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**The Politics of Contestation in Asia:
How Japan and Pakistan Deal with their
Rising Neighbors**

Hannes Ebert, Daniel Flemes and Georg Strüver

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Abstract

Rising powers have attracted tremendous interest in international politics and theory. Yet the ways in which secondary powers strategically respond to regional changes in the distribution of power have been largely neglected. This article seeks to fill this gap by presenting a systematic comparative analysis of the different types of and causes of contestation strategies undertaken by secondary powers. Empirically, it focuses on two contentious regional dyads in East and South Asia, exploring how structural, behavioral, and historical factors shape the way in which Japan and Pakistan respond, respectively, to China's and India's regional power politics. The paper concludes that the explanatory power of these factors depends on the particular context: in the case of Japan, China's militarily assertive regional role has invoked the most significant strategic shifts, while in the case of Pakistani contestation, shifts in polarity have had the largest impact on the strategic approach.

Hannes Ebert, M.Sc.

is a researcher within the project "Contested Leadership in International Relations: Power Politics in South America, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa," which is financed by the Volkswagen Foundation, and a Ph.D. student at the University of Hamburg.

Contact: <hannes.ebert@giga-hamburg.de>

Website: <http://staff.en.giga-hamburg.de/ebert>

Dr. Daniel Flemes

is a political scientist, a Schumpeter Fellow at the GIGA Institute of Global and Area Studies, and the head of the GIGA Research Team "Foreign Policy Strategies in the Multipolar System."

Contact: <daniel.flemes@giga-hamburg.de>

Website: <http://staff.en.giga-hamburg.de/flemes>

Georg Strüver, M.A.

is a researcher within the project "Contested Leadership in International Relations: Power Politics in South America, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa," which is financed by the Volkswagen Foundation, and a Ph.D. student at the University of Hamburg.

Contact: <georg.struever@giga-hamburg.de>

Website: <http://staff.en.giga-hamburg.de/struever>

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Hannes Ebert, Daniel Flemes and Georg Strüver

Article Outline

1 Introduction[1]

Asia has become a contested region. With the (re)emergence of systemic leaders, the lines of traditional power politics and spheres of influence established during the Cold War have shifted remarkably. In the past decade, the East Asian subregion has seen a dramatic shift in material capabilities towards China, a shift which has turned the country into the region's primary military and economic power. In South Asia, a rising India has transformed its economic leverage into political influence to enforce its regional hegemony. The secondary re-

gional powers have been most affected by – and most responsive to – these developments. These states, Japan and Pakistan, are the ones that have the greatest capacity to implement alternative policies in the respective regions.

Yet while Japan and Pakistan, as increasingly subordinate secondary powers, experience similar structural conditions, as well as historical burdens and hegemonic aspirations, the two states have adopted very different foreign policy strategies. Both have essentially contested their neighbors' increasing regional dominance, but the form this contestation has taken has varied significantly – an important nuance often overseen by classical comparative strategic analysis concepts. Additionally and surprisingly, both states seem to have pursued inherently contradictory strategies, at least when judged through the lens of classical strategic studies concepts. This paper takes up this twofold puzzle. It asks how we can adequately categorize secondary powers' contestation strategies towards their rising neighbors, and how we can explain variance across states.

Secondary powers employ a vast variety of foreign policy strategies towards their dominant neighbor: They balance, bait, buffer, buck-pass or bind; they contain, evade, or resist; they appease, bandwagon, comply or withdraw. The strategic portfolio is infinite. This paper is about contestation. We do not seek to explain the variance among *all* types of strategic responses to the rise of regional powers. Instead, we explain those strategies that range from competitive to conflictive modes of conduct, and thus exclude cooperative approaches. In a dynamic region like contemporary Asia, it is contestation strategies that hold the largest potential for conflict. The major problem with the classical cooperative–competitive–conflictive framework, however, is its failure to distinguish between the strategies' inherent goals and means – an essential criterion for understanding foreign policy strategies. We therefore introduce the relatively novel concept of "contestation" into the debate in order to better capture the essence of the large variety of strategies that have been subsumed under the labels of competitive and conflictive strategies.

Contestation is a disputed concept, but a narrow understanding contributes to conceptual clarity regarding secondary powers' noncooperative strategies. In general, to contest means that an actor is taking part in a dispute, argument or struggle for supremacy. In this article, we focus on contestation as a set of strategies of secondary powers. As a strategic device, we refer less to *military* strategy, understood as "the art of distributing and applying military means to fulfill the ends of policy" (Hart 1967: 321), and more to a limited form of what is understood as *grand* strategy. Grand strategy implies the matching of cultural, economic, diplomatic and military means with long-term political goals (Kennedy 1991: 5). We explicitly focus on diplomatic and military means and the political goal of security provision coordinated at the highest political levels. We thus follow Bajpai and Sahni's (2010) understanding of grand strategy as the "more or less coherent plans of states to ensure their survival and their position in relation to other states" (ibid.: 93). We concentrate on contestation because it holds the largest potential for conflict and uncertainty. Contestation encompasses those

counterpolicies of secondary states that seek to achieve the goal of maintaining external security vis-à-vis the primary power through competitive or conflictive means.

But how can we compare different types of contestation strategies? We propose to differentiate between revisionist and nonrevisionist (Johnston 2003; Organski and Kugler 1980) strategic goals and direct and indirect means of achieving these goals. This framework enables us to generate hypotheses regarding the causes of different types of contestation that can be applied to Asia. We focus on the (sub)regions' second most powerful states, which are equipped with sufficient cultural, diplomatic, economic or military capabilities to compete with the regional power in at least one policy area (Flemes and Wojczewski 2011).[2]

In order to test general assumptions about this causal relationship, the paper investigates two dyads of contested leadership in Asian power dynamics over the last decade: it explores how structural, behavioral, and historical factors shape the way in which Japan and Pakistan respond, respectively, to China's and India's power politics at the regional level. We thereby seek to contribute to the study of regional powers and regional orders by providing a comprehensive perspective on the strategic portfolio of secondary states and by identifying causes of contestation.

The paper proceeds as follows: In Section 2, we review the literature on the types and drivers of strategic foreign policy responses to regional and global primary powers on the part of secondary states. On the conceptual side, we discuss contributions from international relations theory and comparative strategic analysis, and present a descriptive overview of the contestation types therein. Section 3 provides a conceptual overview of four broad types of strategic contestation as well as a set of drivers. In addition, we generate working assumptions regarding possible causal relationships between the types and drivers of contestation. These working assumptions are tested in Section 4, which explores the diplomatic and military means employed by secondary powers to ensure national security. The last section summarizes our empirical results and outlines potential areas for future research.

