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The Economics of Smart Defense

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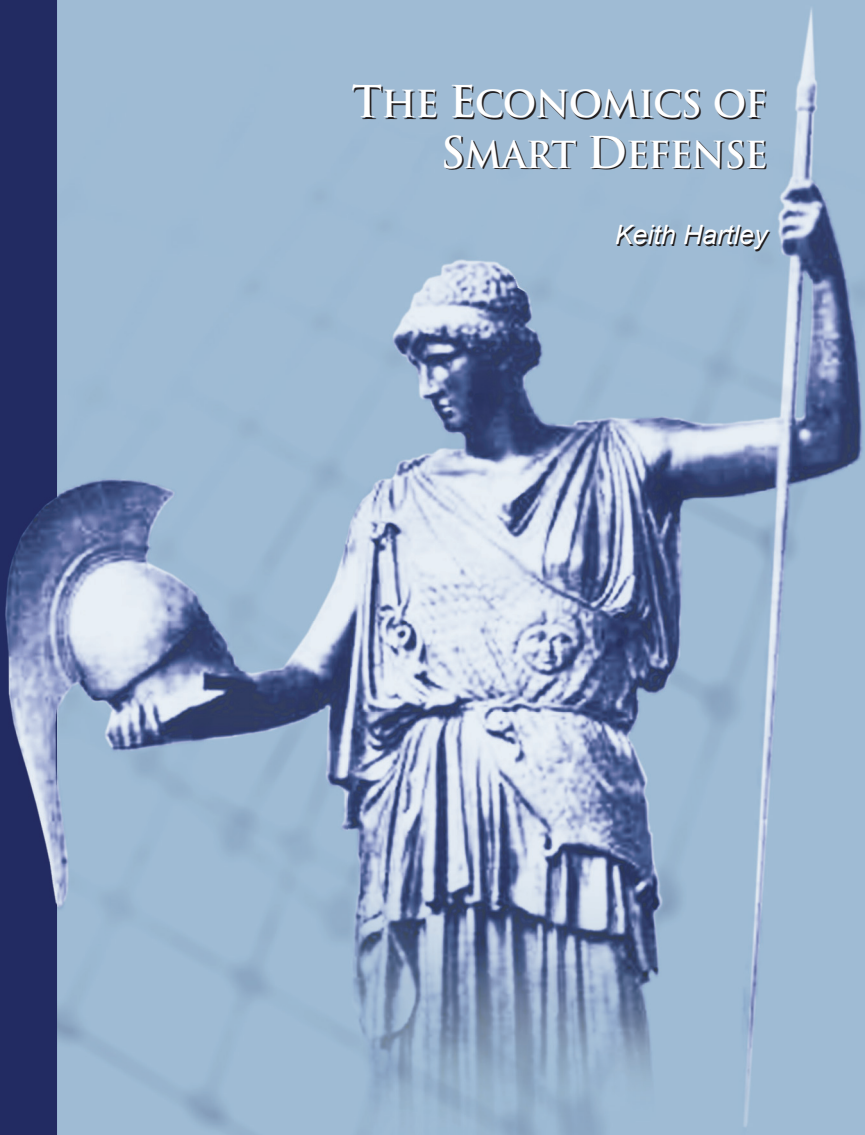

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The Economics of Smart Defense

Keith Hartley [*]

Introduction: Difficult Choices

NATO's "Smart Defense" proposal claims to be a new way of thinking about generating defense capabilities. It encourages allies to cooperate in developing, acquiring, and maintaining military capabilities. It means pooling and sharing capabilities, setting priorities, and coordinating efforts better. It involves member states not spending more but spending better; it is about specializing in what we do best and seeking multinational solutions to common problems.[1]

Smart Defense has economic dimensions that need to be clarified and assessed critically. We do not live in a world of "magic wand" economics, where declarations of intent miraculously lead to efficiency improvements in defense markets. Smart Defense cannot ignore the incentives and constraints that operate in defense markets at both the national and Alliance levels.

The financial and economic crisis of the past five years has meant cuts in national defense budgets, which have meant that nations cannot avoid the need for more and continuing difficult defense choices. Inefficiencies within member states' defense markets and within NATO have to be addressed. For each member state, budget pressures and rising input costs mean that, yet again, something has to go. The question is, What are the options and what goes?

Furthermore, defense budgets that have been cut in real terms still have to finance defense equipment, which is both costly and becoming costlier. For example, intergenerational cost growth on U.K. main battle tanks and combat aircraft was almost 6 percent. The unit cost of the Hunter fighter aircraft was £4.6 million in 1955, compared with today's replacement, the Typhoon, at a unit cost of £72 million (2012 prices). Of course, the Typhoon is superior to the Hunter in terms of speed, weight, complexity, and capability.[2] Such rising unit costs, which affect all nations, have led some commentators to forecast a future single-ship British Navy, a single-tank British Army, and a 'Starship Enterprise' for the Royal Air Force!

The defense economics problem is clear. Defense budgets—which are constant or falling in real terms, and subject to costly and rising equipment costs—mean that difficult defense choices cannot be avoided. National defense policies will have to consider a range of choices affecting equipment and personnel. While these choices will include

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[1] Mikaela Blackwood, "How Smart is Smart Defense? A Review of NATO's Smart Defense Proposals," *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* 11:3 (Summer 2012): 85–93.

[2] Neil Davies, A. Eager, M. Maier, and L. Penfold, *Intergenerational Equipment Cost Escalation*, DASA-DESA, Economic Working Paper Series No. 1 (London: U.K. Ministry of Defence, 2011).

numbers of personnel and equipment, there are also substitution possibilities *within* equipment and personnel and *between* equipment and personnel.

Some of these choice problems can be avoided where there are inefficiencies in defense spending. The defense economics problem identifies the need to increase the *efficiency* of defense spending, and this applies to all member states and NATO. Of course, efficiency improvements also involve winners and losers: some of the interest groups that currently benefit from consuming inefficiency will lose from efficiency improvements. Examples of inefficiencies in defense markets include non-competitive procurement policies, preferential purchasing (e.g., buy-national policies), a failure to assess the efficiency of military units, and the duplication of armed forces and defense industries in NATO.

Inefficiencies in NATO Defense Markets

NATO is an inefficient organization for providing both armed forces and defense equipment. Inefficiency embraces opportunities for choosing an ideal or "socially-desirable" level of defense output and/or achieving the same defense output at a lower cost. Here, major problems arise, since defense markets are different. Compared with commercial markets, where there are large numbers of buyers and sellers, defense markets are dominated by governments as major or monopsony buyers, usually facing a national monopoly or oligopoly supplier of defense equipment. As major or only buyers, governments can determine the size of their national defense industry, its ownership, structure, and performance.

Governments are also the owners of their national armed forces. Such forces are publicly owned and publicly financed. They are state monopolies where their "managers" are not entrepreneurs governed by profit incentives and subject to the efficiency incentives of private capital markets reflected in take-over and bankruptcy threats. Instead, units in the armed forces are protected from competition; their managers (commanding officers) focus on increasing or protecting their budgets and are immune from cost-minimization and efficiency objectives; and, ultimately, senior commanders report to elected governments, who act as agents of the voters. In contrast, in private competitive markets, large numbers of private consumers determine society's preferred output of, say, motor cars and washing machines, and suppliers of these products are motivated by profitability, by rival firms, and by the "policing" behavior of private capital markets. Such incentives and market arrangements are lacking in the "non-market" for the armed forces (aircraft squadrons, army regiments, warships).

Also, in defense markets there are no obvious measures of defense output. Traditionally, defense outputs were measured on the basis of defense *inputs* (the principle that inputs equal outputs, which applies throughout the public sector). Some nations have improved on such conventions by identifying the defense capabilities purchased by its defense spending, but defense capabilities are not expressed in monetary terms in a way that easily allows them to be compared directly with defense spending (do the benefits of defense spending at least equal its costs?).

A visitor from Mars would be astounded at the current arrangements for defense in NATO and the EU. Both organizations are characterized by inefficiencies in the provision of armed forces. There are massive duplications of national defense ministries, armies, navies, and air forces; duplication of training, military bases, and of logistics and repair organizations. Similarly, NATO and EU defense equipment markets are dominated by inefficiencies reflected in the duplication of costly defense R&D spending and small-scale national production orders. For example, within NATO, there are eight competing types of combat aircraft (the F-15, F-16, F-18, F-22, and F-35, produced by the U.S.; the Swedish Gripen; the French Rafale; and the Eurofighter Typhoon) involving seven nations. Imagine the cost savings if these nations had selected only one type and combined their national production orders. The result would have been one R&D bill and a total output for the eight nations of over 2,500 units of one type, leading to economies of scale and learning. However, while the most efficient solution would require all eight nations to purchase their combat aircraft from a single supplier, it is likely that the nations would require a multi-national collaboration. Such collaboration appears attractive economically, but it has been characterized by substantial inefficiencies reflecting work-sharing arrangements and duplication of procurement and industrial management organizations.[3]

Improving Efficiency in NATO Defense Markets

Economics offers some general principles for improving efficiency in NATO defense markets. These include:

- For economists, defense is a *public good*. Such goods are characterized by being non-rival and non-excludable (e.g., the provision of air defense for the U.K. is available to all its citizens), and these features apply within and between nations (e.g., NATO, the EU). For NATO, the strategic nuclear deterrent is an example of an alliance public good (peace is also a public good).[4]
- Public goods are characterized by *free-riding behavior*, both within a nation and between nations in a military alliance. Examples include the willingness of NATO nations to "free ride" on U.S. defense spending, and a focus on national rather than NATO interests when determining defense cuts (nations within an alliance will focus on burden-shifting rather than burden-sharing).[5]

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[3] Keith Hartley, *White Elephants? The Political Economy of Multi-National Defence Projects* (Brussels: New Direction, Foundation for European Reform, October 2012), available at http://newdirectionfoundation.org/content/white-elephants-political-economy-multi-national-defence-projects.

[4] The strategic nuclear deterrent is non-rival among Allies, with the ability to deter an attack being independent of the number of Alliance members being protected. It is also non-excludable, since no Ally can be excluded from the consequences of using nuclear weapons against an aggressor.

[5] The U.S. defense budget as a share of GDP is higher than the NATO average, but this is a misleading indicator, since U.S. defense spending is allocated to the defense of the U.S. mainland

- The principle of *self-interest*. Smart Defense involves "spending better," but such changed behavior requires that individuals and groups be given appropriate incentives. Left to themselves, individuals or agents will use every opportunity to pursue their own interests, such as a desire for a quiet life, luxury offices, and attractive foreign travel. Economists regard this as a principal-agent problem, where there are difficulties for the owner or principal in monitoring an agent to whom decisions have been delegated. For example, an air commander might be given the task of bombing enemy targets, but is left with considerable discretion to interpret this objective (e.g., military, industrial, or city targets?). Typically, peacetime commanders of military units might be given fixed budgets to encourage cost-conscious behavior. But fixed budgets are often limited, since all major inputs and expenses are determined externally, which means that local commanders have only limited opportunities to economize (such as on catering, transport, and window cleaning costs for a military base). Also, even where commanders achieve cost savings, such savings accrue to the central organization, and ultimately to the national treasury, thus reducing the incentives for efficiency savings.
- The principle of *international comparative advantage*. Nations differ in their competitive ability to provide goods and services. Some nations are good at producing jet airliners; others are good at motor cars; and others are good at growing bananas. In defense, some nations have high labor costs, and their comparative advantage lies in advanced technology military forces and equipment, such as nuclear weapons and combat aircraft; other nations are low labor cost nations, and their comparative advantage lies in personnel-intensive armed forces and labor-intensive defense equipment (e.g. infantry, ammunition production).
- Efficiency requires *private competitive markets*: privately-owned firms operating in competitive markets subject to fixed price contracts leads to efficient outcomes. In principle, such markets are achievable for defense equipment, but they require that the definition of the market extends beyond the national dimension to allow foreign firms to bid for national defense contracts. However, importing defense equipment involves other risks—namely dependence on foreign suppliers and risks of re-supply in conflict, and foreign suppliers being unwilling (or prohibited by law) to supply the latest technology.
- While private competitive markets are feasible for defense equipment, their application to the armed forces raises much greater challenges. How would one introduce the notion of profitability for military units, or allowing the takeover of military units, or extend the use of contractors to full combat units? Nonetheless, some of these economic principles can be introduced into the armed forces, especially the use of private contractors competing for work traditionally undertaken by military units.

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and the Pacific region as well as Europe. In contrast, most of NATO Europe's defense spending is for the defense of individual European nations.

- There are extensive opportunities for applying the economic principle of substitution. For example, with respect to equipment, it is possible for imported equipment to replace nationally-produced equipment; within personnel, reserves can replace regulars, and private contractors can undertake some of the tasks usually performed by "in-house" military units. Between equipment and personnel, it is possible for capital to replace labor, just as aircraft substitute for soldiers, and the nuclear deterrent replaces conventional forces. Such substitution possibilities (and others) need to be part of NATO's Smart Defense policy.

Applying These Principles: Some Examples

Economic pressures on national defense budgets mean that radical defense choices have to be considered.[6] These can be international, within an alliance, or national. But military cooperation between the twenty-eight member states of NATO is difficult and costly, since each member state has different national interests, different economies, and different defense budgets, each subject to the influence of its national military-industrial-political complex. Nonetheless, applying the above economic principles could offer efficiency improvements. Examples include:

- Identifying Alliance public goods and the opportunities for *beneficial international collective action*. One example would be the Alliance provision of an anti-ballistic missile defense system and a satellite surveillance network.
- Creating a defense equipment *free trade area* between member states of NATO. This would require member states to abandon preferential purchasing and support for their national defense industries. The EU has made a commitment to establishing a single market for defense equipment, but pressures from various national interest groups (aka protectionism for EU defense industries) will inevitably distort the final outcomes.
- Applying the principles of specialization by comparative advantage within NATO and the EU. Proposals for *role specialization* in NATO are not new, but these proposals are based on specialization by international comparative advantage, where comparative advantage is based on efficiency criteria (who are the lowest-cost suppliers of specific armed forces rather than some political-equity criteria for role specialization). Possible NATO examples include the U.K. and France providing aircraft carriers, with other European allies providing escort warships; or the U.K. providing amphibious forces, Germany providing tank units, and Turkey supplying infantry units. But such NATO specialization cannot be left to market forces, since there is no market for the military units of a nation's armed forces. Instead, NATO central headquarters would have to allocate specialized military roles to partner nations based on their comparative advantage. Sovereign nations will be unwilling to

[6] EU nations might be subject to a major external shock if the United States decided to withdraw from NATO to focus on the Pacific region. Such a shock effect might lead to EU nations developing a more efficient defense policy.

accept NATO declarations on the size, structure, and role of their national military forces. Defense is about protecting the security of a nation's citizens, its assets, and its national interests, and no nation will be willing to delegate that function to an unelected international military alliance.

- In the absence of military specialization, there is scope for exploring a greater use of *pooling and sharing* military resources and capabilities between NATO member states, as outlined in its Smart Defense policy. Pooling and sharing costly assets, say, between two member states, might be a first step towards role specialization. Examples of beneficial sharing might include France and the U.K. sharing their nuclear deterrents (e.g., two boats per nation rather than each nation owning four boats); sharing satellites; sharing training and military bases; or sharing their air tanker and air transport fleets and maritime air patrol capabilities. Sharing can be extended to other nations within NATO – for example, some nations specialize in providing peace-support forces.

Inevitably, there are two major issues with sharing and pooling proposals, and hence with Smart Defense. The first is the issue of ownership and funding (either via money or in-kind contributions). Who will own the specialized asset? Will they be willing to share use of the asset? How will its acquisition and operation costs be shared between the potential users? The private sector "solves" these problems through "club" arrangements, where members join a club that is economically attractive compared with the option of no club (e.g., clubs for angling, golf, swimming and tennis, where individuals would not be able to afford such facilities). Second, the key issue of trust, which is difficult to formulate into a legally-binding international contract. National contracts are difficult and costly to enforce, but the difficulties and costs are much greater for international contracts where there is no enforcement agency equivalent to national courts (even if trust could be defined legally). Here, the central issue is whether in a conflict the partners will in fact show up to help. For example, some partner nations might be unwilling to commit their national military capabilities to be used in a conflict involving another particular nation. For instance, Spain might be unwilling to provide support to the U.K. for a conflict involving the Falkland Islands and Argentina. If ownership, funding, and trust continue to create barriers to efficiency improvements in NATO defense markets, then nations will have to bear the consequences: all the adjustments to the defense economics problem will be confined to the level of the nation-state.

There are further barriers to improving efficiency in NATO and national defense markets represented by each nation's military-industrial-political complex. These include agents in national defense ministries, the armed forces, producer interest groups, and elected politicians and national governments. Each of these agents will pursue its self-interest, including budget-maximization for bureaucracies and the armed forces, rent-seeking by defense contractors, and vote-maximization by politicians. Such diverse behavior by different interest groups is unlikely to lead to efficient outcomes in NATO and national defense markets. Indeed, Smart Defense policies might lead to perverse outcomes. For example, the apparent economic benefits of multi-national collaboration

for equipment programs might lead to major collaboration inefficiencies as each partner nation seeks portions of the work that protect and benefit its national defense industry.

Conclusion

Nations cannot avoid the defense economics problem reflected in the continued need to make difficult defense choices. Typically, these choices will be made on the basis of national interests, and they will reflect the influence of national military, industrial, and political pressure groups. Prospective defense cuts will be met with myths, emotion, and special pleading. Examples include claims that "force X is absolutely essential for national defense," or that "the loss of capability Y means that we shall no longer be able to intervene in some specific part of the world," or the fear that "we are losing our world influence." These claims need to be subject to critical appraisal, including an assessment of their costs.

Smart Defense also needs to recognize and apply the economic principle of *substitution:* the idea that there are alternative means of providing defense. Duplication of armed forces is costly. Typically, the private sector uses capital, including technology in the form of computers and machinery, to replace labor. Applied to defense, nations need to explore the extent to which capital-intensive armed forces can replace labor-intensive forces. The price of introducing new equipment might be labor substitutions either within each service or between services. Examples include the nuclear deterrent replacing conventional forces, and the capital-intensive air force and navy replacing the labor-intensive army. Other examples of possible substitutions include attack helicopters replacing tanks; maritime patrol aircraft replacing naval frigates in anti-submarine roles; UAVs and cruise missiles replacing manned strike and manned maritime air patrol capabilities; and reserves replacing regulars, including the greater use of reservists in flying roles.

NATO's Smart Defense initiative cannot ignore the market and non-market arrangements for supplying defense equipment and military forces. These are political markets dominated by national governments and their military-industrial-political complexes. Ignoring the economic aspects of Smart Defense will confine the initiative to the same sidelines as previous NATO policies (such as that on standardization).

How Do Social Media Affect Intra-State Conflicts other than War?

Thorsten Hochwald [*]

Introduction

General

To look at social media in the context of conflict seems, at first glance, a stretch of the imagination. Before 2011, many would have argued that the Web 2.0 or social media was originally designed for business purposes and had little to do with conflict at all. However, following recent events, mainly in the Arab world, this view faces some serious challenges. Some would go so far as to claim that new media can be and actually have been "weaponized" in order to catalyze the transformation of existing authoritarian regimes in the Arab world. It has also been argued that social media was the single most important factor in bringing about the Arab Spring – leading to it being referred to as "Revolution 2.0."[1] Those who support the antithesis to this argument merely see social media as a set of new information exchange tools made available by the ever-advancing tide of technology. Whatever the truth may be, the events in the course of the Arab Spring, which swept the Region of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) since December 2010, took many by surprise.

As these events are quite recent or still ongoing, factual data is fragmentary, and research on the connections between conflict and social media is incomplete at best. Although numerous books have been published, up-to-date information can be found mostly in think-tank research papers and articles on the Web. Much is still unresolved and in a state of change. Moreover, the nature of conflicts has changed after the end of the Cold War, from mainly inter-state to intra-state. Civil society's influence became a major and expanding factor within the conflict sphere. Last but not least, the nature and number of actors playing important roles in these struggles have also changed—not only in dimension but also in their scope of action.

Whereas the actual impact of these actors is still being debated, the rather new phenomenon of social media in the sphere of civil society seems to have played a role in all of the recent struggles, and has therefore garnered substantial media attention in itself. In a way, social media appear to make support for authoritarian regimes more costly,[2] while simultaneously acting as influencing factors causing a considerable shift in the

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[*] The author has worked in the field of security for more than 25 years. This article was originally written as a research paper completed toward a Master of Advanced Studies in International and European Security at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy.

1 Wael Ghonim, *Revolution 2.0* (London: Fourth Estate, 2012).

2 See Marko Papic and Sean Noonan, "Social Media as a Tool for Protest," *Security Weekly* (3 February 2011); available at http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20110202-social-media-tool-protest.

balance of power within conflicts. The literature that examines the impact of social media in sub-national conflicts other than war is very undeveloped. The majority of earlier works emphasized that social media enhance the political power of the people. However, the most recent studies note that governments are becoming highly adaptable, and are beginning to use social media to their advantage. This article explores the impact social media will have on governments' security policy and the reshaping of security instruments in order to cope with this new development. The questions that arise are therefore the following: How significant will this impact be, and how can governments employ these tools in order to avert, constrain, or completely remove the threats to their existence, and thereby help safeguard national strategic interests?

In this context, this essay will try to shed light on how social media have been used by state and non-state actors inside (mostly) authoritarian regimes experiencing intra-state conflict, such as the Arab revolutions, and what impact social media have had on these events. It will look at the topic from different perspectives and try to establish whether social media are a curse or a blessing for governments, and which side actually reaps the benefits of social media's impact in the conflict sphere. In the process, it will address the question of whether there actually has been a shift in balance from revolutionaries towards the government. Subsequently, the article will extract some patterns and try to apply them to a democratic context, assess the potential impact on future security policies, and attempt to formulate certain policy recommendations that would enable governments to adapt to this new dimension of the conflict spectrum.

Methodology

This article aims to present a current picture of social media and their use by groups and organizations at both the state and non-state level in the conflict spectrum and analyze their present and future influence on security policy. By taking into account different assessments of social media's role and by studying the way social media have been used during intra-state conflicts, such as the Arab revolutions, this paper will try to analyze whether social media play an important part in intra-state conflict and what this role actually looks like. Subsequently, some patterns shall be extracted and tested in a democratic model context. The article will conclude with certain policy recommendations for security policy makers on means to implement the use of social media in pursuit of their national interests.

The first part will provide the theoretical framework for the paper by defining the two main concepts: social media and conflict. This will offer a general understanding of the context of the analysis as well as the author's perspective. Following a definition of social media, the essay will outline a brief history of how social media came into existence, and developed from one-to-many (radio, newspaper, etc.) modes of communication towards many-to-many (social media) modes of information distribution. The article will then address the different types of media and their respective reaches within society, subsequently looking at the implications of each – what it can and cannot achieve as a tool or actor. Furthermore, the paper tries to see whether social media have different impacts on governments and the public.

Using an analytical approach, the article will look at selected case studies from the Arab Spring to establish the strengths and weaknesses of social media, the role they play in intra-state conflicts (with special reference to authoritarian regimes), their impact, and how government's reactions have either reduced or intensified this impact. It will do so by analyzing a variety of open-source documents from organizations, research institutes, and think tanks as well as publications from the Web and relevant books. It will consider opinions on social media not only from Western academics but also some Arab bloggers, participants in the Arab Spring, or academics from the region in order to determine if the perception of social media's role is the same in the different regions.

Having established the strengths and weaknesses of social media and their potential influence on all actors involved in a conflict as well as in conflict prevention, the article will assess their effect on politics, especially security policies and further likely actions of governments adapting to the influence of social media, before concluding with a look towards the future.

Definitions

The article will lay the foundations and begin with a definition of social media valid for the scope of this paper. This is required due to the fact that, although social media are not actually new, they are still rapidly evolving and have only recently (the last five to seven years) entered the mainstream of civil society. And they have shown staggering growth rates: "the number of active social media users surpassed the first billion in 2011, many of whom connect to social media using their mobile devices."[3] And more is still to come; experts "expect the total number of worldwide Social Networking accounts, including both Consumer and Enterprise accounts, to grow from about 2.4 billion in 2011, to about 3.9 billion in 2015. The number of Social Networking users is expected to rise from 798 million users in 2011, to over 1.2 billion in 2015. (Note: users typically have more than 1 account)."[4] With these high rates of growth and steady change, it is not surprising that research about the impact of social media on society is still in its infancy.

Academia, government agencies, and ordinary people all have different views on social media and experience them from divergent perspectives. Therefore, a commonly agreed upon definition is still missing. There are numerous definitions around, which mostly are flawed in that they fail to provide insight into both the means and purpose of social media, which for this paper are both relevant in order to identify its implications for policies later on. Hence, to achieve a more complete definition the essay will further build on two perspectives on what social media entails. First, the definition provided in a

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[3] International Telecommunication Union, "Trends in Telecommunication Reform 2012: Smart Regulation for a Broadband World" (Geneva, 2012); available at www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-d/opb/reg/D-REG-TTR.13-2012-SUM-PDF-E.pdf.

[4] The Radicati Group, Inc., "Social Networking Market 2011-2015" (March 2011); available at www.radicati.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Social-Networking-Market-2011-2015-Executive-Summary.pdf.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
World Social Networking Accounts (M)	2,395	2,723	3,073	3,471	3,890
% Change		14%	13%	13%	12%
World Social Networking Users (M)	798	910	1,030	1,135	1,240
% Change		14%	13%	10%	9%
Average Accounts per User	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.1

Figure 1: Worldwide Social Networking Accounts and Users, 2010–2015.
Source: Social Networking Market 2011-2015, The Radicati Group, Inc.

research paper from the Governance and Social Development Resource Centre at the University of Birmingham, reads as follows:

> Such technologies allow for the mass distribution of a one-way message from one-to-many. The widespread diffusion of the Internet, mobile communication, digital media and a variety of social software tools throughout the world has transformed the communication system into interactive horizontal networks that connect the local and global. New forms of social media, such as SMS, blogs, social networking sites, podcasts and wikis, cater to the flow of messages from many-to-many. They have provided alternative mediums for citizen communication and participatory journalism.[5]

The second attempt in defining social media is provided by an analyst of the U.S. Congressional Research Service (CRS), who provided the following definition:

> The term Social Media refers to Internet based applications that enable people to communicate and share resources and information. Some examples of social media include blogs, discussion forums, chat rooms, wikis, YouTube channels, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. Social Media can be accessed by computer, smart and cellular phones, and mobile phone text messaging (SMS).[6]

This gives more insight into means and purpose of social media, but for the purposes of this article it is still not conclusive enough. Therefore, a fusion of the combined definitions will be used here:

> The term social media refers to applications that enable people to communicate and share resources and information and allow for the mass distribution of a one-way message from one-to-many, thereby transforming the communication system into interactive horizontal networks that connect the local and global. The new

[5] GSDRC, "Communication and Governance," available at http://www.gsdrc.org/go/topic-guides/communication-and-governance/social-media#The new communication landscape.

[6] B.R. Lindsay, *Social Media and Disasters: Current Uses, Future Options, and Policy Considerations* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 6 September 2011); available at www.fas.org/sgp/crs/homesec/R41987.pdf.

> forms of social media, such as SMS, blogs, social networking sites, podcasts, and wikis, cater to the flow of messages from many-to-many and provide alternative mediums for citizen communication and participatory journalism, allowing distributors and recipients of information simultaneously to use and create content.

Following this definition, there is a clear difference between social media on the one hand and new media, including satellite television (Sat-TV), on the other. As there is only a modest possibility of active interaction, Sat-TV shall, for the purpose of this study, be treated as a one-to-many broadcasting medium, where broadcasters such as Al-Jazeera are just distributing information by means of a new technology to a broader audience. And although analysts agree that Al-Jazeera did also play an important role in the Arab Spring, due to the editorial scope, this article will not address this topic.

The term "conflict" is hard to define, due to the many different and in some cases even opposing explanations of what it entails. This paper will omit looking at conflict as war between states or government-like entities already fully engaged in combat activities. In accordance with the title, this paper will look at intra-state conflict other than war. For the scope of this paper, conflict is defined as "the most common type of conflict that occurs between the armed forces of the government and an opposing civil organized group within the state borders. These conflicts are often driven by ethnic, religious or ideological incompatible positions."[7] Here the paper looks at the "'classical' intra-state conflict without foreign intervention."[8] Having provided sufficient theoretical basis for the analysis, the next section of the article will provide a brief look at the history and the different relevant types of social media before considering what implications they will have for society.

Social Media

History, From Telecommunications to Web-Based Interaction

Vast changes have occurred on the communication landscape during the last three decades, in a way that can be better described as revolutionary instead of evolutionary. Pre-Internet mass-communication systems relied mainly on mass media, such as radio, television, and print. Although it can be argued that social media are not actually new—as people have utilized digital media for information acquisition, social interaction, and networking for more than three decades—it has only recently entered the mainstream of civil society. This "new" form of communication has entered everyday life, and has changed it profoundly.

These forms of interaction, however, did not begin with the personal computer era – they started with the telephone. In the 1950s, hackers began rogue exploration of telephone networks via "phone phreaking," a method designed to make use of telephone companies' test lines to host virtual discussions, circumventing the tremendous charges

[7] From "Definition of Conflict," available at http://cso-effectiveness.org/IMG/pdf/conflict_definition_final.pdf.

[8] Ibid.

to the detriment of the phone companies.[9] The first real "blogs" thus took place on hacked company voice-mail systems until they were discovered and terminated. This was followed by the development of the first Bulletin Board Systems in 1979, which were basically small servers connected via a phone modem, hosting social discussions on open message boards, online games and more. These techniques, however, were mainly used by distinct "underground" users, who were active in hacking, information gathering, and illegal file sharing. At the same time, commercial online services like Prodigy and CompuServe appeared in the 1980s for "social" interactive practice for the general population. The first chat systems were launched, although at staggering cost (USD 30/hour).[10]

During the 1980s, costs gradually decreased as accessibility increased. Nevertheless, the real breakthrough did not come until the 1990s, with the public availability of the Internet, or World Wide Web. Although the Internet already existed since the late 1960s as a network, it became available exclusively for universities, governments and, via illegal access, the hacker community in 1991.[11] This changed around the mid-1990s with the introduction of private Internet Service Providers (ISPs), which subsequently spread around the world and provided the possibility of advanced communication forms for the general public. Many new possibilities were invented to share, communicate, and participate in the entire news spectrum. In addition to peer-to-peer file sharing applications and instant messaging services, social networking and social news websites began to appear.

In contrast to the aforementioned "sharing sites," which basically allow connections with strangers, networking sites operate on the principle of profiles and networking initiation. Although contact between strangers is basically possible, the distinctive feature of networking sites is the ability to "enable users to articulate and make visible their social networks. This can result in connections between individuals that would not otherwise be made, but that is often not the goal."[12] More importantly, "interactions commonly are multi-directional, interactive, and iterative. An online newspaper reader can comment, and the author can respond. What previously seemed like insurmountable barriers between writers and other public persons have to a large extent melted away, inherently connecting people and information in spontaneous, interactive ways."[13] The new technology gradually entered people's daily life, especially with the younger generation;

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9 See Brett Borders, "A Brief History of Social Media," *Copy Brighter Marketing* (2 June 2009); available at www.copybrighter.com/history-of-social-media.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

12 Danah M. Boyd and Nicole B. Ellison, "Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 13:1 (2007): 210–230; available at http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00393.x.

13 Mark Drapeau and Linton Wells II, "Social Software and National Security: An Initial Net Assessment," Center for Technology and National Security Policy Defense & Technology Paper, National Defense University, Washington, D.C. (April 2009), 1; available at www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA497525.

it completely changed people's interaction with each other, as well as the manner in which they shared and gathered news and information. The first of those social networking sites (see Figure 2), which started the so-called Web 2.0 phenomenon, was SixDegrees in 1997, followed by the development of Friendster (2003) and MySpace (2004). The launch of Facebook in 2004–05 finally initiated a real social network boom. An additional trend was established with the emerging social news websites, basically using editor-picked stories, shared bookmarks, and comments on mostly static pages.[14]

The missing link to real global networking, especially in countries with a lack of landline bandwidth and static computers, was finally provided by the development of the iPhone and its functional mobile Web browser. This innovative technology allowed location-based social networking and real-time news updates. It created the opportunity to make use of social media independently, even in areas with only mobile communications as means of access to the Web.

The large—now global—community of users and the low barriers of entry presented by the software enable people everywhere to connect with all forms of social media like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and the various forms of blogs. This has in turn made an almost global social network possible, formed on an ad-hoc basis, thereby giving it enormous potential to rapidly share news, thoughts, and ideas within the network. Combined, these media have enormous power to shape events, both due to the numbers of users and to the possibilities of its combined software potential. It is making "communication on the Internet … no longer a controlled, organized, exclusive, product-driven monologue; it is an authentic, transparent, inclusive, user-driven dialogue" with global reach.[15]

This consequently has far-reaching implications for governments, politics, and policies, and thereby for the everyday life of people. Although consequences in conflict-prone states are more apparent, these media have the potential to affect society anywhere. The question of how social media can influence everyday politics, both as a tool and an actor, is a key concern of this article.

Implications for Society

Interaction, global proliferation, and the increasing interpenetration of society enable social media to have extensive implications. Whereas social media in the beginning first and foremost spread in the developed world, as they required the availability of computer technology and transmission bandwidth, the shift towards mobile technology made global propagation possible. Social media have developed relatively unimpeded by national legislation due to their origins in countries with constitutional rights for freedom of speech and communication. With mobile technology in developing countries increasingly becoming the standard communication method, the possibility of access via smart phones provided the opportunity for social media to expand globally. This means that social media have also arrived in less developed, often non-democratic, authoritar-

[14] See Borders, "A Brief History of Social Media."
[15] Drapeau and Wells, "Social Software and National Security," 3.

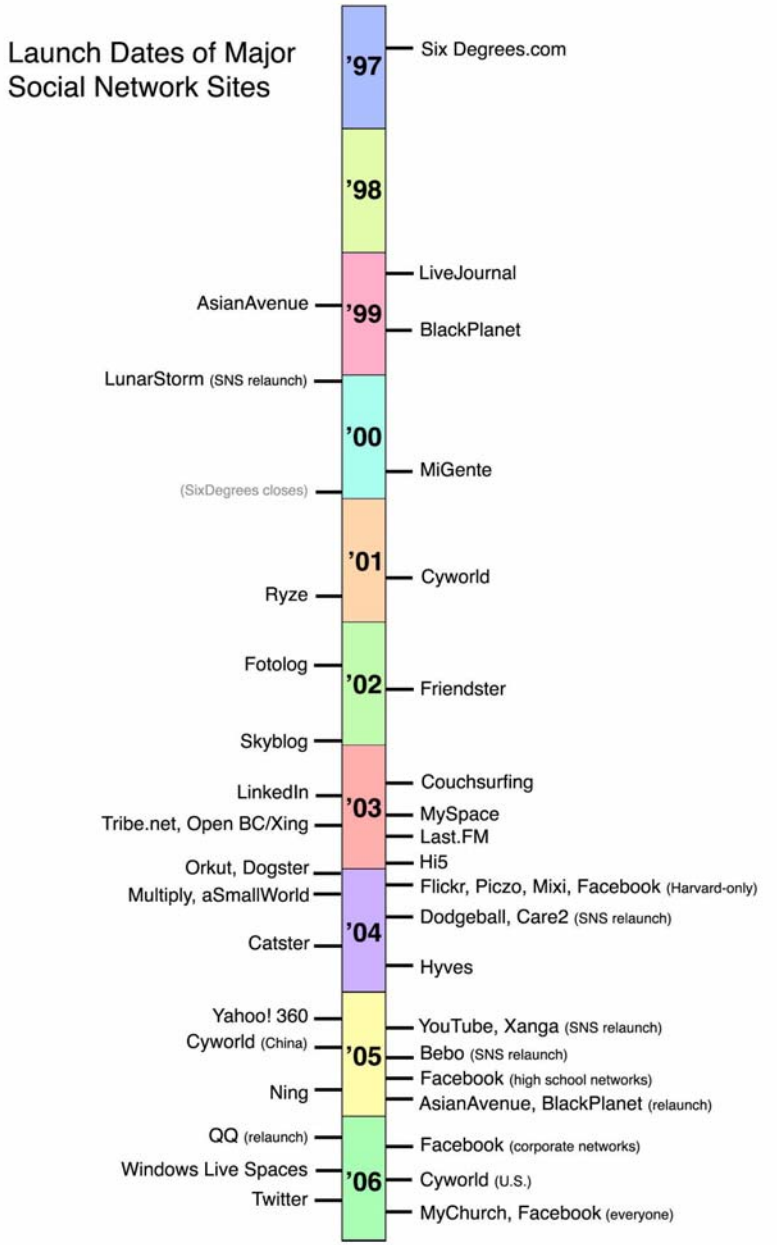

Figure 2: Launch Dates of Major Social Network Sites.
Source: Boyd and Ellison, "Social Network Sites."

ian countries. Social media affect all these societies differently, not always in a beneficial way to either people or governments.

