

# Somewhere Between Great and Small: Disentangling the Conceptual Jumble of Middle, Regional, and ‘Niche’ Powers

by David A. Cooper

*“There is a burgeoning strata of pivotal states, dynamic rising middle powers ... likely to play an increasingly important role in regional security and global rule-shaping.”<sup>1</sup>*

*“While there are some hints as to how to differentiate between great powers and regional powers, there is still the problem of making a clear-cut distinction between regional powers and middle powers.”<sup>2</sup>*

Structural schools of International Relations (IR) theory have long indulged a benign disinterest in the intermediate spectrum of states within the power hierarchy that comprises their most elemental conception of the international system. These states are the score or more of supporting actors that do not rank among the few great powers that command the starring roles on the world stage, but that nevertheless boast sufficient national wherewithal to act as consequential regional players or to exert some meaningful degree of global influence. This moderate capacity to affect international affairs sets these supporting actors apart from the much larger cast of bit players, meaning the vast majority of sovereign actors that are too small (geographically or demographically) or too weak (militarily or economically) to exercise any significant independent agency in shaping their external relations. There is now every reason to suppose, however, that scholarly interest in these intermediary actors may be on the rise. Given the widely surmised transformation of today’s quasi-hegemonic world order into a more multipolar incarnation, it seems likely that IR scholarship—even to include the stubbornly solipsistic American mainstream version of the discipline—will need to look beyond the United States and its handful of closest peers to discern the shape of things to come.

While welcoming such an expansive prospect, this article suggests that a pause is in order for some overdue categorical housecleaning. Until relatively recently most

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IR theorists focusing on middling international actors were content to group them loosely under an all-encompassing “middle powers” rubric, with “regional powers” occasionally referenced as either an interchangeable term or at most as a lesser-included sub-category. Happily, a burgeoning literature on regional power dynamics is now expanding and sharpening this distinction. There is still though a lingering

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**RATHER, THE INTENT HERE IS MERELY TO SURVEY THE CONCEPTS OF *MIDDLE POWER* AND *REGIONAL POWER* IN DELIBERATE JUXTAPOSITION IN ORDER TO HIGHLIGHT IMPORTANT DISTINCTIONS AND INTERSECTIONS BETWEEN THEM.**

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tendency to conflate these concepts, particularly, it must be said, when the focus is on middle powers *per se*. Moreover, even when the two categories are explicitly distinguished (most frequently in the regional power literature) there remains surprisingly little cross-fertilization between them.

The intent of this essay is to begin the task of disentangling these concepts while also suggesting the need going forward to correlate them in a more considered manner. The author does not attempt to recapitulate, much less

expand upon, the mature literature on middle power theory or the more recent literature on regional powers, for which timely reviews already exist.<sup>3</sup> Rather, the intent here is merely to survey the concepts of *middle power* and *regional power* in deliberate juxtaposition in order to highlight important distinctions and intersections between them, as well as to suggest the novel idea of *niche power* as a possibly useful additional conceptual nuance. In a nutshell, this article asks scholars engaging the intermediate level of IR to be mindful of simultaneous exigencies for greater distinction and synthesis in approaching these cognate concepts.

### **LEGACY NOTIONS OF “MIDDLE POWER” AS A GLOBAL CLASSIFICATION**

The idea that intermediate-level powers within any prevailing international system constitute a distinctive class of international actor has been a familiar, albeit peripheral, staple of IR theory for decades, if not centuries. Because the idea of “middlepowerness” focuses on relative degrees of national power within the international system, middle power theorizing can properly be characterized as rooted in structural assumptions about IR.<sup>4</sup> Tracing its contemporary scholarly roots to Organski’s power transition theory, middle power theory remains more or less embedded within this broader structural perspective.<sup>5</sup> The essential focus of middle power theorists is to explicate the foreign policy behavior and IR role of states that have aggregate national power attributes ranking in the upper tertiary range of a perceived continuum of power at the international system level. These intermediate states immediately follow the second-tier great (or major) powers that in turn are just

below a first-tier of dominant (or super or hegemonic) power(s). In other words, middlepowerness is intrinsically a *global positional* concept.