2 Rising Powers and Their Discontents: The Merits and Limits of Current Research on Contestation in International Relations

With regard to our first question of how secondary powers strategically respond to an increasing relative power loss and/or a threat to security, international relations scholars have traditionally classified foreign policy strategies somewhere between the two poles of "bal-

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2 Secondary powers have a two-sided systemic position: they formulate their foreign policy strategies under the condition of factual, perceived and/or anticipated inferiority to the regional power and superiority to all other states of the region. With regard to material capabilities, Pakistan is the secondary power in South Asia, whereas Japan represents the most potent challenger of China's growing regional clout in East Asia. The presence of a secondary power within a regional system does not imply the system's bi- or multipolarity – it can also be part of a unilateral region.

ancing" and "bandwagoning" – a distinction that reflects the controversies of the "Third Great Debate" between neorealist and neoliberal institutionalist scholars (Ikenberry 2003: 14; Wei 2006).[3]

Both strategic responses are relevant for our research question. The debate's antagonistic perspective, however, covers only a small and often ideal-typical selection of possible strategic reactions. An increasing number of comparative strategic analyses recognize such shortcomings and discuss middle strategies within this spectrum – the conceptual continuum has thus been significantly broadened. As the limited space of this article does not permit us to evaluate all the possible approaches that the foreign policy makers of secondary powers can choose from, Table 1 offers a comprehensive overview of the strategies discussed in the broadened agenda of international relations theory. We follow the – often implicit – distinction between strategies that operate in a cooperative, competitive or conflictive manner (see Medeiros 2005: 147). These strategies can operate simultaneously and are not mutually exclusive. In fact, many authors have recently demonstrated that states employ a set of partially contradictory "hedging" strategies by diversifying their options and pursuing different approaches at the same time in order to decrease their security risks (Goh 2005, 2008, 2011a; Heginbotham and Samuels 2002; Kuik 2008; Medeiros 2005; Tessman and Wolfe 2011).

These works provide a broader and more nuanced descriptive picture of secondary powers' strategic responses. They remain, however, confined to the balancing–bandwagoning continuum, which is rather one-dimensional. Scholars have mistakenly assumed that both strategies serve the same goals and only vary in terms of their means. They have also narrowly focused on *one* specific type of strategy, thereby oversimplifying the strategic spectrum of regional counterpolicies. Strategic diversification concepts, such as "hedging" or "complex balancing," seek to solve this problem; however, they lack conceptual clarity as they encompass all possible secondary-power strategies and fail to explain why states employ strategies that pursue contradictory goals. Finally, these studies predominantly deal with balancing at the global level, thereby ignoring the increasing relevance of balancing dynamics within regions.

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3 The convergent explanations were part of the broader "Great Debate" between neorealist and neoliberal institutionalist scholars. Balancing has been debated extensively (see Mearsheimer 2001; Paul et al. 2004a; Walt 1987; Waltz 1979). In contrast, bandwagoning is a relatively recent concept (Kaufman 1992; Reis and Dehon 2004; Schweller 1994).

Table 1: Broadened Agenda of Strategic Responses

Mode of Interaction	*Secondary Powers' Strategic Responses*
Conflictive	Containment (Acharya 1999) Hard (internal and external) balancing (Waltz 1979) Moat-building (Basrur 2010) Resistance (Ikenberry et al. 2009)
Competitive	Baiting (Ikenberry 2003) Balking (Jesse et al. 2012; Walt 2005) Bargaining (ibid.) Binding (Ikenberry 2003; Rock 2000) Blackmailing (Lapp 2012; Walt 2005) Buck-passing (Chan 2010; Christensen and Snyder 1990; Mearsheimer 2001; Mochizuki 2007) Buffering (Gries 2005) Chain ganging (Christensen and Snyder 1990) Delegitimation (Walt 2005) Economic prebalancing (Layne 2006) Evasion (Bobrow 2008) Everyday and rightful resistance (Bobrow 2008; Destradi 2010; Ikenberry 2003; Ikenberry et al. 2009; Prys 2010; Schweller and Pu 2011) Hedging (Goh 2005, 2008, 2011a; Heginbotham and Samuels 2002; Kuik 2008; Medeiros 2005) Leash-slipping (Layne 2006) Log rolling (Ikenberry 2003) Niche diplomacy (Cooper 1997) Modification (Bobrow 2008) Omni-balancing (David 1991) Omni-enmeshment (Goh 2008) Pulling and hauling (Ikenberry 2003) Soft and indirect balancing (Goh 2008; Pape 2005; Paul 2005a)
Cooperative	Accommodation (Ross 2006) Acquiescence (Ikenberry 2003) Allying (Walt 2005) Appeasement (Mearsheimer 2001; Rock 2000) Bandwagoning (Kaufman 1992; Labs 1992; Schweller 1994) Bonding (Ikenberry 2003) Compliance (Walt 2005) Diverting (Chan 2010; Goh 2008) Engagement (Acharya 1999; Goh 2005; Medeiros 2005) Followership (Cooper et al. 1991) Free riding (Gilpin 1981; Kindleberger 1981) Hiding (Ikenberry et al. 2009; Rajagopalan and Sahni 2008) Norm entrapment (Cooper et al. 1991) Transcending (Chan 2010) Withdrawal (Wei 2006)

Source: Authors' compilation. We understand "contestation" as comprising all "conflictive" and "competitive" strategies listed above.

By taking up these shortcomings, comparative strategic studies have contributed to a *deepening* of the research agenda. Schweller (1994: 93–99) describes the variation in particular strat-

egies' goals using a continuum of state interest that stretches from the value of revision to the value of the status quo. Satiated states, at one extreme of the spectrum, pursue self-preservation by balancing; buck-passing; or self-abnegation via appeasement, bandwagoning and distancing. Insatiable states, at the other extreme of the spectrum, pursue unlimited self-extension via risk-acceptant aggression or limited self-extension via offensive bandwagoning. Jesse et al. (2012) have recently presented the most extensive attempt to systematically categorize and compare secondary powers' strategic responses: They outline a continuum of responses to hegemony ranging from opposition via resistance and neutrality to accommodation, and they subsume the nine strategies of hard balancing, soft balancing, balking, blackmailing, leash-slippling, neutrality, binding, bonding, and bandwagoning to these dimensions (ibid.: 14). Yet they fail to argue, first, why they have chosen these nine strategies over others (see Table 1) and, second, what comparative criteria they have used. Finally, their comparison still remains limited to a one-dimensional understanding of types of strategic responses.

Rajagopalan and Sahni (2008) have contributed a two-dimensional empirical study on strategic responses. They describe India's strategic portfolio in a China-dominated Asia according to the dimensions of "active" versus "passive" strategy, and "involved" versus "not involved in power politics" (ibid.: 16–20). They conclude that India's balancing against China would be active and would get Delhi involved in power politics, and that its bandwagoning with China against the US would be passive and involved; the act of transcending by building cooperative security in Asia would be active and not involved; and hiding by refraining from becoming aligned would be passive and not involved in power politics. Such a multi-dimensional approach allows for comparison and contributes to a better understanding of types of strategy. However, the authors' choice of dimensions is misleading, as "active" and "involved in power politics" can hardly be distinguished from one another.

The second major stream of literature adds an analytical angle on the drivers of the various forms of strategic contestation to the descriptive debate outlined above. This analysis stems from works in the late 1960s, when scholars examined smaller states' choice of which superpower to align with. In major studies on how small states behave strategically in alliances, Keohane (1969, 1971) laid the groundwork for the field. He stated, "one of the most striking features of contemporary international politics has been the conspicuousness of small states in an era marked by increasing military disparity between Great and Small" (Keohane 1969: 291), arguing that "if Lilliputians can tie up Gulliver, or make him do their fighting for them, they must be studied as carefully as the giant" (ibid.: 310).[4] While we explicitly do not focus on "small states,"[5] but rather on "subordinate" secondary states in

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4   Similar works deal with "The Influence of Small States Upon Superpowers" (Park 1975), "Alliances and the Third World" (Liska 1968) and the "Inequality of States" (Vital 1967).

5   See more recently Handel (1990), Ingebritsen (2006), Keohane (1969, 1971), Labs (1992), Park (1975), Sechser (2010), and Vital (1971).

