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The Next Great War?: The Roots of World War I and the Risk of U.S.-China Conflict (Belfer Center Studies in International Security)

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A century ago, Europe's diplomats mismanaged the crisis triggered by the murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and the continent plunged into World War I, which killed millions, toppled dynasties, and destroyed empires. Today, as the hundredth anniversary of the Great War prompts renewed debate about the war's causes, scholars and policy experts are also considering the parallels between the present international system and the world of 1914. Are China and the United States fated to follow in the footsteps of previous great power rivals? Will today's alliances drag countries into tomorrow's wars? Can leaders manage power relationships peacefully? Or will East Asia's territorial and maritime disputes trigger a larger conflict, just as rivalries in the Balkans did in 1914?

In *The Next Great War?*, experts reconsider the causes of World War I and explore whether the great powers of the twenty-first century can avoid the mistakes of Europe's statesmen in 1914 and prevent another catastrophic conflict. They find differences as well as similarities between today's world and the world of 1914 -- but conclude that only a deep understanding of those differences and early action to bring great powers together will likely enable the United States and China to avoid a great war.

Contributors Alan Alexandroff, Graham Allison, Richard N. Cooper, Charles S. Maier, Steven E. Miller, Joseph S. Nye Jr., T. G. Otte, David K. Richards, Richard N. Rosecrance, Kevin Rudd, Jack Snyder, Etel Solingen, Arthur A. Stein, Stephen Van Evera

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Editorial Review

Review

The origins of the First World War have eerie parallels to the present. Will war again be an inevitable outcome of the changing balance of power and entangling alliances? In this timely book, top international relations experts ask whether nations today can better control their destinies as China rises and challenges the global order and the world lurches toward new conflicts.

(Francis Fukuyama, Olivier Nomellini Senior Fellow, Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Stanford University)

None of the leaders who drifted into war in August 1914 would have done so could they have foreseen the world of 1918. In this thought-provoking volume, distinguished observers and participants in international affairs assess the origins of that catastrophe and its important lessons for the future.

(Henry A. Kissinger)

What can World War I, a devastating conflict that no state wanted to happen, teach us about how to prevent a twenty-first-century war in Asia? In this book, an all-star team of historians and international relations scholars review the origins of World War I and highlight important lessons for the U.S. and China, including watching out for allies and building cross-cutting alliances and regional concerts. Should be required reading in Washington and Beijing.

(Susan L. Shirk, Ho Miu Lam Professor of China and Pacific Relations, University of California, San Diego)

This is an unusually rich and insightful collection that offers a convincing as well as thought-provoking discussion of why war broke out in 1914 and lessons that might be drawn for the future of U.S.-China relations. It suggests that much more will depend on the sagacity of our future leaders than on any recurring patterns of the past.

(Zara Steiner, Emeritus Fellow, Murray-Edwards College, University of Cambridge)

...the essays that Rosecrance and Steven Miller have assembled in this volume are judicious and nuanced, brimming with insights for theorists, historians and policy-makers alike.

(Ali Wyne *Global Asia*)

One of 2014's more thoughtful books.

(Julian Snelder, *The Interpreter*, Lowy Institute for International Policy, Australia)

Examining the causes of World War I, Rosecrance and Miller's star-studded cast of scholars ask all the right questions.

(Lawrence Freedman *Foreign Affairs*)

The 2014 centennial brought multiple comparisons between Europe 1914 and Asia 2014. Some of the best are assembled in Rosecrance and Miller's *The Next Great War?: The Roots of World War I and the Risk of US--China Conflict* (2015).

(Stein Tonnesson *International Area Studies Review*)

An excellent new academic volume, '*The Next Great War?: The Roots of World War I and the Risk of U.S.-China Conflict*,' co-edited by Richard Rosecrance and Steven Miller, highlights that, in addition to deterrence, the United States also needs to work hard at cooperation -- at integrating China into the global system.

(Fareed Zakaria *The Washington Post*)

The Next Great War? asks whether we are truly in a 1914 moment today and whether war between China and the United States is inevitable. The answers, thankfully, are no and no.

(Stephen John Stedman, *The American Interest*)

The Next Great War? is essential reading both for those who are interested in the relevance of previous power transitions for East Asia today as well as those studying the international relations of the World War I era.... At a time when there has been much superficial punditry concerning the relevance of World War I for the present, this is a very welcome contribution.

(Todd Hall *International Studies Review*)

To mark the centenary of World War I, an impressive array of distinguished scholars and practitioners have produced an edited volume revisiting the origins of this momentous conflict and drawing implications for the early twenty-first-century rise of China.... this volume is highly recommended for those who desire a magisterial overview of the road to World War I combined with thoughtful observations about the future trajectory of U.S.--China relations.

(Andrew Scobell *Political Science Quarterly*)

About the Author

Richard N. Rosecrance is Director of the U.S.-China Relations Project at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, where he is also adjunct professor of public policy. Steven E. Miller is director of the International Security Program at the Belfer Center.

Users Review

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