Before trying to tease out conceptual distinctions between middle and regional powers, it must be acknowledged that, beyond a rudimentary notion of states positioned somewhere between great and small within a global systemic hierarchy, the longstanding idea of middlepowerness itself remains troublingly imprecise. There are no widely agreed metrics within the various literatures on national attributes for how to measure relative national power, or consequently, for where to draw the lines between greater, intermediate, or lesser powers. While scholars can and manifestly do disagree on the importance of various national power attributes, the most common benchmarks of global power standing measure aggregate material power as a percentage of global total by some combination of the size of a state's economy, military, and population. A few more sophisticated models take into account other material factors such as technology and diplomatic infrastructure.<sup>6</sup> Others go even further by considering a diverse array of supplemental material and other measurable factors such as agricultural output, energy resources and reserves, education, environmental quality, sociopolitical governance, political stability and levels of corruption, as well as more ephemeral soft power considerations like national reputation, moral clout, and cultural influence.<sup>7</sup> For example, at least two studies methodically apply seven to nine discreet power attributes to propose comprehensive rankings.<sup>8</sup> However, these factors, across the literature, elude agreement, quantification, and weighting. Persistent attempts to bring what are imagined as typifying behavior into the middle power definitional mix further confuse matters, although this revisionist behavioral approach has increasingly been dismissed as both empirically unsupportable and tautologically discreditable.<sup>9</sup> All of this amounts to a definitional morass that offers little consistent understanding of the countries that should be counted as middle powers and why.

Notwithstanding this general categorical inconsonance, a useful reductive approach is to focus on the size of national economies as the core defining element of national power. In effect, this is a deliberate oversimplification in order to isolate a single variable. Thus, focusing only on the criterion of relative total GDP at purchasing power parity, it is possible to suggest a straightforward global ranking. This then permits us, somewhat arbitrarily, to devise a ballpark stratification of dominant, great and middle powers; say, for instance, dominant and great powers lumped together as the top ten, and then perhaps at least the next twenty as putative middle powers. Applying this admittedly offhand stratification of an overly simplistic ranking, the following countries as of 2012 can notionally be classified as global middle powers (in rank order): Mexico, South Korea, Spain, Canada, Indonesia, Turkey, Iran, Australia, Taiwan, Poland, Argentina, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, South Africa, Egypt, Pakistan, Colombia, Malaysia, and Nigeria.<sup>10</sup> This is obviously not a definitive or even particularly satisfying list, but it offers a plausible core middle power grouping if only for illustrative purposes of framing the present discussion. While methodologically crass, this is about as good as the extant

definitional vagaries of the category will allow.

What does middle power theory posit about the behavior and influence of this loosely defined category of international actor? The most longstanding, widely ascribed, and empirically validated suppositions of the literature converge on common tactics of middle power statecraft when engaging in global affairs that derive from a need to overcome comparative deficiencies in material sources of influence relative to greater powers. These include that middle powers prefer to work through multilateral coalitions and institutions and therefore tend to support global institutions and norm-building to maximize such opportunities. Their multilateral *modus operandi* stresses diplomatic entrepreneurship on a small number of carefully calibrated issues that balance underlying national interests and plausible opportunities for exerting influence. Middle power diplomacy often seeks to play bridging roles (although sometimes in the context of either balancing against or bandwagoning with great powers) to facilitate compromises on terms acceptable to their own interests.<sup>11</sup>