(sub)regional systems that can conduct the cost-intensive strategies of contestation (Basrur 2010: 11–12), we can still draw on this literature's findings regarding the general conditions of strategy building within asymmetric (conflictive) relations.

In particular, Keohane found that under the structural condition of bipolarity, "small states" utilized membership in alliances to turn one-sided dependency into mutual interdependency. Similarly, Rothstein (1968: 24–26) identified strategies that "small states" are structurally obliged to adopt (as opposed to those adopted by "great powers"): "small states" adopt strategies that resolve their short-term needs, even at the expense of long-term security; they most often rely on outside help in situations of insecurity, but seek to distance themselves politically and economically from strong states in order to reduce their vulnerability; and they favor multilateral frameworks to increase their leverage in bargaining processes.

The more recent literature on causes of contestation demonstrates similarly dichotomous arguments to those in the neo–neo debate outlined above. The neorealist school follows a central assumption of the balance-of-power or balance-of-threat theory (Walt 1987), which maintains that "threats will be resisted" (David 1991) – that is, external security threats will result in balancing or bandwagoning.

Studies from a liberal perspective deal extensively with the nonemergence of balancing strategies vis-à-vis a "state's rapid growth and subsequent hegemonic ambitions" (Wei 2006: 195). This group asserts that countries and peoples "experience … unipolar power in different ways. A threat to some is an opportunity to others" (Ikenberry 2003: 8). Wei (2006: 204) demonstrates that balancing becomes less likely the larger the disparity between the (potential) hegemon and its opposition gets, because the latter's costs increase significantly. When other factors are similar, secondary states tend towards bandwagoning, free riding, treachery, and withdrawing (ibid.). Ross (2006: 357–358) refines this observation by maintaining that bandwagoning and accommodation become more likely the more a rising power can fundamentally affect a secondary state's security.

Similarly, Kuik (2008) offers a comparative perspective by differentiating between the responses of selected ASEAN states to China's reemergence according to a spectrum spanning from power rejection to acceptance, with a neutrality point in the middle. Those states that demonstrate a high degree of power rejection pursue risk-contingency goals, while those that show a higher degree of power acceptance follow return-maximizing options (economic pragmatism, binding engagement, and limited bandwagoning). He concludes that such "hedging" strategies constitute the predominant pattern of response in East Asia and are driven less by "the growth of the Great Power's relative capabilities per se" and more by "an internal process of regime legitimation in which the ruling elite evaluate – and then utilize –

the opportunities and challenges of the rising power for their ultimate goal of consolidating their authority to govern at home" (ibid.: 161).[6]

Three main tasks for our research result from the literature's conceptual shortcomings: First, at the descriptive level, we need to develop models to more accurately compare the goals and means of different strategies and the underlying resources, interests, and perceptions of the respective states. Second, at the analytical level, we must go beyond the classical neoliberal versus neorealist debate on the drivers of contestation. Finally, we need to transfer the findings from the international-level analyses that have dominated the scholarly debate to the regional level.

3 Varieties of Contestation: A Strategic Analysis

3.1 Types of Contestation

In order to systemically capture the varieties of contestation, we propose a model that differentiates between their goals on the one hand and the means to achieve them on the other.

First, contestation strategies vary significantly in terms of their goals. In order to compare such goals, scholars of strategic analysis have suggested opposing indicators such as "shaping" versus "imposing" (Schweller and Pu 2011), "active" versus "passive" (Rajagopalan and Sahni 2008), and "status quo" (satiated) versus "revisionist" (insatiable) (Schweller 1994: 85–88). Each of these covers a certain aspect of contestation objectives, yet we adopt the latter perspective, which promises to most neatly link with our core interest: the secondary power's ambition vis-à-vis the primary power. Even though concepts of strategic revisionism remain vague and undertheorized (Johnston 2003: 8–12), all revisionist types of contestation pursue a shared overall strategic rationale: to revert, stall or contain the primary power's claim to regional supremacy.[7] In adopting a revisionist strategy, a secondary power seeks to reorder the distribution of goods in the region (Zionts 2006: 633). The contested goods are not confined to material capabilities (for example, economic and military resources); they also include variables such as ideology (for example, the regime type), status and prestige.[8] These strategies

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6 For a summary of the debate on the causes of different strategic responses, see Jesse et al. (2012). They identify three explanatory frameworks: (1) the realist balancing-of-power or balancing-of-threats perspective, (2) the institutionalist binding approach, and (3) the domestic-level-factor theories.

7 Numerous studies that deal with the concept of strategic revisionism have departed from classical power transition theory's distinction (Johnston 2003; Organski and Kugler 1980) between dissatisfied/unsatiated revisionist versus satisfied/satiated status quo states, for example, Schweller and Pu (2011), Nel and Stephen (2010), Frazier and Stewart-Ingersoll (2010), Zionts (2006), Legro (2005), and Chan (2004).

8 According to Legro (2005), revisionism refers to states that "reject the dominant norms of interaction in a given international society and believe that active involvement in overturning that order serves national interests" (ibid.: 9). It can be observed in "national rhetoric and doctrines that aspire to different international ordering principles, aggressive critiques of, and challenges to, existing norms and rules" (ibid.: 10). While we follow

generally aim to protect a state "from the security threat emanating directly from a potential hegemon" (Brooks and Wohlforth 2005: 105). They are conflictive in nature as they seek to implement preferences that oppose those of the primary power.

In contrast, nonrevisionist strategies refrain from challenging the existing order, with the second state seeking instead to actively maximize its relative leverage in certain regional policy areas. These strategies aim to offset security risks, maintain regional stability and compete with the primary power on limited levels. It is important to note, however, that, combined with our understanding of a limited grand strategy, both revisionist and nonrevisionist strategies follow the overall political goal of security provision through diplomatic and military means.

In addition, we differentiate between the strategic means secondary powers employ to contest on the continuum between the two poles of direct and indirect contestation.[9] Direct contestation immediately addresses the regional power and confronts its primacy via specific interactions. Specific interactions range from the weaker state's initiation of a military confrontation via an extensive arms buildup or an exclusive military alliance (Tessmann and Wolfe 2011: 221) to targeted economic sanctions explicitly aimed at the primary power. Such strategies resort to capability-based policies that become manifest in ongoing, overt declaratory and high-level interactions.

In contrast, indirect contestation strategies utilize intermediaries such as formal and informal institutions or constitutive principles (such as legitimacy or order).[10] In order to avoid overt confrontation, secondary powers employ persuasive tactics that rely on identity-based rather than capability-based approaches. These are detached from the dyadic relationship's contentious issues and instead operate via loops or triangular relations that are only implicitly directed against the regional system's primacy. Goh (2008: 133–134) has demonstrated, for instance, that Southeast Asian states engage in indirect balancing vis-à-vis China: rather than explicitly targeting specific Chinese military threats, their policies "borrow" US military power under the pretext of "other types of security interests shared with the United States." In contrast to what the proponents of "soft balancing" suggest (Paul 2005b: 58–59), therefore, indirect contestation is not confined to nonmilitary means, and vice versa.

Based on these dimensions of contestation, we can generate a nominally scaled two-by-two typology of strategic contestation (see Table 2). The horizontal dimension reflects the particular contestation strategy's goal; the vertical dimension outlines the strategic means to achieve each of these goals. However, the four resulting ideal-typical groups, which we de-

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this broad understanding of revisionism, we avoid the labeling of states as (non)revisionist per se, focusing instead on specific strategies.

