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## Essential Reading

U.S. Naval Update Map: May 10, 2018 — This map shows the approximate locations of U.S. Carrier Strike Groups and Amphibious Ready Groups. [Link](#)

Syria: Iran and Israel Clash In New Strikes — Iran has responded to weeks of increasing Israeli airstrikes with its own retaliatory strike, seriously escalating the conflict between the two countries in the Syrian battle space. [Link](#)

Tunisia's Elections: An Arab Spring Success Story — With its latest vote, the North African country is pushing further into the uncharted territory of a decentralized, democratic government. [Link](#)

## On Geopolitics

For the U.S. and China, the Economic Fight of the Century Begins — The world's two largest economies will continue on their collision course, regardless of whether the current U.S. administration can reduce their trade imbalance. [Link](#)

*A collision between the United States and China may well have been inevitable from the moment China joined the World Trade Organization in 2001.*

## Global Perspectives

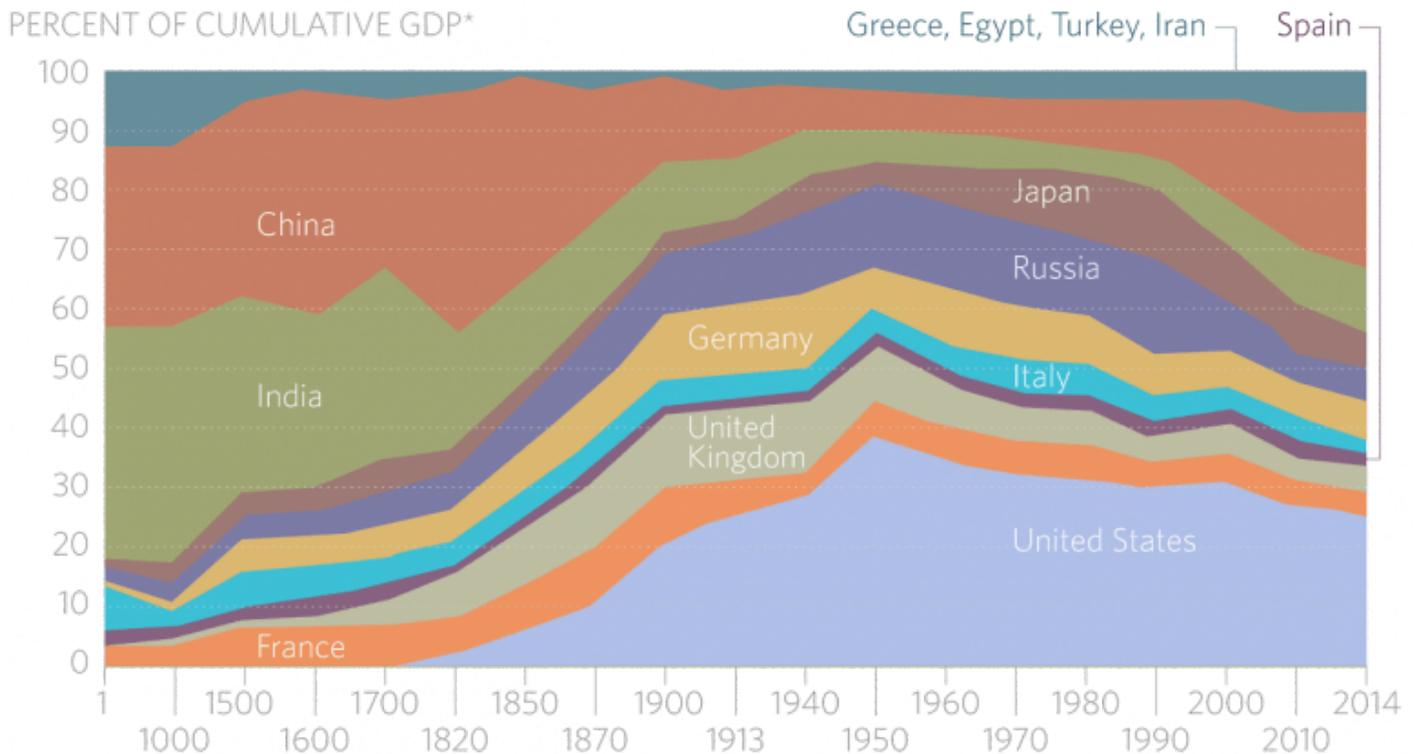
Lebanon's Election Ritual Repeats — Stratfor contributor Charles Glass writes that throughout the country's modern history, votes have been a harbinger of chaos to come. The recent parliamentary election, held two days before President Donald Trump announced that the United States would withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal, promises to be no different. [Link](#)

## Stratfor Graphic

*At the turn of the 21st century, opinions varied on how long [China's economic miracle](#) would last and whether the double-digit growth would continue.*

## An Economic History of China and Other Major Powers

For China's economy, the past 200 years are a historical aberration. For most of the past two millennia, China has accounted for a fifth -- or more -- of global economic activity. And its most recent economic rise can be more aptly described as a return to China's economic status quo.



\* The cumulative gross domestic product is for all the countries listed and represents at least 70 percent of the total for the world at any given time, with the rest provided by smaller countries.

Source: The Maddison-Project, 2013 Version

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## Forums

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## Theme of the Week: Rebalancing Power in the Middle East

Though the Middle East has never been a picture of stability, the region has had at least a semblance of order for the past hundred or so years, held together as it was by authoritarian regimes that for all their failings managed to keep the region from devolving into outright chaos. That is no longer the case. The fall of Saddam Hussein gave Iran, the Middle East's premier Shiite power, an opportunity to extend its influence from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea. Its rise has galvanized the region's Sunnis, led by Turkey and Saudi Arabia, against Iran in a series of proxy wars throughout the region. The disarray has given extremist groups the space to operate and has all but invited outside powers like Russia and the United States to intervene and exploit as they see fit. Within this quagmire, Iraqi voters are heading to the polls on May 12 for national elections. Iraq is one of the region's political battlegrounds, and the results of the election will indicate the degree of closeness between Iraq and Iran moving forward. [Link](#)

## News You May Have Missed

For even more news, visit Stratfor's [Situation Reports](#) page.

- Israel: Rockets From Southern Syria Rain on Golan Heights [Link](#)
- Iraq: Airports, Border Crossings to Shut Down During Elections [Link](#)
- U.K.: British Government Remains Divided Over Brexit [Link](#)
- Turkey: President Calls Emergency Meeting on Economy [Link](#)
- North Korea: Three U.S. Detainees Freed [Link](#)

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