Obviously, the very use of social media as an instrument for information transfer can be detrimental to a state's security. It can be argued that the higher the degree to which a society is dependent on the use of information technology (IT) and a correspondingly high ratio of online information acquisition, sharing, and control, the higher the vulnerability of this society to Web-based threats.[16] Accordingly, the risks of incorporating social media applications in the day-to-day running of a country, either in strategically important companies or in government agencies, seems at first glance higher for more developed countries.

However, there are less obvious but still essential areas that are affected by social media, two of which are of major importance. First, secrets are very difficult (if not impossible) to keep. Smartphone technology allows numerous possibilities for users to interact, transfer, and obtain digital information. Additionally, mobile phone cameras can be found almost everywhere in the field – wherever there are people, there are cameras. This makes it almost impossible to cover up events. Second, social media provide a platform for civil society to influence the public sphere, where civil society is understood as the organized expression of the values and interests of society.[17]

The public sphere—"a network for communicating information and points of view"—is exactly the area where social media have brought about a dramatic shift.[18] Previously, depending on mostly government-controlled, one-to-many media for information access, a government's interaction with its citizens was predominantly reduced to election periods. Nowadays, civil society can easily gather information, access structure, and channel debates as well as share ideas and thereby express its support or rejection of government policies anytime and from anywhere. It would not be too far-fetched to call this a new public sphere, situated in the online domain.

Those two main characteristics generate several implications for both governments and society. As social media and the incorporated technology provide a stage for public society, decisions of governments are almost instantaneously brought under the scrutiny of public opinion. In order to win public support, the need for transparent decision-making is increased, and dubious back-room deals are less likely to pass public scrutiny. Due to the continuous supervision of politics, the reaction time for governments (compared to the pre-social media era) has been dramatically reduced. Additionally, in democracies politicians seem to become less risk-prone and more cautious and anxious

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[16] See Gustav Lindström, "Meeting the Cyber Security Challenge," Geneva Centre for Security Policy, Geneva Paper 2012/7 (June 2012); available at http://www.gcsp.ch/Regional-Capacity-Development/Publications/GCSP-Publications/Geneva-Papers/Research-Series/Meeting-the-Cyber-Security-Challenge.

[17] Manuel Castells, "The New Public Sphere: Global Civil Society, Communication Networks, and Global Governance," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616:1 (2008): 78.

[18] Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), 360.

when making decisions, as mistakes are quickly made public. Especially in times of crisis, this is not always a good approach to leadership.[19]

On the other hand, one needs to evaluate whether governments can utilize social media to their advantage. It can be argued that, if social media are utilized and exploited properly by government agencies, they could "unlock self-organizing capabilities within the government, promote networking and collaboration with groups outside the government, speed decision-making, and increase agility and adaptability. … It could also decrease the probability of being shocked, surprised, or outmaneuvered."[20] In this way social media could act in a positive way as a warning and prevention tool and, if used appropriately, as a manipulation device to prevent violence. Hence, by considering the above implications, this article argues that social media in one way or another affect the whole of society.

Social Media and Intra-State Conflict

The connection between conflict and traditional media has been subject to much research. In the context of researching the respective relations to social media, it has been argued "that the complex relationship between media and conflict is longstanding. Traditional mass media have been used to amplify and extend viewpoints and ideologies, to persuade audiences at home, and to influence opposing sides in conflict. However, both media and conflict have changed markedly in recent years. Many twenty-first-century wars (conflicts) are not only about holding territory, but about gaining public support and achieving legal status in the international arena."[21]

The link between governments and information is even more important when it comes to authoritarian regimes, because they have a tendency to regulate the distribution and availability of information via control of the media. Such regimes frequently aim at exerting power over their subjects not only through force but also by building up a monopoly on information and influencing the public with the careful dissemination of pro-government information.

This was already true before the Internet age, but since then not only technology has changed, but so have the characteristics of conflict itself. Conflict before the end of the Cold War mainly consisted of wars between sovereign states. Since the collapse of the bipolar world order, one can observe a shift towards intra-state conflicts of various intensities. In intra-state conflicts, social media have created a new relationship between governments, politics, and its subjects. The new civil society has become a powerful actor in the "struggle" for public opinion, and is often a crucial factor in the quest for international attention and support.

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[19] See Papic and Noonan, "Social Media as a Tool for Protest."

[20] Drapeau and Wells, "Social Software and National Security," vi.

[21] Ivan Sigal, "Digital Media in Conflict-Prone Societies," paper prepared for the Center for International Media Assistance (October 2009), 8; available at http://cima.ned.org/sites/default/files/Sigal%20-%20Digital%20Media%20in%20Conflit-Prone%20Societies.pdf.

Accordingly, "media are increasingly essential elements of conflict, rather than just a functional tool for those fighting. Acts of violence performed in the theatre of the public eye can be used in the fight for influence. Violent groups increasingly use media to achieve their goals, and violence itself is also used as a message."[22] Many researchers argue that social media in future conflicts will reverse the lack of accessible and reliable information in previous wars to a state of information saturation, creating an over-supply of data. Thus, information itself becomes the center of attention, even more than traditional military power. Therefore social media provide civil society with a tool that equalizes the area of previous governments' supremacy: information dominance.

However, the dependence of both parties on the Web-based information domain has its own strengths and weaknesses. Protest movements' reliance on social media allows regimes to effectively monitor and influence online content. This may lure potential protesters away from certain hotspots, or lead them to areas of less concern, effectively reducing the protest movement's impact. Another method is by asking Facebook or Twitter to stop certain pages from being published or, more crudely, as in Egypt in 2011, simply shutting down the country's Internet services.[23]

The recent revolutions have shown that the rapidly changing and developing technologies and characteristics of social media have become a challenge to which regimes need to adapt quickly. There is little doubt that "new media technologies have increased communication and information dissemination in the context of conflict."[24]

The much-coveted prize in the conflict between protest movements and (authoritarian) regimes seems increasingly to be national and international public opinion. The global nature of the Web enables social media to transgress national borders and gain international attention, which could lead to recognition and support. Therefore, one can argue that there is a definite link between social media and conflict, as the constant presence of social media provides a public stage, which also makes transgression and violence immediately apparent and thereby costly for the government to stop. Controlling media and information flows is an effective tool for governments in order to cover up transgressions, which by its nature is especially important to authoritarian governments, as they depend on the monopoly of available information far more than democracies in order to stay in power.[25]

Social media eliminate this monopoly on information and easily make potentially damaging incidents public. As Ivan Sigal notes, "The ability to communicate, and to produce and receive diverse information through participatory media, is part of a struggle within conflict-prone societies to either allow for non-coercive debates and dialogue

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[22] Sigal, "Digital Media in Conflict-Prone Societies," 9.

[23] For example, the Indian government during the Bombay terror attacks of November 2008 asked Twitter to temporarily shut down its services, as they had clear evidence that the terrorists were using tweets to coordinate their attacks. In this case, Twitter complied.

[24] Sigal, "Digital Media in Conflict-Prone Societies," 9.

[25] But the Wikileaks scandal has demonstrated that even in democracies it was heavily debated as to what too much information for citizens is and how much should be made public about the government's way of doing business.

that focus on endemic weak-state problems, or equally, enable those seeking power to organize for political influence, recruitment, demonstrations, political violence, and terror."[26] The opposition can use social media as a coordination tool for demonstrations, to mobilize resistance, and to organize protest movements against government policies. They reduce the formerly high costs for protest groups to recruit, organize, and participate in anti-government actions, making the activation of protest feasible. However, social media on their own are not enough to bring about regime change. They generally require a trigger; the proverbial straw that breaks the camel's back and exceeds the citizens' level of acceptance.

The key, then, is to mobilize sufficient support, which "requires organization, funding and mass appeal. Social media no doubt offer advantages in disseminating messages quickly and broadly, but they are also vulnerable to government counter-protest tactics. And while the effectiveness of the tool depends on the quality of a movement's leadership, a dependence on social media can actually prevent good leadership from developing."[27] Although social media have been used to organize protests on a tactical and operational level, research has shown that protest movements organized via social media lack the capacity for strategic thinking. Since social media constitute a decentralized network, their mechanisms closely resemble swarm intelligence: effective once in progress, but difficult to focus. This would require the emergence of an accepted, high-quality leadership cadre to direct the movement in the desired direction. Real, non-personalized online leadership is difficult to achieve, and is frequently unable to generate sufficiently dependable loyalty that is able to withstand setbacks. In the end, the aim is to create an alternative form of leadership on the public stage, which finally would require a personal connection. Lacking that, social media are able to encourage and manage civil disobedience to a degree previously unheard of, as long as the government does not obstruct the flow of information.

However, more is required in order to evolve from the stage of activism against regimes into a protest movement that can produce a critical mass of citizens on the street. The question is how to translate the rather faceless and comparatively low-risk activism on the Internet into individual identification and a willingness to accept personal risk on the street protesting against regime authority. This not only requires a socially persuasive nature on behalf of the movement, but also ultimately broad-based support and a legal status for the opposition's aims.[28] The requirement for "protest organizers is to expand their base beyond Internet users, they must also be able to work around government disruption. … Ingenuity and leadership quickly become more important than social media when facing government counter-protest tactics, which are well developed even in

[26] Sigal, "Digital Media in Conflict-Prone Societies," 20.

[27] Papic and Noonan, "Social Media as a Tool for Protest."

[28] See Reda Benkirane, "The Alchemy of Revolution: The Role of Social Networks and New Media in the Arab Spring," Geneva Centre for Security Policy, Policy Paper 2012/7 (June 2012); available at http://www.gcsp.ch/Regional-Capacity-Development/Publications/GCSP-Publications/Policy-Papers/The-Alchemy-of-Revolution-The-Role-of-Social-Networks-and-New-Media-in-the-Arab-Spring.

the most closed countries."[29] In order to be successful, the aim of opposition leadership must therefore be to inspire, gain international attention (as national regime attention is counterproductive), and adapt their methods of operation according to regime responses.

So how does this relate to real world conflicts? How does the use of social media change the course and outcome of disputes? This shall be analyzed through case studies from the recent revolutions in the MENA region in the following section.

Analysis: Social Media – A Tool for Protest?

Underlying Factors for Revolution in the MENA Region

It is commonly agreed that the use of social media has had a significant impact on recent revolutions around the world. As Ivan Sigal writes,

> The discord between citizens creating and disseminating media and governments aspiring to restrict, censor, and influence in conflict situations reflects the tension between informal, fast-moving information and community networks and the formal hierarchies of state power. New information networks link people together through non-state, citizen-oriented communities, challenging the concept of a ruling authority able to control and direct information flows amongst its citizens.[30]

However, the new technology displays both advantages and disadvantages. The following section will scrutinize real-world limitations in their use and various impacts throughout the protests in the Middle East and North Africa, commonly grouped together under the rubric of the "Arab Spring." The first step in this respect shall be an evaluation of the factors underlying these revolutions.

Similar to other great events in world politics, the uprisings in the MENA region started on a local level, expanded regionally, and finally acquired a trans-regional dimension. The uprisings can be classified as historical, with a global impact. Moshe Ma'oz has written, "These popular uprisings have constituted a remarkable historical political phenomenon of the Arab street secular and religious, male and female, casting off the 'barrier of fear' against their oppressive, despotic, and corrupt rulers, insisting on obtaining freedom, dignity, justice, equality, and democracy."[31] The process itself and its aftermath will probably continue longer and potentially be bloodier than the end of the Cold War was for Central and Eastern Europe, and its effects will change the strategic picture of the entire region for years to come.

Several publications rank social media as the most important factor of those playing a role in the twenty-first-century transformations of authoritarian regimes in the MENA region.[32] There are many claims that the "Arab Spring" was only possible through social

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[29] Papic and Noonan, "Social Media as a Tool for Protest."

[30] Sigal, "Digital Media in Conflict-Prone Societies," 21.

[31] Moshe Ma'oz, "The Arab Spring and the New Geo-Strategic Environment in the Middle East," *Insight* Turkey 14:4 (Fall 2012); available at www.insightturkey.com/insight-turkey-volume-14-no-4/issues/228.

[32] See Ghonim, *Revolution 2.0*.

media, but social media by themselves could not have brought the uprisings to the actual level of anti-regime action without certain underlying factors. Although these differed from country to country, there are also some clear similarities. Generally speaking, the socio-political situations in all of the affected states were ripe for change. Poor governance, blatant violations of human rights, together with a high level of corruption and increasing inequality (with particular discrimination against women) and poor prospects for youths constituted the norm. Most of the authoritarian governments used excessive force against the opposition and had little interest in letting their subjects participate in ruling the country. Additionally, the absence of the rule of law, vast structural problems in economic development, inefficient resource allocation, and high unemployment, especially among youths, gave an edge to the already explosive mixture of factors.

Excessive inflation exacerbated the already high rate of poverty, and the growing number of young (often qualified) people lacking adequate jobs created an entire generation without future prospects. Demography did not help the ruling powers, as exceptionally high birth rates generated a population bulge in the younger generations, providing far more jobseekers than the economy could absorb. This collection of factors became intolerable, but the fear of oppression measures from the regimes kept an increasingly well-educated and informed sector of the population in check. Many analysts were not surprised when the Arab Spring took place in 2011, but rather that it started so late.[33] The only thing lacking was a specific triggering event. Such an event occurred in Tunisia. Spreading news of this triggering event via social media played an important role in getting the revolution started. But what actually was its share in the ongoing events? This will be dealt with in the following sections.

Social Media and the Arab Spring

Tunisia is where the Arab Spring began. A twenty-six-year-old Tunisian street vendor committed suicide by burning himself on 17 December 2010 as a form of protest against the lack of opportunities provided by the regime in Tunisia. His suicidal act was the catalyst that set off a rapidly spreading chain of protests. News of his self-immolation (including images) was quickly disseminated via Facebook, from where it reached satellite TV (mainly Al-Jazeera). Without a mobile phone camera and social media, the burning might have gone unnoticed—as it took place at the same time as the suicides of other desperate people without prospects in the region—but this crucial event was disseminated widely, and set off a chain of events that are still unfolding.[34]

The uprising in Tunisia lasted about a month, and ended with the expulsion of President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, who had autocratically ruled the country for over twenty-three years. He was quickly driven into exile in Saudi Arabia by an agitated population. In the beginning, the regime applied oppressive measures in order to quell the protest movement. The progressively brutal measures included deliberately targeting protesters.

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[33] Volker Perthes, *Der Aufstand – Die arabische Revolution und ihre Folgen* (Munich: Random House, 2011), 14–19.

[34] See iCompare, ibid., pp. 43–47.

This method was meant to induce fear, but it had the contrary effect. By virtue of the sheer magnitude of violence applied against its own population, the regime quickly lost any remaining support and legitimacy it had retained to that point. Most of the violence was made public via YouTube and subsequently via Al-Jazeera, thereby providing a global stage for the reproduction of images of the unfolding events. Facebook and Twitter played a crucial role in coordinating ad-hoc demonstrations and diverting protest actions around known anti-protest arrangements of the regime. In the end, the loss of support of the well-educated middle class, women, and the younger generation was crucial.[35] These factors were mainly responsible for creating the public platform of civil society via social media, directing the protests and making it clear to the regime that a change of government was now the only remaining option.

The uprising succeeded with the subsequent change of government in Tunisia at the end of 2010, and it rapidly expanded into Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Qatar, Bahrain, and Syria. As a United States Institute of Peace report notes, "An extraordinary wave of popular protest swept the Arab world in 2011. Massive popular mobilization brought down long-ruling leaders in Tunisia and Egypt, helped spark bloody struggles in Bahrain, Libya, Syria, and Yemen, and fundamentally reshaped the nature of politics in the region."[36] Furthermore, it had an impact on Oman and Jordan as well, without resulting in actual uprisings. But why did the revolutionary tendency spread over the whole MENA region? Under normal circumstances, the effect of a regime change in Tunisia would probably have spread no further, the country being less prominent in terms of power, regional influence, and interdependence. Again, a kind of virtual pan-Arab civil society, mainly fuelled and connected via social media, created the platform for change.

Egypt: High Stakes

The uprisings soon reached Egypt, where the underlying socio-economic conditions were comparable to those in Tunisia (as are, in fact those in many countries in the region). The same population strata—the well-educated youth without future prospects and the shrinking middle class—connected via social media, and satellite TV brought the possibility for change to the suppressed Egyptian civil society. Some researchers even claim that this response created a new political generation in the MENA region.[37]

Street demonstrations began on a regional level and quickly gained trans-regional momentum, gaining international attention in the process. All attempts to violently suppress the uprising, including shutting down Internet access, proved fruitless. "Still the uprising continued, and the army made the decision ultimately not to act against the protesters. Mubarak's weak concessions … failed to appease the Egyptian people's de-

[35] See Perthes, *Der Aufstand*, 44.

[36] Sean Aday, et al., "New Media and Conflict after the Arab Spring," United States Institute of Peace, Peaceworks Report No. 80 (2012), 3; available at www.usip.org/files/resources/PW80.pdf.

[37] See Perthes, *Der Aufstand*, 30–33.

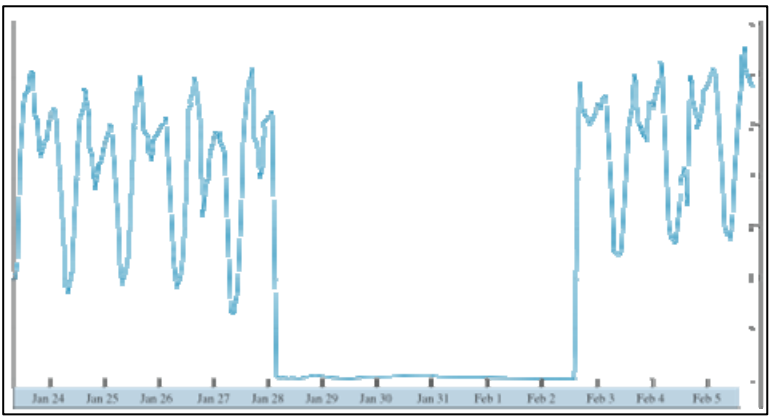

Figure 3: Egyptian Internet Traffic between 28 January and 2 February 2011.
Source: Arab Social Media Report, "Civil Movements: The Impact of Facebook and Twitter," 3; available at www.dsg.ae/portals/0/ASMR2.pdf.

mands. On 11 February, a day of massive 'Friday of Departure' demonstrations, Mubarak was finally forced to resign."[38]

In the beginning of the unrest, the Facebook page named "*Kulluna Khalid Said*" ("We are all Khalid Said"), named after a blogger who the police had caned to death, rapidly acquired more than one million followers.[39] It aimed at organizing protests against the regime, and quickly became one of the most crucial websites for the anti-regime movement. Although there had already been protests in Egypt following the rigged 2010 elections, there is little doubt that the events in Tunisia triggered the uprising in Egypt.[40]

The actual revolution barely lasted eighteen days, with the government reacting in ways that had become traditional for authoritarian regimes, using disproportionate force against protesters. Initially surprised by events in Tunisia, but convinced that those concerns did not apply to Egypt, the mood quickly changed. Tahrir Square in Cairo, which was occupied by protesters and rapidly came to be focal point of the revolution, was surrounded by the Egyptian Army and gangs of thugs loyal to the Mubarak regime. Internet and mobile communications were temporarily shut down (see Figure 3 above), and anti-activist measures were undertaken on the Web – all to no avail.

The revolution had already acquired critical mass and momentum, and the protesters had broadened their base beyond those who read Facebook and Twitter messages or were physically present in Tahrir Square. Communication shutdowns by the regime

[38] "Arab Spring: A Research and Study Guide," Cornell University Library Guide; available at http://guides.library.cornell.edu/arab_spring.
[39] See Ghonim, *Revolution 2.0*, 58–81.
[40] See also Perthes, *Der Aufstand*, 53.

proved fruitless, as the public could witness regime brutality live on Al-Jazeera, further strengthening the protesters' resolve.[41] Social media made the public feel that they were part of the movement. Consequently, the fear of regime suppression was greatly reduced, and the protests continued. An additional crucial factor was the support of the Muslim Brotherhood. Their level of organization and countrywide deployment aided anti-government action and ultimately served as a guarantor for initial success. Social media helped the movement gain international support, making governments around the world shy away from the "doomed" Mubarak regime. The conflict became more violent, causing many casualties and leading to an increasingly chaotic situation. The traditionally strong and respected Egyptian military stepped in, and for a week provided protection for the protesters in Tahrir Square.[42] The protest movement was well coordinated and had strong public support; from this position of strength it was able to refuse all proposals from the Mubarak government.

In the end, the Egyptians toppled the Mubarak regime by their own efforts and with the help of the military, who did not leave a power vacuum but helped to maintain order.[43] However, two serious consequences emerged. First, the main goal of the protest movement—to replace the government with a new, more participatory and open one—was not achieved (as subsequent events in Egypt have shown all too clearly). Second, with far higher stakes at play regionally and globally, it demonstrated that if the unsatisfied population could overthrow the Egyptian government, any government in the MENA region, which all face similar problems, were potentially in trouble. Not completely unexpected, Libya was the next country to encounter the people's newly discovered power.

Libya and Beyond

Although the actual situation in Libya was slightly different from that in neighboring states, the underlying problems were essentially identical to those described above. The big difference in the anti-government protest was the almost immediate turn to violence and the subsequent shift to outright civil war. This is the reason why this article will not look at Libya in detail, but will utilize it as transition to the other revolutions in the region.

Following the fall of the Mubarak regime in Egypt, young Internet activists in Libya called for demonstrations for Friday 17 February 2012, declaring it "the day of anger." However, another event became the igniting factor: the arrest of an attorney from Benghazi who was representing relatives of political prisoners who were massacred in a revolt a few years earlier. This immediately led to demonstrations, which spread rapidly throughout the country. Those security forces that did not change sides countered the uprising with the utmost brutality. The military was quickly deployed to fight its own

[41] However, as stated in the introduction, the role of the traditional media will not be further analyzed due to limitations in scope of this essay.

[42] See Perthes, *Der Aufstand*, 55–57.

[43] Ibid., 59.

population with every weapon in its considerable arsenal.[44] Social media not only provided the public with video footage of the regime's atrocities, it did also created a pan-Arab mood for change. Following the toppling of the regimes in Tunisia and Egypt, social media quickly made the outbreak of civil war in Libya not only a regional problem, but a broader international one as well. The Arab League suspended Libya's membership and asked the United Nations for the establishment of a no-fly zone. Considering the regime's military strength, a war ensued that could not be won as quickly as the public expected.[45]

Social media did not play a direct role in coordinating the war effort, as international forces provided the opposition with communications equipment, mainly satellite telephones. However, as is the case of any war in the Information Age, it was also a war about public opinion in the neighboring states, which largely played out on Al-Jazeera. With hindsight, the quick veer towards civil war followed by direct international intervention made the Libyan case more unique in the context of the Arab Spring. Social media had little time to assert their potential, but rather acted as a tool on the tactical level to gain support and to denounce atrocities of the other side. This in the end brought about the international intervention that helped bring the war to a swifter end.

At the same time, anti-regime protests spread into Yemen, Bahrain, and Syria. In Yemen the ruling president managed to gather enough support to drag out the process and (following political intervention from the Gulf Cooperation Council, or GCC) deliver a compromise that in the end brought about a regime change. During the protests, social media were used to gather support and to direct strike actions across the country, thereby making it clear to the regime that continuing as before was not an option.

In Bahrain, the protest movement was initially more moderate, calling for demonstrations via Facebook, demanding political and social change. After a flaring of violence the conflict quieted down, following an intervention by the GCC (mainly Saudi Arabia) and a proposal from the government to enter into a "dialogue of national consensus." In a way, the protest movement was suppressed successfully also by the use, or rather the absence of the media. Qatar-based Al-Jazeera showed a remarkable lack of interest in the conflict, thus taking away the movement's main source of regional and global media coverage. The public stage was thereby reduced considerably, and the impact of the protests narrowed.[46]

Due to its limited scope, this essay will not look at the other countries affected by the Arab Spring. Suffice it to say that the conduct and outcomes of the uprisings vary from country to country, and have so far brought about elections in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya (and, at the other end of the spectrum, a bloody and protracted civil war in Syria). However, so far results show that free elections alone do not solve problems. As the underlying reasons for the revolts have not been conclusively addressed, much remains yet to be done in order to achieve a peaceful transition on the road to prosperity. For many of

[44] See also Perthes, *Der Aufstand*, 85–92.
[45] Ibid., 91.
[46] Ibid., 106–16.

the other countries in the MENA region, the protest movements and the demand for socio-political change are still ongoing, and it is too early to evaluate the complete consequences for the MENA region as well as its potential global geopolitical impact.

Assessment: Past and Future Impact

Media Revolutions?

As was shown above, "the situations in Tunisia and Egypt have both seen an increased use of social networking media such as Facebook and Twitter to help organize, communicate, and ultimately initiate civil-disobedience campaigns and street actions."[47] It has also been demonstrated that social media alone would not be able to carry through a revolution from start to finish:

> Calling the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt Twitter or Facebook revolutions overlooks social media access in these countries. In 2009 in Tunisia and Egypt there were only 34.1 and 24.3 Internet users per 100 inhabitants respectively. Furthermore, in Egypt only 7 % of inhabitants are Facebook users, while 16 % use the platform in Tunisia. Facebook use is highest in the United Arab Emirates (36 %), Bahrain (29 %), Qatar (24 %) and Lebanon (23 %). Of these countries, only one (Bahrain) experienced significant protests. From the social media access and usage it is clear that there is no necessary correlation between social media access and unrest.[48]

It can be argued that, although social media can act as a catalyst for change, the will to revolt needs underlying reasons. And this is more likely to occur within authoritarian regimes than in democracies.

The Arab Spring has been dubbed "Revolution 2.0," implying that without social media the uprisings would not have taken place.[49] On the other hand "the significance of social media was definitely there but should neither be under- or overstated."[50] It seems more convincing, rather, that the uneven demographic distribution within these societies and the perceived unfairness of the ruling regimes were the actual factors for change. It has been shown that the impact and

> the mobilizing effect of new information and social media networks as catalysts of broad socio-political protest will vary significantly from region to region and from one political context to another. The presence of multiple underlying causes for socio-political protest will not suffice for new information and communication networks to become a major catalyst. For one, Internet access must be available to significant segments of the population. In the foreseeable future, this condition will exclude a number

[47] Papic and Noonan, "Social Media as a Tool for Protest."

[48] Alex Comninos, "Twitter Revolutions and Cyber Crackdowns," paper prepared for the Association for Progressive Communications (June 2011), 5; available at www.apc.org/en/system/files/AlexComninos_MobileInternet.pdf.

[49] See Ghonim, *Revolution 2.0*.

[50] Translated from Perthes, *Der Aufstand*, 27.

Country	*Est. # of active twitter users (Avg. b/n 1 Jan and 30 Mar 2011)*	*Twitter penetration* (%)*	*Number of Facebook users (4/5/2011)*	*Facebook penetration* (%)*	*Internet users per 100 **	*Mobile Subscriptions per 100 **
Algeria	13,235	0.04	1,947,900	5.42	13.47	93.79
Bahrain	61,896	7.53	302,940	36.83	53.00	177.13
Comoros	834	0.12	9,080	1.28	3.59	18.49
Djibouti	4,046	0.45	52,660	5.89	3.00	14.90
Egypt	131,204	0.15	6,586,260	7.66	24.26	66.69
Iraq	21,625	0.07	723,740	2.24	1.06	64.14
Jordan	55,859	0.85	1,402,440	21.25	26.00	95.22
Kuwait	113,428	3.63	795,100	25.51	36.85	129.85
Lebanon	79,163	1.85	1,093,420	25.50	23.68	56.59
Libya	63,919	0.96	71,840	1.08	5.51	77.94
Mauritania	1,407	0.04	61,140	1.78	2.28	66.32
Morocco	17,384	0.05	3,203,440	9.78	41.30	79.11
Oman	6,679	0.23	277,840	9.37	51.50	139.54
Palestine	11,369	0.25	595,120	13.10	32.23	28.62
Qatar	133,209	8.46	481,280	30.63	40.00	175.40
Saudi	115,084	0.43	4,092,600	15.28	38.00	174.43
Somalia	4,244	0.04	21,580	0.22	1.16	7.02
Sudan	9,459	0.02	443,623	1.01	9.19	36.29
Syria	40,020	0.17	356,247	1.55	20.40	45.57
Tunisia	35,746	0.34	2,356,520	22.49	34.07	95.38
UAE	201,060	4.18	2,406,120	50.01	75.00	232.07
Yemen	29,422	0.12	340,800	1.37	9.96	35.25

Figure 4: Facebook, Twitter, Internet and Mobile Subscription Rates in the Arab Region.

Source: Arab Social Media Report, "Civil Movements: The Impact of Facebook and Twitter," 29; available at www.dsg.ae/portals/0/ASMR2.pdf.

> of underdeveloped countries with minimal Internet penetration.[51] Therefore traditional media such as satellite TV and radio will continue to play a major role in informing and mobilizing the masses such as Al-Jazeera during the Arab Spring. While it was reluctant in broadcasting events from Bahrain it practically took the side of the protest movement in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya.[52]

However, "social media are tools that allow revolutionary groups to lower the costs of participation, organization, recruitment and training. But like any tool, social media have inherent weaknesses and strengths … and no doubt offer advantages in disseminating messages quickly and broadly, but they also are vulnerable to government counter-protest tactics."[53] In the coming years their influence is likely to grow, with the younger generation using these technologies as integral parts of their everyday life. Additionally, social media penetration across all sectors of society will likely increase as well. The governments in the MENA region overall reacted poorly to the new media technologies. Many mistakes were made, as the ruling elite had neither an understanding of social media or its impact on their actions. Drawing on the experiences during the Arab Spring, the next section will extract some patterns and try to apply them to the democratic context, assess the potential impact on future security policy, and attempt to formulate certain policy recommendations that would generally enable governments to adapt to this new dimension.

Blessing or Curse?

This article has shown so far that the use of social media has undeniable implications for governments, especially (but not exclusively) in internal conflict situations. As Ivan Sigal writes, "It is now clear that increased access to information and to the means to produce media has both positive and negative consequences in conflict situations. The question of whether the presence of digital media networks will encourage violence or lead to peaceful solutions may be viewed as a contest between the two possible outcomes. … However, it is equally possible for digital media to increase polarization, strengthen biases, and foment violence."[54] But it has also been shown that social media can act more like a tool, and can serve as a catalyst to more widespread popular action, rather than causing revolutions or anti-government action on their own. Underlying reasons are required to actually instigate mass protest movements on a revolutionary scale.

Social media create an alternative communication infrastructure that is difficult to control, theoretically allowing nationwide and even region-wide concerted action, which could seriously threaten a regime's stability. As Papic and Noonan observe, "Current conventional wisdom has it that social networks have made regime change easier to or-

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[51] Ekaterina Stepanova, "The Role of Information Communication Technologies in the Arab Spring," PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo No. 159 (May 2011), 3; available at www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/ponars/pepm_159.pdf.

[52] See Perthes, *Der Aufstand*, 28–29.

[53] Papic and Noonan, "Social Media as a Tool for Protest."

[54] Sigal, "Digital Media in Conflict-Prone Societies," 9.

ganize and execute. An underlying assumption is that social media [are] making it more difficult to sustain an authoritarian regime—even for hardened autocracies like Iran and Myanmar—which could usher in a new wave of democratization around the globe."[55]

The flow of information on social media suggests an alleged objectivity. This is a crucial aspect in the quest for internal and external support. Papic and Noonan state: "Foreign observers—and particularly the media—are mesmerized by the ability to track events and cover diverse locations, perspectives and demographics in real time. … Social media no doubt offer advantages in disseminating messages quickly and broadly, but they also are vulnerable to government counter-protest tactics."[56]

As with any other instruments, there are two sides to the use of social media. There is not only inherent strength in their use, but also an accompanying weakness, as social media platforms eliminate operational security to a minimum. Social media, "as well as being possible instruments of protest, can also render users vulnerable to state surveillance. These platforms have been used by security and intelligence agencies to identify and locate activists and protesters."[57] Thereby these instruments can "quickly turn into a valuable intelligence-collection tool. A reliance on social media can also be exploited by a regime willing to cut the country off from Internet or domestic text messaging networks altogether, as has been the case in Egypt."[58] It can also be used to track down and locate leaders of anti-government movements. As Wikileaks' Julian Assange recently noted, the Internet is not only a force for openness and transparency, "it is also the greatest spying machine the world has ever seen. The capabilities of such a surveillance machine can be amplified by social networking platforms like Facebook that link an online identity to (most often) a user's real name, place of residence and work, interests, pictures, and network of friends."[59]

Due to the fact that most mobile phones have built-in GPS receivers and use many applications with geo-location functionality in the background (i.e., without the user's knowledge), intelligence agencies are not only able to connect virtual identities with real persons but are equally able to track them in real-time (online) via their mobile phones. This dramatically increases the surveillance capabilities of governments. Papic and Noonan note that "Facebook profiles, for example, can be a boon for government intelligence collectors, who can use updates and photos to pinpoint movement locations and activities and identify connections among various individuals, some of whom may be suspect for various activities."[60] In this respect social media and their use in anti-government movements are more of a blessing than a nuisance for the respective government. Additionally, social media offer another bonus for governments, as they are not only useful to cover protests but also to help steer protests in certain directions through the use of misinformation, fake identities, and cleverly placed counter-propaganda. As Alex

[55] Papic and Noonan, "Social Media as a Tool for Protest."
[56] Ibid.
[57] Comninos, "Twitter Revolutions," 10.
[58] Papic and Noonan, "Social Media as a Tool for Protest."
[59] Comninos, "Twitter Revolutions," 11.
[60] Papic and Noonan, "Social Media as a Tool for Protest."

Comninos observes, "Social networks can very quickly become mechanisms for spreading rumor and falsehood and, as there is usually no moderation of this content, it becomes the responsibility of the user to critically examine the veracity of claims made on these platforms."[61]

Intelligence agencies have learned to use social media to their advantage. By using fake identities, they are able to create an illusion of support for ideas. They are also able to challenge ideas on social media platforms by inserting counter-arguments that appear to come from the "grass-roots" level of the movement, by disseminating "views over social media that appear to be the legitimate and spontaneous voices of a grass-roots movement, but are actually campaigns by individuals, corporations, or governments. The goal of such campaigns is to disguise the efforts of a political and/or commercial entity as an independent public reaction to some political entity—a politician, political group, product, service or event" [e.g., the practice known as "astroturfing"].[62]

Another commonly used counter-protest tactic

> is to spread disinformation, whether it is to scare away protesters or lure them all to one location where anti-riot police lie in wait. We have not yet witnessed such a government 'ambush' tactic, but its use is inevitable in the age of Internet anonymity. Government agents in many countries have become quite proficient at trolling the Internet in search of pedophiles and wannabe terrorists. (Of course, such tactics can be used by both sides. During the Iranian protests in 2009, many foreign-based Green Movement supporters spread disinformation over Twitter to mislead foreign observers).[63]

In summary, it can be stated that social media could benefit both sides as much as they can hinder the achievement of each side's respective goals. Comninos states: "User content created on mobile phones and instantly disseminated on the Internet was a powerful tool in the hands of the regime security and intelligence forces, as well as protesters, and social media could also be used to spread fear or disinformation. Social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter could be used to spy on protesters, find out their real-life identities and make arrests and detentions."[64] As already stated, the exploitation of social media is truly a double-edged sword. However, one factor stands out as most important: social media as a tool are too powerful to ignore, which is true for both sides of a conflict. Their potential is far from being fully explored, made more difficult by their constantly changing nature. They will have consequences for future security policies, both for authoritarian regimes as well as for democratic countries.

Policy Implications

To this point this essay has illustrated that social media "can transform information sharing into knowledge production. But they can also be used for control and manipula-

[61] Comninos, "Twitter Revolutions," 13.
[62] Comninos, "Twitter Revolutions," 14.
[63] Papic and Noonan, "Social Media as a Tool for Protest."
[64] Comninos, "Twitter Revolutions," 15.

tion of citizens."[65] It has shown that sharing information via social media is likely to increase globally, and that it exhibits especially high growth rates in present conflict-prone areas. Therefore, one could argue that the information space will be a contested area, one that cannot be ignored by governments. As Drapeau and Wells note, "The proliferation of social software has ramifications for (U.S.) national security, spanning future operating challenges of a traditional, irregular, catastrophic, or disruptive nature. Failure to adopt these tools may reduce an organization's relative capabilities over time. Globally, … [g]overnments that harness its potential power can interact better with citizens and anticipate emerging issues."[66] This means that social media cannot be ignored, and governments are required to act in the contested information space. This demands a comprehensive cyber-strategy considering both the dangers and possibilities of the new technology, in the sense that "social media can also be employed at the same time both for defense activities (prevention, warning, institutional communication, crisis management, counter-propaganda) and for offensive actions (influence, propaganda, deception)."[67] Events during the Arab Spring demonstrated that ignoring social media is no longer an option. At the same time, a brute force approach that moves by completely shutting down Internet access, as was attempted during the Egyptian revolution, has not proven successful either. On the contrary, it even had negative consequences for business and administration, which are both increasingly dependent on Internet access. Hence, it can be argued that "command-and-control approaches to media are likely to fail in a networked, participatory media environment. Attempts to either restrict or dominate media flows are counterproductive in many cases, as people everywhere increasingly have diverse options for creating, receiving, and sharing information."[68]

So how can governments use social media advantageously? In short, it requires a strategic and holistic understanding of the topic in order to develop a workable comprehensive strategy. On a national level, all aspects have to be studied to be able to successfully deal with the existence of social media. Apart from data mining, the most obvious direct opportunities for the use of social media arise in:

- Warning, surveillance, and trend analysis
- Deception and influence
- Institutional information sharing.