9   Analyzing military strategies, Arreguin-Toft (2001: 105–106) argues that "the universe of potential strategies and counterstrategies can be reduced to two distinct ideal-type strategic approaches: direct and indirect." We assume that this observation can also be applied to "grand strategies."

10 This distinction, however, does not suggest a simple differentiation regarding the (non)involvement of the primary power in the strategic interaction, but rather investigates the kind of relations that channel the contestation strategies.

velop in more detail in the following discussion, are not mutually exclusive: we expect secondary powers to diversify their strategies when facing uncertainty about threat perceptions or an unusually rapid transition of power.

Table 2: Varieties of Contestation

		Strategic Means	
		Direct	*Indirect*
Strategic Goals	*Revisionist*	Resistance	Reformism
	Non-revisionist	Rivalry	Resignation

Source: Authors' compilation; see also Stephen (2012).

Resistance encompasses those contestation strategies that are explicitly directed at the primary power and that allow the secondary power to shape the existing order through overt and instantaneous confrontation. Simultaneously, the secondary power operates through unmediated channels and unambiguously pursues immediate security in opposition to the primary power. A successful, ideal-typical form of direct revisionist strategy manages to revert, stall or contain the primary power's claim to regional supremacy without resorting to intermediaries or intervening factors. It typically involves the highest material and political costs (Goh 2008: 116; Schweller 1994: 114) and therefore demands relatively advanced (perceived) capabilities.[11] Successful resistance manifests as a regression to the power-distribution and threat-perception situation that existed before the regional hegemon's rise. In order to be categorized as this type of contestation, the respective strategy must thus fulfill the following criteria:

1) it expresses a high degree of opposition to the current distribution of goods;

2) it expresses a high degree of divergence of interests;

3) it is perceived as an unmediated challenge to the primary power's regional supremacy; and

4) it depends significantly on capabilities. Strategies that meet these criteria include internal and external "hard balancing" and "rightful resistance."

"Hard balancing" implies the "forging of countervailing strength against a potentially hegemonic or threatening power – a situation that is implicitly understood as preferable to one in which a dominant power is unchallenged" (Goh 2005: 3). The means of hard balancing vary significantly and include internal and external forms of balancing (Tessman and Wolfe 2011:

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11 Schweller (1994) argues that balancing and bandwagoning are not opposite strategies, but result from different motivations: the former from seeking security and the latter from seeking profit. The costs of the former are therefore often higher.

217–220). A secondary power might balance externally by allying and forging close strategic partnerships with states and joining military opposition coalitions within and beyond the region. In order to mitigate the strategic costs of external alliances, such as entrapment, a state may choose to balance internally or unilaterally by extensively increasing its own material capabilities and defensive stocks as a deterrent against the other power – an option that often distinguishes secondary from subordinate states.

Schweller and Pu have proposed a new form of resistance with a direct revisionist outlook: "rightful resistance" can aim to revise the existing order or simply to maximize security. The secondary power not only refuses to accept or comply with the regional order, but also engages in "a hegemonic bid to overturn that order when doing so becomes a viable option" (Schweller und Pu 2011: 50). According to Ikenberry's (2003) global-level analysis, the goal of such resistance is "to loosen ties and undercut or block American power and policy" (ibid. 4).

Secondary powers also adopt strategies that pursue the goal of reversing the rise of a regional power but employ persuasive, more enduring, often subtler, and subversive means in order to achieve this end. These reformism strategies aim to reshape the existing order, yet they seek to achieve this strategic goal within a more diffuse relationship with the primary power. Power in indirect revisionist strategies works through the rules of formal or informal institutions (Barnett and Duvall 2005: 48). A successful "reforming" secondary power reverses the current trend in the distribution of power by avoiding the high costs of open confrontation with the primary power. The necessary criteria for a strategy to be included in this group are thus as follows:

1) it expresses a high degree of opposition to the current distribution of goods;

2) it expresses a high degree of divergence of interests;

3) it is perceived as a mediated challenge to the primary power's regional supremacy; and

4) it depends significantly on identity and persuasion. Revisionist "soft balancing," "leash-slipping," and "delegitimation" meet these criteria most comprehensively.

"Soft-balancing" approaches have the same goals as hard-balancing approaches, but they rely on complex strategic means that do not directly challenge the more powerful state's military preponderance and instead use nonmilitary tools to delay, frustrate, and undermine the superior state's unilateral policies (Pape 2005; Paul 2005b). Territorial denial, economic strengthening and the signaling of resolve to participate in balancing coalitions increase the costs of the primary power's regional policies (Pape 2005: 9–10). Soft-balancing secondary powers form limited diplomatic coalitions or ententes and strengthen economic ties between peers to constrain the superior power in the long term. Secondary powers can also embrace complex balancing, which seeks to integrate broader forms of managing the regional order through diversification, institutionalization, and normalization (Goh 2008: 139–148).

"Leash-slipping" (Layne 2006) is another form of reformism adopted by secondary states that are not immediately afraid of being attacked by the hegemon and that are building up their military capabilities in order to maximize their ability to implement independent foreign

policy and to be prepared for potential future aggression (ibid.: 9). It is not explicitly directed at countering an existential threat from the hegemon, but seeks to reorder the distribution of goods in the regional system. Secondary powers "slip free of the hegemon's leash-like grip and gain the leverage needed to compel" the hegemon to respect their foreign policy interests, with the ultimate goal of re-creating the regional system's pre-rise type of polarity (ibid.: 29).

An even more persuasive reformism strategy is "delegitimation," with which the secondary power seeks to indirectly alter the distribution of ideational goods such as values, status and reputation. Finnemore (2009: 66) observes that secondary powers that are constrained in their capabilities become creative, undercutting the credibility and integrity of the hegemon and "concoct[ing] alternative values or political visions that other states may find more attractive." This strategy is cost-efficient in contemporary politics as it only requires "information and the ability to disseminate it strategically" (ibid.). Walt (2005), for instance, views US legitimacy as being severely hampered by opponents "seeking to convince others that Washington is selfish, hypocritical, immoral, and unsuited for world leadership, and that its dominance harms them," an assault that "does not directly challenge U.S. power, but … encourages other people to resent and resist U.S. supremacy."

In contrast to these revisionist approaches, secondary powers may also employ rivalry strategies to contain the regional power's aspirations. These strategies are explicitly directed at the primary power and allow for the accumulation of relative gains and the offsetting of security risks. Such strategies eschew the high costs of confrontation, as the degree of power rejection, hostility and confrontation is lower than in revisionist policies. The convergence of goals, interests and values between the primary and secondary power is often greater than when the secondary power resorts to revisionist strategies, and the latter's sufficient capabilities allow it to reinforce contestation without mediation. In short, the strategy must meet the following criteria:

1) it expresses a relatively low degree of opposition to the current distribution of goods;

2) it expresses a high degree of convergence of interests;

3) it is perceived as an unmediated challenge to the primary power's regional supremacy; and

4) it depends significantly on capabilities. The most prominent forms include buck-passing, borrowing, and buffering.

Buck-passing involves one state "getting another state to bear the burden of deterring or possibly fighting an aggressor, while it [the respective secondary power] remains on the sidelines" (Mearsheimer 2001: 157). One form of buck-passing is the "borrowing" of the already present military power of external actors in the region on the basis of common security interests other than the targeting of the respective regional power (Goh 2008: 133).

Another overriding direct nonrevisionist strategy consists of "buffering" (Gries 2005: 407–408). A buffering secondary state seeks to curb the dominant power by enforcing independent defense and the economic and political subregional orders. By deepening economic

and security cooperation with other small states, the secondary power increases its leverage over the regional power or, at least, augments its autonomy.