Beyond these tactical proclivities, there is a body of speculation, mostly dating from the late- and post-Cold War period and now widely regarded as somewhat dubious, that middle powers may also share distinctive normative characteristics, notably as virtuous “good international citizens” who put the good of the international community above their own interests.<sup>12</sup> Most predictions about the behavior of positional middle powers point to their distinctive supporting role in shaping and implementing global governance. Over the past two decades middle powers have played prominent roles in diverse global coalition-, norm-, and institution-building endeavors including: creation of international criminal courts, development of the responsibility to protect doctrine, and prohibitions on various global ills such as landmines, cluster munitions, chemical and biological weapons, ballistic missiles, child soldiers, conflict diamonds, and weapons of mass destruction trafficking.<sup>13</sup> Many observers speculate that major structural transformations of the current international system may occur in the coming decades. This perceived trend is often shorthanded as ‘the decline of the West and rise of the rest’ and some scholars believe that it portends a global power transition that will afford new opportunities for a wider swath of great and middle powers (Western and otherwise) to bolster their individual and collective influence on global governance.<sup>14</sup>

This idea of a coming diffusion of global order, including a greater emergent global governance role for middle powers, has nearly achieved the status of newly minted conventional wisdom. Notably, this is a primary theme of the latest iteration of the US National Intelligence Council’s quinquennial forecast on emerging global trends.<sup>15</sup> Such widespread popular belief in the coming rise of middle power influence in global governance certainly explains the recent uptick of scholarly interest in this hitherto peripheral category. It thus follows that the durability of this interest will depend on whether these predictions are validated in coming years.

The great harbinger and hope for greater middle power influence on global governance is the Group of Twenty (G20). This group expands the longstanding G7

(now G8) mechanism to encompass not only presumed rising great powers such as China, India, and Brazil, but also rounds out the top-tier of middle powers to include Argentina, Australia, Indonesia, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and South Korea.<sup>16</sup> Its elevation after the 2008 global financial crisis from a forum for finance ministers to an annual summit process has led a number of observers to speculate that the G20 could evolve into a *de facto* global steering committee.<sup>17</sup> Yet most of these same studies note that the fledgling mechanism faces significant obstacles to becoming a leading force in global governance. This is borne out by its lack of success so far in coalescing around major innovations. It also faces increasing competition from alternative groupings such as the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) summit process with its implicit aloof theme of “rising great powers” that cuts out most merely middle powers.

However, on balance, the general inclination leans toward cautious optimism about the prospects of the G20 or something analogous. As one prominent futurist study notes, “Despite its somewhat disappointing performance to date, it is probably as good a mechanism as we will get for building consensus on global governance.”<sup>18</sup> There are also suggestions that, like the G8, it will eventually expand its focus beyond purely economic matters into the security realm.<sup>19</sup> In no small part, these positive assessments are based on the underlying interests of the leading powers. As Garret explains:

*Both China and the US are committed to embedding their bilateral diplomacy in multilateralism, with the G20 as their preferred vehicle. The G20 is globally representative yet small enough to make consensual decision making flexible. It is the first important grouping to embody China's major power status, without asking China to play a global leadership role it is not yet ready to embrace. The G20 allows the US to encourage China to become a 'responsible stakeholder' while also providing balance against what Americans view as European obduracy.<sup>20</sup>*

Moreover, recent studies suggest that middle powers may prove especially adept at working within the evolving milieu of informal “network” multilateralism that the G20 embodies.<sup>21</sup> Along these lines, middle powers have already been able to exert outsized influence by leveraging their turns hosting three of the past seven annual G20 summits (and middle powers Australia and Turkey will be taking on this rotating role in 2014 and 2015, respectively).<sup>22</sup> Although the jury is still out, there are entirely plausible reasons to suppose that the top-tier of middle powers may eventually play a non-trivial role in what could be emerging as a preeminent conclave for global coordination.

If these optimistic predictions for the G20 or some similar arrangement are realized, possibly along with other manifestations of diffusing global governance—for example broader permanent membership on the United Nations (UN) Security Council—then most of the major middle powers could find themselves at the proverbial head tables of global governance. Should this transpire, then scholarly interest in middle power theory is sure to be more than a passing fad. On the other hand, if such hopes prove evanescent, then any broad theoretical scholarly interest

in the middle power category is likely to revert back to the extrinsic norm. Paradoxically, however, regardless of whether or not interest in middle powers fades, at least some middle powers may still attract keen conceptual interest in their cognate guises as regional powers.