The early warning and surveillance aspect is of major importance to all governments, as it is crucial in order to avoid strategic surprise, prolong warning times ahead of events, and decrease vulnerability to unexpected developments. In this context, social media cannot only act as intelligence collection tools, as described earlier, but also as an

[65] Benkirane, "The Alchemy of Revolution."

[66] Drapeau and Wells, "Social Software and National Security," v.

[67] Capt. Alfonso Montagnese, "Impact of Social Media on National Security," Centro Militare di Studi Strategici (Italy), Research Paper STEPI-AE-U-3 (February 2012), 21; available at http://www.difesa.it/SMD_/CASD/IM/CeMiSS/Documents/Ricerche/2012/Stepi/social_media_20120313_0856.pdf.

[68] Sigal, "Digital Media in Conflict-Prone Societies," 26.

early warning system against future security threats and malicious activities. As the utilization of social media—not only by anti-government movements, but also by opposing states as well as criminal organizations and terrorist groups—is increasing steadily, the potential for intelligence collection is enormous, especially since the nexus between terrorists and organized crime is becoming dramatically more interdependent.[69] The potential for early warning against the highest priority security threat in the world today—terrorism—is growing. In this connection, social media can be employed to obtain "the first signs of a hostile or potentially dangerous activity for a state's security."[70] Respective measures could encompass the analysis of messages shared online, the scan of threads and blogs dealing with hacker activity, and the examination of guerrilla recruitment and instruction videos disseminated via virtual platforms in order to "understand the attack methods and techniques and devise effective methods to react and to counter the terrorist threat; the continuous control of a Facebook profile updates and a careful exam of the photos published on that very profile can allow [a government] to trace the movements and the activities of the members of a criminal group and [map] their connections, etc."[71]

Trend analysis is aimed at analyzing and forecasting the actions of possible opposing groups through the observation of social media networks in order to extract possible long-term tendencies. Advanced content analysis would enable security services to predict evolutions in cyberspace before they actually happen in the real world.[72] An example of such a project is one initiative launched by the U.S. Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI),

> called Open Source Indicators (OSI), [which] means to actively … [develop] automatic systems for provisional analysis applied to forestalling national security related events: political crises, migrations, epidemics, humanitarian emergencies, protests, periods of economic instability, etc. In particular, OSI is based on the principle that relevant social events are always anticipated by changes of behavior through the population (increase/reduction of communication, consumes, movements, etc.). Plotting and studying such behaviors can, in fact, be useful to anticipate the events themselves.[73]

This would not only indicate future trends, but also would point out suitable points of connection or other key nodes where a deception or influence campaign might be inserted in order to counter possible future threats before they develop further. Here

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[69] See Christina Schori-Liang, "Schattennetzwerke: Der Wachsende Nexus von Terrorismus und Organisierter Kriminalität," Geneva Centre for Security Policy, Policy Paper 2011/20 (September 2011); available at http://www.gcsp.ch.

[70] Montagnese, "Impact of Social Media on National Security," 22.

[71] Ibid., 22.

[72] See Jared Keller, "How the CIA Uses Social Media to Track How People Feel," *The Atlantic* (4 November 2011); available at www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2011/11/how-the-cia-uses-social-media-to-track-how-people-feel/247923/.

[73] Montagnese, "Impact of Social Media on National Security," 23.

> the use of social media allow … [observers to describe] events, model reality, influence the perception of a certain situation, a specific issue or a person, and influence choices and behaviors. Therefore, social media can strongly affect institutional, business or team strategic decision-making, as well as formation and development of the public opinion's collective awareness. These tools can be employed to interfere with the adversaries' decision-making process, both directly, that is by manipulating their information and analysis framework or by influencing their close collaborators, and indirectly: by influencing groups of people (i.e., political parties, trade unions, public opinion, etc.) whose reactions affect the very choices of a country's leadership.[74]

Several programs that aim at exactly those purposes—data mining, early warning, and influence campaigns—have already been installed to that effect in numerous countries. These programs are most prominently operated by the United States, but other countries are catching up quickly.[75]

However, acquiring indispensable intelligence is just one part of a comprehensive strategy. As many historic examples have shown, it is one thing for a government to acquire information, but quite another to share it with the necessary agencies in order to develop an appropriate response.[76] An overall institutional information sharing strategy is another part of the required policy package in order to act successfully. To this end, there are two main aspects: an internal element, connecting relevant government agencies in an intra-institutional network, and an external element connecting the government with its people. Both have different obstacles to overcome in order to be applied.

Internally, a common dilemma—especially within intelligence circles—is the balance between the need for security and the necessity to share information. This is actually one of the main reasons information mishaps occurred in the past. However, one cannot ignore the need for security. As Drapeau and Wells note, "security, accountability, privacy, and other concerns often drive national security institutions to limit the use of open tools such as social software, whether on the open web or behind government information system firewalls. Information security concerns are very serious and must be addressed, but to the extent that our adversaries make effective use of such innovations, our restrictions may diminish our national security."[77] In other words, adapting to the new technology is of the utmost importance, as possible adversaries already take advantage of those potentials. The effective utilization of social media adds significantly to the ability to quickly disseminate information among government agencies and to build up a common operational intelligence picture where every civil servant can contribute and make use of the information available and create "living intelligence."[78] A good

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74 Ibid., 26.

75 Ibid., 24.

76 A tragic example being the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 in the U.S., where all the information needed to prevent the attacks was present, but it was not connected to an overall understanding of the threat, and was not disseminated to the right people and agencies at the right time.

77 Drapeau and Wells, "Social Software and National Security," v.

78 See Drapeau and Wells, "Social Software and National Security," 25.

example of such a policy initiative is the A-Space initiative, a collaborative platform aimed at improving intelligence sharing inside the U.S. intelligence community. So it can be argued that overall the government side has overtaken its opponents in reaping the benefits of social media in the conflict sphere.

The external dimension also adds an international element to the equation, as "networked media require different policy approaches with regard to state boundaries. Information and communications development policies that focus exclusively on nation-states neglect the regional and global nature of networked media, and of the impact of international satellite television."[79] That means a decision of a local character can, via social media, quickly get regional or even global attention. This would then increase the requirement for international cooperation far beyond the present level, again relying more heavily on authoritarian regimes where openness is not part of the present policy spectrum.

Conclusion

So what conclusions can be derived from the material and considerations presented so far? And what is the potential impact of social media, particularly on authoritarian regimes? Social media have a profoundly higher impact on everyday life than was likely originally planned or anticipated. They have changed the way people interact with each other; how they view, share, and influence information; and they have also generated completely new relationships. The shift from one-to-many towards many-to-many communications, with the possibility of personal interaction and participation, has brought about many dramatic changes in modern society, including in the context of conflict.

The combined power of the various social media applications has enormous potential to shape events. Due to two main features, this extends social media's impact beyond merely affecting its users. First, secrets are (almost) impossible to keep. Second, social media provide an additional platform for civil society to influence the public sphere, increasing the need for transparency and participation accordingly.

This article revealed how state and non-state actors experiencing intra-state conflict, such as the Arab revolutions, have used social media and what impact social media had on these events. It established how social media can both be a curse and a blessing. Furthermore, the paper extracted patterns and applied them to the democratic context, and assessed the potential impact on future security policies. It formulated certain policy recommendations that would enable governments to adapt to this new dimension in the conflict spectrum.

Governments' previous monopoly on information has been massively reduced, especially in the case of authoritarian regimes, which have traditionally relied upon control over the distribution and availability of information via dominance of the media as one pillar of their power. The borderless nature of social media has the capability to rapidly expand a local issue to a regional or trans-regional one, reducing the possibilities for control at the same time. Social media have already had an impact on information distri-

[79] Sigal, "Digital Media in Conflict-Prone Societies," 27.

bution in the framework of conflict, making it a valuable tool in the increasingly important struggle for national and international public opinion in conflict situations.

As the case studies from the Arab Spring have demonstrated, those elements actually increase the political cost of using violence against protesters, and can have a negative impact on public opinion. Likewise, it reduces the costs faced by protest movements, which can use social media as tools for recruitment, coordination, and mobilization, making broad participation easier and global support more likely to occur. However, although social media can act as catalysts for change, the will to actually revolt needs underlying causes.

This essay has shown that social media have inherent strengths and weaknesses. They offer quick information distribution possibilities, but also reduce operational security to a minimum and create vulnerabilities to surveillance, control, and manipulation by adversaries, making their use a two-edged sword.

The Internet and social media have implemented new realities in regard to communications. Metaphorically speaking, people have moved closer together information-wise, creating a kind of "global village" with the possibility of instantaneous and exhaustive information sharing. This intensified networking has created a kind of swarm behavior of the masses, who may lack leadership but are nevertheless difficult to steer against their inherent wishes and are practically impossible to stop once a movement is set in motion, especially a political transformation. Counting on the masses' inertia is no longer an option for governments, because public opinion can shift quickly under the influence of social media.

This paper has illustrated that social media and their impacts cannot be ignored without consequences, and that they demand a comprehensive, flexible, properly implemented and resourced public campaign and cyber-strategy to cope with social media's constantly changing nature and impact. Furthermore, future governance needs to adapt to the new realities of the Internet age and the increased need for transparency and participation.

Therefore, social media are a tool that is too powerful to ignore, and if "utilized properly, [are] expected to yield numerous advantages: improve understanding of how others use the software, unlock self-organizing capabilities within the government, promote networking and collaboration with groups outside the government, speed decision-making, and increase agility and adaptability."[80] This article has shown that even though the majority of the current literature on social media argues that it enhances the political power of the people, there is a shift in the balance under way. Governments have demonstrated great adaptability and are beginning to use social media to their advantage. However, in order to employ social media to its full potential, governments must become more transparent while maintaining an outward-looking approach to their people. Transparency will necessarily need to be accompanied by more truthfulness in governments' decision-making processes and actions, as social media increase the cost of dishonesty. Especially for autocratic governments, this generates problems by itself, as

[80] Drapeau and Wells, "Social Software and National Security," vi.

making their present methods transparent would create immediate outcry from the population. A stronger participatory and transparent approach seems necessary in order to cope with the new realities.

For countries with a high degree of public participation inherent in the system, like Switzerland, adaptation would primarily be a technical issue. More closed and autocratically ruled countries, though, would have to change the way they govern their citizens before being able to implement these policies and to eliminate the potential dangers of the new technology to their status quo. This would encompass quite radical systemic changes that could deprive the authorities of their former power basis. It is, of course, highly doubtful that an authoritarian government that presently maintains its hold on power via careful information control and oppressive use of their security apparatus would risk such a step, rather than trying to control the use of the Internet by its citizens. Without a doubt "the expansion of Internet connectivity does create new challenges for domestic leaders who have proved more than capable of controlling older forms of communication. This is not an insurmountable challenge, as China has shown, but even in China's case there is growing anxiety about the ability of Internet users to evade controls and spread forbidden information."[81]

Whether the increasing penetration of social media across global society will ultimately lead to an upsurge in the democratization process in countries hitherto less inclined to follow that path is difficult to answer. And whether such a process would create a better world is also a question that would need to be explored, as the upheavals in the Middle East and North Africa have shown. It is far easier to revolt than to make things better. Neither social media nor revolutions alone can eradicate the underlying societal and economic problems that create the conditions for an uprising in the first place.

[81] Papic and Noonan, "Social Media as a Tool for Protest."

A Critical Analysis of the U.S. "Pivot" toward the Asia-Pacific: How Realistic is Neo-realism?

Rong Chen [*]

Introduction

At the time of writing, the U.S. had its highest-ranking military delegation in over two years, led by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey, visiting Beijing. The mission was intended to conduct sensitive bilateral negotiations at the highest level in China, having been received by President Xi Jinping and members of China's Central Military Commission. This visit took place during a period of heightened tension in northeastern Asia, characterized by nuclear tests and other provocative actions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), and the escalating territorial dispute between China and Japan over Diaoyu Island. It underscored the importance of Sino-U.S. bilateral relations, and encouraged students of the region to reflect on the strategic significance and policy implications of the U.S. pivot toward the Asia-Pacific, which is the key factor of the strategic context of the region.

In the Fall of 2011, the Obama Administration announced that it would expand and intensify the U.S. role in the Asia-Pacific region, and that "the center of gravity for U.S. foreign policy, national security, and economic interests is shifting towards Asia,"[1] a move that was later to be labeled as the U.S. "pivot" or "rebalancing" with respect to Asia. Since then, "the U.S. pivot to Asia" (hereafter referred to as "the U.S. pivot") has been the subject of discussion by many analysts, theorists, and policy practitioners in the U.S., China, Asia and elsewhere. There are many articles analyzing the reasons why the United States undertook this strategic readjustment or "rebalancing" that ask the following question: What are the implications of this shift on the Asia-Pacific region, and especially on emerging powers in the region such as China and India? However, these questions are not the topic of this essay.

Although the officially stated fundamental goal underpinning the U.S. pivot is "to devote more effort to influencing the development of the Asia-Pacific's norms and rules," and "deepen U.S. credibility in the region at a time of fiscal constraint," the move has raised considerable controversy.[2] For some observers, the U.S. pivot is not only a response to the growing significance of the Asia-Pacific region to the United States' interests, but also a response to the increasing power of China.[3] To some degree, the U.S. pivot has triggered some distrust and may cause negative consequences in the region,

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1 Mark E. Manyin, et al., *Pivot to the Pacific? The Obama Administration's "Rebalancing" Toward Asia* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 28 March 2012), 6; available at http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R42448.pdf.

2 Ibid., summary.

3 Ibid., 2

but from another perspective it is understood as extending strategic reassurance to U.S. allies and partners in the region. However, more than one year after the announcement of the realignment of U.S. policy, the overall state of relations between the U.S. and China has generally been fairly smooth. So, what was the purpose of the U.S. pivot? Do Chinese analysts and strategic thinkers and commentators really understand it, or correctly interpret it? It is these key questions that this essay addresses.

This article will identify and critically assess the debate among realist scholars in the U.S. (where the realist tradition in both academia and policy circles is strongest) as to whether or not the U.S. is balancing China, as the approach of defensive realism suggests, or seeking to maintain its dominance in the region, as offensive realism contends. This article aims to achieve three objectives. First, by focusing on the U.S. pivot as a case study, it seeks to identify and critically assess debates among Western realist scholars as to whether or not the U.S. is balancing/containing China or whether the U.S. is seeking regional hegemony. Is there a gap between how realist international relations theorists conceptualize the pivot and its strategic effects and the reality of its effects? Second, the article informs the ongoing debate about the utility of international relations theory and academic studies for the policy-practitioner world. Third, it is hoped that this essay may contribute to shaping Chinese perceptions/misperceptions of U.S. strategic intent, and so modify Chinese policy responses. In other words, it tests the extent to which neo-realist theory shapes, informs, and justifies real-world strategic and policy choices. In order to achieve these objects, this paper is split into six parts. Following this introduction, the second section takes a close look at the evolution of the U.S. pivot to Asia. The third part reviews the literature on key proponents of defensive and offensive realist propositions and studies. The fourth section is application of the theory to the pivot toward the Asia-Pacific, the fifth part offers an assessment of results, and the final draws conclusions from the study.

The United States' Pivot to Asia

The United States has been a Pacific power since the nineteenth century. After the end of World War II, the U.S. placed significant emphasis on the Asia-Pacific region, including establishing alliance relationships, maintaining a military presence, and playing a role in important developments in the region.[4] The Obama Administration's approach of a pivot to Asia is not fundamentally different from that of its predecessor. For example, under the administration of George W. Bush, the U.S. emphasized strengthening

[4] Evan A. Feigenbaum, "Strengthening the U.S. Role in Asia," *CFR.org* (16 November 2011); available at http://www.cfr.org/asia/strengthening-us-role-asia/p26520. The U.S. established a network of bilateral alliances, known as the San Francisco System, after the Second World War. Most of these partnerships emerged at the onset of the Cold War, including agreements with Australia (1951), New Zealand (1951), the Philippines (1951), South Korea (1953), Japan (1954), and Thailand (1954). See Kevin Placek, "The San Francisco System: Declining Relevance or Renewed Importance?" *Quarterly Access* 4:1 (Summer 2012): 15-20; available at http://www.aiia.asn.au/qa/qa-vol4-issue1/759-the-san-francisco-system-declining-relevance-or-renewed-importance.

relations with its Asian allies and establishing partnerships with India and Indonesia, among others. The Obama Administration has continued all those efforts.

At the beginning of the Obama Administration, a series of high-level diplomatic visits to the Asia-Pacific region foreshadowed the emergence of the pivot policy. In February 2009, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made her first overseas trip to Asia, an event that also represented the first visit by a sitting Secretary of State to the ASEAN Secretariat. She attended the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and signed the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in July with the statement that the U.S. was "back in Southeast Asia."[5] In November 2009, President Obama participated in the Seventeenth Annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) leaders' meeting in Singapore and visited the Philippines, Indonesia, China, Japan, and South Korea.

The trend continued in 2010 and 2011. In March 2010, Obama made his second Asia trip, this time visiting Guam, Australia, and Indonesia. The first bilateral Strategic Dialogue between the U.S. and the Philippines concerning maritime awareness and security was held in January 2011. And there was an inaugural round of Asia-Pacific Consultations in Honolulu, hosted by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell and Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Cui Tiankai in June 2011. By the fall of 2011, the policy of the Obama Administration became clear through a series of announcements[6] that described a "pivot" or "rebalancing" with respect to the Asia-Pacific region, including Secretary Clinton's article "America's Pacific Century," and her subsequent public remarks.[7] In his November 2011 address to the Australian Parliament, Obama stated that "after a decade in which we fought two wars that cost us dearly, in blood and treasure, the U.S. is turning our attention to the vast potential of the Asia Pacific region,"[8] and the goal of this turn is to ensure that the U.S. "will play a larger and long-term role in shaping the region and its future."[9]

In addition, there are two military issues that highlighted the U.S. pivot. One is the U.S. Department of Defense's Strategic Guidance issued in January 2012, which stated

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5 Hillary Rodham Clinton, Press Conference at the ASEAN Summit in Phuket, Thailand, 22 July 2009; available at www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/july/126320.htm.

6 Tom Donilon, "America is Back in the Pacific and Will Uphold the Rules," *Financial Times* (27 November 2011); available at http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/4f3febac-1761-11e1-b00e-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2RMSU2pkO; and Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Fact Sheet: The East Asia Summit," 19 November 2011; available at www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/19/fact-sheet-east-asia-summit.

7 Hillary Clinton, "America's Pacific Century," *Foreign Policy* (November 2011); available at http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/11/americas_pacific_century?page=full; and Hillary Rodham Clinton, "America's Pacific Century," remarks delivered at the East-West Centre, Honolulu, 10 November 2011; text available at www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2011/11/176999.htm.

8 Office of the White House Press Secretary, "Remarks by President Obama to the Australian Parliament," speech delivered at the Parliament House, Canberra, Australia, 17 November 2011; available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/17/remarks-president-obama-australian-parliament.

9 Ibid.

that the U.S. "will of necessity rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region" and identified China and Iran as threats that "will continue to pursue asymmetric means to counter our power projection capabilities."[10] The second one is the announcement of U.S. Secretary of Defense Panetta at the Shangri-La Dialogue in June 2012, which announced that "by 2020 the Navy will re-posture its forces from today's roughly 50/50 percent split between the Pacific and the Atlantic to about a 60/40 split between those oceans. That will include six aircraft carriers in this region, a majority of our cruisers, destroyers, Littoral Combat Ships, and submarines."[11]

When we examine the pivot in greater depth, we can identify several steps taken by the U.S. since the fall of 2011. These include:

- Announcing new troop deployments to Australia, new naval deployments to Singapore, and new areas for military cooperation with the Philippines
- Stating that, notwithstanding reductions in overall levels of U.S. defense spending, the U.S. military presence in East Asia will be strengthened and be made "more broadly distributed, more flexible, and more politically sustainable"
- Joining the East Asia Summit (EAS), one of the region's premier multinational organizations, and securing progress in negotiations to form a nine-nation Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership (TPP) free trade agreement (FTA).[12]

According to the Obama Administration, the reason for the pivot lies in three major developments. First, The Asia-Pacific region is more and more important to the United States' economic interests, and China is of particular importance to the nation's economic future. Second, the United Sates' ability to project power and the freedom of navigation in the region may be challenged by China, in light of its growing military capabilities and its claims to disputed maritime territory. Third, U.S. allies in Asia-Pacific doubt the United States' commitment to the region, taking into consideration the U.S. government's budget cutting, particularly the defense budget.[13]

However, many observers have argued that the most important impetus explaining the pivot is the growing U.S. perception of a potential military and political challenge from China. The U.S. alliances in Asia are primarily politico-military in nature, and the most significant elements of the U.S. pivot have been in the military realm, although the Obama Administration has declared that the pivot includes diplomatic, economic, and

[10] U.S. Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, January 2012), 2, 4; available at http://www.defense.gov/news/Defense_Strategic_Guidance.pdf.

[11] U.S. Department of Defense, News Transcript, "Remarks by Secretary Panetta at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore," 2 June 2012; available at http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=5049.

[12] Manyin, et al., *Pivot to the Pacific*, 1.

[13] Ibid., 4.

cultural aspects. Therefore, the U.S. fear of losing its military supremacy in the Asia-Pacific appears to be the primary explanation for the pivot.[14]

From a U.S. perspective the pivot represents an attempt to reassure its allies and other countries, while dissuading China from using military means to solve its disputes with its neighbors, such as squabbles over maritime territory in the South and East China Seas, thus contributing to an easing of tensions. However, from a Chinese perspective, such moves appear to be an attempt to contain China's development in the region and to divide China from its neighbors. This could in turn encourage China to become more determined to develop protectionist capabilities and more reluctant to be responsive to U.S. economic concerns, such as market access for U.S. firms to the Chinese market. As for China's neighbors, most of them are not willing to "choose" between the U.S. and China, since China is often their largest trading partner, and is the dominant economic power in the region.

Realist Theories

As was noted above, the U.S. pivot appears to exemplify the classical realist security dilemma; as such, it serves as a good case study to apply the assumptions of realist IR theory, given that this theory claims to have a strong purchase on reality.[15] Realism is one of the dominant paradigms of international relations theory. It tends to "emphasize the irresistible strength of existing forces and the inevitable character of existing tendencies, and to insist that the highest wisdom lies in accepting, and adapting oneself to these forces and these tendencies."[16] It is based upon four propositions. First, there is no hierarchical political rule in the international system, and states exist in anarchy. States must arrive at relations with other states on their own, and have to rely on "self-help" for protection and prosperity.[17] What's more, the international system exists in a state of constant conflict. Second, states are the only relevant actors that matter. The states are both those that affect international politics, and those that are affected by international politics.[18] Realists focus mainly on great powers, because "these states dominate and shape international politics and they also cause the deadliest wars."[19] Third, all states within the system are unitary, rational actors. They tend to pursue self-interest, and they strive to obtain as many resources as possible. Fourth, the primary concern of all states is survival. States build up militaries in order to survive, which may lead to a security dilemma. That is, increasing one's security may bring along even greater instability, since

[14] Ibid., 10.

[15] Jack Donnelly, "The Ethics of Realism," in *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 150.

[16] E. H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*, 2nd. ed. (London: Macmillan, 1962), 10.

[17] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979), 111.

[18] John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), 17.

[19] Ibid.

the opposing power may build up its own military in response. Thus, security becomes a zero-sum game.

Although the primary realist tenets are derived from earlier writings, such as Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian Wars*, Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan*, and Carl von Clausewitz's *On War*, realism took shape as a formal field of academic research after World War Two. Realist theories can be divided into three main camps, which differ in terms of explaining state action: classical realism, structural/neo-realism, and neo-classical realism.[20] Structural/neo-realism can be further divided into approaches emphasizing defensive and offensive alternatives.

Classical realism is also called "human nature realism." The classical realist states that it is fundamentally the nature of man that pushes states to act in a way to maximize their power.[21] Hans J. Morgenthau is one of the most important representatives of the classical school. His landmark book *Politics Among Nations* argues that states seek as much political power as possible because they are social institutions, and therefore follow the drives of human nature. Given the assumption that people will experience a conflict of interest in their pursuit of power, the goal of politics is to achieve "the realization of the lesser evil rather than of the absolute good."[22] This "lesser evil" is pursued through a quest for the balance of power, in which states try to maintain an existing equilibrium or construct a new equilibrium.[23]

Neo-realist thought is derived from classical realism, but its focus is on the anarchic structure of the international system, instead of human nature. Kenneth Waltz first advanced it in his book *Theory of International Politics*, which builds on his 1954 book *Man, the State, and War*. Neo-realists believe that structural (or international system) constraints are more important than agents' (states) strategies and motivations. Neo-realists use structural analysis, which suggests state behavior is a product of the structure of the system itself and the imperatives that flow from it. Neo-realism uses structure to explain recurrence in international politics despite different actors.[24]

Neo-realists mention three possible systems, according to the number of great powers within the international system. A unipolar system contains only one great power, a bipolar system contains two great powers, and a multipolar system contains more than two great powers. Neo-realists conclude that a bipolar system is more stable than a multipolar system, because balancing can only occur through internal balancing, as there is no possibility to form alliances with other great powers.[25] Because there is only internal

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[20] A leading proponent of this camp is Fareed Zakaria. See, for example, Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008).

[21] Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace, 6th* ed., brief edition (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 1993), 4.

[22] Ibid., 4

[23] Ibid., 184.

[24] Joseph K. Clifton, "Disputed Theory and Security Policy: Responding to the 'Rise of China'," undergraduate thesis completed at Claremont McKenna College, Spring 2011; available at http://scholarship.claremont.edu/cmc_theses/141.

[25] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 132–33.

balancing in a bipolar system, rather than external balancing, there is less opportunity for miscalculation and therefore less chance of a war between the two great powers.[26]

Neo-realists agree that the structure of international relations is the primary influence on how states go about seeking security. However, there is disagreement among neo-realist scholars as to whether states merely aim to survive or whether states want to maximize their relative power. The former represents the ideas of Waltz and the school of defensive realism, while the latter represents the ideas of John Mearsheimer and the approach of offensive realism.

Defensive realism is one of the structural realist theories that explains the manner in which the structure of the international system influences state behavior.[27] Defensive realism predicts that the anarchy of the international system causes states to become obsessed with security. In order to overcome the inevitable "security dilemma," states will try to preserve the balance of power and "maintain their position in the system," instead of gaining power through offensive actions.[28] Moreover, great powers should avoid attempting to increase their power too greatly, because "excessive strength" may cause other states to form alliances against them, leaving them in a worse position than before.[29]

There are two ways in which states can balance power: internal balancing and external balancing. Internal balancing means that states grow their own capabilities by increasing their domestic sources of power, such as economic growth and/or increasing military spending. External balancing occurs as states enter into alliances to check the power of more powerful states or alliances. According to defensive realism, should a state begin to create a power imbalance, other states should balance against this rising power by forming a counter-coalition and increasing their domestic sources of power. This also means that achieving a balance of power instead should be states' primary goal, instead of pursuing the maximization of power. "Band-wagoning" and other power-seeking policies increase instability, because they make the option of waging a preventive war more attractive, which is contradictory to the goal of security. States will

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[26] Ibid., 133.

[27] Prominent defensive realists include Stephen Walt, Kenneth Waltz, and Stephen Van Evera. See Stephen Walt, *Taming American Power: The Global Response to U.S. Primacy* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005), *Revolution and War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), and *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987); Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State, and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954), *Theory of International Politics*, and *Realism and International Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2008); and Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999).

[28] John H. Herz, "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 2:2 (January 1950): 157-80; Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 126.

[29] Kenneth Waltz, "The Origin of War in Neorealist Theory," in *The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 40.

seek power as a means to ensure their security through the balance of power. Gaining power is not an end in itself.[30]

Offensive realism is another approach under the rubric of structural realism, one that is primarily associated with John Mearsheimer. It adopts the same structural formulation as does Waltz's defensive approach, but draws different conclusions about state behavior and international outcomes. Defensive realism claims that states are restrained in their pursuit of power, and they only seek power to the extent that it creates a balance. Offensive realism, on the other hand, claims that states are insatiable for power. As Mearsheimer puts it, "A state's ultimate goal is to be the hegemon in the system."[31] In the offensive realist understanding, states do not believe that maintaining a balance of power alone will provide security, because states have the ability to attack each other. They have little proof of other states' benign intentions, and any state can cheat the system at any time. States are always potential dangers to each other. The only way for a state to maximize its security and therefore maximize its chance of survival is to maximize its power, since a powerful state is less likely to be attacked and more likely to win a war if it is attacked.[32]

Mearsheimer's offensive realism draws a much more pessimistic picture of international politics as being characterized by dangerous inter-state security competition that is likely to lead to conflict and war.[33] The offensive realist approach intends to fix the "status quo bias" of Kenneth Waltz' defensive realism theory.[34] While both offensive and defensive realists argue that states are primarily concerned with maximizing their security, they disagree over how much power is required to do so. While defensive realism suggests states are status quo powers, seeking only to preserve their respective positions in the international system by maintaining the balance of power, offensive realism claims that states are in fact power-maximizing revisionists with consistently aggressive intentions.[35] Indeed, in offensive realism the international system provides great powers with strong incentives to resort to offensive action in order to increase their security and ensure their survival.[36] The international system characterized by anarchy leads states to constantly fear each other and resort to self-help mechanisms to provide for their survival.[37]

In order to alleviate this fear of aggression, states always seek to maximize their own relative power, measured by material capabilities. As Mearsheimer puts it, "they look

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30 Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 62.
31 Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 21.
32 Ibid., 33.
33 Ibid., 32–33.
34 Ibid., 20.
35 Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 126; and Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 21.
36 Sten Rynning and Jens Ringsmose, "Why Are Revisionist States Revisionist? Reviving Classical Realism as an Approach to Understanding International Change," *International Politics* 45 (2008): 26.
37 John J. Mearsheimer, "China's Unpeaceful Rise," *Current History* 105:690 (2006): 160.

for opportunities to alter the balance of power by acquiring additional increments of power at the expense of potential rivals."[38] He also notes, "The greater the military advantage one state has over other states, the more secure it is."[39] States seek to increase their military strength to the detriment of other states within the system, with hegemony—being the only great power in the state system—as their ultimate goal.[40] Mearsheimer summed up this view as follows: "Great powers recognize that the best way to ensure their security is to achieve hegemony now, thus eliminating any possibility of a challenge by another great power. Only a misguided state would pass up an opportunity to be the hegemon in the system because it thought it already had sufficient power to survive."[41] Accordingly, offensive realists believe that a state's best strategy to increase its relative power to achieve hegemony is to rely on offensive tactics. Provided that it is rational for them to act aggressively, "great powers will likely pursue expansionist policies, which will bring them closer to hegemony. While global hegemony is nearly impossible to attain due to the constraints of power projection across oceans and retaliation forces, the best end game status states can hope to reach is that of a regional hegemon dominating its own geographical area."[42] This relentless quest for power inherently generates a state of "constant security competition, with the possibility of war always in the background."[43] Only when great powers achieve regional hegemony will they become status quo states.

The most distinctive difference between defensive and offensive realism is that offensive realism holds that hegemony is the ultimate aim, while defensive realism claims that state survival can be guaranteed without hegemony. To defensive realists, "security increments by power accumulation end up experiencing diminishing marginal returns where costs eventually outweigh benefits."[44] Under a state of anarchy in the international system, there is a strong tendency for states to engage in balancing—states shouldering direct responsibility to maintain the existing balance of power—against power-seeking states, which may in turn succeed in "jeopardiz[ing] the very survival of the maximizing state."[45] This argument also applies to state behavior towards the most

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38 Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 24.

39 John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19:3 (1994-1995): 11–12.

40 Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 21 and 29.

41 Ibid., 35.

42 Mearsheimer, "China's Unpeaceful Rise," 160; and *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 141. See also Keir A. Lieber and Gerard Alexander, "Waiting for Balancing Why the World Is Not Pushing Back," *International Security* 30:1 (2005): 111–12; and Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, "Balancing on Land and at Sea: Do States Ally Against the Leading Global Power?" *International Security* 35:1 (2010): 11.

43 Mearsheimer, "False Promise," 12.

44 Glenn H. Snyder, "Mearsheimer's World – Offensive Realism and the Struggle for Security: A Review Essay," *International Security* 27:1 (2002): 154.

45 Peter Toft, "John J. Mearsheimer: An Offensive Realist Between Geopolitics and Power," *Journal of International Relations and Development* 8 (2005): 390.

powerful state in the international system, as defensive realists note that an excessive concentration of power is self-defeating, in that it will trigger balancing countermoves.[46]

Offensive realism, therefore, paints the darkest picture of a rising power and growing instability. A rising power will not simply wish to create a new, stable balance of power that is tilted somewhat more in its favor. Instead, it will actively seek to accumulate as much power as possible at the expense of its potential rivals. Other great powers will see the potential for a peer challenger or even a hegemon, and will wish to halt the rising power while they still have the chance.[47] Great power conflict in these situations is likely, and at the very least one would expect the undesirable results associated with significant power competition, such as proxy wars, arms races, and drain on national economies. For Mearsheimer and other offensive realists, China currently fits this role as a dangerous rising power.

To conclude, offensive and defensive realists differ on whether or not states must always be working to maximize their relative power ahead of all other objectives. While the offensive realist believes this to be the case, some defensive realists believe that the offense-defense balance can favor the defender, creating the possibility that a state may achieve security.[48] Some defensive realists also differ from their offensive counterparts in their belief that states may signal their intentions to one another. If a state can communicate to another state that its intentions are benign, then the security dilemma may be overcome.[49] Finally, many defensive realists believe that domestic politics can influence a state's foreign policy, while offensive realists tend to treat states as black boxes.[50]

Application of the Theory to Practice in the Asia-Pacific Region

Having surveyed the realist tradition, and in particular the varieties of neo-realist thinking, this section will now analyze the U.S. pivot in terms of the applicability of their theories. Defensive realists such as Stephen Walt, who has written extensively on this topic, assumes that the U.S. and China can coexist and cooperate peacefully through balancing, although the level of uncertainty derived from their direct, bilateral conflicts

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[46] Yuan-Kang Wang, "Offensive Realism and the Rise of China," *Issues & Studies* 40:1 (2004): 177.

[47] The literature on power transition theory and the notion of "rear-end collision" is extensive. See A.F.K. Organski, *World Politics*, 2nd ed. (New York: Knopf, 1968); Organski and Jacek Kugler, *The War Ledger* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); David Rapkin and William Thompson, "Power Transition, Challenge and the (Re)Emergence of China," *International Interactions* 29:4 (2003): 315–42; and Steve Chan, "Exploring Puzzles in Power-Transition Theory: Implications for Sino-American Relations," *Security Studies* 13:3 (2004): 103–41.

[48] Charles Glaser and Chaim Kaufmann, "What is the Offense-Defense Balance?" *International Security* 22 (Spring 1998): 44–82.

[49] Charles Glaser, "Realists as Optimists: Cooperation as Self-Help," *International Security* 19 (Winter 1994–95): 50–90.

[50] Stephen Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories," *Foreign Policy* 110 (Spring 1998): 29–45.

remains high. However, offensive realists such as Mearsheimer see competition for hegemony between the two countries in the Asia-Pacific region, which may lead to a future conflict.

Walt has projected the outcome of the trends in U.S.-China economic, military, and energy rivalries this way: "If China is like all previous great powers, including the U.S., its definition of 'vital' interests will grow as its power increases – and it will try to use its growing muscle to protect an expanding sphere of influence." He contends that "given its dependence on raw material imports (especially energy) and export-led growth, prudent Chinese leaders will want to make sure that no one is in a position to deny them access to the resources and markets on which their future prosperity and political stability depend." Moreover, "This situation will encourage Beijing to challenge the current U.S. role in Asia. Over time, Beijing will try to convince other Asian states to abandon ties with America, and Washington will almost certainly resist these efforts. An intense security competition will follow."[51] Walt compares the situation of a rising China in the twenty-first century to that of the U.S. in the nineteenth century.[52] He draws on the thinking of George Kennan, the architect of containment of the Soviet Union during the Cold War, to explain U.S. policy in the Asia-Pacific in this century.[53]

Some scholars hold that the U.S. should be alarmed by the continued tensions between China and Japan over Diaoyu/ Senkaku Island.[54] As Anna Morris notes, "The radar episode foreshadowed a situation in which momentary confusion could turn into a live-fire exchange, and it is not clear how much restraint either side would exercise. The costs of Sino-Japanese confrontation—disruption to the global economy, the high possibility of being drawn into conflict, and the loss of Chinese cooperation on a host of critical issues, including nuclear proliferation in North Korea and Iran—would be painfully high for the US."[55]

Other leading realist theorists have also commented on the U.S. pivot to the Asia-Pacific. Randall Schweller contends that the future of Sino-U.S. interactions may fall into three modes: China could fight against U.S. hegemony; the two powers could act coop-

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[51] Michael Richardson, "China's Thirst for Oil and Gas," *Canberra Times* (18 June 2012); available at http://www.canberratimes.com.au/opinion/chinas-thirst-for-oil-and-gas-20120617-20hwj.html.