Resignation strategies maximize relative gains of power via diffuse connections. Such strategies combine a relatively large convergence of goals, interests and values with a relatively limited willingness or capability to countervail against the primary power. A resignation strategy meets the following criteria:

1) it expresses a relatively low degree of opposition to the current distribution of goods;

2) it expresses a high degree of convergence of interests;

3) it is perceived as a mediated challenge to the primary power's regional supremacy; and

4) it depends significantly on identity and persuasion. Indirect nonrevisionist contestation includes diverse sets of behaviors such as binding, blackmailing, and balking.

Binding, which can be subsumed under resignation, aims to decrease the regional power's threat potential by "embedding that power in rules and institutions that channel and limit the ways that power is exercised" (Ikenberry 2003: 14). Formal binding serves to tie a regional power to various layers of multilateral institutions through a complex mixture of persuasion and incentive building. Informal binding includes "consultations, ad hoc bargaining, and the continuous pulling and hauling of inter-state relations" (ibid.: 15). The most extensive means of indirect binding is "omni-enmeshment," a process which allows a weaker state to tie down several major powers in multilayered institutional affairs by developing "a web of sustained exchanges and relationships" to such an extent that "the target state's interests are redefined, and its identity possibly altered, so as to take into greater account the integrity and order of the system" (Goh 2008: 121). The aim is to "create overlapping spheres of influence in the region that are competitive [that is, compete with the existing regional order] but positive-sum" (ibid.: 128).[12]

If a secondary power is less afraid of an increased existential threat to its physical security from the rising neighbor, and more "concerned about the adverse effects of that state's rise on its general position, both political and economic" (Layne 2006: 30), it may also resort to "blackmailing." In order to maintain the status quo, it seeks to convince the primary power that a threat to its security would lead to undesirable consequences such as the acquisition or spread of nuclear weapons or the collapse of the primary power's state (Walt 2005: 112).

Balking is the most passive form of resignation. It serves to limit the hegemon's power by simply ignoring or refusing its demands (Jesse et al. 2012: 13–15). Walt (2005: 116) notes that it is especially effective because "even a country as powerful as the United States cannot force every state to do its bidding all the time."

Resistance, reformism, rivalry and resignation are varieties of contestation that secondary states command individually or in combination depending on the context. In the following

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12 The synonymous use of omni-enmeshment as "complex-balancing" or "omni-balancing" (David 1991: 235–238) is misleading; we refer to the former as it is not confined to "balancing" as the strategic goal.

section we explore the conditions that lead secondary powers' leaders to choose one strategy over the other.

3.2 What Causes Secondary Powers' Strategic Choices?

A secondary power's motivation to contest the primary power's regional policies can be explained in different ways.[13] According to the relevant literature, three overriding categories of motivation drive secondary powers to choose their particular strategic contestation approach: structural, behavioral and historical. We explain these categories and develop a set of four general working assumptions (A1a, b–A2a, b) and four more-specific working assumptions (A3a, b–A4a, b) regarding how they influence the respective type of contestation.

First, secondary powers' contestation strategies can be motivated by their discontent with the status quo of the regional power system. It is our assumption that (sub)regional uni-, bi- and multipolarity stimulate secondary powers to pursue different paths of contestation. For instance, under circumstances of significant regional polarity where the primary power has pronounced material superiority relative to the secondary power, a direct and revisionist strategic approach ("resistance") on the part of the latter is unlikely.

From the neorealist perspective, regional contestation is explained by the balance-of-power approach (Paul et al. 2004b; Walt 1987). Secondary powers can engage in counterpolicies in order to break up the status quo of power distribution. This type of contestation is most likely to result if the regional security order is characterized by "conflict formation" (Buzan and Waever 2003) and by a mode of conflict management designated as "power restraining power" (Morgan 1997). Even though one might expect relative military capabilities to be decisive in these types of security orders, both material and ideational capabilities have to be taken into account in order to assess the overall (sub)regional polarity.

Whereas military power is based on a country's latent power, which is made up of its economic and demographic resources, a broader approach to material power incorporates technology and energy indicators as well (Treverton and Jones 2005). We argue that economic and technological dependence on the primary power is another structural factor that influences the secondary power's strategic response.

Ideational resources have been defined in terms of authority (Lake 2007) and cultural attraction (Nye 2004), and as consisting of symbolic (Noya 2005), psychological (Ferguson 2003) or subjective (Lukes 2005) elements. Most scholars of international relations theory agree that these different dimensions of ideational power converge to produce acceptance and legitimacy, which can make a difference in bargains among states. Primary powers can compensate for low degrees of regional legitimacy and acceptance with their superior material resources.

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13 The following analytical framework on the drivers of contestation has also been applied to contestation in South America, see Flemes and Wehner (2012).

On the basis of these material and ideational indicators, we include the (sub)regional polarity and the degree of the secondary power's economic dependence in the analysis. Applying this broad understanding to the balance-of-power framework outlined above, we assume, first, that high levels of polarity and economic dependence on the primary power lead to revisionist contestation strategies (A1a), and, second, that low or decreasing levels of polarity and dependence lead to nonrevisionist contestation strategies (A1b).

Second, contestation strategies can be caused by the foreign and security policy behavior of the primary power. The strongest cause of contestation is a direct security threat to the secondary state. The regional power may threaten the secondary power's vital interests, such as its territorial integrity and its natural resources, through, for example, military intervention. Primary powers can also actively engage in intraregional coalitions or military alliances with adversaries of the secondary power that specifically aim to isolate the latter or involuntarily do so (Arquilla and Fuller 1996). In the same way, the primary power's special relationships with extraregional great powers viewed as foes by the secondary power are likely to trigger contestational politics (Alecu de Flers and Regelsberger 2005). Secondary states are also more likely to be driven to contestation in cases where the primary power abandons "rule-based order and act[s] unilaterally on a global scale" (Ikenberry 2003: 5).

Explicit or latent security threats are typical causes of contestation if the relationship between the primary and secondary powers is marked by the imperialist or hegemonic behavior of the former. Regional strategies of empire and hegemony are based exclusively on the self-interest of the primary state. Particularly in the case of imperialist strategies, secondary powers are expected to submit after being confronted with politics of coercion or intervention (Destradi 2010). In the face of such strategies, contestation will be the most obvious choice on the part of secondary powers because every state avoids abiding by rules made by others without consideration of its values, interests and survival.

Third, strategies of regional contestation can be driven by historical experiences of conflict between the primary and secondary powers and the legacies of such conflict. Historical factors must be seen in direct connection with behavioral causes of contestation as secondary powers will interpret the current relationship in the light of historical experiences (Hwang 2003). In short, both categories are likely to reinforce each other and can lead to threat perceptions on the part of the secondary power. It is unlikely that secondary powers that have been victims of aggression by the primary power in the past will be ready to accept the latter's superior status. In particular, unresolved territorial or border disputes will motivate secondary powers to firmly contest the regional ambitions of primary powers and to deny their support. Negative historical experiences and unresolved conflicts are likely to create images of the "violent enemy" or the "competitive rival" that are deeply rooted in the collective memory of the secondary power's society and political elite (Goertz and Diehl 1993; He 2008).