## **NEWER CONCEPTIONS OF “REGIONAL POWER” AS A DISTINCT PARADIGM**

A significant conceptual weakness that arises from the explicitly global locus of the middle power concept is its general disregard of power hierarchies at the regional level. This probably reflects the deep positivist bias against non-generalizable factors that underlies most structural strands of IR theory, since regional systems tend to be stubbornly *sui generis*. In any case, the tenets of structural middle power theory are based on a state’s position in a global power hierarchy and therefore, by definition, do not necessarily apply in regional contexts (with the possible exception of “regional middle powers” —but more later on this confusing twist). For example, in a regional context “middle powers are often local heavyweights that can employ great-power tactics.”<sup>23</sup> By contrast, it sometimes happens that a global middle power may be a relatively inconsequential player in a region dominated by greater powers, which also effectively nullifies the pertinence of middle power statecraft at the regional level. The conceptual discontinuity between (global) middle power and

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regional power derives from the fact that a given state’s regional status does not always neatly jibe with its global status due to significant variations in internal power dynamics that exist across regions and sub-regions. This gap in middle power theory increasingly is being offset by a distinct literature on regional powers.<sup>24</sup> Unfortunately, because the longstanding middle power label is still too often used as a generic descriptor for states below the great power strata, this distinction sometimes remains muddled vis-à-vis global

versus regional dynamics, typically with “middle power” being indiscriminately applied to both.<sup>25</sup>

Beyond careless residual conflation with the older middle power concept, the regional power category itself also suffers from a vexing degree of definitional malleability. As Shim complains, “[The] list of potential regional powers can be extended quite arbitrarily, something which indicates the difficulty of grasping the term conceptually and highlights the multitude of various definitions.”<sup>26</sup> This shared categorical slipperiness is the result of both the middle and regional power categories embracing the same basic set of imprecise positional assumptions from structural IR

theory. The difference is that in the latter case these assumptions are applied across a set of power hierarchies on simultaneously smaller and more highly variegated scales. As Buzan observes, a regional power hierarchy can differ substantially from the prevailing global order as well as various other regional systems: “One can usefully see South Asia as bipolar, the Middle East...as multipolar, and Southern Africa and North America as unipolar.”<sup>27</sup> Specifics of these variations can alter dramatically depending on how broadly or narrowly one chooses to define a particular region. For example, consider the glaring differences in internal power dynamics implied by the following: Asia-Pacific versus East Asia versus Southeast Asia; or, Middle East versus North Africa versus The Maghreb; or, Western Hemisphere versus Latin America versus Central America. It follows that the regional power concept must be further nuanced to incorporate the ideas of trans- and sub-regional powers. If this category already seems unwieldy, many regional power scholars argue for even greater intra-category stratification. The conventional idea of a regional system (however broadly or narrowly construed) conceives it as a microcosm of the international system writ large, with the regional power concept typically intended to convey the idea of the various regional great powers atop these local hierarchies.<sup>28</sup> But many contemporary scholars see utility in applying the usual wider global power continuum to parse the internal dynamics of regional systems by distinguishing between dominant, great, and middle regional powers within regions (or trans- or sub-regions).<sup>29</sup> To put it mildly, the idea of regional power is heterogeneous.

