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Chinese Eyes on the Prize: Strategic Partnerships and Changing Priorities

Abstract

The overall theme of this paper is increasing knowledge of the evolution of Chinese priorities and strategy since the Korean War, and how the evolution of China's relationships reveals changes in priorities. Why were these partnerships entered into on the part of China? What was China's strategic thinking? How do strengths and weaknesses in these partnerships reflect China's changing priorities? To attempt to answer these questions, three case studies are used to reveal and analyze changes: Sino- North Korean relations since the Korean War, Sino-Russian relations after the end of the Cold War, and Chinese participation (relations with member states) in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Consideration in this paper will also be given to the future stability of China's involvement with Russia and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

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CHINESE EYES ON THE PRIZE:
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND CHANGING PRIORITIES

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the University of Denver

University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Elizabeth O'Grady

June 2009

Advisor: Dr. Suisheng Zhao

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

"...No amount of stealthy diplomatic posturing can obscure the fact that China is growing more powerful and more assertive by the day, and in the process, a new world order is being shaped. Lest anyone suspect hostility in this rebuttal of China's new line, one hastens to add that this is exactly the way it should be. China obviously constitutes a huge slice of humanity. It has an exceptionally long history of power on the world stage, against which the last two centuries of relative weakness are a mere blip. And like any fast-rising power, its re-emergence will change the rules of the game."¹

China today is recognized in the global community as a rising power with incredible potential. Chinese rapid economic growth is impressive and continues each year, seemingly unstoppable in its progress. China's role in the international community is growing ever more involved, both bi-laterally and multi-laterally. Regionally, the same is true as the country can celebrate membership in many regional organizations. China, however, was not always in this position of growing prominence. Questions remain about China's rise and positioning as it pursues strategic partnerships to accomplish goals of major growth and success. How did China work its way from isolation to integration? How has China utilized partnerships with other countries and involvement in regional organizations to advance its position? How have strategic goals

¹ Herald French, "Letter from China: Is It A 'Peaceful Rise'? U.S. Shouldn't Bet On It," *The International Herald Tribune*, April 20, 2006, http://www.howardfrench.com/archives/2006/04/21/letter_from_china_is_it_a_peaceful_rise_us_shouldnt_bet_on_it/ (accessed September 3, 2008).

shifted over time, changing from the pursuit of Communist revolution to Capitalist reform and economic growth? In considering these broad questions about China's growth, more specific questions arise about China's relationships since the Korean War.

What happened to the strength of the Chinese-North Korean partnership? Is the post Cold-War Chinese-Russian partnership built on similar fragile ground or is it here to stay? Will China's relations with Russia and the SCO have the same unfriendly end as the Chinese-North Korean relationship? How has China utilized these relationships to accomplish strategic goals? How do these relationships reveal China's changing priorities? These questions and more will be considered throughout this paper, utilizing three case studies to discuss China's changing priorities and behavior – Sino-North Korean relations since the Korean War, Sino-Russian relations post-Cold War, and Chinese involvement in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

The first section analyzes China's relationship with North Korea, showing how the country eventually no longer satisfied buffer zone requirements and came to be in a position to potentially jeopardize China's promising development and future. Also lacking in this relationship was any economic opportunity, an increasingly important aspect of Chinese domestic and global policy. It is worth examining China's behavioral and policy changes toward North Korea will clearly illustrate the shift in China's priorities over time, justifying the Chinese government's change to deepening relations with Russia and the development of the SCO. This analysis gives the reader an increased understanding of how China has planned and reacted over time, to add to the understanding of where the roots lie for present government policy decisions and where

China wants to go in terms of the international system. The purpose of this paper though is not to make predictions concerning China's future role, but rather analyze past and current positioning to track China's changing strategic priorities.

Illustrating most clearly China's shift from isolation to regional (and global) player is its behavior toward North Korea. According to the historical tradition of Sino-North Korean relations, their relationship was as close as lips to teeth.² China utilized North Korea's strategic position as a buffer zone to keep the United States' influence in China during the Cold War as limited as possible: "The United States was cast in the role of leader of imperialism, and the common struggle was against American imperialism."³ However, since the Cold War ended, China's priorities where North Korea is concerned have been changing. Although the China-North Korea relationship has persisted despite repeated stresses and crises, relations now are fraught with tension and at an all-time low.⁴ China's

² Scott Zhou, "All Lips and Teeth – For Now," *Asia Times Online*, October 21, 2006, Saturday, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/HJ21Ad01.html> (accessed September 20, 2008). For a discussion of Chinese-North Korean relations, from good to bad, please also see Kosuke Takahashi, "China's Worsening North Korean Headache," *Online Nautilus Institute Policy Forum*, (February 8, 2005), http://www.nautilus.org/fora/security/0510A_Takahashi.html (accessed September 1, 2008).

³ Harold M. Vinacke, "Communist China and the Uncommitted Zone." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 362, (November 1965): 113. It is worth perusing his entire article as the role of Anti-Americanism in Chinese policy is explored.