Hence, imminent or latent threat perceptions on the part of secondary powers can be induced by the primary power's overwhelming power capabilities, its threatening behavior or

historical legacies of conflict. In all cases the secondary power's threat perceptions will most likely become manifest in its military doctrines and other strategic documents. Even though the respective official documents are generally classified, armament politics as well as the geographical deployment of the military apparatus demonstrate which threat scenarios the government and the armed forces of the secondary power presume to exist. Otherwise, military and defense cooperation between the regional and the secondary power in terms of military personnel exchanges or common maneuvers hint at a certain degree of mutual trust (Oelsner und Vion 2011). To conclude, we assume that historical legacies combined with strong threat perceptions lead to direct strategies of contestation (A2a), while the absence of historical legacies combined with a weak threat perception lead to indirect strategies (A2b). Table 3 provides an overview of the possible causes of contestation and proposes how they can be utilized for comparative analysis.

Table 3: Causes of Contestation Variance

Structural Factors	*Regional Polarity*	**Distribution of Capabilities** • Unipolarity • Bipolarity • Multipolarity
	Dependence	**Economic Dependence** • Trade • Energy • Technology • Infrastructure
Behavioral Factors	*Security Threats*	**Imperialist or Hegemonic Behaviour** • Intervention/coercion • Threat to vital interests **Alliance Building** • Regional alliance building • External alliance building
Historical Factors	*Historical Legacies*	**Type of Legacy** • Territorial disputes • Border disputes **Mutual Image** • Violent enemy • Competitive rival

Source: Authors' compilation.

Given the general suppositions (A1a, b–A2a, b), we can generate four more-specific assumptions regarding why secondary states choose specific types of contestation. First, we assume that a high level of polarity and strong threat perceptions combined with historical legacies

lead to direct revisionist contestation strategies (A3a). Second, a high level of polarity, no threat perception, and possible historical legacies lead to indirect revisionist contestation strategies (A3b). Third, a low level of polarity, no "hot" conflicts, and possible historical legacies lead to direct nonrevisionist contestation strategies (A4a). And, fourth, a low or decreasing level of polarity combined with the absence of conflicts or historical legacies leads to indirect nonrevisionist contestation strategies (A4b). We examine these assumptions in the context of major cases of contestation in Asia in the subsequent section.

4   The Politics of Contestation in Asia

4.1   Japan: Resignation towards Chinese Regional Dominance

Despite the multiple burdens weighing on Sino-Japanese relations, Tokyo has by and large resorted to nonrevisionist strategies in its dealings with China. The general cooperative approach, characterized by intense economic exchange and (attempts at) political engagement – except for the security-oriented hard balancing through the Japanese–US Security Arrangements (Hughes 2009: 839; Medeiros et al. 2008: 32–40; Mochizuki 2007: 769) – has been complemented by Japan in recent years with a stronger military hedge in the form of hard balancing.

The most tangible expression of Tokyo's modified posture towards China is the Japanese government's effort to enhance national security by drawing on the resistance strategy of internal hard balancing. Even though Japan's military budget has not exceeded one percent of the national GDP over the last decade, Tokyo is apparently undertaking a process of military modernization and the alteration of its defense doctrine (Goh 2011a: 896; Yahuda 2009: 372). Japan's recent defense guidelines for the period 2011–2015 provide, on the one hand, for the decrease of the ground forces' capabilities and an increase in the maritime force's submarine units. On the other hand, they envisage the dislocation of units from the country's north to the south and southwest (Japan Ministry of Defense 2010a: 2–3). In addition, the Japan Coast Guard (JCG) has been turned into a blue-water force.[14] Despite budget cuts to Japan's Defense Agency, which was upgraded to a ministry in 2006, the JCG has received significantly increased funds since 2005. These are earmarked for modernization and the acquisition of new boats and jets (Berkofsky 2011: 6; Samuels 2007: 3; Yahuda 2009: 372). These new deployments, especially those in the island areas of southwestern Japan, reflect Japanese "concerns about China's growing assertiveness in areas of territorial dispute" (IISS 2011a: 211).

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14 Since 2001 the JCG has been allowed "the outright use of force to prevent maritime intrusion and to protect the Japanese homeland" (Samuels 2007: 2). No legal framework, however, exists to deploy the Maritime Self-Defense Forces in the disputed exclusive economic zone in the East China Sea (Mochizuki 2007: 754).

To further constrain the potential scope of Chinese power projection in East Asia, Tokyo has been contributing to binding its neighbor to the rules and practices of regional institutions, and thus adopting reformism strategies. For instance, Japan played a central role in including China in the ASEAN Regional Forum and ASEAN Plus Three and thus facilitated the release of the first Chinese defense white paper and "a joint declaration on conduct over the territorial disputes in the South China Sea" (Goh 2011b). Furthermore, in the process of establishing the East Asia Summit, Japan pushed for the inclusion of Australia, India and New Zealand to balance Chinese influence and gain the lead in "regional 'institutions racing'" (Goh 2011a: 895, 898; see also Chung 2011: 414–420, 426).

Despite the fact that the above-mentioned strategies reflect a potentially revisionist stance, they attempt less to revert, stall and contain Beijing's claim to regional supremacy through overt confrontation and more to secure Japan's security and sphere of influence.[15] This goal of national security maximization is also carried forward through the promotion of cooperation with the US (Mochizuki 2007: 751) and "efforts to combine bilateral and multilateral security cooperation and create a network in a multilayered manner" (Japan Ministry of Defense 2011).

Within this rivalry strategy of buck-passing, the alliance with Washington constitutes the main pillar of Japan's efforts to secure its national security by borrowing from the ally's military power and getting the US to bear the burden of nuclear deterrence. With Japan's ongoing intention to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership, where it has had observer status since 2010, and the lifting of the prohibition of arms exports in December 2011, a further intensification of the US–Japanese alignment is to be expected. The alliance with the US is supplemented by bilateral relations with Asian states that share Japanese values and security interests, such as India, and are also allies of the US, such as South Korea and Australia (Japan Ministry of Defense 2010b: 8).[16] Defense cooperation with these countries also helps Japan to buffer China's rising military power by enabling the establishment of independent subregional orders (IISS 2010: 460–461, 2011b: 467). With regard to the smaller Southeast Asian states, Japan holds regular dialogues at the (vice-)ministerial level with Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia to exchange views on bi- and multilateral military cooperation (Japan Ministry of Defense 2011).

Notwithstanding the Japanese government's turn towards more robust strategic responses to China's rising power in East Asia when it comes to questions of national security, resigna-

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15 In fact, many Japanese regard China's regional rise as inevitable and think the country should thus concentrate on benefitting from economic cooperation with China and maximizing its national security (Chung 2011: 420–421; Medeiros et al. 2008: 56–57).

16 Japan and Australia signed a Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation in 2007 and meet in trilateral fora with the United States. In 2008, the governments in Tokyo and New Delhi signed a Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation. South Korea and Japan signed an initial Memorandum of Intent regarding Defense Exchanges in 2009 (Japan Ministry of Defense 2011).

tion strategies aiming to engage and socialize with China still play the key role in Tokyo's dealings with its neighbor (Goh 2011a: 892–893). In terms of multilateral engagement, Japan has promoted China's reintegration into the regional economic and security order, especially since the 1990s. Bilaterally, both governments have sought to upgrade relations by citing "common strategic interests," by revitalizing presidential and ministerial meetings, and by stepping up confidence-building measures in defense affairs, especially since the end of Prime Minister Koizumi's administration in 2006 (Atanassova-Cornelis 2011; Kim 2010: 25).