As should now be apparent, the concepts of middle versus regional power do not stand as opposing this-or-that alternatives. Instead, they are intertwined and sometimes overlapping concepts, which at the same time have distinctive criteria. Accordingly, as one seminal regional power theorist muses, “A regional great power may be a middle power in the global context, but not necessarily so....On the other hand, a middle power generally is not necessarily a great power regionally, since it may exist in close and dominated vicinity to really great powers....”<sup>30</sup> Thus, in looking at South Korea, Shim concludes that, despite residing among the very top strata of global middle powers by virtually any metrics of national capacity, Seoul probably should be classified as a secondary regional power because it is squeezed geopolitically between the vastly superior might of China and Japan and remains subordinate to the United States for its security.<sup>31</sup> Along the same lines, consider the following instances of differentiation between global and regional standing:

*Australia is at one and the same time a quintessential middle power globally, a secondary peripheral regional power within the greater Asia Pacific, and a hegemonic sub-regional power in the South Pacific; Canada, by contrast, is also a quintessential global middle power without being any kind of regional power; whereas Nigeria can barely be considered a global middle power and Ethiopia is certainly not one, but both are nonetheless major regional and dominant sub-regional powers.*<sup>32</sup>

These are just a few expository cases. Expanding this type of comparative ranking

across various regions and sub-regions would quickly yield a dizzying array of categorical contrasts.

These regional distinctions could matter even more than global standing. Along with predictions of broadening global governance, there is a large and growing body of literature including especially prominent IR scholars that anticipates a regionalization of international relations over the coming decades.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, while much of this speculation has concentrated on the geopolitical realm, there have also been forecasts of the looming regionalization of international normative consensus and of economic globalization.<sup>34</sup> A leading proponent of the importance of regional security complexes asserts unequivocally, “The classification of *regional power* is much more important overall than traditional classifications such as *middle power*.”<sup>35</sup> This conclusion is debatable and is likely to depend on whether and how shifts in the international system evolve: if broader global governance mechanisms gain traction; if regionalization trends deepen; or, if the status quo resiliently muddles along with only incremental adjustments. What seems inarguable, however, is that the concept of regional powers can no longer be ignored by, conflated with, or relegated as a subset of, the middle power category.

### **PONDERING THE IDEA OF “NICHE POWER” AS A FURTHER REFINEMENT**

It is worth pausing briefly at this juncture to consider whether adding a new conceptual nuance would be useful, which for lack of a better label might be termed “niche power.”<sup>36</sup> The middle and regional power categories are both derived from some measure of *aggregate power* relative to a general power hierarchy, albeit respectively at the different levels of the international and various regional systems. But even taken together, do these categories cast a wide enough conceptual net if the goal is to encompass the full gamut of sovereign actors having the wherewithal to assert meaningful international agency either globally or regionally? The answer to this question is probably no. Neither category takes into account specialized sources of influence that manifest too narrowly to affect overall system-level position.

Consider a finding from a recent study by the present author about the leading role that Denmark carved out for itself within the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), a global multilateral coalition of over a hundred states launched by the United States to promote cooperation to impede trafficking related to WMD programs. Denmark would normally be seen as too small to rank as a global middle power by most traditional measures. Nor is it considered to be a significant European regional power. Even within its immediate Nordic neighborhood it is overshadowed by Sweden and Norway. Yet because container shipping is a key aspect of the illicit trafficking challenge, the Danes were able to leverage the influence of their corporate citizen, Maersk, the world’s dominant container shipping line, to eclipse Sweden and many other nominally more powerful PSI participants. This same study found that Singapore likewise brought oversized leverage to bear in the PSI due to its niche

dominance in the transshipment sector.<sup>37</sup> One can easily conjure comparable instances of states with specific capacities affording them significant global influence in specialized venues, irrespective of their global or regional standing, such as Greece working within the International Maritime Organization, or Norway within the International Whaling

Commission, or Canada within the Arctic Council, or even tiny Fiji regarding UN peacekeeping matters. One could even stretch this reasoning to account for the global attention that a few nuclear weapons allow impoverished North Korea to command. Thinking in terms of niche power could also introduce tangible soft power factors in

assessing the specialized influence that otherwise minor actors can assert at the global or regional systemic levels. For example, Qatar hosts the Al Jazeera media network and Norway controls the selection committee for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Trying to specify broadly applicable criteria for a niche power category would be fraught with complexities. Nor are specialized sources of influence likely to prove consistent, prevalent, or even necessarily important enough for the category to matter a great deal in itself. However, the idea of niche power could be useful as a sort of catch-all subordinate category that fills in gaps in a holistic understanding of intermediary IR hierarchies. Indeed, striving for a synthesized understanding of global, regional, and niche power seems essential for conceptual thoroughness.

