared from the seas, "Portugal's big maritime discoveries . . . [emerged as] a well-conceived and well-organized national strategy." Similarly for Spain, Madrid's willingness to support Columbus' maritime discoveries is described as a risky investment with a massive payoff for Spain's national power. Sea power is also discussed in the context of the exploring the rise of various land powers. While Napoleon intended to "use the land to conquer the sea," in the end Paris was left "without any option" to contest Britain's power on the seas. Somewhat contrary to its wider conclusions, the legacy of Bismarck (especially in the context of national unification) is thoroughly praised, but Germany's clumsy attempts to develop and wield naval power are criticized in *The Rise of Great Powers*. The description of Russia's development as a great power may be the most relevant to the maritime transformation question. Indeed, Peter the Great's quest to develop ports for international trade is described as a major impetus for Russia's rise. Ultimately, however, the capability of the USSR to field fleets on all the world's oceans, impressive as it might be, is discredited in The Rise of Great Powers because of its part in Moscow's larger tendency "to lavish resources on its military rivalry with the United States."

Apparently, a major conclusion of *The Rise of Great Powers* is the fundamental value of the market and international trade as drivers for national development and consequently national power. For example, one historian is cited in the study explaining that "only three countries in the past 500 years could claim that they had dominated the world--the Netherlands, Britain and the United States. Like taking part in a relay race, these three countries renewed and developed the market economy." The essential link between maritime commerce and national development is very clear in the context of The Rise of Great Powers' exploration of the Netherlands' rise to preeminence: "During the 17th century, the Netherlands, which has an area about half the size of Beijing, created a commercial empire that dominated the world because of the financial and commercial institutions it had created." Given the observation in *The Rise of Great Powers* that Netherlands' commercial power was superseded with remarkable rapidity by the upstart British in part because of a lack of robust naval power, a possible conclusion is certainly that Chinese commercial power cannot develop wholly independently of national military capabilities, including a blue water fleet.

In conclusion, then, *The Rise of Great Powers* suggests that developing maritime power is necessary but not sufficient to support the rise of a great power. A great power's rise, which may be supported by such other factors as industrialization, innovation, and an effective political system, can support naval development, but naval development only seems to support a great power's rise if it is part of a larger flourishing of economic development and trade. Such nations as Portugal and the Soviet Union tried to further their national power by selectively developing the military component of maritime power but ultimately failed because of a lack of dynamic economic activity. China is clearly avoiding this strategic error; indeed, its commercial maritime development is proceeding much more rapidly and broadly than its naval development. By thus balancing economic and military development, China may rise to great power status sustainably and with minimal foreign opposition.

This is a positive sign—for China, the United States, and the rest of the world. Western analysts and officials should welcome the findings of *The Rise of Great Powers* project because it uses sound historical research methods to chart a path for China's peaceful rise—one that is careful to avoid military conflicts that could derail its development path. Still, it must be emphasized that the study's findings also may serve to support China's continued dynamic development of its new maritime inclinations. Further research should be done to see what lessons Chinese leaders take from the series as their nation continues to rise on the world's oceans.