Turning to the causes of Japan's response to China's regional rise, it is difficult to determine what factors have led to the mix of strategies ranging from engagement to hard balancing. In general, manifold reasons to expect Japanese balancing against China exist. First of all, Japan has been placed in second position in the regional power hierarchy. However, this does not constitute a strong structural driver for revisionist policies. In fact, the gap in material capabilities between both nations is still relatively small, which allows Tokyo to continue employing nonrevisionist and cooperative policies. Furthermore, economic ties foster Japan's and China's bilateral relations and "fears and concerns have been mitigated in part by the depth of their economic interdependence" (Yahuda 2009: 372). Despite the burdensome legacy of distrust and animosity in bilateral relations, the historical legacy seems to be a subordinate or, at best, indirect cause. On the one hand, it is reasonable to argue that Japan is driven to even more cooperative regional policies due to its own war history. On the other hand, history functions as an indirect driver because of China's nationalistic turn and anti-Japanese demonstrations, which Japan interprets as a potential security threat. Thus, Japan's perception of China as a threat and behavioral factors (for example, China's showing off of military force in contested maritime areas and in Japanese territorial waters, the opacity of its military modernization programs, and its inertia regarding strategic goals) have to be regarded as the strongest factors affecting Tokyo's strategic choices in relation to its rising neighbor.

With regard to our specific working assumption, the case of Japan's politics of contestation is only partly conclusive. For instance, Japan's stronger embracing of direct revisionist strategies, that is, hard balancing, seems to be the result of behavioral factors, together with the low polarity and the subordinate role of historical drivers. In this sense, it is perceived security challenges directly related to China and the PRC's intensified maritime activities in contested waters since the middle of the previous decade, "together with insufficient transparency over China's military forces and its security policy" (Japan Ministry of Defense 2011), that best explain Tokyo's shift to direct revisionist strategies. With regard to the direct nonrevisionist types of contestation, it is again behavioral factors and the corresponding Japanese threat perceptions that appear to be decisive. In the case of borrowing and buffering strategies, however, it is structural factors that operate in line with our assumptions. Against the background of nuclear polarity, the PRC's "modernization of its nuclear weapons and missile forces in a non-transparent manner" has facilitated Japanese buck-passing and nuclear

borrowing as part of its security arrangements with Washington (The National Institute for Defense Studies 2011: 261).

4.2 Pakistan: Existential Resistance under the Shadow of Nuclear Symmetry

The Pakistani state has developed a set of foreign and security policies with strategic qualities to counter its dominant neighbor India. While Islamabad's grand strategy since independence has consisted of containing the existential threat allegedly posed by India, its tactical ends and the means to reach the overall goal have changed significantly with India's rise.[17] The asymmetric conflict's focus has shifted away from territorial disputes and the struggle for Kashmir to a broader strategic struggle around South Asian hegemony, which is manifested in three central strategic elements: Afghanistan, nuclear weapons and the use of asymmetric warfare.

Resistance strategies have become Pakistan's foremost doctrine of contestation. While the degree to which hard balancing and rightful resistance have been used have varied over the last decade, the latter has remained the most dominant choice.[18]

Internal balancing took on a new quality when Pakistan became a nuclear power in 1998. The country sought to use "minimum credible deterrence" (Jones 2008) to avoid Indian aggression and to continue conventional attacks against the superior enemy – for example, in the military confrontation in Kargil in 1999.[19] The military, moreover, sought to maintain its countervailing capabilities at an "optimal level" (Rais 1991: 380), with military expenditures well above the regional average.[20]

As Pakistan became increasingly unable to match India's military strength, however, it resorted to its most well-developed "strategy of survival" (Gill 2005: 253): external balancing. It cultivated a complex pattern of allying with its declared "all-weather ally" China against Delhi, overtly lobbying for China's solidarity in the event of Indian aggression. More importantly, Islamabad gained leverage from its revived function as the "frontline" state in the US counterterrorism campaign in the region. Playing the "nuclear leadership card," Islamabad also utilized its strategically important ties with the Gulf States to contain India's influence in South and Central Asia (Blank 2003).

In order to circumvent entrapment and diplomatic manipulation or the neglect of external strategic partnerships, Pakistan has regularly opted for rightful resistance. This direct re-

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17 Observers often ignore the fact that at the global level the two states regularly coordinate their policies. At the regional level, however, strategies of competition and conflict prevail.

18 Pakistan's India policy, particularly with regard to the conflict over Kashmir, has often been described as "revisionist," for example, Tellis (2004), Narang (2009: 39), and Ganguly (2001: 7; 2011: 48).

19 This "stability/instability paradox" (Kapur and Ganguly 2010; Narang 2009; Thränert and Wagner 2009) implies military operations against superior enemies under the "shadow of nuclear deterrence."

20 Military expenditures (not including spending on paramilitary forces) increased from 3.84 billion USD in 2000 to 5.16 billion USD (in constant 2009 USD) in 2010 (SIPRI Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2011).

visionist form of contestation became most evident through the country's latent support of extremist groups in Kashmir and beyond. This strategy of "bleeding India by a 'thousand cuts' with little fear of significant retaliation" (Narang 2009: 39) was demonstrated in the 2001/2002 Indian parliament attack and the 2008 assault on different locations in Mumbai by armed extremists who were allegedly supported by (parts of) the Pakistani security establishment. It was also employed in the proxy war in Afghanistan, where Pakistan's intelligence service supported various armed groups to counter India's involvement.[21] Islamabad at the same time refused to comply with India's regional policies by constantly forming counterblocks to Delhi's diplomatic endeavors in the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

Finally, and most centrally, Islamabad has enforced "resistance" by overtly questioning Delhi's control over territories such as Jammu and Kashmir, the Siachen Glacier, and Kori Creek. It has accused India of misusing its upstream position on various rivers and breaching the Indus Water Treaty. It has reportedly supported various (internal and external) armed groups in their fight against India. Behind this pattern of existential resistance lies Pakistan's adherence to Muslim superiority in South Asia, the perception of structural deprivation since partition, and the establishment's fear of the consequences of Indian dominance in the region.

Islamabad has also sought to indirectly reverse India's rise through reformism strategies such as soft balancing, leash-slipping, and delegitimation, but its use of formal and informal institutions has remained limited and ambiguous. On the one hand, Pakistan has favored multilateral conflict-resolution mechanisms that have increased the cost of regional governance for India in cases such as Afghanistan. It has utilized countervailing power to soft balance India by engaging in economic, religious and security-oriented organizations (Kumar 2006: 124). At the bilateral level, it has lobbied abroad to couple the Kashmir dispute with the international engagement in Afghanistan in order to entangle the US in third-party mediation. Simultaneously, it has sought to draw in China in the areas of trade, finance, and defense cooperation. Finally, Pakistan has delegitimized India's regional policies by accusing Delhi of intervening in domestic affairs in Baluchistan and the border region and blaming India for the lack of success in SAARC (ibid.: 130). The latter is a form of everyday reformism that has remained a latent diplomatic strategy.

Particularly in SAARC, on the other hand, Islamabad has remained a rather isolated and passive actor and has thus refrained from formally binding India to rules and institutional practices that channel and limit the scope through which Delhi could exercise power (Ikenberry 2003). Strategic attempts to bind India informally through various track-two dialogues and ad hoc bargaining have failed and have also hindered Islamabad from engaging effectively in leash-slipping or delegitimation. Pakistan has also not succeeded in initiating

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21 This proxy war shifted from a struggle for "strategic depth" to a more general conflict over influence in Afghanistan and the Pakistani fear of encirclement.

concerted forms of soft balancing such as ententes or limited diplomatic coalitions with other South Asian states.