## **TOWARD A SYNTHESIZED UNDERSTANDING OF INTERMEDIARY POWERS**

Having parsed the main distinctions between the middle and regional power categories (and having proffered the germinal idea of niche power as a potential further distinction), it is now incumbent to tease out the innate interrelationships between these categories.

The recognition of the relationship between middle and regional power is far more deeply ingrained within the regional power literature than within middle power theory. This may be due simply to middle power theory predating most contemporary theorizing about regional power dynamics. Or perhaps the interplay is more intuitive in terms of the top-down relationship of global standing to regional standing, the latter, as Østerud observes, being “confined to local interrelationships, and therefore conditioned by the wider balance of forces,” meaning that “the regional hierarchy of states is never completely autonomous.”<sup>38</sup> In other words, it is fairly apparent that a region can be “penetrated” by global power dynamics.<sup>39</sup> It is

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therefore not surprising to find wide understanding within the regional power literature that regional standing depends on a combination of “perceptions about the configuration of global and regional power hierarchies.”<sup>40</sup> In any case, what is still lacking is a corresponding level of awareness in the middle power literature that this is a two-way street.

If anything, it is entirely credible that regional influence is more important to global standing than the other way around. We have already seen Shim’s assessment that South Korea’s subordinate regional position mitigates against classifying it as a major regional power, but he also makes the larger point that this lack of regional standing has been a major drag on Seoul’s capacity to wield global influence commensurate with its nominal global power standing.<sup>41</sup> Looking at the opposite side of this coin, although Iran is squarely a global middle power, a great deal of the outsized worldwide attention that it commands would seem to revolve around its expansive regional ambitions.<sup>42</sup> Possibly the most dramatic example of this bottom-up dynamic is the recent addition of South Africa to the BRIC grouping, which is implicitly conceived as a global coordinating mechanism for current and prospective non-Western great powers. Pretoria has no business being invited to this exclusive party based solely on its global power credentials, yet clearly its role as a hegemonic regional player sufficiently boosts its standing to jump the line of global power hierarchy. It is precisely this underlying pattern of regional power enabling global influence that Balcer has in mind when he asserts, “From the perspective of international order, the most important is the classification which divides the middle powers into those playing an important regional role, and those ... not able to completely stretch their wings because of their geopolitical environment.”<sup>43</sup> Some would take this to the extreme of updating Organski’s venerable global power taxonomy to replace middle powers with regional powers as the tertiary tier.<sup>44</sup> From this perspective of the primacy of regionalism, put glibly, South Africa’s gain is Canada’s pain.

The regionalists certainly make a compelling case. That said, there seems little point in championing the relative importance of regional versus global sources or manifestations of power. In the end, this is going to depend on as yet opaque developments in the future world order. If effective global governance remains viable but evolves into a more diffuse model, then the importance of middle power theory will evolve with it. On the other hand, if the loci of international affairs devolve to regional power centers, then understanding regional systems will become paramount. Alternatively, as Lundesfad persuasively argues, if the world simultaneously is getting smaller through globalization and larger through a reactive counteraction of regional fragmentation, both concepts could become increasingly relevant in tandem.<sup>45</sup>

The bottom line is that, notwithstanding the conceptual utility of distinguishing between global, regional, and niche powers as separate categories, neither the global nor the regional influence of intermediary actors can be properly understood in isolation. At the categorical extremes there can be non-regional middle powers (like