[52] Stephen M. Walt, "Dealing With a Chinese Monroe Doctrine," *The New York Times* (2 May 2012); available at http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2012/05/02/are-we-headed-for-a-cold-war-with-china/dealing-with-a-chinese-monroe-doctrine.

[53] See Stephen M. Walt, "Explaining Obama's Asia Policy," *Foreign Policy* (18 November 2011); available at http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/11/18/explaining_obamas_asia_policy.

[54] This is actually a group of uninhabited islands in the East China Sea. It is called Diaoyu Island by China, and Senkaku Island by Japan.

[55] Anna Morris, "The U.S. Pivot to Asia: Will the Senkakus be its First Challenge?" *Eurasia Review – RSIS Commentaries*, No. 053/2013 (3 April 2013); available at http://www.eurasiareview.com/09042013-the-us-pivot-to-asia-will-the-senkakus-be-its-first-challenge-analysis/.

eratively; or China could try to gain as much as possible under U.S. hegemony before it has the ability to shape a world order on its own.[56]

The offensive realist discourse is led by John Mearsheimer. He has cast doubts on the strategic effects of China's rapid development. He contends that China cannot rise peacefully, and that the U.S. and China might end up in an escalating strategic competition.[57] Mearsheimer believes that China will decide to pursue regional hegemony, and so chase the U.S. out of Asia: "A wealthy China would not be a status quo power but an aggressive state determined to achieve regional hegemony."[58] For security reasons, it will want to be the dominant power in Asia; therefore, "intense security competition" between the two powers is destined.[59] China would also attempt to establish a sphere of influence in Asia that might extend over Southeast and Central Asia.[60]

As the U.S. does not tolerate peer competitors, neo-realist theory contends that it will form a balancing coalition with countries in the region to contain China.[61] To this end, "Washington hopes to work with China's neighbors to put together a balancing coalition that will contain China and prevent it from dominating Asia the way the U.S. dominates the Western Hemisphere." One of the most important members of the coalition is Japan. "Washington has been pushing Japan to improve its military forces and act more assertively, because the U.S. is increasingly worried about growing Chinese power, and wants Japan to play a key role in checking China if it adopts an overly ambitious foreign policy."[62] As an offshore balancer, Mearsheimer contends that the U.S. would keep its forces outside the region, not "smack in the centre of it. … The US would put boots on the ground … only if the local balance of power seriously broke down and one country threatened to dominate the others. Short of that, America would keep its soldiers and pilots 'over the horizon.'"[63]

He also reminds us that multi-polarity can be competitive or conflictual, since there are more potential adversaries in a multi-polar system. "Potential great powers see opportunities to maximize their position militarily if inequalities unbalance systemic equi-

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[56] William Choong, "America's Clout: That Shrinking Feeling," *The Straits Times* (6 November 2011); available at http://archive.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=209350.

[57] Goh Sui Noi, "Positive Spin to China's Muscle Flexing," *The Straits Times* (12 October 2010); available at http://www.viet-studies.info/kinhte/positive_spin_to_china.htm.

[58] Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 402.

[59] John W. H. Denton, "Ambitious China Need Not Be an Emerging Problem," *The Australian* (28 December 2010); available at http://theaustralian.newspaperdirect.com/epaper/viewer.aspx.

[60] Amitav Acharya, "Georgian Crisis: Lessons from Asia," *The Straits Times* (7 October 2008); available at http://www.amitavacharya.com/?q=content/georgian-crisis-lessons-asia.

[61] Noi, "China's Muscle Flexing."

[62] Sang-ho Song, "U.S.-Japan Alliance Grows for Asia-Pacific Security Balance," *The Korea Herald* (8 July 2012); available at www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20120708000302.

[63] John J. Mearsheimer, "Pull Those Boots off the Ground," *Newsweek* (30 December 2008); available at http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2008/12/30/pull-those-boots-off-the-ground.html.

librium."[64] Therefore, Mearsheimer believes there will be severe security competition—with a possibility of war—between the U.S. and China if the Chinese economy keeps on growing rapidly. He further argues that it is because the U.S. has acted as an offshore balancer through transatlantic cooperation that Europe has been able to avoid a major war since 1989.[65]

How, then, does China view the U.S. pivot? Does it perceive the pivot in realist terms? A review of Chinese responses to the U.S. pivot can clarify our understanding of this issue. At an official level, China has responded relatively cautiously and positively. In remarks during his February 2012 trip to the United States, Vice President Xi, who is now the President of the People's Republic, said "China welcomes a constructive role by the U.S. in promoting peace, stability and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific," while "at the same time, we hope the U.S. will respect the interests and concerns of China and other countries in this region."[66] When we move past diplomatic rhetoric and examine the Chinese responses to the U.S. pivot, we can uncover four categories of focus: the overall strategic implications on U.S.-China relations; U.S. military strategy; U.S. military presence; and South China Sea disputes. Let us examine each set of responses in turn.

The Pivot's Strategic Implications

With regard to addressing the strategic implications of the pivot on Sino-U.S. relations, Le Yucheng, Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister, has stated: "We hope the U.S. can play a constructive role in this region, and that includes respecting China's major concerns and core interests. The Pacific Ocean is vast enough to accommodate the coexistence and cooperation between these two big countries. … In my view, the U.S. has never left the Asia-Pacific, so there is no 'return' to speak of. China does not want to and cannot push the U.S. out of the Asia-Pacific."[67] This statement is very typical in tone and content in addressing the strategic implications of the U.S. pivot for Sino-U.S. relations from Chinese official sources. "The constructive role played by the U.S. in the Asia-Pacific," as well as the mention of U.S. respect for the "interests and concerns of

[64] Paul Gillespie, "'Polarities' Old Hat in Newest of World Orders," *The Irish Times* (25 September 2010); available at http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P2-25948378.html.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Wu Jiao, "China Welcomes US Role in Asia-Pacific Region," *China Daily* (16 February 2012); available at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-02/16/content_14618271.htm.

[67] Ministry of Foreign Affairs, P.R. China, "The Rapid Development of China's Diplomacy in a Volatile World," Address by Assistant Foreign Minister Le Yucheng at the "Seminar on China's Diplomacy in 2011 and its Prospect," held at China Foreign Affairs University, Beijing, 18 December 2011; available at www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjb/zygy/gyhd/t890675.htm.

other parties in the Asia-Pacific, including China" are often emphasized.[68] The two sides are also often encouraged to "develop a relationship featuring mutual benefit, win-win and sound interaction between emerging and established powers."[69]

In addition, press conference statements usually contain mild criticisms of the expansion of U.S. military deployments and the strengthening of its alliance relationships. One of the typical examples is as follows: "At present, peace, cooperation, and development is the general trend of the times and common aspiration of people in the Asia-Pacific region. All parties should be committed to safeguarding and promoting peace, stability, and development in the Asia-Pacific. It is unfitting to artificially single out a military and security agenda or intensify military deployment and alliance."[70]

By contrast to these official governmental responses from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and People's Liberation Army (PLA), there are many articles and commentaries in the Chinese government and military media that are more explicitly critical of the U.S. pivot and that more explicitly understand the pivot in terms that are familiar from the realist tradition of international relations scholarship. Chinese commentators believe that the United States' actions can be explained by a U.S. desire to sustain American dominance in the Asia-Pacific. Wang Tian argues: "China's rise is one of the main reasons behind the eastward shift of [the] U.S. global strategic focus. Due to the weak U.S. economic recovery and China's growing economic and political clout, Americans are becoming increasingly worried that a rising China may pose a major threat to their country."[71] Major General Luo Yuan, a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and deputy secretary-general of the Chinese Society of Military Science, also understands the United States' motives through the realist prism,[72] and Wang Fan, a professor of the Chinese Foreign Affairs Institute, also views the pivot as an attempt to contain China.[73] Therefore, according to this under-

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[68] See Ministry of Foreign Affairs, P.R. China, Regular Press Conference, 4 June 2012; available at www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xwfw/s2510/2511/t939675.htm. See also Ministry of Foreign Affairs, P.R. China, Regular Press Conference, 31 May 2012, available at www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xwfw/s2510/2511/t939538.htm, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, P.R. China, Regular Press Conference, 14 November 2011, available at www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xwfw/s2510/2511/t878946.htm.

[69] See Ministry of Foreign Affairs, P.R. China, Regular Press Conferences, 31 May 2012 and 14 November 2011.

[70] Ministry of Foreign Affairs, P.R. China, Regular Press Conference, 4 June 2012. See also Ministry of National Defense, P. R. China, Regular Press Conference, 28 June 2012; available at http://www.mod.gov.cn/photo/2012-06/28/content_4381068.htm.

[71] Wang Tian, "U.S. Uses 'Hedging' Strategy to Deal with China's Rise," *People's Daily* (26 December 2011); available at http://english.people.com.cn/90780/7688310.html.

[72] Luo Yuan, "China Should Stay Calm, Alert about U.S. Strategy Adjustments," *PLA Daily* (12 January 2012); available at http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90883/7702723.html.

[73] See Wang Fan, "U.S. Should Back up Its Proclaimed 'Good Intentions' in Asia-Pacific With Action," *Xinhua News Agency* (12 June 2012); available at http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/indepth/2012-06/03/c_131628241.htm.

standing, the U.S. needs to counterbalance Chinese influence, "because only China's rise can pose a potential challenge to U.S. hegemony."[74]

The Pivot and U .S. Military Strategy

With regard to Chinese interpretations of the pivot's implications with respect to the United States' military strategy, many comments emerged following the publication of the U.S. Defense Strategy Review report in January 2012.[75] The wording of the statements issued by the Chinese Ministry of National Defense in response to questions from the press was very restrained. Ministry of National Defense spokesperson Geng Yansheng stated that China has "paid attention to" the strategic defense guidelines and will "closely watch out for" the influence of the new U.S. policy shift on the security situation of the Asia-Pacific region and the world at large.[76] In contrast, remarks by PLA analysts in PLA media have been much more critical, suggesting that the U.S. pivot represents a return to Cold War-style thinking. According to these remarks, the United States regards China as a threat, and will formulate its national security plans on the premise of this threat assessment.[77]

The Pivot and U.S. Military Presence

With regard to comments that addressed the issue of the United States' military presence in the Asia-Pacific region, in answering questions about the announcement of the rotational deployment of U.S. Marines to Darwin in Australia, MFA spokespersons reiterated "China's commitment to peace and stability in the region" and urged other countries to "make constructive efforts in building a harmonious and peaceful Asia-Pacific region."[78] By comparison, military spokespersons addressed the deployment more critically, describing it as "an expression of a Cold War mentality" and as being against the "trend of peace, development, and cooperation."[79]

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[74] Zhong Sheng, "Goals of U.S. 'Return to Asia' Strategy Questioned," *People's Daily* (18 October 2011); available at http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90780/7620216.html.

[75] U.S. Department of Defense, "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership."

[76] Ministry of National Defense, P.R. China, Press Briefings, "U.S. Should Treat China and Chinese Military Objectively and Rationally: Defence Ministry," 10 January 2012; available at http://eng.mod.gov.cn/Press/2012-01/10/content_4336374.htm.

[77] See Lin Zhiyuan, "What Sort of Message Does the New U.S. National Defence Strategy Convey?" *Liberation Army Daily* (7 January 2012); available at http://news.xinhuanet.com/mil/2012-01/08/c_122552246.htm.

[78] Ministry of Foreign Affairs, P.R. China, Regular Press Conferences, 5 April 2012, available at http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xwfw/s2510/2511/t921455.htm; 27 March 2012, available at www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xwfw/s2510/2511/t918577.htm; 17 November 2011, available at http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xwfw/s2510/2511/t879769.htm; and 10 November 2011, available at http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xwfw/s2510/2511/t876744.htm.

[79] Ministry of National Defense, P.R. China, Regular Press Conference, 39 November 2011, available at http://www.mod.gov.cn/affair/2011-11/30/content_4347180.html.

The Pivot and Disputes in the South China Sea

Responses from the Chinese side connecting the U.S. pivot to the status of disputes in the South China Sea have been comparatively strong. Vice Foreign Minister Cui Tiankai said that the "United States is not a claimant state to the dispute," "so it is better for the United States to leave the dispute to be sorted out between the claimant states." He suggested that, "if the U.S. does want to play a role, it may counsel restraint to those countries who've been frequently taking provocative action."[80] Some Chinese observers assert that the South China Sea disputes are used by the U.S. as an excuse to enhance its military presence and support its pivot in the region.[81]

Assessment

When we reflect on how Western scholars and IR theorists understand the significance of the U.S. pivot in terms of their own theoretical inclinations, what can we discern? As a general point, it is clear that both offensive and defensive neo-realist IR theorists evaluate the significance of the U.S. pivot in terms of expected realist behavior – for them, the theory explains the practice. Indeed, although official statements from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs are careful to express mild disapproval and not attribute the pivot to competitive behavior, it is also clear that the "commentariat" in China brings a realist understanding to current events in the Asia-Pacific region, as was noted above.[82] Therefore, a combination of offensive and defensive realism may better explain the U.S. pivot than other alternative explanations.

Neo-realists argue that their theories, which place an emphasis on changes in power distribution, explain the reasons behind the U.S. pivot. For realists, the international system is governed by power politics. Neo-realism, in particular, is primarily concerned with the structure of the international system, with a special emphasis on the international distribution of power. It is commonplace to note that in recent years, the world power distribution is shifting from West to East, and China is the biggest variable. The sustained economic growth of China and Asia, combined with the Western economic downturn since the 2008 global financial crisis, has accelerated this process of power redistribution, a trend that continues. According to "Global Trends 2030: Alternative

[80] Edward Wong, "Beijing Warns U.S. About South China Sea Disputes," *New York Times* (22 June 2011); available at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/23/world/asia/23china.html?_r=0.

[81] See Zhong Sheng, "U.S. Should Not Muddy the Waters Over the South China Seas," *People's Daily* (20 March 2012); available at http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/102774/7762724.htm.

[82] The most authoritative voice in Party newspapers is in "editorial department articles." "Editorials" and "commentator articles" are also considered as authoritative voices, but are of less importance. Articles by "Zhong Sheng," which is the homophone of "Chinese voice" from the government, can be considered as quasi-official articles. Other low-level commentary and signed articles, which are the reflection of the popular views of the Chinese people, can not be considered as official voices, although they represent the voices of civil society and academia.

Worlds," published by the U.S. National Intelligence Council in December 2012,[83] there will be a dynamic shift of power by 2030 from the U.S. and Europe to Asia, which would be a reversal of the West's rise in the eighteenth century and a transition of the distribution of the world's wealth and power to Asia.[84] Although interpretations of the meaning and magnitude of this power shift differ, the overall assumption is that it reflects the relative decline of the U.S. and the West against Asia's (mainly China's) strong rise.

This shift of the distribution of power in the Asia-Pacific region may lead to changes in relations among regional countries. The U.S., as the predominant regional power, with its outstanding economic, military, and diplomatic influence, is afraid that emerging powers such as China will challenge its leading role in the region. If the U.S. hews to the realist line, these actions could impair the United States' interest in the region, since all states have strong incentives to increase their relative share of power at the expense of their competitors. Therefore, the U.S. is pursuing policies that can contain or engage China, which explains the reasons behind the U.S. pivot to the Asia-Pacific.

The second phenomenon that reflects the realist tradition is the specific steps that the U.S. has taken that emphasize military power and alliances. Realists believe that states cannot afford to trust another state's peaceful intentions. In order to ensure their own survival, they have to build up their military strength or seek to establish alliances to check the rising power of other states. In the case of the U.S. pivot, although it claims to be a comprehensive approach, including diplomatic, economic, cultural, and military elements, the most striking and concrete elements have been in the military realm.

The U.S. has made plans to substantially increase its military presence in the Asia-Pacific. By 2020, the U.S. is to have 60 percent of its naval forces stationed in the Pacific, up 10 percent from 2011. By 2016, the U.S. will station 2,500 Marines in northern Australia. The U.S. is also working to build and strengthen its military relationships with its Asia-Pacific allies in order to counter China's influence. U.S. efforts in engaging India in Afghanistan, encouraging Burma, and encouraging Japan, India, Vietnam, Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines to "bandwagon" have increased in intensity. The U.S. is also seeking to normalize relations between Japan and South Korea. All these actions underline a carefully constructed "offshore balancing" role, and demonstrate a realist logic put into practice.[85]

Since realism is a powerful tool that helps explain some elements of the reality of the U.S. pivot, we can ask, Which branch of neo-realism—offensive realism or defensive realism—best explains the U.S. pivot? The major difference between offensive and defensive realism is that offensive realism holds that a state's ultimate goal is to be the he-

[83] U.S. National Intelligence Council, "Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds," December 2012; available at http://info.publicintelligence.net/GlobalTrends2030.pdf.

[84] Ken Jimbo, "Dynamics of Power Shift from U.S. to China – Asia-Pacific Security and Japan's Foreign Policy," *Japan Foreign Policy Forum* 13–15 (March–April 2013); available at http://www.japanpolicyforum.jp/en/archive/no13/000445.html.

[85] Sumantra Maitra, "U.S. Foreign Policy: Back to Realism," *International Affairs Review* (13 January 2013); available at http://www.iar-gwu.org/node/453.

gemon in the system. In order to achieve that, the state should gain as much power as possible at the expense of other states. The defensive realists believe that maintaining the balance of power will bring more security. A state does not need more power than the amount that can preserve the balance. Rather than an either/or answer, a combination of the two might provide the best explanation. In the case of the U.S. pivot, it seems that offensive and defensive realism have an explanatory utility for different policy areas. For example, in the area of military actions, offensive realism is more persuasive, since the military option, which can sustain U.S. hegemony in the Asia-Pacific, has been the first, and most demonstrative foot that Washington has put forward in implementing the pivot.

Aside from the exercise of military power, the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement (TPP) is another example of how the U.S. works to establish economic hegemony in the region and to exclude China from the Asia-Pacific trade group (or only to include China if it plays by rules written in Washington). China has been one of the strongest proponents of the ASEAN+3 and ASEAN+6 models, and is considered as a hub for multi-country manufacturing.[86] The TPP, proposed by the U.S. and based on the model of past U.S. Free Trade Agreements, set the bar of membership so high that China cannot reach the standards in the short run.

On the other hand, according to offensive realism, cooperation is very difficult to achieve and maintain, due to the fact that states are constantly evaluating the relative gains of different courses of action, and are afraid of being cheated: "Consequently, an offensive realist state does not consider cooperation to be a serious strategic option."[87] Comparatively, defensive realism believes that cooperation is another option for resolving conflicts of interest, instead of necessarily having them end up in actual conflicts. Under many circumstances, states can overcome the obstacles posed by anarchy to achieve cooperation and avoid certain conflicts.[88] In this sense, the U.S. pivot can be explained better by defensive realism, since the U.S. seeks cooperation and coordination on many regional issues with China.

What is more, in some areas—such as the strengthening of U.S. alliance relations and dominating the establishment of multi-lateral regional mechanisms—both defensive and offensive realism are reflected. On one hand, these actions aim at strengthening the United States' hegemon status in the region by establishing an exclusive system to marginalize China, which is more in line with the expectations of offensive realism. On the

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[86] J. F. Hornbeck and William H. Cooper, *Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) and the Role of Congress in Trade Policy* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 14 January 2013), 16; available at http://www.nationalaglawcenter.org/assets/crs/RL33743.pdf.

[87] Tang Shiping, "From Offensive Realism to Defensive Realism: A Social Evolutionary Interpretation of China's Security Strategy," paper presented at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technical University, Singapore; available at www.rsis.edu.sg/publications/SSIS/SSIS003.pdf. See also Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 21, 33, 51–53.

[88] Robert Jervis, "Realism, Neo-liberalism and Cooperation: Understanding the Debate," *International Security* 24:1 (1999): 42–63.

other hand, these steps also serve as a means to steer and regulate China's behavior in U.S.-dominated mechanisms and maintain the balance of power in the Asia-Pacific, which is more in keeping with the tenets of defensive realism. The U.S. attitude to the Sino-Japanese island dispute is another example of this "dual use" tendency. The U.S. encourages Japan's provocative actions, such as purchasing the disputed island, because this can be used as a way to balance China's influence and contributes to U.S. efforts to maintain hegemonic status in the region, achieving the central goal of offensive realism. At the same time, the U.S. is not willing to see the conflict turn into a war, which would be against U.S. interests. Keeping the island dispute as a status quo and preventing the dispute from escalating into a war is more of defensive realistic thinking. In sum, neither offensive nor defensive realism by itself can explain the U.S. pivot. A combination of these two realism theories may offer more explanatory power.

The second assessment is that *how* the pivot is understood matters as much as *what* it actually entails. The U.S. pivot is the subject of intense contemporary discussion. The United States is trying to contain a fast-developing China, and China is pushing back. It seems that a clash is coming. But when we look at what has really occurred, in reality we see a relatively slow process unfolding rather than a sudden shock. The U.S. does not have one more formal ally than it had before, and the percentage of the U.S. Navy dedicated to the region will not rise to 60 percent until 2020.

Concerning the issue of China's increasing economic and military strength, China has no intention to drive U.S. influence out of Asia. Instead, as was quoted previously from a Chinese official, "the breadth of the Pacific has enough space for the two big countries. China welcomes the U.S. to play a constructive role in regional peace, stability, and prosperity."[89] In reality, we see a marriage between an influential long-standing theory that focuses on power shifts and power distribution and its strategic implications with events unfolding on the ground. Torrential discourse and rhetoric in which many commentators and analysts discuss fine theoretical distinctions may also influence people's perception of reality. Therefore, the perception of the announcement of power changes and pivots generates a response that carries as much weight as the changes themselves.

So why does the perception of the pivot and its strategic implications, especially in its military aspects, vary so widely between the U.S. and China? The reasons can be summarized as follows. First of all, the Asia-Pacific area is a region burdened by a heavy history. The states in the area are very sensitive to military build-ups, due to a history of external invasion. To the Western countries, the dispute between China and Japan over Diaoyu Island is more of a legal issue. But to the Chinese people, it is an issue charged with emotion. It recalls the Chinese memory of the Sino-Japanese War in 1894, and Japanese attitudes toward its neighbors during World War Two. Japan's appeal for the island is a signal to China that Japan does not recognize its historical role as

[89] Ministry of Foreign Affairs, P. R. China, "Xi Jinping Accepts a Written Interview with the Washington Post of the U.S.," 2 February 2013; available at www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t904674.htm.

an aggressor, and therefore it may make the same mistake of invading in the future. The Cold War in the Asia-Pacific region was not cold at all, but rather a shooting war, with conflicts including the Korean War, the French colonial war in Indochina, and then the U.S. involvement in Vietnam. The DPRK still considers the Cold War to not be over.

Second, the Asia-Pacific is the region with the highest risk of military conflict in the world. The globe's only two separated countries, China (Chinese mainland and Taiwan) and Korea (South Korea and DPRK), are in the region. The region is plagued by a variety of intense land and maritime territorial disputes, including those between China and Japan, Japan and Russia, and India and Pakistan. Besides, there are increasing terrorist threats in the region. Of nine *de facto* nuclear weapon states, five are players in the Asia-Pacific region (China, U.S., Pakistan, India, and DPRK), and one (DPRK) is still conducting nuclear tests. In this circumstance, any actions or moves in the military sphere can potentially cause unexpected consequences. Thus, Asian countries tend to interpret military-related policies in a more highly charged way than do most Western countries.

In addition, cultural differences between West and East influence perceptions. Unlike Westerners, who tend to emphasize specific facts and details, Easterners pay more attention to the overall trend or tendency of an issue. We can see an example from daily life. When writing an address on an envelope, Westerners usually put the street number in the first line and the country sent to in the last line, while Chinese do this in reverse. When the U.S. announced its redeployment, China did not calculate the exact number of personnel redeployed in the Asia-Pacific region; rather, it considered those deployments as an increased U.S. military presence at its front door.

Therefore, Western perceptions can be very different from what China perceives. The mid-nineteenth-century history of China, which was characterized by internal turmoil and foreign aggression, still holds such strong sway over the Chinese people that their aspiration for peace and prosperity is much stronger than Westerners imagine. Besides, there is little sign showing that China is pursuing regional hegemony or a sphere of influence of either the coercive or benign kind. There is no Chinese move in Asia that seeks to exclude the U.S. Therefore, history is a channel through which we can understand what is happening.[90]

From the above analysis, we may conclude that, due to different conventions, history, and social experience, the Asian countries' perception of the U.S. pivot is different from that of the Western countries. However, this constructed perception is of the same importance as what is really happening. We can apply constructivist thinking in this aspect.

The third assessment is that U.S. strategic decision makers appear to be using realist means (reallocation of military resources and renovation of politico-military alliances and partnerships) to realize idealist ends. This essay has used realist approaches to analyze the U.S. pivot. However, some may argue that the U.S. cannot be regarded as a realist power, because of the frequent U.S. tendency to legitimize international actions by

[90] Yongjin Zhang and Barry Buzan, "The Tributary System as International Society in Theory and Practice," *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 5:1 (Spring 2012): 3–36.

claiming a basis in liberal values, such as human rights and promoting democracy. Indeed, it has been argued that realism has never been a popular school of thought in the U.S., because it goes against their basic values about themselves and the outside world.[91] As John Mearsheimer put it, "Americans are utopian moralists who press hard to institutionalize virtue, to destroy evil people, and eliminate wicked institutions and practices."[92] So most U.S. foreign policy discourse is usually expressed in the language of liberalism.

Examining the U.S. pivot, we can find an enormous amount of liberal rhetoric. Commenting on the U.S. pivot to Asia, former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton asserted that the "heart of the strategy" is "our support for democracy and human rights." She explained that "[democracy and human rights] are not only my nation's most cherished values; they are the birthright of every person born in the world. They are the values that speak to the dignity of every human being." And in his first trip to Asia, new U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said, "We must use our Pacific partnership to build a region whose people can enjoy the full benefits of democracy, the rule of law, universal human rights, including the freedom of expression, freedom of association, and peaceful assembly, freedom of religion, conscience and belief."[93]

From the U.S. perspective, what the U.S. does—such as moving military assets to the Asia-Pacific, creating partnerships, and strengthening alliances in the region—is done in order to strongly engage China to emerge as a "responsible stakeholder" in a stable, liberal, and democratic international order. So the United States' justification of their actions and strategic purpose would be "we are using realist means to idealist ends."

The final assessment is that employing realist thinking to explain U.S. policies in the Asia-Pacific may be to use old theoretical frameworks that are not fit for the purpose, that do not fully take into account the complexity of contemporary developments. Since the beginning of the new century, profound and complex changes have taken place in the world. The global trends toward economic globalization and multi-polarity are intensifying, cultural diversity is increasing, and an information society is fast emerging. As the pace of globalization accelerates, the world has become more interconnected and interdependent. At the same time, the conglomeration of power possessed by a state is being distributed to many actors such as NGOs, non-state actors, and international organizations. States are no longer the only actors in the international arena.

Realist theories, including offensive and defensive ones, have been thoroughly applied to the Cold War era, where great powers competed with each other, and there was almost no common interest between them. However, realism by itself has a difficult time explaining the reality today, given that there is no military confrontation between the U.S. and China, and that there are profound levels of economic interdependence between the two actors, particularly in the role that Western markets play in driving

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[91] Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 23.

[92] Seymour Martin Lipset, *American Exceptionalism: A Double-edged Sword* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton, 1996), 63.

[93] U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, "Remarks on a 21st Century Pacific Partnership," Japan, 15 April 2013; available at http://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2013/04/207487.htm.

China's breakneck economic development. Besides, the U.S. needs China's cooperation and support in numerous international issues, such as anti-terrorism, non-proliferation, and climate change. Therefore, military conflicts are the first thing that both the U.S. and China are trying to avoid, since a stable and prosperous Asia is the biggest common factor in the interests of both countries.

As to the question of whether China wants to be an offensive country and a hegemon in the Asia-Pacific, the answer is negative. China has demonstrated self-restraint and a willingness to be constrained by others. Since the 1980s, China has increased its involvement in many international organizations and institutions. This demonstrates that China believes that the current international security mechanism established and supported by the U.S. is in its own self-interest. China wants to be part of the existing system and, at the same time, benefit from it.

Besides, China's ultimate goal is national rejuvenation. China wants to achieve the "China Dream" of being a peaceful and prosperous key actor in the twenty-first century. China has pursued a strategy of maintaining amicable relationships with its neighbors, mostly through reassurance and confidence building. This strategy reduces the level of anxiety among neighboring countries about China's rise, thus helping to alleviate the security dilemma between China and regional states. Even if China perceives the U.S. pivot as a threat, China's response is rational, and in line with what China believes it must do to reach its goals. In addition, establishing military blocs and alliances is not conducive to regional integration, and it is more difficult to adapt to the diversified reality of the Asia-Pacific region. If the realist theories are applied further to the U.S. policy in the Asia-Pacific, it may lead to intensified competition between the U.S. and China, which will be unfavorable to both countries.

Conclusion

This article has examined the "U.S. pivot or rebalancing to Asia," including its diplomatic, economic, cultural, and military elements. It highlighted the contested nature of the pivot by identifying and critically assessing debates among Western scholars in the realist tradition as to whether or not the U.S. is balancing China, as defensive realism suggests, or seeking to maintain its dominance in the region, as offensive realism postulates. By reviewing the different varieties of realist theories and analyzing the application of the theories to the U.S. pivot, the essay argues that realist theory has some purchase on the reality of Asia-Pacific security politics. First, the combination of offensive and defensive realism does help us to better understand the U.S. pivot—both its intentions and likely outcomes. Second, in order to arrive at the fullest understanding, we must also accept that how the pivot is understood matters just as much as what it actually entails. Realism *per se* must be informed by constructivist thinking. Constructivist neorealism provides the best analytical lens. Third, U.S. strategic decision makers appear to be using realist means (reallocation of military resources and renovation of politico-military alliances and partnerships) to realize idealist ends.

This article encourages us to reflect further on the uses and abuses of theory in international relations. Stephen Walt has written that "theory is an essential tool of state-

craft."[94] Many policy debates are based on competing theoretical claims. The debate over how to respond to the "rise of China" hinged in part on competing forecasts about China's intentions. Those who advocated for the containment of China argued that, since "China is the only potential hegemon," and could "take the form of dominance through threat,"[95] the U.S. should adopt a policy of containment. Their opponents argued that, because of the increasing levels of economic interdependence, the U.S. and China can avoid military conflict, and that absolute gains, instead of a zero-sum situation, are possible through engagement. These disagreements arose in part because of fundamentally different views between neo-realism and neo-liberalism.

History shows that sometimes "good theory" leads to good policy. For example, "the theory of deterrence articulated in the 1940s and 1950s informed many aspects of U.S. military and foreign policy during the Cold War, and it continues to exert a powerful impact today."[96] On the other hand, relying on a "bad theory," as well as the analysis that flows from this perspective, may lead to unwise policy decisions, which may then pave a road to foreign policy disasters. For instance, neo-conservatism led the George W. Bush administration into two wars and impaired the United States' image and comprehensive national capabilities.

With these reflections in mind, this essay concludes with three key points. First, the U.S. pivot provides a contemporary example of realist IR theory informing strategy and policy. Second, policy practitioners should appreciate that a combination of theoretical approaches provides the best tool for analysis, and that through helping to sort and sift through a deluge of facts and opinion, such a combined approach can provide fixed reference points and analytical clarity. Third, practitioners and policy makers themselves should guard against becoming prisoners of the paradigms theories propose. Does the application of realist theory take into account the complexity of contemporary developments, particularly the heavy burden of historical experiences and divergent cultural understandings? As Yongjin Zhang and Barry Buzan caution, we may need to "develop greater historical and cultural sensitivity to the evolution of international orders and their transformations in world history" and "historicize the past as a way to understanding the present as problematic and the future as contingent on history."[97]

At the time of writing, the U.S. has its highest-ranking military delegation in two years visiting Beijing, and is currently conducting sensitive bilateral negotiations at the highest level. This visit, as was noted in the introduction, underscores the importance of Sino-U.S. bilateral relations and encourages us to reflect on the strategic significance and policy implications of this study. First, the U.S. pivot to Asia is a strategic policy adjustment, one that is still under development. The U.S. and China should focus more on increasing strategic trust and trying to respect each other's core interests and major concerns, rather than on using provocative rhetoric. Second, maintaining stability and

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[94] Stephen M. Walt, "The Relationship Between Theory and Policy in International Relations," *Annual Review of Political Science* 8 (2005): 23-48.

[95] Mearsheimer, "China's Unpeaceful Rise", 163.

[96] Walt, "The relationship between theory and policy in international relations", 28

[97] Yongjin Zhang and Barry Buzan, "The Tributary System," 4.

prosperity in the Asia-Pacific is the biggest common interest of the U.S. and China. Both countries should work cooperatively to create an environment conducive to achieving this common goal. Third, the U.S. has been one of the most important actors in shaping the positive environment in Asia in the past fifty years by establishing international security mechanisms. China has benefited from this development, and wishes to continue to play its role in it instead of challenging it. Both countries need to enhance understanding through dialogue and confidence-building measures. Fourth, the next decade will be a period of restructuring global power, the focus of which will be the Asia-Pacific region. Neither the U.S. nor China is fully prepared for this change at this point. Achieving a win-win situation through cooperation and coordination is the ultimate goal, as well as the only way to adapt to this change.

The Rise of All

James Thompson [*]

Introduction: What Will the World Look Like in 2050?

In the 1950s, there was much speculation as to what would happen if mankind ventured into outer space. Both Soviet and U.S. scientists were forced to speculate about how objects would perform above the atmosphere without knowing what would truly happen. TIROS I, for example, was the first successful orbit-sustaining satellite, designed to map the earth's weather. It was launched by the United States' National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) on 1 April 1960.[1] Thirty years later, NASA turned the TIROS technology around and started looking outward, towards deep space. In 1990, NASA launched the Hubble Space Telescope into orbit and created some of the most detailed visible-light images ever, thereby allowing a deep view into space and time. Many Hubble observations have led to significant breakthroughs in astrophysics. By taking modern theory from communications satellites and looking outward instead of toward Earth, or "reversing the lens," scientists were able to discover a new universe. But could scientists have accurately predicted the Internet, a rover on Mars, or hypersonic travel in the 1950s?

In the field of political science, there is often a similar practice of taking previous observations and using them to try to build pictures of what world governments will look like in the future. Evidence would show, however, that there is a lack of current consensus among academics on what the world order will look like over the next fifty years. Will it finally be the end of Charles Krauthammer's "Unipolar Moment"[2] for the United States, as the world transitions to Giovanni Grevi's "Interpolar world"?[3] Or will the world develop an equilibrium solution to the "political trilemma" between global democracy, national determination, and economic globalization proposed by Harvard professor Dani Rodrik?[4] Perhaps it could develop into a "G-Zero" world, as proposed by

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1 "TIROS," *NASA.gov*; available at http://science.nasa.gov/missions/tiros/. The Sputnik and Explorer 1 satellites were launched prior to TIROS, but were not self-sustaining, and both ran out of power in less than four months.

2 Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs* 70 (1990–91): 1

3 Giovanni Grevi, "The Interpolar World: A New Scenario," EU Institute for Security Studies Occasional Papers, no. 79 (June 2009), 44.

4 Dani Rodrik, *The Globalization Paradox, Democracy and the Future of the World Economy* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011), xix.

Ian Bremmer, where every state fends for itself?[5] Additionally, what of the possibility that the U.S. might face a steady relative decline, while the remaining states experience Fareed Zakaria's "Rise of the Rest"?[6] Particular difficulties arrive when trying to analyze the end of the Cold War, the rapid rise of Brazil, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS), the formation of the European Union, and the deep entrenchment of the global war on terror. With so many chaotic events, political scientists are left striving to paint a coherent picture that accurately predicts the future state of the world.