Nonrevisionist strategies have remained marginalized in Pakistan's contestation portfolio. Among them, rivalry strategies such as buck-passing and buffering have prevailed over indirect ones. Islamabad has passed the buck to China so that the latter bears the burden of deterring or possibly fighting India by allowing massive Chinese investments in critical strategic areas such as Azad Kashmir and Baluchistan's deep-sea port of Gwadar. The Pakistani military has diverted US assistance away from counterinsurgency on the Western border, instead investing in the modernization and enlargement of its nuclear arsenal.[22] Pakistan's buffering strategy of promoting independent subregional economic and security orders with reference to its ideological "Muslim leadership" as the only nuclear armed and second most-populous Islamic state have remained comparatively restricted due to a lack of willing followers and deep-rooted domestic identity quarrels.

Resignation is the least developed of the four strategic groups in Pakistan's contestation arsenal. The country's balking and blackmailing strategies have rested on two limited elements: First, Islamabad has denied India the use of its territory for logistical and economic transfers and market access, and has resisted international pressure to halt its nuclear arms buildup and more forcefully disrupt the activities of transnational proliferation networks (see Walt 2005: 123). Second, it has signaled its resolve to participate in balancing coalitions with China. Binding has never fully occurred.

Which factors have led to which type of Pakistani contestation? In the case of Pakistan's contestation strategies, all of the four general assumptions can be verified. At an overall level, the predominance of revisionist strategies can be explained by the increasing power gap between India and Pakistan over the last decade. The strongly diverging interests and persistent territorial and border disputes, second, have indeed encouraged Pakistan's governments to choose direct over indirect means. This is elaborated upon in the discussion of the more-specific assumptions.

First, as predicted in our third assumption, a combination of an increasingly sharp power gap between India and Pakistan, the former's coercive regional politics, and the historical animosity between the two countries since independence has led to hard balancing and rightful resistance on the part of the latter. Structural factors hold the largest explanatory power: while India's material and ideational superiority has increased and transformed the region's structure from bipolar to unipolar (Buzan 2002), Pakistan has managed to mobilize sufficient resources for internal balancing and to exploit its geostrategic position for external balancing. India's limited ability and willingness to provide inclusive regional leadership and the historically unrivaled strategic rapprochement with the US have further aggravated the deeply rooted historical tensions.

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22 As revealed by Wikileaks sources, the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) estimates that the Pakistani nuclear arsenal is the fastest growing worldwide, see De Young and Miller (2010).

Accordingly, second, revisionist indirect contestation has gained relative importance when polarity has been high and the perceived threat to Pakistan's existence low. Such was the case when in 2003, Islamabad successfully soft balanced Delhi by entangling it in the rules of the Composite Dialogue.[23] Most important in this context, however, is the structural component of an increasing power differential, which has forced Pakistan to resort to unconventional counterpolicies. Under the condition of increasing power polarization, entangling India in rules and norms as embodied in SAARC has become more complicated.

Third, Pakistan has rarely undertaken direct nonrevisionist contestation due to the structural conditions and the historical and structural deprivations described above. It has barely resorted to buck-passing, borrowing, or buffering because of the enduring territorial dispute in Kashmir, the increasingly "hot" conflict in Afghanistan, and the relatively low level of trust since the attack on the Indian parliament in 2001. The increasingly manifest great power politics between China and the US, and the latter's security stakes in Afghanistan have facilitated the option of borrowing military presence to contest India.

Fourth, and again in accordance with our assumption, Pakistan's refusal to bind, blackmail, or balk has been caused by the relatively low degree of regional integration in South Asia. As predicted, a shift from a bipolar to a unipolar structure has made indirect nonrevisionist strategies less likely – a fact that can be explained with reference to the strategic nuclear ("fearful") symmetry between India and Pakistan (Ganguly and Hagerty 2005).

5   Conclusion

Our first specific assumption – that resistance is driven by high polarity, strong threat perceptions and historical legacies – has been verified in only one of the two empirical analyses. As predicted, Pakistan's hard balancing and revisionist resistance towards India are fueled by asymmetric resources, India's coercive regional policies and historical legacies. Japanese internal and external balancing is also due to increasing threat perceptions in view of Beijing's extensive military build-up. But while the weight of behavioral factors could be verified in the case of Japan, low polarity and the subordinate significance of history as an indirect driver of Tokyo's contestation contradict our working assumption.

We found the most supporting evidence with regard to our second specific assumption: Reformism, in fact, seems likely when polarity is high, threat perceptions do not exist, and historical legacies possibly exist. The low significance of revisionist soft-balancing and binding approaches in the case of Japan's approach toward China is explained, in accordance with our assumption, by the low level of East Asian polarity, a high risk perception given the modernization of the Chinese nuclear arsenal, and the Japanese preference to maximize co-

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23 The Composite Dialogue (CD) comprised a series of meetings between the governments of Pakistan and India that started in 2003 and was halted in 2008.

operative gains on the basis of common interests. With a view to the South Asian dyad, Islamabad has only resorted to binding approaches at certain historical moments: In 2003, when polarity was high and threat perceptions had decreased, India was bound successfully by the rules of the Composite Dialogue.

Our third assumption proposed that rivalry is a likely choice in the face of low polarity, the absence of virulent conflicts, and possible historical legacies. The empirical results are mixed. We expected the relative power symmetry between East Asia's primary and secondary actors to be the cause of Japanese borrowing, buffering and buck-passing. However, the empirical analysis demonstrated that again it is Chinese security policy behavior and the resulting Japanese threat perception that are the driving forces behind Tokyo's strategic reactions. Pakistan's weak reliance on rivalry strategies, in contrast, confirms our assumption that because Pakistani–Indian polarity is high and historical disputes between Islamabad and Delhi remain unresolved, Islamabad has only sporadically adopted rivalry strategies.

Finally, the fourth specific assumption – low or decreasing polarity and the nonexistence of conflicts and historical legacies leads to resignation – could be neither clearly verified nor falsified as the empirical results were contradictory. The case study on Pakistan versus India verified our assumption by demonstrating that high polarity, patterns of conflict and strong historical legacies undermine binding, blackmailing and balking strategies – in part because of the lack of effective regional organizations. In contrast, the working assumption was not supported by the analysis of Japanese contestation policies against China. Tokyo has applied resignation strategies towards Beijing on various occasions in spite of ongoing, virulent conflicts; the subordinate historical legacies and the still relatively low polarity were seemingly more decisive factors in this case.

In general terms, we can deduce from the empirical analyses that secondary powers that engage in direct revisionist types of contestation are likely to pursue several supplementary and less coercive contestation approaches. Our overriding working assumptions have been verified for the most part. It is true that the assumption that the degree of regional polarity and (non)revisionist approaches are interlinked is undermined by, in particular, Japanese strategic choices. However, the causality between the degree of threat perception, which is often intensified by historical legacies, and the directness of the secondary power's strategic reactions toward the primary power is supported by both empirical cases.

Future research should build on both the conceptual model and the empirical puzzles that result from this analysis. While our cases focused on the resistance (Pakistan) and resignation (Japan) forms of contestation, additional research needs to seek explanations for the occurrence of reformism and rivalry. In particular, more empirical work needs to be done on the relationship between regional polarity and the various forms of contestation. The framework proposed here can be used to study contestation in other regions and from an interregional perspective. This is an endeavor which is becoming ever more important given the trend towards increasing multipolarization.

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