Canada) and non-middle regional powers (like Ethiopia), but most intermediary actors will play overlapping roles somewhere along this spectrum. Nolte makes this point eloquently when he posits, "It makes sense to act not on the assumption of only one global power hierarchy but rather on the presupposition of a parallel and superposed system of global, regional and, in some cases, sub-regional power hierarchies which are in a permanent process of interaction."<sup>46</sup> If anything he may be understating these overlapping complexities by overlooking the growing importance of trans-regionalism as reflected in the rising profile of existing groupings like the Arctic Council and the prospective importance of nascent groupings such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Some argue that this complex interplay requires an entirely new paradigm.<sup>47</sup> It may be, however, that all that is needed is taking greater care in distinguishing and synthesizing these concepts. This would at least be a good start.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Robert A. Manning, *Envisioning 2030: US Strategy for a Post-Western World* (Washington, DC: Atlantic Council, 2012), 25.

<sup>2</sup> Detlef Nolte, "How to Compare Regional Powers: Analytic Concepts and Research Topics," *Review of International Studies* 36, no. 4 (2010): 889.

<sup>3</sup> David A. Cooper, "Challenging Contemporary Notions of Middle Power Influence: Implications of the Proliferation Security Initiative for 'Middle Power Theory,'" *Foreign Policy Analysis* 7, no. 3 (2011): 317-336; James Manicom and Jeff Reeves, "Locating Middle Powers in International Relations Theory and Power Transitions," in *Responses to China: Why Middle Powers Matter*, ed. Bruce Gilley and Andrew O'Neil (March 2, 2013); Nolte, "How to Compare Regional Powers"; Robert Stewart-Ingersoll and Derrick Frazier, *Regional Powers and Security Orders: A Theoretical Framework* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

<sup>4</sup> For constructivist challenges to this notion, see the following: Nikola Hynek, "Humanitarian Arms Control, Symbiotic Functionalism and the Concept of Middlepowerhood," *Central European Journal of International and Security Studies* 1, no. 2 (2007): 132-155; Paul Gecelevsky, "Constructing a Middle Power: Ideas and Canadian Foreign Policy," *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 15, no. 1 (2009): 77-96; Carl Ungerer, "The 'Middle Power' Concept in Australian Foreign Policy," *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 53, no. 4 (2007): 538-551.

<sup>5</sup> A.F.K. Organski, *World Politics* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958).

<sup>6</sup> One of the most sophisticated rankings of relative global power is provided by The International Futures (IF) Modeling System developed by the University of Denver's Pardee Center in cooperation with the U.S. National Intelligence Council (NIC), available online at [www.ifs.edu](http://www.ifs.edu). The International Futures (IF) Modeling System, University of Denver's Pardee Center and the U.S. National Intelligence Council (NIC), <http://www.ifs.edu>.

<sup>7</sup> Gregory F. Treverton and Seth G. Jones, *Measuring National Power* (Conference Proceedings) (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2005); Karl Hwang, "New Thinking In Measuring National Power," (paper prepared for the WISC Second Global International Studies Conference, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, 23-26 July 2008) [www.wiscnetwork.org/ljubljana2008/papers/WISC\\_2008-137.pdf](http://www.wiscnetwork.org/ljubljana2008/papers/WISC_2008-137.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Jonathan H. Ping, *Middle Power Statecraft: Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Asia Pacific* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2005); Karl Hwang, "New Thinking in Measuring National Power."

<sup>9</sup> Ramesh Thakur, "The Elusive Essence of Size: Australia, New Zealand, and Small States in International Relations," in *International Relations: Global and Australian Perspectives on an Evolving Discipline*, ed. Richard Higgott and James L. Richardson (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1991); John Ravenhill, "Cycles of Middle Power Activism: Constraint and Choice in Australian and Canadian Foreign Policies," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 52, no. 3 (1998): 309-327; Denis Stairs, "Of Medium Powers and Middling Roles," in *Statecraft and Security: The Cold War and Beyond*, ed. Ken Booth, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Adam Chapnick, "The Canadian Middle Power Myth," *International Journal* 55, no. 2 (2000): 188-206; Jennifer M. Welsh, "Canada in the 21st Century: Beyond Dominance and Middle Power," *The Round Table* 93, no. 376 (2004): 586-7; Ungerer, "The 'Middle Power' Concept in Australian Foreign Policy"; Cooper, "Challenging Contemporary Notions of Middle Power Influence."