Sometimes, when scientists are left without a feasible theoretical basis for understanding effects in play, they look to other fields of study to identify an applicable method that might help them toward new discoveries in their own field. In the late 1980s, an air power theorist named Colonel John Warden developed an "Air Theory for the Twenty-first Century."[7] This common-sense theory provided a "Five-Rings Model" lens through which strategic-level planners could examine a state and determine how best to go about dismantling a regime using the tool of military intervention. The theory breaks a state down into five basic centers of gravity (a concept proposed in the 1820s by the German military theorist Carl von Clausewitz), which military forces can then attack to impose strategic paralysis on an enemy. "Reversing the lens" of this theory, we can use the Five-Rings Model to examine how to build up (instead of surgically destroy) a state. However, the modern state is influenced by a factor that is much more prevalent now than in the late 1980s, when Warden developed his theory: globalization. Adding a sixth ring of globalization to the model adds another dimension to the lens with which we can examine the state. To completely understand the effects of this theory on the construct of global governance, we must first examine in more detail the Six Rings, which are Leadership, System Essentials, Infrastructure, Population, Fielded Military Forces, and Globalization. Second, we can look at each ring individually and translate what this would relate to in the political science spectrum. Next, we can organize our study of states by using groupings into six levels based on global functionality and power in order to simplify analysis. Finally, in a synthesis of these concepts, we can use a matrix of six rings and six levels to examine the construct of global states, and can anticipate an optimistic future that includes the "Rise of All."

Warden's Five Rings Model

In order to see how the world might come to support the "Rise of All," we must first completely understand the methodology of Warden's Five Rings model. John Warden first developed this model in the late 1980s while studying the effects of strategic military operations, particularly air operations. At the core of the Five Rings theory, Warden divides the various components of a few example "systems" into five main components.

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5 Ian Bremmer, "Every Nation for Itself: Winners and Losers in a G-Zero World," *South China Morning Post* (25 March 2012), 15.

6 Fareed Zakaria, *The Post American World* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton, 2012), 285.

7 John Warden, "Air Theory for the Twenty-First Century," *Airpower Journal* (September 1995); available at http://www.airpower.au.af.mil/airchronicles/cc/smith.html.

Each system, or "ring," was considered one of the enemy's centers of gravity, which is the source of strength of a state – in other words, it was an element so critical that, if it were removed, the state would have difficulty conducting business. Warden's thesis provides four examples of the application of the Five Rings model, as seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Warden's Five Main Components of System Analysis.[8]

	Body	***State***	***Drug Cartel***	***Electric Company***
Leader	Brain, eyes, nerves	Government, communication, security	Leader, communication, security	Central control
Organic essentials	Food/oxygen organic conversion	Energy: electricity, oil; food, money	Coca source plus conversion	Input: heat, hydro power Output: electricity
Infrastructure	Blood vessels, bone, muscles	Roads, airfields, factories	Roads, airways, sea lanes	Transmission lines
Population	Cells	People	Growers, distributors, processors	Workers
Fighting mechanism (first responders)	Leukocytes	Military, police, firemen	Street soldiers	Repairmen

Warden then combined the five components in a mathematically inclined differentiation approach that creates a unique way of looking at the strategic centers of gravity that reversed the normal tactical-level thinking of the time. This strategic, or top-down approach, reorganizes his observations into the Five Rings theory model. The five rings, in order of importance, are leadership, system essentials, infrastructure, population, and fielded military forces, as shown in Figure 1.

The idea behind Warden's Five Rings model was to simultaneously attack each of the rings to paralyze the enemy, an objective also known as *physical paralysis*. The effort in studying the enemy and understanding how they are organized would allow military planners to impose costs and lead directly into enemy paralysis via a technique called parallel war. To optimize a parallel war construct, the attacker engages as many rings as possible, with special emphasis on paralyzing the center ring, which is the enemy's leadership.[9]

Warden's theory was used to develop the strategic air campaigns of Operations Desert Storm (against Iraq in 1991), Allied Force (against the Milosevic-led Yugoslavia in

[8] Warden, "Air Theory for the Twenty-First Century," 3.

[9] Howard Belote, "Warden and the Air Corps Tactical School: What Goes Around Comes Around," *Airpower Journal* (Fall 1999); available at http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/apj/apj99/fal99/belote.html.

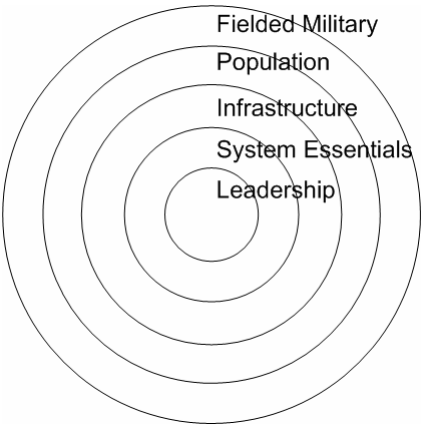

Figure 1: Warden's Five Rings Model.

1999), Enduring Freedom (the ongoing campaign in Afghanistan, under way since 2001), and Iraqi Freedom (the 2003–11 war in Iraq), all of which provided some of the most rapid destructions of states that the world has ever observed. Warden himself summarized the application of the five rings model during Operation Desert Storm as follows:

> Within a matter of minutes, the Coalition attacked over a hundred key targets across Iraq's entire strategic depth. In an instant, important functions in all of Iraq stopped working. Phone service fell precipitously, lights went out, air defense centers stopped controlling subordinate units, and key leadership offices and personnel were destroyed. To put Iraq's dilemma in perspective, the Coalition struck three times as many targets in Iraq in the first 24 hours as [the] Eighth Air Force hit in Germany in all of 1943.[10]

Warden's theory is not without opponents, however. A U.S. Air Force Air War College analyst, Major Howard Belote, points out that, "unlike a human body, a society can substitute for lost vital organs, and metaphor-based theories have led to faulty employment of airpower in war because they fail to see that conflict is nonlinear and interactive."[11] Though many could also point to the achieved end-state of several of the listed campaigns, political objectives notwithstanding, the efficiency with which these operations achieved their purely military objectives stands sacrosanct. Or, as Warden himself states, "Its imperfection does not erase its utility. If bold ideas, unjustified anticipations, and speculative thought are our only means …we must hazard them to win our prize."[12] Let us then accept that Warden's theory provides the starting point of a model that may prove useful to observe the development of the modern state.

[10] Warden, "Air Theory for the Twenty-First Century," 2.
[11] Belote, "Warden and the Air Corps Tactical School," 3.
[12] Warden, "Air Theory for the Twenty-First Century," 6.

Globalization

Many political scientists argue that the primary forces currently at work on the states of the world are those of globalization. First, let us define these forces, so we are better able to understand their effects in combination with Warden's previously identified five rings. Manfred B. Steger has defined globalization as a "social condition, characterized by tight global economic, political, cultural and environmental interconnections and flows that make most of the currently existing borders and boundaries irrelevant."[13] He also suggests that five main claims exist about globalization:

1. Globalization is about the liberalization and global integration of markets
2. Globalization is inevitable and irreversible
3. Nobody is in charge of globalization (it happens by accident)
4. Globalization benefits everyone
5. Globalization furthers the spread of democracy in the world.[14]

In each of the five rings, we can observe the forces of globalization in effect. Take, for example, the leadership ring, which covers the governments of the world. The political origins of the modern state trace back to the *Pax Romana*, the early Renaissance, and the 1648 Peace of Westphalia.[15] Politically, we have observed a great expansion and intensification of interrelations between states around the world over the last century. Steger lists the United Nations, the European Union, the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and NATO as examples of this globalization.[16] The leadership ring also consists of hundreds of worldwide and non-governmental associations (NGOs) like Greenpeace or Amnesty International.[17]

The system essentials ring, consisting of the economy and energy sectors, may best portray the effects of globalization. Strategist Thomas Barnett suggests "the global economy is the ultimate service-oriented architecture that nobody quite controls even as almost everybody avails himself of its connectivity, adding transactions to its volume every day."[18] This did not happen overnight, and has, in fact, taken centuries to build. In the post-World War Two era, for example, the Bretton Woods conference established three new international economic organizations. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) administers the monetary structure and transfer of currencies among nations. The International Bank for Reconstruction collected donor monies and distributed funds to building or recovering economies. Lastly, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

[13] Manfred Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 8.
[14] Ibid., 103.
[15] Ibid., 59.
[16] Ibid., 58.
[17] Ibid., 69.
[18] Thomas P. M. Barnett, *Great Powers, America and the World After Bush* (New York, NY: Berkley Books, 2010), 294.

(GATT) was established to create and conduct multilateral trade agreements. Due to globalization, many portions of these institutions have undergone significant transformation. The IMF underwent a complete restructuring since the 2008 global financial crisis, the International Bank for Reconstruction was later transformed into the World Bank, and the GATT was later replaced by a much more robust World Trade Organization, which has a headquarters in Geneva that is growing by leaps and bounds.[19]

In the infrastructure ring, let us address one main impact of globalization in the technological sector. The entire Internet is designed around providing access, freedom of speech, and expression, as it was originally created by Vint Cerf, then a project manager at the U.S. Department of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), where he did the research that would earn him the title the "father of the Internet." According to Cerf, "the Net already accounts for 13 percent of American business output, impacting every industry, from communications to cars, and restaurants to retail. Not since Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press or Alexander Graham Bell the telephone, has a human invention empowered so many and offered so much possibility for benefiting humankind."[20] Overall, the globalizing effects of the Internet have exploded with the development of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

For an example of the effects of globalization in the population ring, one can point to the merging around the world of technological advancements, languages, and cultures. Since 1903, for example, the introduction of aviation has yielded a prime illustration of global merging. Aviation uses only one time zone for reference—Zulu time (or Greenwich Mean Time)—and one language – English. Almost one-fourth of the world's population (more than 350 million native speakers and 400 million with English as a second language) can speak basic English and, even more profoundly, the number of spoken languages in the world has decreased by 48 percent from about 14,500 in 1500 to less than 7,000 in 2007.[21] Clearly, this represents global merging.

Globalization in the area of fielded forces has also evolved greatly over the last fifty years. One needs only look at the two World Wars, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), or the United Nations peacekeeping operations to understand this effect. There are basically two major international armament producers in the world, with a few more that produce for their own nations, but each company's products look remarkably similar in form and function to the rest.

Warden's theory of the Five Rings conceptually says that when one force or entity directly affects all other rings to an extent that, if it is crippled, it could seriously affect the function of the state, that force or entity forms the essential element of an additional ring. Since globalization has become such central element of the functioning of today's state, a modernization of Warden's rings warrants placing globalization as an independ-

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[19] Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*, 39.

[20] Vinton Cerf, "'Father of the Internet': Why We Must Fight for its Freedom," *CNN.com* (30 November 2012); available at http://edition.cnn.com/2012/11/29/business/opinion-cerf-google-internet-freedom.

[21] Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*, 81.

ent, yet completely interdependent, sixth ring that one could attack (in the case of military strategic planning) or an entity which planners could build upon to improve a state (in the case presented in this paper). Clearly, building and incorporating globalization as a sixth ring would greatly contribute to the state-building process if planners could clearly identify where to best allocate resources and investments. In order to help identify the relative status of each state's systems, we can look to several indicative metrics, as depicted in Table 2.

Table 2: Six Rings for Analysis of the Modern State.

	Modern State	***Forms of Indicative Metrics***
1. Leadership	Executive, state, parliament, judicial functions	Corruption index
2. System Essentials	Economy and energy: electricity, oil, food, water, land	Human development index, water/food rights, global warming, GDP per capita
3. Infrastructure	Sea lanes, roads, airfields, factories	Highways/roads, judicial system and the rule of law
4. Population	People, human rights, freedoms, human security	Population, human development index
5. Fielded Forces, Security Personnel	Military, police, firemen, intelligence services	Internal and external force structure, civil-military relations
6. Globalization	Interaction with international organizations, travel, access, diversity	Market integration, UN participation, ICC-ICJ participation

With definitions in hand, and a quick glance across the six rings, applying this lens to the entire world is still a daunting task. Perhaps a useful tool often found in political studies is to group states according to a specific set of criteria.

Six Rings in "Six Levels" of States

When one examines the 193 countries in the world, there is great disparity in the levels of all six rings with respect to global functioning and power. As Steger states, "Globalization is an uneven process, meaning that people living in various parts of the world are affected very differently by this gigantic transformation of social structures and cultural zones."[22] Warden used an analytical tool when looking at different potential enemies with his Five Rings theory, using sequential Five Rings analysis at the next sub-level system inside each primary ring. Similarly, to assist with analyzing the potential development paths of the world discussed at the beginning of this paper, we can categorize

[22] Steger, *Globalization. A Very Short Introduction*, 11.

the world into six different levels via a combination of multiple systems, such as global functioning and power. These "Six Levels" are similar, in part, to the nature of the First, Second, and Third World concepts that dominated the Cold War era. These are not strict lines of demarcation, merely just a "family resemblance" within each level. This ranking is similar to the floors on an elevator: the higher you go, the better the view. Extrapolating this concept creates a list resembling Table 3.

Table 3: Six Rings Applied to Six Levels of States in Global Functionality and Power.

	[193] *Countries*
Level 6	Ideal state: peace, prosperity, prime example to follow
Level 5	[1] United States
Level 4	[22] (**G8**) ***U.K., France, Germany***, ***Canada, Italy***, ***Russia, Japan***, **Brazil**, **India**, **China, South Africa**, **Australia,** "Upper Europe" (aka Spain, Portugal, Benelux, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Switzerland)
Level 3	[44] **G20**/Next 11 Bangladesh, Egypt, **Indonesia** (G20), Iran, **Mexico** (G20), Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, **South Korea** (G20), **Turkey** (G20) and Vietnam. (rest of G20) **Argentina, Saudi Arabia,** + "Middle Europe" (aka Hungary, Austria, Poland, Ukraine), middle Americas, Asia, Africa
Level 2	[66] Lower "rest": lower Europe, lower Americas, Asia, Africa
Level 1	[60] Failed, failing, collapsed states

With this Six Level structure established, we can again apply Warden's nested systems analysis, and examine one core ring as it applies to each of the six levels of states. As an example, let us look at system essentials, which includes economic and energy issues, and how these issues filter through the six levels of states.

Level One: Failed, Failing, and Collapsed States

There are several lists of failed or failing states; one example is the *Foreign Policy* "Failed State Index," published annually since 2005. This list includes the sixty states that rank lowest on a combination of factors, including demographic pressures, refugees and displaced persons, group grievances, human flight issues, uneven development, economic decline, delegitimization of the state, public services, human rights, security apparatus, factionalized elites, and external intervention.[23] Each of these categories falls quite easily into one of the six rings of the model discussed above. Though the situation seems quite grim in Somalia, the Congo, and Sudan, numerous countries have improved their standing on the index over the last eight years. Few probably believed the United

[23] "Failed States Index 2012," *Foreign Policy*; available at http://www.foreignpolicy.com/failed_States_index_2012_interactive.

States "experiment" would survive in the late 1700s or early 1800s, but provided the right intervening foreign assistance, anything was possible. Simple investments in cell phone architectures have made drastic differences in newly forming countries, completely bypassing the developmental process through the telegraph, and even the telephone, straight to the Internet age.

Level Two: Lower "Rest"

The difference between the Level One and Level Two countries is the equivalent of the difference between sitting down and standing up. These states have at least a fledgling government that has proven able to provide for its citizens' basic needs, and has started down the road of establishing a national economic basis. There is significant opportunity for growth, which often requires the investment of outside sources, particularly for security issues. These investments are happening all over the world at a rapid rate. Unfortunately, the global community is seemingly unable to agree on exactly how to best provide investments for these developing countries, and, according to the EU Trade Commissioner, the latest rounds of WTO investment standardization talks resulted in failure: "The Doha development round of trade talks initially started in 2001 with the aim of remedying inequality so that the developing world could benefit more from freer trade. However, the talks have repeatedly collapsed as developed countries failed to agree with developing nations on terms of access to each others' markets."[24] But there is hope, after all, that at least there is a global forum for the discussion of improving economic conditions in the developing world. Welcoming outside investment, building an infrastructure, and rapidly increasing GDP per capita are all similar to the developmental tendencies in the United States during the 1800–80 timeframe. Fortunately, however, no nation has to repeat the developmental process of the steam-powered train!

Level Three: G20, Next 11

The next level of state analysis consists of those countries that have building or semi-self-sufficient economies, are able to handle self-protection, but possess limited power to project their self-interests (the equivalent of walking, as an advance from sitting and standing in our example). This level of state might be considered the "middle class" nations of the world. Many would say, just as the middle class is the driving force within the U.S. economy, the Level Three countries are the driving force among states on the global stage. For instance, the significant push into developing Africa's integration into the world economy has been driven by multiple donors, with diverse interests. For the U.S. and other Western nations, investment in Africa denies Al Qaeda a base of operations if there are thriving economies and representative governments. For China, India, and the rest of an ascendant Asia, the Level Three countries provide multiple sources of energy and natural resources to sustain the world's largest populations.[25]

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[24] "World Trade Talks End in Collapse," *BBC News* (29 July 2008); available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7531099.stm.

[25] Barnett, *Great Powers, America and the World After Bush*, 286.

America's military Central Command in Africa was started in May 2003, establishing the Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa, and later AFRICOM. It effectively seeks to "build local capacity up, keep radical jihadists out, encourage Asia (and Middle Eastern) firms in, and [build] African militaries and governments, thereby bolstering continental peacekeeping. All can be accomplished on the basis of indigenous capacity first, regional cooperation second, and help from external great powers third."[26] But perhaps Asia presents a better model for economic development in this region, as many Asian states understand how to handle millions of poverty-stricken people in a land with scarce natural resources. Barnett suggests, for example, that "Africa will be a knockoff of India, which is a knockoff of China, which is a knockoff of South Korea, which is a knockoff of Singapore, which is a knockoff of Japan, which half-a-century ago was a knockoff of the U.S."[27] Whichever way you look at it, the nations in Level Three are in a substantial building phase. Many of these nations have similar developmental tendencies to the United States during the 1880–1930 timeframe.

Level Four: G8, Major EU and Asian Players

As we move to the next level of states, we consider a broad spectrum of global involvement and power development ("jogging" countries, to continue the metaphor). Countries at this level show self-sustaining economic and political development, are capable of some form of self-protection, and can implement some control over their self-interests abroad.

The economic power of the combined European Union (EU) can, when actually unified, propel it to an equivalent of the top level of nations, but it will likely be many years before the EU will have a coherent economic policy. European economic dominance is not new, however. Western European GDP per capita was higher than that of both China and India by 1500; and between 1350 and 1950, Western GDP per capita increased from USD 662 to USD 4,594, a 594 percent increase, while China and India remained relatively constant.[28] After World War Two, the reintegration and rebuilding of Germany and Japan helped create two of the largest powerhouses in today's world economy. These two nations have also helped mold the economies of Europe and industrialized Asia along the way. The last thirty years, in addition, have seen an unprecedented wave of Asian economic development grow at a rate equivalent to the last two hundred years of Western growth. According to Alain Guidetti from the Geneva Center for Security Policy

> The spectacular emergence of Asia is mainly led by the unprecedented development of the Chinese economy over the last 30 years (average growth of some 10 % until 2010, 8.5 % in 2012). China became the world's second-largest economy in 2010, the world's first trade exporter, and the major trade partner of the U.S. and Europe. This performance, while reflecting China's new economic might, boosts its influence in

[26] Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, 286.
[27] Ibid., 248.
[28] Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, 66.

> world affairs, as illustrated by its ascent to the rank of third-largest member country of the IMF and its growing weight in the UN, the UN Security Council, as well as regional institutions such as ASEAN.[29]

Perhaps surprisingly, however, 61 percent of Chinese consumers are willing to pay more for a product labeled "Made in USA" over a foreign brand because of higher quality, particularly in baby food, household appliances, tires, car parts, furniture, and tools.[30] This highlights a grand interdependence between the Level Four and Level Five national economies. Clearly, globalization has many benefits for all involved.

Some of the nations that benefit most from rising Chinese trade include Australia, India, and Japan. Indian officials often claim that they are at a disadvantage to the Chinese because, as a senior government official states, "We have to do many things that are politically popular, but are foolish. They depress our long-term economic potential. But politicians need votes in the short term. China can take the long view. And while it doesn't do everything right, it makes many decisions that are smart and far-sighted."[31] An example of these limitations is that it took two years of attempts to open the Indian market to foreign investment. In December 2012, Manmohan Singh, the Indian Prime Minister, and his party pushed through economic reforms to allow foreign chains like Wal-Mart to operate in India. This move is likely to attract foreign investment to the ailing pension and insurance industries and the USD 450 billion retail sector.[32] Similarly, in the late 1980s, Japan's automobile exports helped it develop into one of the top five economies in the world. Several analysts believed it would surpass the U.S. as the world's largest economy, but the advent of significant Japanese competition and reforms caused U.S. auto producers to significantly improve their efficiency and quality. Japan's markets, industries, institutions, and politics have made significant gains in the global market, but it has not surpassed the United States.[33] One could reflect that many of the Level Four nations are experiencing similar developmental issues as the United States during the 1950–90 timeframe.

Level Five: The United States

The fifth state level contains those states involved in every region of the world with dominant economic, military, and political power. In this level is the United States, although clearly even its power is not universal, as seen in the cases of Vietnam, and to

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[29] Alain Guidetti, "Reshaping the Security Order in Asia-Pacific," Geneva Centre for Security Policy Paper 2012/11 (2012), 1; available at www.gcsp.ch/Regional-Capacity-Development/Publications/GCSP-Publications/Policy-Papers/Reshaping-the-Security-Order-in-Asia-Pacific.

[30] Nick Zieminski, "'Made in USA' Label Popular in China, too: Study," *Reuters* (14 November 2012); available at http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/15/us-china-usa-consumers-idUSBRE8AE00520121115.

[31] Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, 108.

[32] Nigam Prusty, "Indian Government Wins Vote on Wal-Mart-type Stores," *Reuters* (6 December 2012); available at http://news.msn.com/world/indian-government-wins-vote-on-wal-mart-type-stores.

[33] Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, 22.

some extent, the yet-to-be-resolved Global War on Terrorism. The U.S. economy, however, clearly has remained at the forefront of the world's economic development, as a unique combination of technological advancements from the fur trade in the early nineteenth century through the Industrial Age combined with vast land and natural resources to vault it to soaring heights. Despite having only 5 percent of the world's population, the U.S. accounts for a dominant share of the world's economic output: 32 percent in 1913, 26 percent in 1960, 22 percent in 1980, 27 percent in 2000, and 26 percent in 2007.[34] According to the World Economic Forum, America's ingenuity propels it to "first in innovation, university-industry collaboration, and research and development. China does not come within twenty countries of the United States in any of these, and India breaks the top ten on only two counts: market size and national savings rate. In virtually every sector that advanced industrialized countries participate in, U.S. firms lead the world in productivity and profits."[35] Another two fields where the U.S. dominates are nanotechnology and biotechnology. There are more dedicated centers for nanotechnology research in the United States than in Germany, the U.K., and China combined, and U.S. biotech revenues approached USD 50 billion in 2005, five times greater than Europe, representing 76 percent of global revenues in the sector.[36] And, in fact, if examining all the top production sectors of the world, as represented in Table 4, the U.S. is at or near the top of each and every one, and likely to remain so for the foreseeable future.

The tremendous economic power of the U.S. is not only used for development, but also provides the largest budget for internal and external security of any nation in the world. After all, can you name another Department/Ministry of Defense that has seven geographic commands that cover all seven continents, or another Department of State (or Ministry of Foreign Affairs) that covers 250 posts in over 180 of the 193 countries in the world?[37] Economically speaking, Fareed Zakaria frames it best:

> America has succeeded not because of the ingenuity of its government programs, but because of the vigor of its society. It has thrived because it has kept itself open to the world – to goods and services, to ideas and inventions, and above all, to people and cultures. This openness has allowed [the] U.S. to respond quickly and flexibly to new economic times, to manage change and diversity with remarkable ease, and to push forward the boundaries of individual freedom and autonomy. It has allowed America to create the first universal nation, a place where people from all over the world can work, mingle, mix, and share in a common dream and a common destiny. America's great corporations access global markets, easy credit, new technologies, and high-quality labor at a low price.[38]

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[34] Ibid., 197.
[35] Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, 200.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Bureau of Public Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Diplomacy: The U.S. Department of State at Work" (June 2008); available at www.state.gov/documents/organization/46839.pdf.
[38] Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, 283.

Table 4: Global Leaders of Development.[39]

	1	2	3	4	5
Agriculture, food processing	**U.S.**	China	India	Brazil	Japan
Pharmaceutics, biotechnologies	**U.S.**	U.K.	Germany	Japan	China
Nanotechnologies, new materials	**U.S.**	Japan	Germany	China	U.K.
Energy	**U.S.**	Germany	Japan	China	U.K.
Defense and security	**U.S.**	Russia	China	Israel	U.K.
Electronics, computers	**U.S.**	Japan	China	South Korea	Germany
Software, information management	**U.S.**	India	China	Japan	Germany
Automotive industry	Japan	**U.S.**	Germany	China	South Korea
Aviation, rail transportation	**U.S.**	Japan	China	Germany	France

The U.S. economic drive, however, does not proceed without consequence. The European preference for slow but steady development has long countered the "go-go" philosophy of the United States. Some would say this symbiosis in production has stalled progress, but, on the other hand, the combination of both has probably resulted in better rules and standards development along the way, possibly preventing extreme, self-serving goals and unsustainable consumption.[40] For example, the U.S. (along with parts of Europe) has become the leading consumer nation (by far) in the world over the last two decades. Overconsumption in the technology, banking, and retail consumer sectors set the conditions for the "Great Recession" of 2008, which quickly corrected the consumption trend. However, the economy is a balance, and for debt to exist, creditors must also exist. Sure enough, several nations from the developing world (many from Level Four) were willing to donate their newfound wealth to this vast consuming machine, piling up savings and then lending them to the Western world.[41] In the meantime, the potentially dangerous consequences of this economic imbalance led the Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff at the time, Admiral Michael Mullen, to assess in 2011 that

[39] Andrei Zagorski, "Economic Cooperation in the Post Soviet Space," presentation at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, Geneva, 4 March 2013.
[40] Barnett, *Great Powers, America and the World After Bush*, 211.
[41] Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, 47.

"debt is the single biggest threat to [U.S.] national security and is basically not very complex math" – in effect, many would say the financial crisis has had the effect of delegitimizing America's economic power.[42] The good news is, however, that there have been over fifty recessions in the global economy since 1920, and the U.S. has had significant trends of deficits followed by non-deficit spending. The final point for Level Five nations is they are always advancing—assembling lessons learned and moving forward, constantly evolving and refining their processes. The difference between Level Five and Level Four countries are not always great, and in fact, sometimes, nations exhibit characteristics of both levels simultaneously.

Level Six: The Ultimate State

This level can be described (like the highest level of social achievement), but it has not yet been achieved by any nation in the world. Perfect in every way, it refers to the ideal state that all nations would strive to become if possible. For instance, imagine if the United States could continue all the donations made by non-governmental organizations and relief agencies while designating significant military and economic aid to all countries of the world, participating in only UN sanctioned interventions, with an all-encompassing human rights commitment and adherence to the Geneva Conventions (including the CIA). Or, perhaps if China stays consistent with its message of "peaceful rise," resolves its island disputes peacefully, and leaps forward to take measures to reduce all forms of pollution. Having a sixth level indicates that there is yet room for all states to rise in their development.

Though we only compared the developmental state levels inside one ring—that of system essentials, including the economy and energy sectors—clearly one could perform similar analyses within each of the six rings. Putting all these concepts together (Six Rings and Six Levels) provides us with a complete matrix with which we can analyze the development paths for the world, as depicted in Table 5.

The combined matrix of Six Rings and Six Levels now presents a complete lens through which to view the states of the world. Let us next turn to looking at the two main players of the next half-century and see how they look through this matrix lens.

What's Next? Projection to 2050

The "Rise of All" is not evaluated simply on the basis of economic progress. It contains elements of development, sustainability, and learning lessons in all six rings of state interoperation. Before we examine these factors, let us look at how Zakaria's research describes the "Rise of the Rest" with surprising twist:

[42] "Mullen Talks About Deficit, Santorum Outlines Foreign Policy Position," *C-Span* (28 April 2011); available at www.c-span.org/Events/Mullen-Talks-About-Deficit-Santorum-Outlines-Foreign-Policy-Position/10737421203/.

Table 5: Six Rings and Six Levels Matrix for the Analysis of the Modern State.

	Level 1 Failed, Failing	**Level 2** Lower "Rest"	**Level 3** G20, Next 11	**Level 4** G8, Major EU, Asia	**Level 5** U.S.	**Level 6** Future Rise
1. Leadership	Unstable, corrupt	Stable	Building	International interests	Advancing global agendas	100 percent transparent
2. System Essentials	Unavailable	Attainable	Readily available	Advancing	Efficient	Overflowing
3. Infrastructure	Non-existent	Existing	Improving	Advanced	Leading-edge	Well developed
4. Population	Suffering, disorganized	Basic needs met	Improving lot	Integrated	Educated, employed, advanced	Happy, human rights respected
5. Fielded Forces, Security Personnel	Rebel groups	Basic internal	Internal + stand-alone military	Force projection	Multi-theater projection	Internationally effective
6. Globalization	Disconnected	National	Regional	International	Global influence	Globally integrated

> The Rise of the Rest, while real, is a long process. And it is one that ensures America a vital, though different role. As China, India, Brazil, Russia, South Africa, and a host of smaller countries all do well in the years ahead, new points of tension will emerge among them. Many of these rising countries have historical animosities, border disputes, and contemporary quarrels with one another. In most cases, nationalism will grow along with economic and geopolitical stature. But these rivalries do give the U.S. the opportunity to play a large and constructive role at the center of the global order. It is a role that the U.S. – with its global interests and presence, complete portfolio of power, and diverse immigrant communities, could learn to play with great skill.[43]

Thus the key players are leaders in the Level Four through Level Six nations, predominantly the two global leaders: the United States and China. How they establish the pace of progress will determine what the rest of the world will do. Few counter the "Rise of the Rest" concept, so the real question is whether the United States will continue to rise or not, particularly in relative terms to China. In other words, can the U.S. also continue to advance with the rest of the world? In order to "Rise with the Rest," the U.S. must continue to progress across all six rings.

The United States and the Six Rings

Ring 1: Leadership. When the U.S. first moved beyond the Monroe Doctrine of isolationism to involvement in "other nations' affairs," the other great powers noticed and were not quite certain what to make of an imperial power that did not want to colonize,

[43] Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, 257.

but attempted to spread the rule of law and the doctrine of individual freedom.[44] By finally embracing global leadership in international security in the form of World War Two (although one could say the United States had it forced upon them by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor), then the Cold War effort at Soviet containment, the U.S. had to finally define "Americanism," and along the way undergo significantly greater international scrutiny. As the world now watches globalization make similar demands on other societies, the U.S. must understand that political solutions take time. Fifty years after World War Two, the nations of Japan and Germany are world leaders in all aspects. One must exercise patience with the nations of Iraq and Afghanistan. To advance in the Leadership Ring, the U.S. should ratify and fully vest in the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice concepts, and must learn to patiently work towards developing coalition-style political solutions to long-term economic problems.[45] Though individual leaders will change, the system of checks and balances ensures that the system shall prevail. More importantly, the U.S. is less reliant on the skills of a particular leader, and is thus more likely to continue to progress as a continuously evolving system of leadership.

Ring 2: System Essentials—Economy and Energy. Simply mention Wal-Mart, Starbucks, McDonalds, Stanley Tools, Chevrolet, or Ford, and most nations across the world will recognize one of the names. By far, the largest trans-national companies in the world today are based in the U.S. The rules of globalization are not necessarily just American, but U.S. domestic and foreign policy do have a great effect on a global level.[46] To advance in the systems essentials ring, the U.S. must continue to articulate and execute its national strategy at the WTO, G8, and G20 forums on global economic development. The U.S. must:

- Maintain a focus on improving new regulatory oversight of inter-market financial flows
- Invest energy into the exploration, production, and protection of new energy reserves
- Adjust to retail, food, and production pattern changes (like job outsourcing on the low-end).

Additionally, the U.S. introduction of shale gas generated through hydraulic fracturing (or "fracking") will increase production and economic advancement. U.S. natural gas output has soared in the last decade, as well as the introduction of biofuels, causing a resurgence of corn production across the U.S. Midwest. Not only has the increase of output from inside the U.S. in terms of oil and gas production bolstered the United States' position relative to other nations, but new technologies have led to an increase in reserves and a lack of reliance on outside sources that assists with strategic security as well. The International Energy Association even suggested the U.S. may surpass Saudi

[44] Barnett, *Great Powers, America and the World After Bush*, 112.
[45] Ibid., 127.
[46] Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*, 106.

Arabia as the world's largest oil producer within the next decade.[47] Recessions are ruthless at creating efficiencies, and the recent global recession caused U.S. manufacturing production costs to drop rapidly. As a result, many producers are returning their production facilities to the United States after having moved them abroad. The Federal Reserve announced in April 2013 that they will consider a plan to start raising federal interest rates. This, combined with the fact that the Dow Jones Industrial Average is at an all time high and many other signs, all suggest that a U.S. economic recovery is imminent.[48]

Ring 3: Infrastructure. Thomas Barnett states, "America arose as a global power thanks to its ability to knit together its states: interstate trade integration through the disintegration and geographic distribution of production chains, with transportation infrastructure—sometimes literally—paving the way for national firms with national platforms that peddle internationally branded products."[49] To advance, the U.S. must continue to:

- Develop its aging highway system
- Invest in transnational transportation methods that are both secure and efficient
- Continue to serve as the guarantor of worldwide security of seaborne commercial traffic
- Lead development on the next edition of the Millennium goals
- Ratify the Kyoto Protocol, and continue working toward the next effort to curb global warming – an effect that will stress Level One and Two nations the most.[50]

Ring 4: Population. Higher education is the United States' best industry. Of the top twenty universities in the world, at least fifteen are in the U.S.; of the top fifty, between twenty-seven and thirty-seven. The U.S. invests 2.6 percent of its GDP in higher education, compared with 1.2 percent in Europe, and 1.1 percent in Japan. In India, universities graduate between thirty-five and fifty Ph.D.s in computer science per year, while the U.S. produces one thousand.[51] Second, the U.S. will increase its population by 65 million by 2040, while Europe will remain virtually stagnant. The United States' edge in innovation is overwhelmingly a product of immigration; foreign students and immigrants account for 50 percent of the scientific researchers in the U.S. The United States' potential new burst of productivity, its edge in nanotechnology, biotechnology, and its ability to invent the future – all rest on its immigration policies (which are the cause of heated debate in U.S. domestic politics).[52] For the U.S. to advance, it must focus on ways to im-

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47 Peg Mackey, "U.S. to Overtake Saudi as Top Oil Producer: IEA," *Reuters* (12 November 2012); available at www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/12/us-iea-oil-report-idUSBRE8AB0IQ20121112.

48 U.S. Federal Reserve Press Release 1 May 2013; available at www.federalreserve.gov/newsevents/press/monetary/20130501a.htm.

49 Barnett, *Great Powers, America and the World After Bush*, 162.

50 Barnett, *Great Powers, America and the World After Bush*, 249.

51 Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, 207.

52 Ibid., 215.

prove its primary and secondary education systems to be the best in the world, particularly in science and technology; develop simpler immigration and taxation laws; and continue to work on the spread, prevention, and inoculation against communicable diseases, particularly in Africa.

Ring 5: Fielded Forces. The U.S. is by far the largest military power in the world, but the last two decades have proven that the only way for the U.S. to deter aggressors is to build broad, multi-national coalitions.[53] The new U.S. strategy issued in 2012 mentions strengthening existing bilateral military alliances (Europe, Middle East, Japan, Republic of Korea, Australia, Philippines, Thailand) and developing strategic security partnerships with other Asian players, in particular India, Singapore, Vietnam, and Indonesia. The other elements of this strategy include a renewed commitment to cooperate with China, a new focus on regional multilateralism, and the promotion of trade and democracy.[54] To stay in the lead in the realm of security, the U.S. needs to:

- Reduce force sizes and budgets to a sustainable level that reduce the debt to controllable levels
- Work toward a reunification or lasting peace process between North Korea and the Republic of Korea, with the assistance of key regional players
- Increase military-to-military cooperation with China, India, Russia, and Brazil, and the "Next Eleven"
- Encourage any regional security cooperation structures throughout the world
- In the cases of Central Command (Middle East and Central Asia), Southern Command (Latin America), and the new Africa Command, continue to invest in the security of the Level One and Two nations
- Continue to invest in border security while protecting the process of lawful immigration.

Ring 6: Globalization. The United States did not invent globalization, but it did perfect it. There is no question that the U.S. dominates the globalization spectrum, particularly in the technological sector. However, many feel that in the last decade and a half, America's international aggressiveness has caused negative feelings to erode some of this globalization effect. The economic ties between the different markets of the world and the United States during the 2008 global economic crisis showed clearly what nations are completely globalized and what nations are still insulated. There is little doubt, however, that the U.S. will continue to lead in, and enjoy the effects of, the processes of globalization, particularly in its relations with China.

China and the Six Rings

With the opening of China's markets in the 1970s, the era of economic cooperation between East and West began in earnest. The China-U.S. economic relationship is one of

[53] Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*, 106.
[54] Guidetti, "Reshaping the Security Order in Asia-Pacific," 2.

symbiosis. The U.S. and Western Europe are vast spenders, with a seemingly insatiable appetite for inexpensive goods, and the Chinese economy, with the world's largest pool of unskilled workers, is quite happy to produce them.[55] On the other hand, however, a serious U.S.-China rivalry could define the new age and turn it away from integration, trade, and globalization.[56] The Chinese have advertised a policy of peaceful advancement, and have shown a willingness to join regional developmental organizations and to display (relatively) restrained involvement in international organizations such as the UN, all while working as the symbiotic "good cop" of the world with the U.S.[57] We can now examine how the rise of China also extends across all Six Rings.

Ring 1: Leadership. The Chinese Communist Party spends an enormous amount of time and energy worrying about social stability and popular unrest, in particular about the possibility (already borne out elsewhere in the world) that economic development leads to political reform.[58] According to Zakaria, "The rule has held everywhere from Spain and Greece to South Korea, Taiwan and Mexico: countries that modernize begin changing politically around the time that they achieve middle-income status (a rough categorization, that lies somewhere between $5,000 and $10,000 PPP)."[59] China's per capita income stands well below that range, and will not reach it for another two decades or more, so the jury is still out on what changes the new government will adopt, though it appears the regime has learned from the lessons of the pro-democracy demonstrations in 1989 in Tiananmen Square, and seems willing to adapt.[60] In the judicial realm, for example, in 1980, Chinese courts accepted 800,000 cases; in 2006 they accepted ten times that number.[61] As China develops, its leadership will have to deal with adapting to the nation's newly elevated status without doing so at the expense of the Chinese people.

Ring 2: System Essentials—Economy & Energy. China's economy increasingly mirrors that of the U.S. Originally, China encouraged big business development, rising from the private sector or state-owned entities, and mostly funded by state-controlled banks. Only recently are small-businesses growing via investment funds from foreign sources.[62] China also has the advantage of knowing they own the global market on low-end manufacturing, while the United States owns the high-end sector. Resource scarcity, disappearing habitable land, acid rain, and polluted environments are all massive issues that China must deal with while trying to modernize. According to Pan Yue, China's Deputy Minister of the Environment,

> Acid rain is falling on one third of the Chinese territory; half of the water in our seven largest rivers is completely useless, while one-fourth of our citizens do not have access to clean drinking water. One-third of the urban population is breathing polluted air,

[55] Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, 140.
[56] Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, 141.
[57] Barnett, *Great Powers, America and the World After Bush*, 234.
[58] Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, 113.
[59] Ibid., 114.
[60] Barnett, *Great Powers, America and the World After Bush*, 177.
[61] Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, 114.
[62] Barnett, *Great Powers, America and the World After Bush*, 175.

> and less than 20 percent of the trash in cities is treated and processed in an environmentally sustainable manner. In Beijing alone, 70 to 80 percent of all deadly cancer cases are related to the environment. [But] in some cities such as Beijing, the air quality has, in fact, improved. The water in some rivers and lakes is now cleaner than it's been in the past. It's the assumption that the economic growth will give us the financial resources to cope with the crises surrounding the environment, raw materials, and population growth.[63]

With their rapidly increasing issues of population growth and resource scarcity, magnified by the massive population of their nation, Chinese leaders have to get the system essentials correct.[64]

Ring 3: Infrastructure. China expert Elizabeth Economy argues, "A century ago, the U.S. was grappling with many of the same problems that currently confront China: rapid deforestation in the Midwestern states, water scarcity in the West, soil erosion and dust storms in the nation's heartland, and loss of fish and wildlife."[65] Minxin Pei points out "the automobile fatality rate [in China] has increased to twenty-six per 10,000 vehicles (compared with twenty in India and eight in Indonesia), but the [number of] cars on China's roads have been growing by 26 percent per year, compared with 17 percent for India and 6 percent for Indonesia."[66] In effect, many of the problems that China is facing now are similar to what the United States faced with its massive expansion in the highway system and nationwide industrialization in the first sixty years of the twentieth century. They have a significant eastern seaboard development, with sparse population (but most of the nation's resources in the west). China will have to achieve significant infrastructure improvements to continue to handle the advancing needs of Chinese society.

Ring 4: Population. John Thornton, writing in *Foreign Affairs*, has painted a picture of a Chinese governmental regime hesitantly and incrementally moving toward greater accountability and openness.[67] Almost weekly, there are reports of protests, particularly around environmental issues, taking place in China, and most are not dealt with harshly. In a surprising statistic, in 1994, there were just 10,000 protests of some kind or other in China, while in 2004 there were 74,000.[68] It appears that the government is not only hearing the voices of the people, but also recognizing their complaints and adjusting their behavior.

Ring 5. Fielded Forces. After two decades of double-digit military growth, China now has the world's second-highest military budget (USD 108 billion in 2012, account-

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[63] Aus dem Spiegel, "The Chinese Miracle Will End Soon," *Der Spiegel* (10 August 2005); available at http://www.spiegel.de/international/spiegel/spiegel-interview-with-china-s-deputy-minister-of-the-environment-the-chinese-miracle-will-end-soon-a-345694.html.

[64] Barnett, *Great Powers, America and the World After Bush*, 186.

[65] Ibid., 383.

[66] Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, 113.

[67] John Thornton, "Long Time Coming: The Prospects for Democracy in China," *Foreign Affairs* 87 (2008): 15.

[68] Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, 110.

ing for 2 percent of GDP), well ahead of Japan, Russia, and India.[69] Though it advocates peaceful relations, China has recently become a more overt actor in international relations. In December 2012, for example, China demanded that Vietnam stop its activities in disputed waters and not harass Chinese fishing boats. Similarly, China has recently found itself in increasingly angry disputes with its neighbors, including the Philippines, Taiwan, Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia, and Japan over claims to islands and parts of the South China Sea.[70] Whether they are rising peacefully or to counter other states' military actions will have a significant effect on the future of relations in the region and the world.

Ring 6: Globalization. In terms of its economic advances, China has taken twenty-five years to achieve what took the United States over two hundred years. Turning around a moribund economy into the world's second-largest was not a small feat. The amount of goods and travel that go through Shanghai and Beijing was clearly evidenced during the 2008 Olympics, but there were still definite restrictions on showing only the events that China had a likelihood of winning throughout the homeland. China continues to limit its population's access to a free press and free Internet, and enacts basic censorship controls. Some also accuse China of keeping exchange rates artificially low despite owning significant cash reserves in the currencies of other countries, particularly the U.S. The continued rise in global markets will only increase the pace of China's globalization and integration, bringing with it a higher likelihood of continued peaceful relations. There are several theorists, for example, who suggest that globalization is making the world more integrated and will continue to bring about more peaceful relations. The theory is that if the economies of two countries are globally intertwined and linked (like the trade balance between China and the U.S.), they are more likely to negotiate toward peaceful solutions, and less likely to lean toward hostile relations. The "soft power" of globalization can then, theoretically, help make the world a more peaceful place as we proceed through the next half-century.

Conclusion: The "Rise of All" as We Move Toward 2050

Now that we have developed the Six Rings concept, examined how the System Essentials ring crosses all Six Levels of states, and looked at how the two main players on the international stage are affected in each ring, let us examine how the future of international relations might look as we move toward 2050. A December 2012 report from the National Intelligence Council predicts many shifts in the international spectrum, which they summarize as follows:

> In the world today, people are increasingly realizing that the successful development of countries is possible only through the augmentation of joint efforts for solving global problems. This trend counteracts growing radicalism of marginal regimes and different

[69] Guidetti, "Reshaping the Security Order in Asia-Pacific," 1.

[70] "Rare Protests in Vietnam against China over Sea Disputes," *Reuters* (9 December 2012); available at http://news.msn.com/world/rare-protests-in-vietnam-against-china-over-sea-disputes-2.

> socio-political, religious and ethnic groups. Over the next 20 years, the world will develop in an evolutionary manner without the radical changes and upheavals that were characteristic of the preceding two decades.[71]

In the United States, this report has sparked extensive discussion among governmental agencies on how to modernize and remain at the forefront of the world well beyond the next twenty years. The hope is that fewer radical changes and upheavals (in comparison with the past twenty years) will allow different resource allocations and personnel adjustments for both the Department of Defense and the Department of State. Since 1990, the U.S. military has had a significant footprint in the Middle East, which it looks to draw down significantly within the next five years. For other regions, however, the U.S. seems plenty willing to continue in its role as the international muscle in the security realm. These massive military draw-downs in the Middle East will allow for a renewed focus on other international issues. And, in fact, the "Pivot to Asia" declared by the Obama Administration is really just a rebalancing of resources to return to the pre-1990 status of a more even distribution between the Atlantic and Pacific theaters.

In the eastern theater, the U.S. will have more time and resources to focus on developing economies beyond the G20 nations without having to focus on Cold War containment, or massive resource-intensive conflicts in the war on terrorism. The extra time and resources will also allow for a more concentrated focus on the pre-9/11 efforts of conflict resolution on the Korean Peninsula. With the assistance of China's support in the region, perhaps all parties could resume the six-party talks that have stalled since before 2009, only with an added emphasis on either a permanent peace agreement or a reunification plan. Ideally, the icing on the cake would be a serious conversation about the sustainability of the status of Taiwan, and possibly developing a Sino-U.S. agreement for the long-term stability of the Taiwan Straits.[72] We have already discussed the fact that the massive surge in Chinese markets stemmed from a willingness to permit a degree of economic freedom in the 1970s. Even though this occurred with a high amount of state involvement in the development of specific sectors and infrastructure, it is relatively concrete proof that any country could follow similar steps. Logically, then, one could extrapolate that a focus on a globally integrated economy now could improve the interrelations of all nations over the next fifty years.

In the European theater, the U.S. will need to improve and reinforce relations with the EU. Within the economic realm, one can look at the merging of U.S., Canada and Mexico's interests in the 1993 North American Free Trade Agreement. Between 1993 and 2006, NAFTA trade increased 197 percent, with U.S. exports to its NAFTA partners increasing by 157 percent, as opposed to a 108 percent increase in trade with the other nations of the world. An EU/NAFTA free trade agreement could have a similar effect. By all accounts, this could significantly enhance over 50 percent of the global trade

[71] National Intelligence Council, "Strategic Global Forecast to the Year 2030," *International Affairs* 57 (2012).

[72] Guidetti, "Reshaping the Security Order in Asia-Pacific," 4.

market and, furthermore, considerably increase the integration of the global economy.[73] The European Union is arguably the world's largest "peaceful experiment" in progress, including winning the Nobel Prize for achievements towards the end of war in Europe. However, the Schengen Zone is quickly discovering the effects of immigration that affect many other areas of the world. Many would say, however, that this is not a bad thing, and that its multi-ethnic diversity has been the engine of the United States' economic improvements over the last decade.

In the remainder of the Western hemisphere, the growing powers of Brazil and Mexico are influencing their nearby neighbors. We have seen significant phase shifts in the opening of Cuba to businesses, and a display of recent accounting shortages in Venezuela, and potentially even a negotiated settlement with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC). Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina are having profound developing influences on the rest of the states in their neighborhoods. The likely forecast is continued improvement and definite rise in these states.

In the Middle East, the Arab Spring has introduced some of the most significant changes of any period in recent history. As many of these fledgling governments establish their course for the future, they are ripe for political and economic investments and are searching for good examples of how to contribute to the international community. Instead of spending USD 200 billion per year on the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, the U.S. can now allocate more resources to the Department of State and follow a leadership path that is much more transformational versus transactional, maybe even proposing a new round of peaceful negotiations to address the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In the African context, we have addressed the impact of U.S. AFRICOM and Chinese investments. Modern societal advancements are making their way each and every day to the numerous Level One and Two countries on the continent, and the fledgling African Union is integrating the five regional intra-governmental structures on the continent in unprecedented ways.

Across all six levels and all six rings, evidence supports the theory that the world could continue to advance, albeit slowly, one step at a time. In global governance, there has been a significant trend towards democratization and greater respect for individual rights. The number of conflicts and intra-state wars has declined to the lowest numbers in world history, although thanks to global media coverage, these conflicts may seem to be more graphic of late. The same forces have highlighted a trend of corruption in developing nations, but these same transparency forces are causing the "corruption index" to have a great effect, and the dichotomy of the rich getting richer and controlling all of the corrupt nations (i.e., aristocrats) is at least exposed to public awareness, if not placed on the road to elimination. Take, for example, recent attention paid to bribes in the Afghan government, and the influence that has had on the Karzai regime. And, on global issues such as energy consumption and science advancement, the world has made (and

[73] "NAFTA's Winners and Losers," *Investopedia* (26 February 2009); available at www.investopedia.com/articles/economics/08/north-american-free-trade-agreement.asp#ixzz2IWY11mza.

will likely continue to make) significant progress. In a "Future of Energy" study conducted by the Shell Corporation, they predict that:

> By 2050, over 60 percent of electricity comes from renewable resources. Carbon capture/storage means fossil fuels are used in more environmentally friendly ways. The world [will] need around 26 percent less energy than if it had not acted. Though energy use will be much higher than it is now, it is far lower than it could have been and the path is much more sustainable. There will be three billion more of us, but CO2 emissions will be lower per capita.[74]

Thus, it appears in each of the six rings, there is clear evidence of likely improvement in the future. Though the "Rise of All" could describe the course the world takes between now and 2050, it is certainly difficult to prove that this is the one and only answer, as there is really no historical precedent for the simultaneous advancement of all nations in the world (just as the Unipolar World, the Multipolar World, or the "Rise of the Rest" also likely provide incomplete explanations). Trying to extrapolate from other venues, however, one can see logical scenarios where integrated development and competition has advanced all players. In the field of Olympic sports, for instance, there is clearly increased competition between all nations, but the Olympics also provide a forum where nations can get along more harmoniously than anywhere else. A particular example came when South Korean and North Korean athletes marched out under the same flag during the 2000 Sydney Olympics, a level of cooperation not achieved in the political realm in over sixty years. And yet, simultaneously, intense Olympic competition has led to new world records year after year. One can find another example in the power grids of the United States. The high level of interconnectedness means that there are fewer grand failures; when one power station fails, the rest of the grid picks up the load, and customers continue to enjoy power. Only a massive systemic shock can cut power to the entire grid. And, in a final example, when a family of three children all enjoy participating in track and field, and the third child starts to get really fast, the older siblings tend to improve their own performance in an attempt to remain ahead of their younger challenger.

In that vein, if Europe's global dominance has come and gone, and the U.S. is now maximizing its performance on the "athletic field," perhaps China—the third sibling in this scenario—will end up performing faster and better. But clearly, in this case, China's performance will entice the other two "siblings" to adjust their performance to match. And so, between now and 2050, the three actors will only continue to improve as the other 190 siblings around the world decide to pick up the sport, and bring about the "Rise of All."

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[74] Shell Global, "Shell Energy Scenarios to 2050," available at www.shell.com/global/future-energy/scenarios/2050/acc-version-flash/2050.html.

Xinjiang in China's Foreign Policy toward Central Asia

Malika Tukmadiyeva [*]

Introduction

The collapse of the Soviet Union led to the appearance of new players in the Central Asian region, the most important of which is China. In the span of some twenty years, China has become a major trade partner and investor in the region. Its trade with nations in the region has grown impressively, from almost nothing in 1991 to more than USD 30 billion in 2011, with China being the region's second-largest trading partner after Russia. According to the Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, Wen Jiabao, Chinese direct investments in Central Asia by 2012 are estimated at USD 250 billion.[1] China is extensively building oil and gas pipelines, developing a network of transportation links, "as well as expanding its diplomatic and cultural presence in the region."[2]

Scholars and experts on the region have devoted extensive attention to the question of what are the drivers of Chinese policies in Central Asia. There is a consensus among Western as well as Chinese and Central Asian researchers that the region is not the primary focus of China's foreign policy. China's relations with the United States is its most important bilateral relationship, and perhaps the primary focus of its foreign policy, along with relations with Japan and other nations in North East Asia, with concerns over stability on the Korean Peninsula taking second place. South East Asia and the wider Asia-Pacific region take third place in order of priority.[3] However, one point that has been highlighted by most studies is that the aspiration to pacify the restive northwestern region of Xinjiang (officially the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region) constitutes the key factor that defines Chinese engagement with and presence in Central Asia.[4] Thus, according to Sébastien Peyrouse, "If Chinese influence in Central Asia has evolved in the course of the two post-Soviet decades, China's key interests have not changed. The

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1 "China's Investment in the Countries of Central Asia Are Almost $250 Billion—Wen Jiabao," *Kyrgyz Telegraph Agency* (2 September 2012); available at www.kyrtag.kg/?q=ru/news/26981.

2 Joshua Kucera, "Central Asia: What is China's Policy Driver?" *Eurasianet.org* (18 December 2012); available at http://www.eurasianet.org/node/66314.

3 Sébastien Peyrouse, Jos Boonstra, and Marlène Laruelle, "China in Central Asia," *EUCAM* (5 March 2013); available at http://isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Articles/Special-Feature/Detail/?lng=en&id=160545&contextid774=160545&contextid775=160542&tabid=1454181096.

4 Sometimes also spelled "Sinkiang."

Central Asian zone has strategic value in Beijing's eyes owing to its relationship with Xinjiang." [5]

Huasheng Zhao, writing in 2007, argued that China's economic interests in Central Asia are insignificant in terms of explaining Chinese interest in the region, while its role in guaranteeing the stability and economic development of Xinjiang and thus the territorial integrity of China is essential.[6] Furthermore, he says that the logic behind the Chinese presence in Central Asia is inherently led by domestic pressures, particularly with regard to security needs.[7] Prominent Kazakhstani sinologist Konstantin Syroyezhkin says that Central Asia is seen by China as a "strategic rear," since the problems that take place in the region have significant impact on one of China's *Achilles' heels*: Xinjiang.[8] As Stephen Blank emphasizes:

> Xinjiang, like Taiwan and neighboring Tibet, is a neuralgic issue for China, which desperately needs internal stability in that predominantly Muslim, resource-rich and strategically important region. Beijing's strategic and energy objectives are based on stability in Xinjiang, and its Central Asian policies grow out of its preoccupation with stability there.[9]

Although a study of the centuries-long historical, cultural, and ethnic ties between Central Asia and Xinjiang is of interest in itself,[10] the emphasis that China places on Xinjiang with regard to its policy in Central Asia is a significant topic of study, as it highlights a number of characteristics and concerns of contemporary Chinese strategic thinking and strategic culture. China's promotion of the idea of the "three evils" identified by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)—terrorism, extremism, and separatism—gives insights into China's priorities in the region.

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5 Sébastien Peyrouse, "Central Asia's Growing Partnership with China," *EUCAM Working Paper* No. 4 (2009), 6.

6 As an extensive pipeline network between Central Asia and China is currently being expanded, Chinese dependence on Central Asia in terms of energy supplies is likely to grow. Currently, China's oil imports mainly come from the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America, while Central Asia accounts for approximately 4 percent of Chinese oil, and 10 percent of gas imports, mainly from Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. See Niklas Swanström, "China and Greater Central Asia: New Frontiers?" *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program* (2011): 53.

7 Huasheng Zhao, "Central Asia in China's Diplomacy," in *Central Asia: The View from Washington, Moscow, and Beijing*, ed. Eugene B. Rumer, Dmitriy Trenin, and Huasheng Zhao (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2007), 154.

8 "Interview with Konstantin Syroyezhkin," *ObshestvenniiReiting* (1 December 2011); available at http://www.pr.kg/gazeta/number553/1927/.

9 Stephen Blank, "Xinjiang and China's Strategy in Central Asia," *Asia Times Online* (3 April 2004); available at http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/FD03Ad06.html.

10 Due to the limitations of this essay, it will not dwell upon the historical and cultural links between Central Asia and Xinjiang. However, the links are apparent to the extent that Xinjiang has been continuously included by many experts within the larger construct referred to as "Central Asia." For further information on this topic, see Michael E. Clarke, *Xinjiang and China's Rise in Central Asia, 1949-2009* (London: Routledge, 2011).

This article is an exploration of the place of Xinjiang in China's foreign policy toward Central Asia. It does not ask the question of what are China's overall interests in Central Asia, and does not doubt that there are multiple Chinese interests in this region over and above its concerns with stability in Xinjiang. Instead, it turns the question around: What is the place of Xinjiang in China's policy in Central Asia? Is China's engagement with Central Asia mediated in any way by its domestic policies and concerns over Xinjiang? To restate the focus, the article is interested in finding out any and all relevant roles and factors that Xinjiang represents for China in Central Asia. Furthermore, by doing so the study goes to examine the transformation of Chinese priorities and tactics towards Central Asia as well as to explore the way in which China has expanded its influence in the region. Thus, China in this paper is examined as an object, Central Asia as a subject, and Xinjiang as a factor.

The essay is also impelled by a number of other facts, such as the rapid development of Xinjiang in recent years, and the share of Central Asian states in Xinjiang's foreign trade volume, accounting to some sources for approximately 83 percent, and being the region's biggest trade partner.[11] Moreover, about 80 percent of China's trade with Central Asia is conducted through Xinjiang.[12] However, it is important to note that this paper does not see Xinjiang as an autonomous actor, but as a factor of Chinese policy in Central Asia.

Xinjiang represents the only border China shares with Central Asia: more than 1,700 km with Kazakhstan, approximately 1,000 km with Kyrgyzstan, and about 450 km with Tajikistan.[13] Moreover, Xinjiang is closely linked to Central Asia by historical, cultural, religious, and ethnic ties.

The clashes between ethnic Uighur and Han Chinese in Urumqi in 2009, which allegedly resulted in over 200 deaths, arguably represented China's most significant ethnic unrest in decades.[14] China's concern over Uighur ethnic separatism in Xinjiang has pushed it to increase the pace of development in what is its largest region, yet remains one of its poorest. China's aspirations of "leapfrog development" and "long-term stability" in Xinjiang are likely to result in respective "leapfrog" increases of Chinese pres-

[11] Cobus Block, "Bilateral Trade Between Xinjiang and Kazakhstan: Challenges or Opportunities?" *China Policy Institute Blog* (7 February 2013); available at http://blogs.nottingham.ac.uk/chinapolicyinstitute/2013/02/07/bilateral-trade-between-xinjiang-and-kazakhstan-challenges-or-opportunities/.

[12] Niklas Swanström, "China's Role in Central Asia: Soft And Hard Power," *Global Dialogue* 9:1–2 (2007); available at http://www.worlddialogue.org/content.php?id=402.

[13] Huasheng Zhao, "Central Asia in China's Diplomacy," 139.

[14] Justin V. Hastings, "Charting the Course of Uyghur Unrest," *The China Quarterly* 208 (2011): 911.

ence in Central Asia.[15] And it is beyond any doubt that this development is already taking place.[16]

Drawing from the main arguments made in the literature on Chinese influence in Central Asia, this article poses and aims to test three sets of hypotheses. The first hypothesis posed is: "Chinese foreign policy in Central Asia is an extension of its policy over Xinjiang." This hypothesis claims that for Beijing, having cooperative regimes in Central Asia provides insurance that Xinjiang separatism will not be supported by these countries. Furthermore, the stronger the economic ties between Central Asia and China/ Xinjiang, the less rosy are the prospects for political/ethnic separatist movements.

A second hypothesis, competing with the first, is: "Xinjiang's place in Chinese foreign policy toward Central Asia is purely pragmatic and economic; the development of the previously laggard Xinjiang region is a goal with no relation to separatism." Sub-hypotheses are: "As one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, China pursues every market it can get, no matter how small or big." Another: "Economic development of Xinjiang is in the overall development interests of China."

A third hypothesis is: "Xinjiang is an element of Chinese foreign policy toward Central Asia as a great/major power." Sub-hypotheses here can be stated as: "Xinjiang is the western frontier of China, bordering Central Asia, and its role is only that of such a bordering region" and "A pro-Chinese Central Asia is a way to prevent U.S. encirclement." Another sub-hypothesis: "Chinese policy in Central Asia is comparable to Chinese policy in East and Southeast Asia – a strategy of gradual economic-based rise into major-power status and dominance." Here it would be potentially interesting to test the following sub-hypothesis: "If China's 'key' to enter Southeast Asia was the Chinese ethnic and cultural presence there, the Turkic Uighurs of Xinjiang are a key to enter/link up with Central Asia."

To summarize, the first main hypothesis might claim that Xinjiang is a significant separatist concern for China, and therefore its Central Asian policy is designed to address and manage that threat. The second main hypothesis claims that Xinjiang was poor (and therefore also separatist), so China's strategy to develop Xinjiang was through trade and economic integration with Central Asia. The third main hypothesis is that Xinjiang is an element of China's great-power strategy, and that Xinjiang's Uighurs may serve as a useful link to Central Asia. The article will elaborate and test each of these assumptions, and see whether any of these hypotheses are able to provide helpful insights about Xinjiang and its relationship to China's policy in Central Asia.[17]

This inquiry is relevant given the growing interest in the "Chinese Rise" around the world, as well as in academia. It will further analyze the topic of the often-neglected

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[15] Shan Wei and Weng Cuifen, "China's New Policy in Xinjiang and its Challenges," *East Asian Policy* 2:3 (2010): 61; available at www.eai.nus.edu.sg/Vol2No3_ShanWei&WengCuifen.pdf.

[16] "Russian-Led Customs Union Intensifies Sino-Russian Rivalry in Central Asia," *Global Security News* (4 August 2011); available at http://global-security-news.com/2011/08/ 04/russian-led-customs-union-intensifies-sino-russian-rivalry-in-central-asia.

[17] I would like to thank Dr. Emil Dzhuraev and Dr. Graeme Herd for their enormous support and invaluable assistance in defining and formulating the main focus and hypotheses of this paper.

Central Asian aspect of this "Rise." As Niklas Swanström notes, "The implications of the growing Chinese prominence in the region will undoubtedly have a significance that extends beyond the region, and to fully grasp the potential (or threat) of this, it is crucial to understand Chinese intentions and the extent of its influence."[18] While it is true that a significant portion of the scholarship on Central Asia is devoted to studies of the growing role of China in the region, this article offers a new perspective for framing Chinese policies towards Central Asia through the lens of policies in Xinjiang.

Xinjiang and Central Asia: Elevating the Internal, Linking to the External

The following sections of this article are aimed at testing the validity of the three hypotheses posed above against the empirical realities of Chinese policies in Central Asia. This section aims at testing the first hypothesis, which assumed: "Chinese foreign policy in Central Asia is an extension of its policy over Xinjiang." This hypothesis claims that for Beijing, having cooperative regimes in Central Asia provides insurance that Xinjiang separatist movements will not meet with support in these countries. Furthermore, it assumes that the stronger the economic ties between Central Asia and China/Xinjiang, the lower the chances for political/ethnic separatist movements. This section seeks to demonstrate how China addressed the very realist goals of maintaining national security, territorial integrity in Xinjiang, and stability in Central Asia through the liberal means of economic expansion, regional integration, and development promotion.

Realist Needs

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, China found itself in a situation where it had to engage with a number of independent states to its west, instead of one Soviet superpower. Relief from the Soviet threat was soon replaced by the uncertain prospects of managing relations with the unstable and largely unknown region of Central Asia to its west, as well as the threat of regional Islamic and Pan-Turkic revival in terms of its possible spillover into separatist Xinjiang. The dissolution of the Soviet Union coincided with the wave of unrest in Xinjiang in 1990–91, including an Islamist-inspired rebellion in the township of Baden.[19] The level of threat perceived in Beijing due to the convergence of external and internal factors "was illustrated by Vice-Premier Wang Zhen's exhortation during a visit to the provincial capital of Urumqi for the regional authorities to construct a 'great wall of steel' to defend the motherland from 'hostile external forces' and 'national splittists' internally."[20] Not surprisingly, the primary (if not the only) objective of Beijing's policies in Central Asia throughout the 1990s was to guarantee stability in the northwest by dealing with the border issues and trying to ensure that the

[18] Swanström, "China's Role in Central Asia," 12.

[19] Michael Clarke and Gaye Christofferson, "Xinjiang and the Great Islamic Circle: The Impact of Transnational Forces on Chinese Regional Economic Planning," *The China Quarterly* 133 (1993): 130–51.

[20] Michael Clarke, "China's Xinjiang Problem," *The Interpreter* (10 July 2010); available at http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2009/07/10/Chinas-Xinjiang-Problem-Part-1.aspx.

newly established governments recognized and respected the "One China" discourse and controlled separatist elements within the Uighur diasporic community in the region. Xing Guangcheng argued that, "to a larger extent the stability and prosperity of Northwest China is closely bound up with the stability and prosperity in Central Asia."[21]

Xinjiang, like Taiwan and Tibet, has historically been a land of constant unrest and struggles for territory.[22] Michael Clarke claims "Xinjiang is arguably more important to China than Tibet. Xinjiang is China's largest province, endowed with significant oil and gas resources, and acts as both a strategic buffer and gateway to Central Asia, with the province sharing borders with the post-Soviet Central Asian Republics, Russia, Afghanistan and Pakistan."[23] Moreover, it is a strategically important region, not only in terms of its natural resources and geostrategic location—historically serving as a security "buffer zone" for "China Proper" against regular invasions by nomadic hordes, and (more recently) the Soviet Union (and perhaps Afghan instability today?)—but also because the preservation of Xinjiang carries immense symbolic importance for Beijing. Stability or instability in Xinjiang will have direct effect on other regions of China. Even though today it would be a highly unlikely occurrence, if Xinjiang succeeded in breaking away from China and gaining independence, it would undoubtedly destabilize other regions that share a long history of restless struggle for independence, most importantly Taiwan and Tibet, and perhaps Inner Mongolia as well.

The Uighur issue was the particular reason behind Chinese efforts to establish the "Shanghai Five" dialogue between China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan in 1996, and its institutionalization into the SCO in June 2001. Through the diplomacy of "separatist containment with neighboring Central Asian states, China tried to assure control over Xinjiang."[24] Prior to the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the SCO defined its priority to be multilateral cooperation against the "Three Evils" of "separatism, terrorism, and extremism."

After 9/11, Beijing was successful in turning the international situation to its advantage, the "Uighur issue" policy was given a new connotation, and was now conducted under the umbrella of the larger "War on Terror," which became an omnipresent concept after the Al Qaeda attacks. Michael Dillon, in his article "Xinjiang and the 'War against Terror,'" writes:

> One reason for China's enthusiastic espousal of the campaign against terrorism became clear when the Foreign Minister of the PRC, Tang Jiaxuan, claimed in a telephone conversation with his Russian opposite number Igor Ivanov in October 10th [2011] that China was also the victim of terrorism by Uighur separatists…By defining all separa-

[21] Ann McMillan, "Xinjiang and Central Asia: Interdependency, not Integration," in *China, Xinjiang and Central Asia: History, Transition and Crossborder Interaction into the 21st Century*, ed. Colin Mackerras and Michael Clarke (London: Routledge, 2009), 96.

[22] Stephen Blank, "Xinjiang and China's Strategy in Central Asia."

[23] Clarke, "China's Xinjiang Problem."

[24] Donald H. McMillen, "China, Xinjiang, and Central Asia: 'Glocality' in the Year 2008," in *China, Xinjiang and Central Asia: History, Transition and Crossborder Interaction into the 21st Century*, ed. Colin Mackerras and Michael Clarke (London: Routledge, 2009), 9.

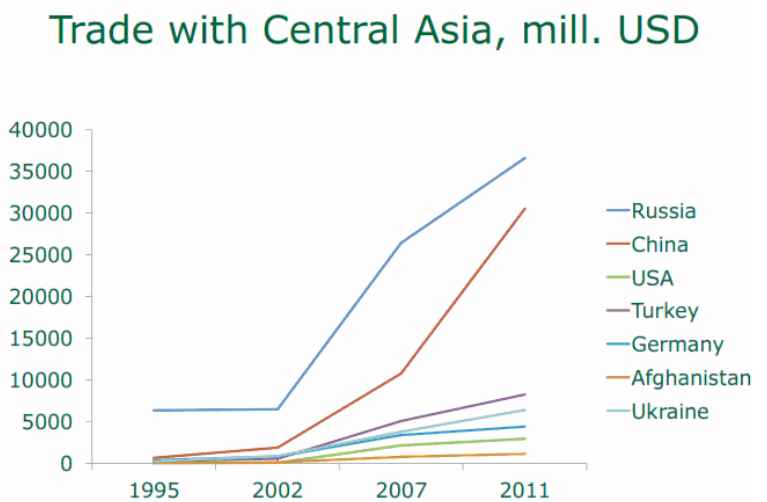
> tist activity in Xinjiang as terrorist, the government of the PRC is hoping to obtain carte blanche from the international community to take whatever action it sees fit in the region.[25]

China was also successful in concluding agreements with its SCO partners (as well as Pakistan and Nepal) that allowed the extradition of alleged Uighur "terrorists" to China.[26]

Liberal Means

Chinese presence in the economies of the Central Asian states has been experiencing a boom, as China is steadily and inevitably overtaking Russia's position of the biggest economic partner to the region.

China is investing massively in the construction of infrastructure like railways, roads, aviation facilities, telecommunications networks, and power grids in Central Asia. Its engagement in resource development—in Central Asia most importantly in oil and gas—is increasing. For example, Chinese companies now produce a considerable part of



Graph 1: Trade with Central Asia, 1995-2011.

Source: Norwegian Institute of Foreign Affairs, "Central Asia Data-Gathering and Analysis Team," in the Regional Security Conference, OSCE Academy, 15 September 2012.

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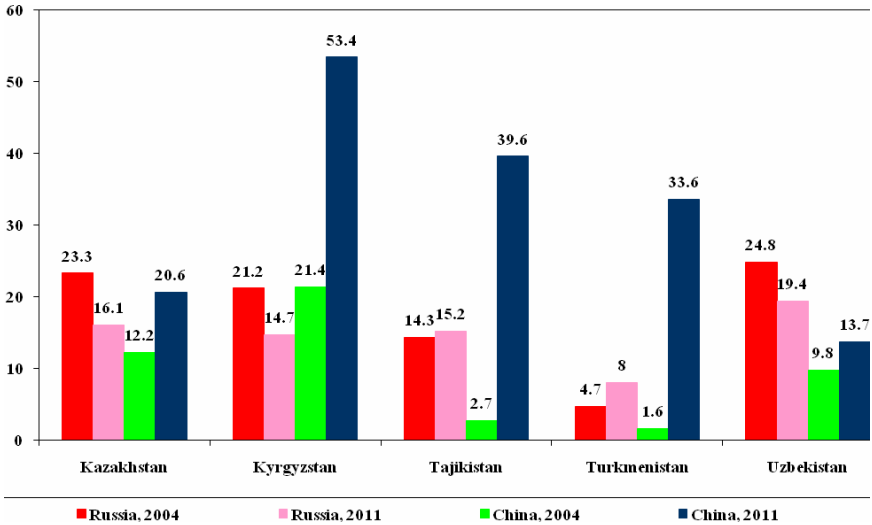
[25] Michael Dillon, "Xinjiang and the 'War against Terror': We Have Terrorists Too," *The World Today* 58:1 (2002), quoted in McMillen, "China, Xinjiang, and Central Asia," 14.

[26] Michael Clarke, "Xinjiang Problem: Dilemmas of State Building, Human Rights and Terrorism in China's West," *Human Rights Defender* 21:1 (2012): 16-19.



Graph 2: Share of Russia and China in external trade of Central Asian countries (2004 and 2011, % of turnover).[27]

Kazakhstan's oil output,[28] and the share is, according to some sources, about to grow up to 40 percent by Fall 2013, a share larger than that of Kazakhstan.[29] Likewise, China offered USD 10 billion in loans to the Central Asian states "to support economic cooperation within the SCO,"[30] and promoted establishment of an SCO development bank to aid the member states.[31] However, these actions are not to be perceived as charity. Even though trade with Central Asia accounts for negligible sliver of Chinese total exports, this is a strategically important sliver, as Central Asia accounts for 83 percent of total exports of the restive province of Xinjiang.[32]

To address the threat of separatism and achieve "lasting stability" in Xinjiang, Beijing has undertaken a strategic plan of "leapfrog development," in addition to a colossal

[27] From Andrei Zagorski, "Share of Russia and China in external trade of Central Asian countries (2004 and 2011, % of turnover)," GCSP, presentation on 4 March 2013: 7.

[28] "Kazakhstan May Hand Kashagan Stake to China," *BusinessNewEurope* (17 April 2013); available at http://www.bne.eu/story4823/Kazakhstan_may_hand_Kashagan_stake_to_China.

[29] "Chinese Companies to Control Over 40 % of Kazakhstan's Oil Shortly," *Tengrinews.kz* (8 January 2013); available at http://en.tengrinews.kz/markets/Chinese-companies-to-control-over-40-of-Kazakhstans-oil-shortly-15796/.

[30] "China Offers 10-Bln-USD SCO Loan," *Xinhua News Service* (6 July 2012); available at http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-06/07/c_131637089.htm.

[31] "Xi's Central Asia Trip Aimed at Common Development, All-Win Cooperation," *Xinhua News Service* (15 September 2013); available at http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-09/15/c_125389057.htm.