<sup>10</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, "Country Comparison: GDP (Purchasing Power Parity)," *The World Fact Book*, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html>.

<sup>11</sup> The preceding offers a simplified and severely abridged set of characterizations drawn from across a wide body of the middle power literature including for example: Annette Baker Fox, *The Politics of Attraction: Four Middle Powers and the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977); Lloyd Jensen, *Explaining Foreign Policy* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1982); Maria Papadakis and Harvey Starr, "Opportunity, Willingness, and Small States: The Relationship Between Environment and Foreign Policy," in *New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy*, eds. Charles F. Hermann, Charles W. Kegley Jr., and James N. Rosenau (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1987); Bernard Wood, *The Middle Powers and the General Interest* (Ottawa: North-South Institute, 1988); Cranford Pratt, "Has Middle Power Internationalism a Future?," in *Middle Power Internationalism: The North-South Dimension*, ed. Cranford Pratt (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990); Thakur, "The Elusive Element of Size"; Andrew F. Cooper, Richard A. Higgott, and Kim R. Nossal, *Relocating Middle Powers: Australia and Canada in a Changing World Order* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1994); Tom Keating, *Canada and World Order: The Multilateralist Tradition in Canadian Foreign Policy* (Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2002); Gene Lyons, "International Organizations and National Interests," *International Social Science Journal* 47, no. 2 (1995): 261-276; Alan K. Henrikson, "Middle Powers as Managers: International Mediation Within, Across and Outside Institutions," in *Niche Diplomacy: Middle Powers After the Cold War*, ed. Andrew F. Cooper (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997); Stairs, "Of Medium Powers and Middling Roles"; Daniel Fleses, *Emerging Middle Powers' Soft Balancing Strategy: State and Perspectives of the IBSA Dialogue Forum* (Hamburg: GIGA, 2007); Kim R. Nossal, "'Middlepowerhood' and 'Middlepowermanship' in Canadian Foreign Policy," in *Canada's Foreign and Security Policy: Soft and Hard Strategies of a Middle Power*, ed. Nik Hynek and David Bosold (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2010).

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<sup>13</sup> Don Hubert, *The Landmine Ban: A Case Study in Humanitarian Advocacy* (Providence: Watson Institute, 2000); David A. Cooper, *Competing Western Strategies Against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction: Comparing the United States to a Close Ally* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2002); Mathew Bolton and Thomas Nash, "The Role of Middle Power – NGO Coalitions in Global Policy: The Case of the Cluster Munitions Ban," *Global Policy* 1, no. 2 (2010): 172-184; Cooper, "Challenging Contemporary Notions of Middle Power Influence."

<sup>14</sup> Bruce Gilley, "Middle Powers During Great Power Transitions: China's Rise and the Future of China-US Relations," *International Journal* 66, no. 2 (2011): 245-264; Adam Balcer, *Golden Age of Middle Powers?* (Warsaw: Center for European Strategy, February 2012).

<sup>15</sup> National Intelligence Council (NIC), *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds* (Washington, DC: Office of the Director of National Intelligence, December 2012), [www.dni.gov/nic/globaltrends](http://www.dni.gov/nic/globaltrends).

<sup>16</sup> It is important to note that, while some recent middle powers like India and Brazil may be judged to have transcended the category and other current middle powers may rise in the coming decades to likewise join the great power ranks and thus wield greater global influence, this does not strictly speaking imply any greater role for middle powers as a category, since the category will then consist of whichever states are left or take their place in the middle tier (including conceivably not only rising lesser powers but also current great powers on the decline that slip from the top tiers).

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