[32] Block, "Bilateral Trade Between Xinjiang and Kazakhstan."

push to "Go West," otherwise known as the Great Western Development Program. During the visit of President Hu Jintao to Xinjiang in 2009, a month after the tragic ethnic clash, he said that "the fundamental way to resolve the Xinjiang problem is to expedite development in Xinjiang."[33] Soon Xinjiang was granted "extraordinarily important strategic status" in the nation's development program. A national work conference on Xinjiang was held to outline the strategic plan of "leapfrog development." A complex of measures resulted in the establishment of new Special Economic Zone in Kashgar; the granting of the status of special trade zones to the ports of Alatau and Korgas, thus fating the region to become China's most important gateway to Central Asia; and the implementation of a program of "pairing assistance," under which nineteen provinces and cities were obliged to provide technical and financial assistance to assigned areas in Xinjiang. On the other hand, the policies of rapid economic development and encouragement of Han migration into Xinjiang were supposed to contain the situation from inside.[34] Chinese leaders definitely took the secessionist threat seriously, and evidently saw the solution to the Xinjiang problem as lying in economic development, driven by the logic that "if the region can develop fast enough, Uyghurs will accept Chinese rule and their dissatisfactions will disappear."[35]

These domestic developments give significant clues to understanding the drivers of Chinese policies in Central Asia. Foremost part of its long history of statehood, China has been a principally inward-looking power; the policies of "opening up" of the last decades did not necessarily change the nature of Beijing's interests. According to Wu Xinbo, there is still a strong link between domestic and foreign policies: "China is still a country whose real interests lie mainly within its boundaries."[36]

That explains the strategy of "double-opening" employed towards Xinjiang in relation to Central Asia – an effort to tie Xinjiang into "China Proper" through simultaneous integration into Central Asian economies while establishing security and cooperation with the Central Asian states. This is how the prominent scholar of Xinjiang Michael Clarke describes this complex strategic logic:

> Thus, security within Xinjiang was to be achieved by economic growth, while economic growth was to be assured by the reinforcement of the state's instruments of political and social control, which in turn was to be achieved by opening the region to Central Asia. Importantly, the economic opening to Central Asia would come to offer Beijing a significant element of leverage to induce Central Asian states to aid it in its quest to secure Xinjiang against "separatist" elements.[37]

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[33] Shan Wei and Weng Cuifen, "China's New Policy in Xinjiang and its Challenges," 61.
[34] Ibid., 61.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Wu Xinbo, "Four Contradictions Constraining China's Foreign Policy Behaviour," in *Chinese Foreign Policy: Pragmatism and Strategic Behaviour*, ed. Suisheng Zhao (New York: East Gate Books, 2004), 58.
[37] Clarke and Christofferson, "Xinjiang and the Great Islamic Circle," 165.

Remembering the role of Xinjiang as an important trade hub on the ancient routes of the Great Silk Road, China's blueprint today is to revive its status as a center for trade, oil and gas being the new commodities traded. Therefore, China's interest in Central Asian oil and gas is not merely economic; the energy sector serves as a "pillar" industry within Beijing's Great Western Development strategy.[38] Energy transportation networks that run from Central Asia through Xinjiang directly to the heart of China would gradually create a comprehensive cooperation system that would tie the whole region into a "complex interdependence."[39] The motivation is threefold. First, it would satisfy China's growing hunger for energy and diversify its energy supplies, which today are heavily dependent on the Middle East. Second, it will be beneficial to the Central Asian economies, opening them up to the second-largest energy consumer in the world, thus benefiting the economic development of the region. Finally, it will tie Xinjiang simultaneously to Central Asia and China.

Thus economic growth, energy, and strategic interests are inextricably tied together. But the precondition for realizing China's strategic and energy objectives is founded on the premise of internal stability in Xinjiang. Thus China's Central Asian policies as a whole are fundamentally strategically conceived and grow out of a preoccupation with the potential for unrest in its lone majority-Muslim province.[40]

The New Frontier

The previous section aimed at providing empirical support for the first hypothesis posed by this paper; its main argument was that China's policy in Central Asia is an extension of its policies in Xinjiang. This section aims to illustrate the argument postulated by the second hypothesis: "Xinjiang's place in Chinese foreign policy towards Central Asia is purely pragmatic and economic." The accompanying sub-hypotheses are: "As one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, China pursues every market it can get, no matter how small or big, and Central Asia is no exception." And: "Economic development of the previously laggard Xinjiang is in China's overall development interests." Accordingly, the postulates of this hypothesis are largely liberal in their nature.

As Michael Clarke argues, Xinjiang's role all through the Chinese history has been a strategic one.[41] It was a transition zone linking China to the Muslim world and Europe. Throughout the twentieth century, due to certain political circumstances China was unable to utilize the advantageous strategic location of Xinjiang. In addition, Xinjiang was cut off from its "vein of life," its main historical mission as a crossroad of trade routes connecting the great civilizations of the past. During the entire century landlocked Xin-

[38] Clarke and Christofferson, "Xinjiang and the Great Islamic Circle," 130–51.

[39] Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, "Power and Interdependence Revisited," *International Organization* 41:4 (1987): 725–53.

[40] Stephen Blank, "Xinjiang and China's Strategy in Central Asia."

[41] Michael Clarke, "China's Integration of Xinjiang with Central Asia: Securing a 'Silk Road' to Great Power Status?" *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly* 6:2 (2008): 90.

jiang languished on the periphery of the Chinese state, far away from the great economic success of the coastal zones of China.

A 1999 paper stated that "The Chinese government is well aware of the fact that... central and western China, where most minority people live, lags far behind the eastern coastal areas in development."[42] Indeed, in the beginning of the 2000s an estimated ninety percent of the eighty million Chinese living below the poverty line lived in the western regions of China.[43] Therefore, in order to sustain the overall economic growth of the country, Beijing needed to address the socio-economic issues on its western periphery.

On the other hand, China needed to supply enough energy to satisfy the needs of its people and fuel its continued economic development. In the early 2000s, China realized that it had become a net energy importer, with rapid annual increases of energy consumption. Accordingly, China's energy objectives in the tenth Five-Year Plan (2000–05) point out that China's security objectives "must be considered within the national political goal of better integrating China's eastern and western regions," and that "Beijing thus will have to resolve, both for reasons of continued economic well-being and domestic tranquility, a national priority of working toward a stable international environment."[44]

Roughly a decade ago Beijing introduced an ambitious "Go West" campaign designed to bring economic development to the six laggard western regions.[45] Due to its endowment of natural resources, strategic geographical location, and massive arable lands, Xinjiang has been a major target of the campaign. Xinjiang is also a key link to Central Asia, which is no less abundant in natural resources. Central Asian gas and oil, even though they would satisfy only a small part of China's energy needs, are important in terms of addressing China's increasing energy deficit and Beijing's risk diversification strategy. Chinese analyst Lan Peng argues for greater energy cooperation with Central Asia. He maintains that other energy supplying regions all bear high levels of risk. "The Middle East, which has 61% of global oil reserves and 41% of natural gas reserves, is politically unstable; Africa has other drawbacks such as societal instability, the risk of terrorism, and its distance from China; Latin America, in geopolitical as well as

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[42] Dru C. Gladney, "The Chinese Program of Development and Control, 1978–2001; Responses to Chinese Rule: Patterns of Cooperation and Opposition," in *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland*, ed. S. Frederick Starr (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2004), 337, cited in Marissa A. Dorais, "The Go West Campaign in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, People's Republic of China: Water Scarcity and Economic Growth" (Environmental Studies Senior Project, Lewis & Clark College, 2005); available at http://enviro.lclark.edu/students/ projects/2005-06/2005-06forweb/mdorais.pdf.

[43] Elizabeth Economy, "China's 'Go West' Campaign: Ecological Construction or Ecological Exploitation?" *China Environment Series* 5 (2002): 4.

[44] Bernard Cole, "'Oil for the Lamps of China' – Beijing's 21st-Century Search for Energy," National Defense University, Institute for National Strategic Studies, McNair Paper 67 (October 2003), 50; available at http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA421818.

[45] Economy, "China's 'Go West' Campaign," 4.

geographical terms, is too close to the US,"[46] Lan Peng writes, whereas Central Asia is a geographically adjacent, stable region, and its economic development would help to boost the economy and security of Xinjiang.[47] "Central Asia has abundant energy resources, while China has a stable demand for energy. Cooperation between the two sides has excellent prospects," said Liu Hongpeng, chief of the Energy Security and Water Resources Department of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific of the United Nations during the Second China-Eurasia Expo in Urumqi, capital of Xinjiang, in 2012. At the same venue, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao affirmed Beijing's far-reaching ambitions:

> Cooperation in this field has expanded from simple imports and procurement to both upstream and downstream sectors covering design, prospecting, refining, processing, storage, transport and maintenance. China should build more energy projects, such as the China-Central Asia natural gas pipelines and the China-Kazakhstan oil pipelines, and hasten the creation of new energy pipelines between China and Russia.[48]

Today, China's infrastructure network "is penetrating an area stretching from Azerbaijan and Iran in the West, to Pakistan in the south, and Mongolia/Central Asia in the north."[49] A number of Chinese-sponsored roads reach as far as Western Europe. Notably, the massive "Western China–Western Europe" transport corridor, 8,445 km long, and called by some the New Silk Road, is by far the biggest infrastructure project in the region that has enjoyed Chinese support; this road is expected to lead to a four-fold reduction of the delivery time from China to Europe.[50]

With its natural resource export-oriented economy, enormous infrastructure needs, and high demand for low-priced Chinese products, it is difficult to find a region as complementary to China in terms of its economic structure as Central Asia. A home to 66 million people, its market is of interest for China simply on its face. The development of Xinjiang's role in international trade was announced to be one of the main objectives of the "Go West" program.[51] However, if the efforts of the Chinese government to build up infrastructure have been a facilitator, the role of small traders and truckers is not to be neglected for their importance in supporting the thrust into the region, playing a role that

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[46] Lan Peng, "An Analysis of the Feasibility of Cooperation in the Energy Sector Between China and Central Asia Based on the SWOT Method (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)," *KejiaoDaokan – The Guide of Science and Education* (November 2011): 240–41; cited in "The New Great Game in Central Asia," *European Council on Foreign Relations* (2011); available at http://www.ecfr.eu/page/-/China%20Analysis_The%20new%20Great%20Game%20in%20Central%20Asia_September2011.pdf.

[47] Ibid.

[48] "China Seeks Regional Energy Cooperation as Challenges Mount," *People's Daily Online* (6 September 2012); available at http://english.people.com.cn/90778/7938283.html.

[49] Swanström, "China's Role in Central Asia."

[50] "West Europe–West China Project to Increase Deliveries by Trucks Almost Four-fold," *Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan*, May 2007; available at http://en.government.kz/site/news/052007/04.

[51] Economy, "China's 'Go West' Campaign," 4.

is perhaps even more important than that of the big Chinese corporations. Small businesses are largely responsible for the expansion of China's market presence in Central Asia, opening up Xinjiang's markets, and providing employment in the region. In words of Premier Wen Jiabao, "Sound infrastructure can promote people-to-people exchanges and help drive economic cooperation and trade."[52]

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the opening up of the borders to the newly independent Central Asian states, Xinjiang once again justified its name of the "New Frontiers" of China. Beijing's efforts are producing results, as Xinjiang's economy has been experiencing rapid growth, with annual GDP growth in the region outpacing China's already impressive national numbers.[53] The "open door policy" adopted toward the neighboring countries has led to massive investments into transportation and energy infrastructure, booming cross-border trade, "as well as a pooling of resources from eastern to western China."[54] Thus, Chinese policies have had multiple effects. First, they have addressed the issue of energy diversification, as well as China's growing demand for energy. Second, they have helped to elevate the laggard Xinjiang economy, slowly but surely making it into a Central Asian economic hub. Finally, these policies have opened new markets for Chinese goods in the states of Central Asia.

Rise of a Great Power

This section of the article will put forth the hypothesis that the role of Xinjiang in Chinese foreign policy in Central Asia is driven purely by economic concerns, and is based on pragmatic interests. In turn, this section is an examination of the argument proposed by the third hypothesis, which postulates that Xinjiang is an element of Chinese foreign policy toward Central Asia as a great/major power. The attendant sub-hypotheses here can be stated as: "Xinjiang is the western frontier of China, bordering Central Asia, and its role is only that of border region," and "A pro-Chinese Central Asia is a way to prevent U.S. encirclement." A third sub-hypothesis is: "Chinese policy in Central Asia is comparable to Chinese policy in East and Southeast Asia – a strategy of gradual economic-based rise into major-power status and dominance." And, finally: "If China's 'key' to enter Southeast Asia was the Chinese ethnic and cultural presence there, the Turkic Uighurs of Xinjiang are a key to enter/link up with Central Asia." Taking the constructivist paradigm as a framework, this section will argue that China's policies in Central Asia are shaped by China's perception of itself as a "rising" great power, and Xinjiang's role in this policy is that of a "key" that will help China gain access to the region.

General Liu Yazhou of China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) once said that "Central Asia is the thickest piece of cake given to the modern Chinese by the heav-

[52] "China Seeks Regional Energy Cooperation as Challenges Mount."

[53] China Bureau of Statistics (2010) cited in Gloria Chou, "Autonomy in Xinjiang: Institutional Dilemmas and the Rise of Uighur Ethno-Nationalism," The *Josef Korbel Journal of Advanced International Studies* 4 (2012): 170.

[54] Swanström, "China's Role in Central Asia," 41.

ens,"[55] and Xinjiang was to become a "Eurasian Continental Bridge" in words of the veteran CCP leader in Xinjiang Wang Enmao.[56] Xinjiang's pivotal geopolitical position, as well as its historical and cultural ties with Central Asia, was of great value to China as it tried to expand its influence into Central Asia, simultaneously integrating the separatist province of Xinjiang into greater China. The integration of Xinjiang into Central Asia is not only supposed to reduce the threat of Uighur separatism, but also strengthen China's geostrategic position on the international stage.

The creation of economic links to the Eurasian inland forms an indispensable part of China's rise. Without the sustainable development of its interior western regions, social unrest is guaranteed to impede China's great power ambitions which, for better or worse, is bound to affect all other states' interests in the region.[57] Xinjiang provides Beijing a justification to assert itself as a Central Asian power. Moreover, it is a "door" for China into the wider Muslim world. Safeguarding the Chinese position in Central Asia and Xinjiang is thus evidently linked to its ability to pursue its global strategy of a "peaceful rise."

Securing the Rear

"As the squeeze on China's strategic space intensifies, a stable western region takes on additional importance as a strategic support for the country. The strategic significance of western China is self-evident."[58] Since the 1990s China has increasingly viewed itself as a major power, gradually coming to embrace its "great power identity."[59] Chinese sources describe its rise as "*daguojueqi*" (the rise of a great power). As it tries to shape itself as a great power, however, it is a common belief in China that it is still very weak politically and economically, especially on its western periphery. Some constructivists see the deeply rooted feeling of vulnerability in the collective psyche to be indicative for the Chinese ideology of "the great power rise." It is argued that, "in contrast to the self-confident American nationalism of manifest destiny, Chinese nationalism is powered by feelings of national humiliation and pride."[60] The concept of the "century of humiliation" (*bainianguo chi*), which refers to the hundred years (1840–1949) of "suffering and humiliation" under Western imperialist powers, had a profound impact on Chinese formations of a vision of world politics.[61]

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55 Joshua Kucera, "China: What's Next?" *The Diplomat* (2011); available at http://thediplomat.com/whats-next-china/central-asia.

56 Clarke, "China's Integration of Xinjiang with Central Asia," 96.

57 Swanström, "China's Role in Central Asia," 14.

58 Clarke, "China's Integration of Xinjiang with Central Asia," 110.

59 Qianqian Liu, "China's Rise and Regional Strategy: Power, Interdependence and Identity," *Journal of Cambridge Studies* 5:4 (2010): 76-92; available at http://journal.acs-cam.org.uk/data/archive/2010/201004-article7.pdf, 86.

60 Suiseheng Zhao, "Chinese Nationalism and Its International Orientations," *Political Science Quarterly* 115:1 (Spring 2000): 1-33, http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2658031.

61 Ibid.

China feels contained, being surrounded by India, Russia, and allies of the U.S. Therefore, opening up Central Asia gave China the potential to develop its western land routes, which are less expensive and more reliable than sea routes (due to U.S. control of sea lanes). The United States' recently announced "pivot to Asia" and its growing presence in the Asia-Pacific region have only exacerbated Beijing's fear of being "encircled." Central Asia is thus becoming "China's great rear of extreme importance," a way to break out of the U.S. strategic encirclement.[62]

In geostrategic terms, Central Asia is adjacent to sensitive regions such as the Middle East, Russia, South Asia, and Turkey. It is one of a few regions where the interests of almost all of the major powers meet, and although China does not seek hegemony in the region, it is important for her to prevent anyone else from dominating it. China seeks to build up a kind of a "stability belt" around itself, so it can focus on its domestic development and the more immediate issues of Taiwan and the Southeast Asian region. It is also imperative for China to prevent conflicts and the rise of terrorist activities and Islamic extremism in the region.

Sébastien Peyrouse argues that Central Asia emerged on Beijing's strategic map "to help China appear as a peaceful rising power able to play the multilateralism card, and to build a specific partnership, one that is economically-based, with the Muslim world."[63] Central Asia is ideal place to become a "laboratory" for Chinese foreign policy. Here it can test new approaches to conducting foreign policy that are more active and less conservative. Notably, Beijing can demonstrate to the international community its sincerity in the endeavor for a "Peaceful Rise"—a rise without confrontation with other powers, the strategy put forward by Deng Xiaoping's *taoguang yang hui, you suozuowei* (keep a low profile and never take the lead).[64]

On the other hand, Konstantin Syroyezhkin says that Central Asia is a "laboratory" for the Chinese rise as not only an economic, but also a normative power. Its political narrative is simple and understandable for the Central Asians, and in contrast to Russia and the U.S., the Chinese treat their smaller partners as equals and "talk business."[65] Chinese leaders follow the principles of "do good to our neighbors, treat our neighbors as partners" (*yulinweishan, yilinweiban*) and "maintain friendly relations with our

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[62] Clarke, "China's Integration of Xinjiang with Central Asia," 109.

[63] Sébastien Peyrouse, Jos Boonstra, and Marlène Laruelle, "Security and Development Approaches to Central Asia. The EU Compared to China and Russia," *EUCAM Working Paper* 11 (2012), 11.

[64] Maria Dolores Cabras, "China's Peaceful Rise and the Good Neighbor Policy," *The European Strategist* (11 December 2011); available at http://www.europeanstrategist.eu/2011/12/china%E2%80%99s-peaceful-rise-and-the-good-neighbor-policy.

[65] Konstantin Syroyezhkin, *China-Kazakhstan: From Cross-Border Trade to Strategic Partnership*, Book 2 (Almaty: The Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies, 2010), 84–85.

neighbors, make them feel secure, and help to make them rich" (*mulin, anlin, fulin*).[66] Furthermore, China—at least in its rhetoric—is a strong proponent of the principles of sovereignty and non-interference into the domestic affairs of states, along with its "no norms" policy. This policy has been highly appreciated by the regimes in the region, and has created a positive image of China among Central Asian elites. Besides, it became a valuable asset of Chinese diplomacy by itself—something that Russian (and especially Western powers) often lack in Central Asia. For Central Asian leaders, China represents an attractive alternative to Russian "sticks without carrots" and the Western push for democratization and human rights. China's "model of market-oriented authoritarianism" might be an attractive direction for the leaders of Central Asia, and "Beijing's ability to present an alternative political and economic model could be a telling indicator of a growing Chinese ideological influence that is countering the Western perspectives of democratic practice as a prerequisite for economic prosperity."[67]

In summary, this hypothesis claims that Beijing has utilized Xinjiang's "intermediate position in Eurasia" in order to enhance its influence in Central Asia.[68] In the process, Beijing hopes that Xinjiang will thus contribute to China's long-term strategy of "peaceful rise" as a great power, help it escape strategic encirclement by the United States, safeguard important trade routes, and buildup a "stability belt" around China, so it can focus on its more immediate issues. Moreover, this section argued that Central Asia has become a "laboratory" for Chinese diplomacy, and a field on which to test China's rise as a normative power.

A Mixed Story

The first main hypothesis (a mix of realist and liberal perspectives) assumed that Xinjiang loomed large as a separatist concern for China, and therefore its Central Asian policy is designed to primarily address that internal destabilizing threat. The second main hypothesis (of a more liberal bent) maintained that the economic development of Xinjiang is in China's overall interests, and Xinjiang's place in Chinese foreign policy is purely pragmatic and economic. The third main hypothesis (seen from the constructivist perspective) claimed that Xinjiang is an element of China's great-power strategy, and that Xinjiang's Uighurs may serve as a link to Central Asia. This section will reflect on the assumptions put forward by the hypotheses, and see whether any of the hypotheses is able to provide helpful guidance about the role of Xinjiang in China's policies in Central Asia.

Central Asia is on the periphery of the Chinese strategic focus; as a result, China has never clearly articulated a strategy towards the region. However, Central Asia is vital for

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[66] Bates Gill and Yanzhong Huang, "Sources and Limits of Chinese 'Soft Power,'" *Survival* 48:2 (2006): 20, cited in Chin-Hao Huang, "China and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Post-Summit Analysis and Implications for the United States," *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly* (2006): 17.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Clarke, "China's Integration of Xinjiang with Central Asia," 91.

Xinjiang, a region that is of paramount importance to China in many regards. First of all, this historically restive and separatist region constitutes one-sixth of China's territory, which is a psychologically significant figure in terms of China's national identity, and especially in the context of the extreme sensitivity around the notion of "national integrity" for China as a nation. Second, it is a region *greatly endowed* with a wide variety of *natural resources*, most notably with oil and gas, most of which are still unexploited. It is home to approximately 25 percent of China's total national reserves of oil and gas, and 38 percent of its coal reserves.[69] Also enjoying generous annual sunshine and strong steady winds blowing across its deserts and steppes, Xinjiang is the most important part of China's massive campaign of developing clean energy, part of its push to address the issue of pollution over the next decades.[70] Third, Xinjiang is important due to its geostrategic position, historically being China's "buffer zone" from instability to the west, as well as serving as its "frontier" into Eurasia. Thus, the desire for stability in Xinjiang is the key to understanding China's policies in Central Asia.

This section will argue that neither hypothesis—as well as neither of the theoretical approaches—alone reproduces the full picture. While the lenses of defense (realist), development (liberal) and diplomacy (constructivist) are not necessarily contradictory, combined they may complement each other and deepen our understanding about the drivers of Chinese policy toward Central Asia in general, and the role of Xinjiang in particular. The idea behind this reasoning lies in the logic of traditional Chinese policy thinking itself. The idea of comprehensiveness, of everything being interconnected and interdependent, is deeply rooted in Chinese political thinking. China sees comprehensiveness (*quanmianhua*) as the main element of security.[71] In other words, national strategy is understood in an all-inclusive, inter-connected framework of economic, political, and military dimensions and defense, with development and diplomacy part of an interlinked continuum rather than separate approaches.

Chinese policies in Central Asia and Xinjiang are no exception: "there is a largely complementary relationship between what may be termed China's Xinjiang, Central Asia and grand strategy-derived interests."[72] Moreover, it can be said that there is a "largely complementary relationship" between Beijing's policies being driven by the pursuit of stability in Xinjiang, its economic development, and the overall strategy of China's rise as a great power. Thus, the hypotheses that were examined above are all parts of one big picture, a picture of a policy that has tilted toward one or another approach over time depending on domestic and international dynamics as interests have also evolved and become more complex.

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[69] "Xinjiang's Natural Resources," *China Trough a Lens*; available at www.china.org.cn/english/material/139230.htm.

[70] Jeffrey Hays, "Wind Power and Solar Energy in China," *Facts and Details*, 2008, available at http://factsanddetails.com/china.php?itemid=318.

[71] Russell Ong, "China's Security Interests in Central Asia," *Central Asian Survey* 4:24 (2005): 425.

[72] Clarke, "China's Integration of Xinjiang with Central Asia," 89.

The current set of Chinese interests in Central Asia did not appear all at the same time, but underwent a process of formation and reconsideration. The first hypothesis, probably, tells us more about the initial priorities and intentions of China in Central Asia. China first started to play a role in the region in the early 1990s, driven by its concern that the acquisition of independence by the Central Asian republics would encourage separatism in Xinjiang. So the policies of China on that stage were directed at assuring the commitment of the newly emerged states to the "One China" discourse, and their support in combating the "East Turkestan" movement. Up until the early 2000s, China did not have any further strategic interests in the region. However, with the opening up of the borders of the Central Asian states to economic activity, the small-scale trade of cheap Chinese goods became an important source of livelihood for people on both sides of the border. The annual trade between Central Asia and China in 1996 and 1997 accounted for less than a billion U.S. dollars.[73]

In the early 2000s, China's interest started evolving toward the policies better described by the second hypothesis. Beijing undertook a campaign focused on developing its western provinces that was unprecedented in its scale, designed to bring stability to Xinjiang through economic development. The development of Xinjiang's role in international trade was announced to be one of the main objectives of the program. The idea was that Central Asia is geographically adjacent and culturally close to Xinjiang, so its stability and economic development would help to boost the economy and security of Xinjiang as well.[74] Massive investments into infrastructure projects connecting Central Asia and China have facilitated cross-border trade, as well as attracted larger businesses into developing the region. So, Beijing's interest in containing separatism did not change, but it reformulated its approach to achieving this goal.

After the 9/11 attacks, China successfully framed its struggle with separatism in Xinjiang as part of the "Global War on Terror," making Central Asia an important partner in that struggle under the auspices of the SCO's fight against its "three evils." China has used the SCO as an instrument to help strengthen its positions in Central Asia without arousing suspicion on the part of the Russians, who traditionally consider Central Asia to be their "backyard" – a zone of immediate interest. On the other hand, China actively exploited bilateral diplomacy in order to build a strong foundation for its advancement into the region. At the same time, in the beginning of the new millennium China found itself as a net energy importer with a seemingly insatiable demand. Diversification of supply became a strategic issue, especially given the impact of the 9/11 attacks on access to global energy markets and the vulnerability of Middle Eastern supplies.[75] These changes in the international arena made energy cooperation an area of primary importance in China's policy toward Central Asia. Only then did large Chinese corporations start penetrating the region. Xinjiang became a major hub of oil and gas

[73] Huasheng Zhao, "Central Asia in China's Diplomacy," 138.
[74] Lan Peng, "An Analysis of the Feasibility of Cooperation in the Energy Sector," 240–41.
[75] Huasheng Zhao, "Central Asia in China's Diplomacy," 138.

pipelines and a refinery zone for Central Asian energy. Consequently, economic cooperation with Central Asia has brought development in parallel to Xinjiang.

With diminishing Soviet infrastructure and weakening cultural and economic ties between Central Asia and Russia, this new infrastructure encourages Central Asia to begin a gradual turn toward China. Former Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Kwan Yew has famously described the economic relationship between China and Singapore as an "elephant on one side and a mouse on the other," arguing that China is no longer interested in promoting its regional ambitions through military means, but rather that "the emphasis is on expanding their influence through the economy."[76] The same conclusion can be easily drawn by examining Chinese policies in Central Asia as it rises as a great power. The integration of Xinjiang into Central Asia is not only supposed to reduce the threat of Uighur separatism, but also to strengthen China's geostrategic position on the international stage. The United States' recently announced "Pivot to Asia" and its reinsertion of its presence in the Asia-Pacific makes the preservation of Chinese influence with its western neighbors ever more strategic, making it a way to escape U.S. "encirclement." Thus, the propositions made by the third hypothesis are becoming more viable in Chinese strategy with time.

Consequently, China's priorities and interests have changed over time, becoming more complex and interconnected, involving more "layers" of interests to interact and reinforce each other. What may look like a cohesive strategy of a Chinese rise in Central Asia appears to reflect the reality of a dynamic equilibrium that has been reached between Chinese material and ideational interests and incentives on the one hand, and the set of strategic reactions and interactions on the part of Central Asian states with China on the other. What we witness today is the result of adaptation strategies and reactive policies to dynamics of both an internal and external nature.

The role of Xinjiang remains essential at every level of Chinese interest in Central Asia, making it a kind of a "conductor" for Chinese policies. Accordingly, it has multiple functions. First of all, separatism in Xinjiang is a threat to Chinese territorial integrity; however, Xinjiang is also a "buffer zone" that protects "China Proper" from any possible instability in Central Asia. Xinjiang serves as a bridge for Chinese economic expansion into Central Asia, and a gateway through which China can channel its political influence. Chinese policy in Central Asia is a tale of how a security challenge (the breakup of the Soviet Union), translated into the need for stability beyond Xinjiang (the buffer zone model) that was ensured through economic benefit, and of subsequent economic expansion (the "bridge" function), which brought about political influence and a strategic windfall.

What China gets in the end is its five main priorities being fulfilled:

1. Stability in Xinjiang and preservation of the territorial integrity of China

[76] Shaun Breslin, "China's Rise to Leadership in Asia – Strategies, Obstacles and Achievements," paper presented at the Conference "Regional Powers in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Near and Middle East," held at the German Institute of Global and Area Studies, Hamburg, 11–12 December 2006.

2. Economic dividends and westward development
3. Diversification of energy sources
4. Central Asia as a sphere of influence
5. A way to break out of the strategic "encirclement" of the "rising great power."

Taken as a whole, China's strategy presents a complex web of linkages between its imperatives of integration and control within Xinjiang, its drive for security and influence in Central Asia, and its overarching quest to achieve a "peaceful rise" to great power status.[77]

Conclusion

This essay has offered an exploration of the place of Xinjiang in Chinese policies towards Central Asia. What is the role of Xinjiang in China's policy in Central Asia? Is Chinese engagement with Central Asia mediated in any way by its domestic policies and concerns over Xinjiang? These were the questions that the research aimed to explore. Hence, China in this paper was examined as an object, Central Asia as a subject, and Xinjiang as a factor.

The essay was impelled by the fact that most studies of Chinese policies in Central Asia widely agree that concern over separatist tendencies in Xinjiang has been the main driver of Beijing's policies in Central Asia. With the growing interest in the "Chinese Rise" in the world, as well as in academia, this paper aimed at analyzing the often neglected Central Asian aspect of this rise. Viewing Central Asia through the lens of Xinjiang, it aimed to systematize the many different facets of Xinjiang's role in this "rise."

Drawing from the main arguments made in the literature, this paper posed three sets of hypotheses. To summarize, the first main hypothesis claimed that Xinjiang is a significant separatist concern for China, and therefore its Central Asian policy is designed to address and manage that threat. The second main hypothesis maintained that Xinjiang's economic development is in China's overall interests, and Xinjiang's place in Chinese foreign policy is purely pragmatic and economic. The third main hypothesis asserted that Xinjiang is an element of China's great-power strategy, and that its role is to serve as abridge to Central Asia.

The study concluded that there is a complementary relationship between Beijing's policies in Central Asia being driven by aspirations to stabilize Xinjiang, economic interests, and the wider strategy of China's rise as a great power. It is argued that neither hypothesis alone can reflect the full picture. However, the arguments made in the hypotheses do not necessarily contradict each other, but rather are all parts of an interrelated continuum between state-directed means and ends, as well as strategic actions and reactions. Depending on domestic and international dynamics, China's interests and priorities in Central Asia have also evolved, becoming more complex and interconnected. Like different sedimentary strata, the new imperatives, interests, and tactics form on top of a previous ones, complicating the policy, making it more diverse and profound. The

[77] Clarke, "China's Integration of Xinjiang with Central Asia," 111.

role of Xinjiang remains essential at every layer of Chinese interest in Central Asia. The strategy of opening up of Xinjiang to Central Asia in order to pacify it has borne fruit, and has resulted in the expansion of China's political influence in the region. What may look like a cohesive, considered strategy of the "Chinese rise" appears to be more of a result of adaptation strategies and reactive policies to changing internal and external dynamics.

Outlining avenues for future research, this article suggests that it would be fruitful to examine the role that Xinjiang has played in the formation of Central Asian foreign and security policy. What does the rising Chinese influence mean for Central Asia? Is it a threat or an opportunity? Furthermore, is China acting in a way that imposes domestic constraints on the Central Asian states? In other words, how does the rise of China impact the multi-vector policies of the Central Asian governments? Does it happen intentionally—by design—or by default? Or, flipping the perspective, does it happen intentionally or involuntarily, i.e., by invitation or by imposition? This is a potentially productive direction of further study and research.

Critical Energy Infrastructure: Operators, NATO, and Facing Future Challenges

Dinos Kerigan-Kyrou [*]

Introduction

Critical infrastructure enables modern society. It includes our communications and Internet, our banking systems, the means of safely delivering our supplies of food and water, health systems, defense installations, transportation networks, air traffic control systems, and logistics and port facilities. It also includes our energy and electricity supply. Power generation plants, electricity grids, and diesel, gasoline, oil, and natural gas distribution networks underpin our entire infrastructure. Critical energy infrastructure is the single most important part of the complex web of critical infrastructure. Without energy—particularly the regular supply of gasoline and diesel—no other element of our critical infrastructure can operate. This was clearly seen in the northeastern United States during Hurricane Sandy in 2012. That is why the priorities in the wake of the storm were first to reestablish power, and second to restore transit systems (buses and subways). Governments and relief organizations quickly realized that only then could other infrastructure, such as hospitals, become operational again.

Threats to our energy infrastructure increasingly take different forms. They can arise from environmental hazards (as in the case of Hurricane Sandy, or the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan); industrial accidents; deliberate sabotage; and "consequential sabotage." The latter two examples are closely connected, and will be explored further below.

The Challenge of Energy Security

This article will highlight a threat to NATO's energy infrastructure that has been a concern for many decades. This threat is energy security. In 1912, the British Royal Navy converted its ships from coal to oil. Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, said "Safety and certainty in oil lie in variety and variety alone." The United States and the U.K., with its oil fields in the Middle East, became the world's oil suppliers. That situation, however, was soon to change, a fact of which U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt was aware. In 1945, Roosevelt met with King Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud, securing U.S. access to Saudi Arabia's oil output. Today the biggest potential challenge in terms of energy security is supply. There is a vast amount of oil, coal, and natural gas in the world. Each day, however, the world uses approximately 86 million barrels of oil. Daily world production is exactly that figure: 86 million barrels. So even a small 2 percent reduction in output caused by, for example, a crisis in Libya, has an enormous effect on

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the global price of oil. When such problems occur, only Saudi Arabia has the ability to quickly make up the deficit in the supply. The world economy is therefore enormously vulnerable to even a small drop in production.

The security of the oil producing regions is vital to the NATO Alliance. In rural Iraq, it costs USD 15,000 for a family to connect to the electricity grid – an impossibly large amount. These communities, however, see vast oil wealth around them. It is vital that they are not tempted to work with those who want to damage the oil production infrastructure. It is particularly important—for our own security—that the international community help ensure that local communities in oil-rich countries benefit from their national energy resources. These benefits should include schools, hospitals, and infrastructure that oil revenues can bring, as well as help in fighting corruption. Once corruption starts, it is very hard to stop, as Nigeria's government has discovered. Corruption becomes ingrained in the whole system. Improving our energy infrastructure security means ensuring that communities in the Middle East and Africa do not have to turn to terrorist groups such as Boko Haram to feed their children. The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), established by BP's John Browne when he was the company's chief executive, is the ideal way to help ensure that oil money benefits the right people.

Improving our energy security also requires increasing the sources of our oil and the resilience of its transport networks. For example, 20 percent of the world's oil transits the Straits of Hormuz. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman recently opened a pipeline that shifts some of that oil away from the strait. Iran has allegedly threatened that it would wreck an oil tanker, causing an environmental disaster and the closure of the strait, so this new pipeline brings welcome additional oil transit security. Such solutions, however, do not solve our energy supply problems; rather, they take us a step forward in increasing resilience. The key goal is widening the variety of energy sources used and increasing the overall supply of oil.

Environmental Threats to Energy Security

Among developed nations, Japan has long been particularly reliant on nuclear power. Indeed, the 2011 earthquake and tsunami is the prime example of an environmental challenge to critical energy infrastructure. The Fukushima nuclear power station was resilient to the earthquake, the most powerful ever to occur. The plant immediately shut down, as it was designed to do. The problem came an hour later, when the protective seawall surrounding the plant was surmounted by a fourteen-meter tsunami. A nuclear power station needs power even after it is shut down in order to cool the uranium fuel rods. The equipment, control systems, and diesel backup generators, however, were underwater, and the cooling water pipes were damaged. The uranium fuel rod storage tanks, which have to be continuously cooled, had no power. The "fail safe" was a heat exchange condensation system, but this lasted only a few hours. Backup generators rushed to the site did not have the right connections. The Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) thought a total power loss was impossible, and this is understandable.

There were multiple backup power generating systems, but these all failed, one by one. It is very difficult for an organization to plan for situations that it cannot foresee.

The main threat facing nuclear power stations, as Fukushima demonstrated, is flooding. In October 2012 during Hurricane Sandy, Indian Point and Oyster Creek nuclear power stations, in New York and New Jersey, remained resilient as they avoided getting flooded. Oyster Creek was offline, but still had spent radioactive fuel rods that needed to be kept cool. Likewise, the 2011 tornadoes that swept across the southern United States killed over 300 people, but an even greater tragedy was averted due to the resilience of the Browns Ferry nuclear power station on the Tennessee River in Alabama. The winds wrecked part of the station, and it lost internal power. Browns Ferry, however, managed to perform a "cold shutdown," thereby avoiding a reactor core meltdown. Nuclear power stations can be safe even if there is a hurricane, tornado, or earthquake.

The Fukushima disaster was obviously not caused by climate change – an earthquake was the cause of the tsunami. But extreme weather events are continuing to occur. This has been seen in the United States over the past couple of years, but also in Russia, China, and Europe. It does not matter what is actually causing this increase in weather catastrophes, although global warming is obviously an issue of grave concern. What is important is that the number of extreme weather events is increasing, and the NATO Alliance needs to be resilient to these new challenges.

When problems occur that cannot be foreseen, however, such as Fukushima, then substantial challenges will occur. This matters, because the number of such "asymmetric" emergencies is growing. Indeed, Hurricane Sandy demonstrated a fundamental point about our energy infrastructure's resilience. Power outages occurred across New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Most were caused by a problem at the system's weakest point – the individual power line, not the power station. A tree falling on an electricity pylon or the flooding of one substation would knock out power for thousands of people. The lack of electricity meant that oil refineries could not get back online. The Bayway refinery in Linden, New Jersey, which typically produces 238,000 barrels per day, was particularly damaged by salt water. Refineries that were not flooded, such as that in Reading, New Jersey, could not get back online quickly due to the lack of electricity. New York Harbor needed to ensure that high priority cargoes, particularly refined gasoline, could be delivered quickly. (Indeed, there were plenty of oil tankers lining up to get into New York, but they could not be docked or unloaded.)

Additional Challenges to Energy Infrastructure

Our infrastructure is increasingly interconnected. It does not, however, require a major event such as Hurricane Sandy to affect it. In 2003 a tree fell on a single pylon near the French–Italian border. This incident cut off electricity across much of Italy. Energy resilience is only as good as the system's weakest point. The fear is that terrorists or extremist protesters may know this. Indeed, it is known that terrorists can sabotage our energy infrastructure. Emergencies can also be caused by what can be called "consequential sabotage," brought about by groups that can be referred to as "reckless protesters."

Their actions may produce results as catastrophic as a terrorist attack. In the U.K., there have been power station occupations and vehicle attacks, such as on trains transporting coal to power stations. Indeed, the recent Greenpeace occupation of the Leiv Eriksson oil rig, in transit from Turkey to Greenland, is a further example. A few weeks later off Greenland, Greenpeace occupied the oil platform again. The Royal Danish Navy removed the protesters for their own safety, the oil workers' safety, and to protect the environment. A protest on an oil rig or in a power station could produce a disaster. At airports, protesters have infiltrated active airfields. If one was to run across a live runway it could result in catastrophe. Energy and aviation infrastructures face many of the same threats from reckless protesters. It is important that aviation and energy companies work together, sharing information, to prevent such challenges from occurring.

Deliberate attacks on our energy infrastructure are therefore obviously of particular concern. Such attacks can sometimes be a necessary part of conflict. In 1943, a Royal Air Force (RAF) squadron attacked three dams in the Ruhr Valley in Germany: the Mohne, Edersee, and Sorpe. This action was called Operation Chastise, but the airmen eventually became informally known as the "Dambusters." The dams were key parts of Nazi Germany's energy infrastructure. Two particularly interesting things can be learned from this operation. First, attacks on critical infrastructure often require ingenious and highly unusual methods – with the Dambusters, it was the development of a "bouncing bomb," which was designed to skip across the water and then detonate underwater next to the dam. Second, how critical infrastructure is built makes all the difference to its resilience. The Mohne and Edersee dams, built of concrete, were indeed breached. But the Sorpe dam suffered only minor damage; its core was covered in earth, making it much more resilient to attack. Breaching the Sorpe dam proved impossible. Not enough Lancaster bombers could get through German air defenses to launch the highly complex attack pattern—an attack that had to be even more complex than those on the Mohne and Edersee dams. (Those attacks required dropping the bouncing bombs at sixty feet above the water, at a precise point at 280 miles per hour, while under anti-aircraft fire.)

Seventy years later we can learn two particularly important lessons about our energy infrastructure resilience. Operation Chastise demonstrates the importance of innovation for an attack (using a bouncing bomb), and resilience—as the Sorpe dam proved—in defending infrastructure. Innovation and resilience were as important in World War II as they are today in protecting critical infrastructure from advanced cyber attack. Indeed, cyber methods are particularly useful for the group mentioned earlier in this essay, the "reckless protesters," sometimes called "hacktivists," after activists who hack computer systems. Extreme elements within environmental groups may use cyber methods against energy companies they disapprove of. Such strategies are also, of course, ideal for terrorists. Indeed, cyber attacks may soon begin to resemble the actual physical attacks that have occurred over the last few years.

In 1996, the Irish Republican Army (IRA), attempted to attack four electricity substations near London. This would have crippled electricity supplies for many months, potentially crashing the U.K.'s economy. The plan failed, but proved how vulnerable the energy infrastructure is to such challenges. In 2002, Al Qaeda attacked the oil tanker

Limburg with a suicide boat near Somalia. Indeed, documents seized from Osama Bin Laden's house in Pakistan indicate that oil tankers would continue to be targets for Al Qaeda attacks. In Saudi Arabia and Iraq, Al Qaeda terrorists have attacked oil refineries and energy facilities, causing many casualties and damaging infrastructure. Such damage to energy producing infrastructure, wherever in the world it happens to be, affects all countries of the NATO Alliance. As was mentioned above, the world uses 86 million barrels of oil each day, precisely the amount that is produced. Any disruption to this supply of oil anywhere in the world has substantial consequences for the NATO Alliance.

Technology-Based Attacks on Energy Infrastructure

Physical attacks against our critical energy infrastructure can increasingly be caused by communications technology, even if the person or organization responsible is on the other side of the world. Control systems are vulnerable to hacking, manipulation, and viruses that can remain undetected for months, even years. Such a cyber attack could take place against almost any aspect of our critical infrastructure. U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta has warned of the potential of a cyber "Pearl Harbor." In November 2011, U.S. Homeland Security and FBI officials were alerted to an apparent cyber intrusion at a water treatment facility in Illinois. Hackers caused a water pump to burn out of control by accessing its Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) software.

Power stations are a particularly vulnerable target of this increasingly worrying phenomenon. Each one has equipment that issues commands, controls turbine speeds and steam production water control valves. In the U.S., power stations and grids are regionally divided, providing increased separational security. However, software similar to the Stuxnet virus (which was used to crash Iran's nuclear program by spinning its centrifuges out of control) can be used in several areas at once. Such a virus can be spread accidentally by engineers with USB drives, or deliberately over the network. A sustained electricity blackout on the East Coast of the U.S. could cause food shortages across the nation in just a week. Moreover, by the time authorities have ascertained what is causing the problem in New York, the virus could have been encrypted and hidden on other systems across the country. A new attack could be launched days, weeks, or even months later.[1] It is very hard to totally insulate a critical infrastructure system from the Internet, USB devices, or emails; indeed, I would argue that it is impossible. Such an attack does not even need a commander with a phone or remote control – the attack can simply be launched when the virus identifies a specific control process, causing a turbine to spin 100 times faster than normal, wrecking the entire plant.

Indeed, there have been cyber attacks on elements of energy infrastructure in the Middle East. In August 2012, 30,000 computers at Saudi Aramco, the world's biggest oil company, and at Qatar's RasGas, which produces the world's largest output of

[1] Joseph Menn, "U.S. Power Plants Vulnerable to Cyberattack," *Financial Times* (11 October 2011); available at http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/00148d60-c795-11e0-a03f-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2e4TzZDvB.

liquefied natural gas, were infiltrated. The virus, called "Shamoon," and possibly a second, known as "Mini-Flame," were re-engineered versions of Stuxnet. It is possible that Iran, or a group acting for Iran going by the name "Cutting Sword of Justice," was behind this cyber attack in retaliation for Qatar and Saudi Arabia's support for the Free Syrian Army. Cyber methods provide the perfect cover for Syria and Iran, as they are easily deniable. The attack itself can be launched from anywhere. However, these incidents affect the global oil supply, and therefore all of the economies within NATO.

Managing Unforeseen Challenges

How asymmetric challenges are managed is of crucial importance to our critical energy infrastructure; indeed, it is becoming ever more important. Of particular concern are emergencies that cannot be planned for – the famous "unknown unknowns," in Donald Rumsfeld's parlance. They will increase over coming years. The Australian government produced very useful research into how such events can be managed. Their Critical Infrastructure Resilience Strategy states:

> A resilience approach to managing the risks to our critical infrastructure encourages organizations to develop a more organic capacity to deal with rapid onset shock. This is in preference to the more traditional approach of developing plans to deal with a finite set of scenarios, especially in the context of an increasingly complex environment.[2]

The Australians have summarized NATO's challenge perfectly. What does this mean in practice? The key is developing methods and exercises to enhance surprise-response capacities.[3] Emergency plans to respond to contingencies that can be imagined will always be required. However, in addition to these arrangements for predictable events, "at the ready" institutional capacities must be established to counter catastrophic surprises that could overwhelm our conventional capabilities. In other words, NATO must prepare itself to deal with emergencies that cannot possibly be foreseen.

With this matter of resilient behavior in mind, I will now turn to the issue of how NATO is making progress on this important issue. NATO's currently developing policies on critical infrastructure protection largely took shape in the wake of 9/11. Just a week after the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, NATO defense ministers asked for a military concept for defense against terrorism. The concept was formally adopted at the 2002 Prague Summit. It enables NATO to take the lead in providing support to counterterrorism and anti-terrorism efforts, including sharing intelligence and

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[2] Australian Government, *Critical Infrastructure Resilience Strategy* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2010), 5; available at www.tisn.gov.au/Documents/Australian+Government+s+Critical+Infrastructure+Resilience+Strategy.pdf.

[3] For further information, see Arjen Boin and Allan McConnell, "Preparing for Critical Infrastructure Breakdowns – The Limits of Crisis Management and the Need for Resilience"; and T. R. LaPorte, "Critical Infrastructure in the Face of a Predatory Future—Preparing for Untoward Surprise," both articles in *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management* 15:1 (February 2007): 173–80 and 60–64.

lessons learned; an emphasis on deterring attacks to prevent dealing with the aftermath of attacks; and providing assistance to civilian authorities, so that the actions of emergency services—and increasingly operators of critical infrastructure—will become more coordinated.

At the NATO Summit in Lisbon in 2010, the Alliance adopted the New Strategic Concept (NSC). The NSC highlights the protection of critical infrastructure from cyber attacks and the importance of energy security. A new, more integrated Counterterrorism and Anti-terrorism Policy was agreed at the May 2012 Summit in Chicago. Critical infrastructure protection is now a key part of this policy. Moreover, the 2002 Military Concept for the Defense Against Terrorism will need to be reviewed in light of the new policy.

In addition to these changes, NATO has established on-the-ground implementation of resources that bear on critical infrastructure protection. The Center of Excellence—Defense Against Terrorism in Ankara and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) are clear examples. Other examples include Operation Active Endeavour, NATO's developing cyber protection measures, work to counter improvised explosive devices, energy security (note the recent establishment of the Center of Excellence—Energy Security in Vilnius), and the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC). Of particular relevance to critical infrastructure protection is the Terrorism Threat Intelligence Unit (now integrated and fully part of the Emerging Security Challenges Division at NATO headquarters), which is specifically intended to help share knowledge and information.

The Defense Against Terrorism Program (DAT) began in 2004 to add more structure to these efforts. DAT was approved at the Istanbul Summit, and was of particular relevance to critical infrastructure protection, as critical infrastructure is one of the program's ten key areas of work. The DAT Program is now a key part of the Emerging Security Challenges Division at NATO.

Just as important as how the Alliance handles asymmetric emergencies is its ability to avoid such situations in the first place. This is the ability to identify a problem when it is a minor issue and deal with it early, before it becomes a major issue. This requires changing NATO's working culture. An example: in 2011 some employees at Norway's Statoil noticed some strange emails. They immediately voiced their concerns. Statoil reported the emails to NorCERT, the Norwegian security authority. NorCERT discovered well-hidden viruses that could have affected oil and gas production. The problem was effectively dealt with early on, well before it became a serious issue. Why was this? The most important part of this story was the excellent immediate action taken by Statoil's staff when they suspected a problem. The investigation aimed to discover what was causing the problem, rather than who had made an error or who was to blame in the company. In other words, a "no-blame" working culture encourages the early identification of problems. Unfortunately, such a no-blame working culture is very unusual in the countries of the NATO Alliance. Most operators of critical infrastructure do not encourage the early identification of problems, despite their claims to the contrary. Indeed, this is not surprising. Operators of critical infrastructure elements, and especially critical en-

ergy infrastructure, are regulated and operate under a license administered by the country in which they operate. The operators are terrified, quite literally, of losing their license to operate. Therefore, problems are very often swept under the rug as the operator is extremely worried that their national regulator will become aware of the problems they have encountered. The "no-blame" culture, which is at its best in Norway, needs to be copied across NATO – not only within the operating companies, but also in the relationship between the operator and the national regulator.

Operators of critical energy infrastructure, and their national regulators, need to change their thinking about security, especially cyber security. This does not happen quickly, especially in hierarchical organizations. This is not a technical issue – it is a management and organizational issue. Doing this will help achieve what I call "pushing threats away," or identifying threats long before they become major issues. Connected to this is the matter of effective knowledge management across hierarchies and divisions, and between competing companies. A knowledge-sharing culture able to identify threats early on is vital. The U.S. 9/11 Commission's inquiry highlighted the "human—or systemic—resistance to sharing information."[4] It identified the problems of "compartmentalizing" information, basing access on a "need to know" basis. The Commission found that systems for information sharing should be decentralized and network based.[5] Its recommendations can apply to very different situations, such as that in Fukushima. Indeed, the International Atomic Energy Agency reported that inadequate information and compartmentalized decision making contributed to the accident.[6] There is a significant similarity between the lessons learned about information sharing in the 9/11 inquiry and what we need to do to protect our energy infrastructure from emerging threats.

It is crucial that knowledge is managed in such a way that lessons are learned and new ways of thinking and adapting can be followed. Knowledge needs to be shared across companies and NATO Allies. Indeed, knowledge management and continual learning is key to reconstruction and recovery.

Conclusion

Threats to NATO's critical energy infrastructure will evolve and change over the coming years. The next event will not be like the last. Like the "Dambusters" raid of seventy years ago, challenges to our critical energy infrastructure will be increasingly innovative. Resilience is vital, requiring new ways of dealing with challenges. These new methods require operators to prepare to deal with unusual events that cannot necessarily be spe-

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4 National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2004); available at http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/report/index.htm.

5 Chapter 13, "How to Do It? A Different Way of Organizing the Government," in *The 9/11 Commission Report.*

6 See Conclusion 6, IAEA *Mission Report: The Great East Japan Earthquake Expert Mission* (Vienna: IAEA, 16 June 2011), 51; available at http://www-pub.iaea.org/mtcd/meetings/pdfplus/2011/cn200/documentation/cn200_final-fukushima-mission_report.pdf.

cifically planned for. Resilience also requires new methods to avoid these challenges in the first place. It is imperative that problems and challenges are dealt with when they are minor, before they become serious. Doing this requires changing how we evaluate challenges, and above all, how we work within organizations and companies that manage our critical energy infrastructure.

The Armed Incident in Georgia's Lopota Valley and its Implications for the Security Situation of the South Caucasus

Emil Souleimanov and Maya Ehrmann [*]

In the Lopota Valley, a picturesque spot situated near Georgia's mountainous northeast border with Russia's Dagestani autonomous region, a series of skirmishes took place on the 28th and 29th of August 2012 that cost the lives of two troops from elite units of the Georgian Ministry of the Interior, a military doctor, and eleven gunmen identified as North Caucasus Islamist insurgents, leaving a few Georgian military personnel injured and one insurgent, a Russian citizen, captured by Georgian special forces. While the circumstances of what happened in the vicinity of the north Kakhetian village of Lapankuri have not yet been sufficiently revealed, the event might have considerable implications for the security situation in the entire region of the North and South Caucasus. The purpose of this article is to analyze various perspectives and issues related to this incident and to prove that the hostage crisis in the Lopota Valley indicates the existence of and the foreshadowing of much greater regional instability. The article shall outline the general course of events and those responsible for the incident. It will then introduce various perspectives on the incident from Georgian, Russian, and Dagestani authorities and sources, and analyze the short-term and long-term implications of the incident.

Background of the Events

The official version of the events presented by the Georgian authorities shortly after this skirmish took place states that in the woods to the east of the village of Lapankuri, a group of five Georgian youngsters was captured by Islamist insurgents who had most likely penetrated the Georgian territory from Dagestan. In subsequent negotiations, the Georgian youngsters were freed in exchange for one or two police officers, and the Georgian authorities then suggested that the jihadists lay down their arms and surrender, a demand that was declined by the insurgents. It is not entirely clear what exactly followed at this point, except for the fact that Georgian security forces supported by military helicopters and aerial vehicles eventually managed to destroy the majority of the

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group of insurgents, which consisted of sixteen to twenty people, while the rest of the group was most likely able to retreat.[1]

News spread of the burial in Georgia's Duisi district of three Kists,[2] members of an ethnic sub-group of the Chechens inhabiting the Pankisi Gorge region,[3] located approximately 40 km to the northwest of the village of Lapankuri. According to this news (which eventually turned out to be true), at least three Kists, citizens of Georgia, were killed in the incident, while some others killed belonged to Georgia's Chechen community that arrived in the early 2000s,[4] when thousands of Chechens escaping the Second Chechen War had moved southward, finding refuge among their ethnic kin in the Kist villages spread across the Pankisi Gorge.[5] This was supported by some eyewitness accounts from among the Lapankuri villagers, according to whom at least some of the insurgents were fluent in Georgian. The rest of the slain insurgents were Russian citizens whose surnames and places of birth indicated their overwhelmingly Chechen origin.[6]

Varying Perceptions of the Incident

According to one explanation of this incident, the Kists recruited in the Pankisi Gorge were in the process of moving to Syria, where they allegedly intended to take part in the local civil war on the side of the Sunni opposition.[7] In this case, it remains unclear why they were moving along the opposite path instead of traveling to Tbilisi and then to the Georgian–Turkish border.

Furthermore, Georgia's President Saakashvili suggested that Russia was involved in the incident. He was quick to visit Lapankuri and assert that what had happened in the Lopota Valley was "in the interest of our enemy," i.e., Russia, a country that according to some Georgian officials and commentators was most likely testing the preparedness of the Georgian security forces, who in the end managed to heroically defend their land and people. At the same time, the president stopped short of blaming Moscow for being

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1 "Georgia Detains Russian 'Militant' after Border Clash," *Terrorism Watch* (8 September 2012); available at http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2012/09/georgia-detains-russian-after-border.html.

2 Gela Mtivlishvili, "What Happened in Lopota Valley and What Is Happening in Pankisi Valley?" *Humanrights.ge* (11 September 2012); available at http://www.humanrights.ge/index.php?a=main&pid=15500&lang=eng.

3 "Ethnic Groups in Georgia," *The Georgian Times* (3 November 2008); available at http://www.geotimes.ge/index.php?m=home&newsid=9724.

4 "Identity, Motives of Intruders onto Georgian Territory Remain Unclear," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (3 September 2012); available at http://www.rferl.org/content/georgian-intruders-caucasus-report-daghestan/24696534.html.

5 Johanna Nichols, "The Chechen Refugees," *Berkeley Journal of International Law* 18:*2* (2000): 241-259; available at http://scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/bjil/vol18/iss2/6/.

6 "Georgian Dream Slams Govt Over Armed Clash in Lopota Gorge," *Civil.ge* (4 September 2012); available at http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=25178.

7 Emil Souleimanov's personal interview with an officer in the Ministry of the Interior of Dagestan, Russia, 12 September 2012.

directly behind the incident, referring instead to the memory of *lekianoba*, Lezghi or rather Dagestani-led raids of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which saw bands of highlanders devastate the Kakhetian countryside. In reference to the events in Kakheti, President Saakashvili stated:

> We already had a great disturbance in the neighboring country in the past. It was in these very regions that our neighbor exported this instability and the related problems to Georgian territory. They entered their troops in this area, which resulted in the well-known events that transpired in Pankisi Valley…. This was followed by chaos and a high death toll. Kidnappings and numerous other negative issues occurred behind these mountains. On this side of the mountains, here in Kakheti, we have great development and reconstruction. The Georgian state will not tolerate the spread of instability, violence, and chaos existing on the territory of our neighbor that may threaten peaceful Georgian citizens and the peaceful functioning and development of our country.[8]

Saakashvili's allusion to past events echoes a common Georgian position of deep-rooted apprehension and mistrust of Russia and a belief in Russia's role as a destabilizing and negative force upon Georgia.

However, due to the general lack of clear and unambiguous information and a gradual evolution of some segments of the official narrative, as well as new evidence from the ground that soon made its way into the Georgian media, the Tbilisi-backed interpretation of the Lopota incident was widely contested both within and outside Georgia. According to some opposition leaders, the whole incident might have been fabricated by the Saakashvili regime to create a plausible pretext for the cancellation or at least postponement of parliamentary elections in Georgia that took place in early October.

A parliamentary candidate from the Ivanishvili bloc, Paata Zakareishvili, claimed: "The tales that the government has been spreading since morning have nothing to do with reality. The government is trying to somehow provoke Russia so that the electorate does not vote against the government in a wartime situation."[9] Others have accused the Georgian authorities of providing insufficient and unreliable information about the incident.

Additionally, to further contribute to the ambiguity of the incident, Russian authorities have staunchly rejected any reports by Georgian officials indicating that the insurgents crossed the Russo-Georgian border, considering it nothing but a "provocation." In fact, the Russians have repeatedly (yet with little evidence on the ground) blamed the Georgians for providing direct support to the jihadists and for turning their country into a safe haven for those terrorists and insurgents who are waging a war against the Russian state. Among other things, Russians have since 2000 often pointed at the Chechen-

[8] Z. Zaza Jgharkava, "Guerillas in Lopota or Putin's Trap?" *Georgia Today* (30 August 2012); available at http://www.georgiatoday.ge/article_details.php?id=10413.

[9] Ibid.

populated Pankisi Gorge, where various forms of support for the North Caucasus insurgency, particularly the Chechnya-based *jamaats*, have been particularly strong.[10]

Similarly, little clarity was to be found in the reports from pro-insurgent sources. Shortly after word spread of the Lopota incident, North Caucasus jihadist sources published a number of statements in which they accused the Georgians of murdering their brethren in arms, who they identified as members of a Dagestani *jamaat*, pledging vengeance against the Georgians. For instance, VDagestan.com, the major website of the Dagestani *jamaat* of the Caucasus Emirate, admitted that some of its members crossed the border, rejecting at the same time the claim that they planned to conduct any military operation on Georgian soil, and asserting that no hostages were taken, and the liquidation of the jihadists was an act of betrayal, which was "by no means the first time they have taken such a treacherous step in a bid to appease the Putinist regime in Russia."[11] This statement also appeared on the website of the Caucasus Emirate's Kavkaz Center, stirring up anti-Georgian sentiments among those Northeast Caucasians sympathetic to the jihadist case. A few days later, both Islamist websites withdrew their statements. Nevertheless, these statements claiming affiliation with the insurgency undermine Tbilisi's claims that Moscow may be behind the insurgencies. Similarly, the jihadists' cries of betrayal directed at the Georgian authorities serve to weaken Russia's claims that Georgia provides a safe haven for North Caucasus insurgents.

In the meantime, sources from the Dagestani Ministry of the Interior soon *de facto* acknowledged the version of events presented by both the Georgian authorities and Dagestani insurgents, indicating that the killed jihadists most likely were part of the Tsunta *jamaat* that had been facing an increasingly fierce counterinsurgent campaign by both Dagestani and Russian federal law enforcement units and chose to eventually cross the Russo-Georgian border.[12]

Security Implications of the Incident

The true motives of the insurgents as well as the response of Georgian law enforcement officials to the hostage crisis remain unclear. Irakli Alasania, Georgia's current Minister of Defense and former opposition leader, stated:

> There is not yet enough information to make a comprehensive analysis of what has happened. One thing is clear: our borders are not protected well and an armed group of

[10] Johan Grennan, "Georgia's Pankisi Gorge and the Global War Against Terrorism," Event Report, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University (April 2012); available at http://belfercenter.hks.harvard.edu/publication/12731/georgias_pankisi_gorge_and_the_global_war_against_terrorism.html?breadcrumb=%2Fpublication%2Fby_type%2Fevent_report%3Fpage%3D9.

[11] Teo Bichikashvili, "Georgians Shaken by Border Incursion," *Institute for War and Peace Reporting* (31 August 2012); available at http://iwpr.net/report-news/georgians-shaken-border-incursion.

[12] Emil Souleimanov's personal interview with an officer in the Ministry of the Interior of Dagestan, Chechnya, 12 September 2012.

> twenty persons can cross into the country without being detected by the border guard. A comprehensive investigation needs to be carried out in order to look into who was in charge of negotiations with [the armed group]; what was the subject of negotiations and why was this operation planned in such a way that led to death of so many people.[13]

Indeed, this incident has raised a number of questions. Foremost, the insurgents' motives are unclear, and this ambiguity lays behind the wide assortment of perspectives on this incident. Subsequently, the killing of the insurgents at the hands of the Georgian forces ensures that the uncertainty of the insurgents' agenda remains intact, a factor that may contribute to a further strain in relations between Georgia and Russia, who both point accusatory fingers at one another for the Lopota Valley events. Also, the actions of the Georgian authorities in handling this incident have been highly scrutinized, especially by the Georgian opposition (who are currently in power following the October elections in Georgia). Furthermore, the growth of the insurgency in neighboring Dagestan reveals a potential link to events in the Lopota Valley and a growing regional threat.

The Interior Ministry of Georgia released a statement identifying seven out of the eleven persons killed by the Georgian forces. Two out of the seven were Georgian citizens, and five were citizens of the Russian Federation from the North Caucasus, including Chechnya and Ingushetia.[14] However, some sources in the Georgian media have questioned the official information about the perpetrators, and claimed that six out of the eleven were natives of Georgia's Pankisi Gorge region, a claim that is adamantly denied by the Georgian Interior Ministry.[15] The discrepancy between official reports on the insurgents' identity and those coming from media sources certainly strengthens the sense of confusion surrounding this incident. It further leads one to consider why the identity classifications of the insurgents provided by the government would be questioned by media sources in the first place. Also, should media sources prove to be correct in their classification, this would cast reasonable doubt upon the former government, and give rise to questions over its motives in withholding the identities of the insurgents, especially of those who were Georgian citizens.

In addition, Mamuka Areshid, Director of the Caucasus Strategic Research Institute, suggested "that it is 'odd' that eleven intruders were shot dead but not a single one was injured or taken alive for interrogation. The special forces units tasked with neutralizing the group should have been capable of shooting to incapacitate, rather than to kill."[16] This speculation goes hand in hand with Alasania's claims that this operation was not well planned. Radio Liberty Europe speculates that the Georgian authorities were quick

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[13] "Georgia: Tracking Events in Lopota Gorge," *Kavkaz Center* (4 September 2012); available at http://www.kavkazcenter.com/eng/content/2012/09/04/16612.shtml.

[14] "MIA Announced the Names of Militants Liquidated in Lopota Valley," *Internet.ge* (3 September 2012); available at http://www.internet.ge/?l=EN&m=6&sm=0&ID=10309.

[15] "Militants from Dagestan Eliminated in Georgia Turned Out to be Residents of Georgian Villages," *Georgia Times* 3 (3 September 2012); available at www.georgiatimes.info/en/news/80028.html.

[16] "Identity, Motives of Intruders onto Georgian Territory Remain Unclear."

to react to the incursions, as they may have thought they were masterminded by Russia, and only later discovered this was not true. Another interpretation is that authorities knew the insurgents came from Dagestan but killed them all anyway in order to fuel the uncertainty over their true motives and thereby ensure suspicion that Moscow may have been behind the incident. The failure to take these insurgents (save for one) alive for questioning means that the truth behind this incident may forever remain shrouded in a veil of mystery. Indeed, whether the response by Georgian authorities to this incident was a gaffe or purposely planned is uncertain.

A further troubling element of this incident is the past decade's escalation of Islamic insurgency in Dagestan, a region that borders Georgia's Lopota Valley, and the potential spillover effect this may have upon Georgia. Recently, Russian and Georgian sources suggest a potential link between the entrance of armed men to the Lopota Valley and events in Russia, namely the August 28th attack by a female suicide bomber in Dagestan. According to the Russian news agency Ria Novosti, "The armed group that the Georgian agents have been fighting has fled the Dagestani police."[17] The agency directly claimed that the group of armed men in the Lopota Valley had fled from Dagestan to Georgia, a claim that provides grounds for Russia to argue that Georgia provides a safe haven for North Caucasus insurgents. Furthermore, on August 29th, National Security Council Secretary Giga Bokeria suggested that it is possible the militants involved in this incident had links with insurgent groups in Dagestan and that it was "obvious that their presence in Georgia was connected with developments there."[18] "Developments" in this case may refer to the growth of the insurgency in Dagestan or, as is inferred by Radio Free Europe, to the buildup of Russian troops and armor in the western districts of Dagestan that border Georgia.

Indeed, a number of Georgian, Chechen, and Azerbaijani news sources reported a concentration of Russian military troops in the Botlikhski and Didoiski Rayons regions of Dagestan.[19] On August 28th, the Dagestani news portal of *V Dagestane* reported that a Russian armored column of vehicles, equipment, and soldiers mobilized in this area. Certainly, such a military buildup of Russian forces could be viewed as a threat to Georgia and is likely what lies behind claims by Georgian officials that Russia may have ignited the recent incident in the Lopota Valley as a means of testing Georgian preparedness.

The possibility of events in Dagestan being linked to those in the Lopota Valley also leads one to question what logical purpose Georgian officials would have in harboring insurgents fleeing from the Dagestani authorities, a factor that would seem to pose a threat to Georgia's national security and is therefore illogical. It is not unlikely that North Caucasus insurgents look to Georgia as a safe haven and may indeed end up there; however, the suggestion by Russian sources that Georgian officials consciously provide these insurgents with a safe haven seems unlikely, as such an action would threaten

[17] Zaza Jgharkava, "Guerillas in Lopota or Putin's Trap?"
[18] "Identity, Motives of Intruders onto Georgian Territory Remain Unclear."
[19] Zaza Jgharkava, "Guerillas in Lopota or Putin's Trap?"

Georgia's already strained relations with Russia and threaten Georgia's security, because authorities cannot be certain of the insurgents' agenda.

The growth of the insurgency in the North Caucasus, and particularly in Dagestan, makes the identification of the affiliation and motives of those insurgents involved in the Lopota Valley incident imperative. Georgia can otherwise not fully clear its name before Russian officials who claim it provides a refuge for Islamic insurgents fleeing Chechnya and Dagestan. Similarly, until the true motives and affiliation of the insurgents comes to light, Russia lacks a sound basis for dispelling Georgia's claim that Russia was behind this incident. Thus, the inability to sufficiently pinpoint the agenda of the perpetrators of this event not only presents a further stumbling block in Georgian-Russian relations but also a threat to regional security.

On the other hand, Pavel Felgenhauer, a Russian military analyst, has speculated that "this clash was accidental from both sides. …What happened in Lapankuri looks more like a serious misunderstanding."[20] This misunderstanding stems from the ambiguity of the incident, made even greater by the hasty response of Georgian law enforcement officials who managed to capture none of the insurgents for questioning. Yet the BBC claims that "it was crucial for Georgia to act decisively, as there were fears in Tbilisi that Moscow would use any sign that terrorists from the North Caucasus are operating in the region as a pretext for entering [deeper] into Georgia."[21] A number of Georgian sources similarly claim that authorities' hasty deployment of forces was preferable to the possibility of an outbreak of another strain in Georgian-Russian relations, which could have been the case should Russia have had basis to back its claims against Georgia.[22]

Saakashvili said that the hostage crisis related to a Russian plot "to give them (Moscow) a pretext to use our (Georgia's) internal disorder and internal divide for implementation of their sinister plans."[23] Saakashvili's statement was made before Georgia's October parliamentary elections, and it is therefore reasonable to presume that in referring to "internal disorder" and "Russia's sinister plans," he suggested Russia may have tried to somehow sway the outcome of the October elections. In turn, Vadim Shibayev, a spokesperson for Russia's Federal Security Service, called Georgia's accusations that Russia trespassed on Georgian territory groundless and provocative.[24] This blame game undoubtedly unveils the deeply rooted mistrust between Russian and Georgian authori-

[20] Special operation video material, *Georgia Ministry of Internal Affairs*, 2012; retrieved from http://police.ge/index.php?m=8&newsid=3492&lng=eng.

[21] "On August 27–September 2, at least 50 Persons Fell Victim to Armed Conflict in Northern Caucasus," *Caucasian Knot* (5 September 2012); available at http://www.eng.kavkaz-uzel.ru/articles/22127.

[22] "Georgians Shaken by Border Incursion," *Turkish Weekly* (5 September 2012); available at http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/141318/georgians-shaken-by-border-incursion.html.

[23] "Georgia Informs NATO about Situation in Georgian-Russian Border," *Trend* (30 August 2012); available at http://en.trend.az/regions/scaucasus/georgia/2060122.html.

[24] "Akhmed Chataev Innocent – MIA Compelled Witness to Sign Fake Testimonies," *Human-rights.ge* (29 October 2012); available at http://humanrights.ge/index.php?a=main&pid=15818&lang=eng.

ties. Yet, with the election of a new Georgian parliamentary body in October headed by the opposition (who incidentally blamed the former Georgian government for utilizing the hostage crisis to win the election), it is unlikely that this incident should serve as a long-term factor of increased tension between Moscow and Tbilisi.

Conclusion

Definite information is still difficult to obtain, and it is likely that the public will never find out the complete truth about what indeed happened in the Lopota Valley in August 2012. However, the reactions of various Georgian and Russian officials to this event shed doubt upon the possibility of cooperation between the two states on future security issues. Even though substantial evidence exists that the August hostage crisis is the responsibility of a jihadist organization, rather than this incident leading to cooperative measures, it appears to have led instead to divisiveness and accusations, both internally within Georgia and between Georgia and Russia. Whatever the course of the recent events in Georgia's northeast, however, they clearly indicate the fact that the Caucasus is a deeply interconnected region—geographically, politically, and ethnically—where developments to the north of the greater Caucasus mountain range might relatively easily spread out toward the south and vice versa. Indeed, Georgia is an integral part of the Caucasus, which implies not only fraternal rhetoric when it comes to the feelings of pan-Caucasian solidarity that dominate in that South Caucasian country with regard to North Caucasians, as many Georgians share strong sympathies for the efforts of the North Caucasus insurgency, and the Saakashvili regime has carried out policies aimed at winning the hearts and minds of the North Caucasians and at turning Georgia into the economic, political, and intellectual core of the united Caucasus. It also implies that, when it comes to tangible policy on the ground, Georgia should take into consideration its own interests that are only partially in line with those of the jihadists or their numerous North Caucasian sympathizers, whose ideological orientation is far from that of the post-Soviet Georgian state.

Importantly, the Lopota events demonstrated the degree of vulnerability of the Georgians in case of prospective provocations that might be plotted by the Russian secret services as a pretext for interference in Georgia's internal affairs. This has also been a clear signal for the Azerbaijanis, who have already faced the dramatic growth of militant Salafist cells in the country's north, which is inhabited by ethnic Dagestanis.[25] This seems to be one of the reasons why Tbilisi decided to respond to the incursion of the jihadist units on its soil in the fiercest possible way, to effectively deprive the Russians of a tool for pressure that might be applied by the latter in the future. As counterinsurgent activities of the federal and local armed forces gain momentum in Dagestan—the current epicenter of the Islamist insurgency in the North Caucasus, where dozens of thousands of army and Ministry of Interior troops have concentrated recently—the pressure will increase upon the insurgents to occasionally cross the Russo-Georgian (and Russo-

[25] Emil Souleimanov, "Jihadism on the Rise in Azerbaijan," *CACI Analyst* (5 February 2012); available at http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/5766/print.

Azerbaijani) borders to secure temporary safe havens. This, again, might pose a serious problem in relations between Moscow on the one hand, and Tbilisi and Baku on the other, prompting the latter to either turn a blind eye on the presence of armed militants on their soil, risk a conflict with Moscow (which might use this as a pretext to exert pressure on the South Caucasian countries, with the ultimate risk of military interference), or risk a dangerous conflict with ethnic minorities of Chechen and Dagestani descent populating their borderland areas.

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