⁴ Takahashi (2005). For additional commentary please see Carin Zissis, "China's Relationship with a Nuclear North Korea," *Council on Foreign Relations Backgrounder Online*, October 24, 2006, http://www.cfr.org/publication/11791/chinas_relationship_with_a_nuclear_north_korea.html (accessed November 11, 2008). Part of the article is available at <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/china/2006/china-061024-cfr01.htm> (accessed December 1, 2008).

behavior toward North Korea since the Korean War most clearly reveals the changes in Beijing's strategic prioritization. An analysis of the Sino-North Korean relationship will allow for a complete understanding of the changes in Chinese external policy behavior and prioritization since the Korean War. This will provide for greater depth of understanding of what drove China's reengagement of Russia and the creation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Chinese-North Korean Relations: Big Changes

Although China began the relationship as an ardent supporter of North Korea, the relationship has shifted from one of a Korean tributary state providing for China to the latter, the Chinese providing for both sustenance and survival in North Korea. During a 2006 visit to Beijing, Chairman Kim Jung-il is described as the one arriving with "empty suitcases" to be filled instead of offering gifts of his own.⁵ It is worth exploring how the relationship came to be at this place, with a desperate Kim Jong-Il completely reliant upon a more and more hesitant provider, China. It is also necessary to understand the changing Chinese priorities, for had China remained unchanged so too would the relationship with North Korea, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization may never have come to fruition. The strength of ties can be partly indicated by the willingness of China to support North Korea with not only aid but military force if necessary (a desire that is waning at best). This is a completely different policy direction than when China

⁵ Scott Snyder, "Kim Jong-il Pays Tribute to Beijing – In His Own Way," *Comparative Connections E-Journal Online* (April 2006): 109, www.csis.org/media/isis/pubs/0601qchina_korea.pdf (accessed October 28, 2008).

first condoned the relationship by defending North Korea in the Korean War. It must be noted throughout history that although China has supported North Korea, it has done so primarily when it is in the best interest of the Chinese state or when China was too weak to take a strong position. So, how did China get to be in a place where military defense of North Korea is not considered a viable option? When were relationship ties first solidified and how solid were the foundations of the partnership? Why is the relationship currently so tense?

Choosing North Korea: Paramount Considerations

Chairman Mao controlled government decisions entirely leading up to the Korean War.⁶ As Chairman Mao considered Chinese involvement, his philosophical mindset was that “conflict didn’t require a solution, it *was* the solution to political problems. Hence politics and international affairs were processes by which contradictions on any level were resolved with conflict...[feeling that] conflict in human affairs was not only inevitable but also desirable. Harmony was transitory and undesirable.”⁷ These

⁶ See Kim Jae Chang and William H. Mott IV, *The Philosophy of Chinese Military Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan: New York, 2006) for a very thorough explanation of the development of the philosophical underpinnings of Chinese military culture. The time period of Chairman Mao’s leadership and the centralization of decision-making are well analyzed. See also the explanation of China’s external relations by Lowell Dittmer, “The Transformation of Chinese Foreign Policy,” in *Regional Cooperation and its Enemies in Northeast Asia: The Impact of Domestic Forces*, ed. Edward Friedman and Sung Chull Kim (London: Routledge, 2006), 103.

⁷ See *The Nature of Conflict* section of Alastair Iain Johnston, “Cultural Realism and Strategy in Maoist China,” in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, ed. Peter Katzenstein (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), <http://0-www.ciaonet.org/bianca.penlib.du.edu/book/katzenstein/katz07.html> (accessed November 13, 2008).

Realpolitik considerations, ensuring a degree of influence for the Chinese state, kept North Korea as a priority on the agenda. Two threads running through Chinese strategic thinking at this time were the concept of flexibility and “just war,”⁸ describing the morally permissible killing of people for the “greater good.”⁹ Confucian standards, also important, were responsible for Chairman Mao’s recognition that China’s *Tao* (military capability) was inferior to that of the United States.¹⁰ Despite the unequal military prowess, China’s intervention was felt to be righteous and triumphant.¹¹ Sun Tzu described flexibility as a goal in Chinese philosophical strategic involvement in war: “... Just as water retains no constant shape, so in warfare there are no constant conditions.”¹²

⁸ China could legitimately enter this war from a Chinese philosophical perspective because according to Chinese “just war” theory, entering a conflict as the weaker nation fighting the strong, automatically put China on the morally permissible side of the conflict. For an extremely thorough discussion of Chinese philosophical analysis, theoretical and philosophical, toward “just war” in Chinese theory and practice please read Nadine Godehardt, “The Chinese Meaning of Just War and Its Impact on the Foreign Policy of the People’s Republic of China,” *GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies Working Paper Series* 88 (2008), 1-38, <http://ideas.repec.org/p/gig/wpaper/88.html> (accessed September 29, 2008). Pay particular attention to sections 2 and 3.

⁹ Johnston (1996): 231.

¹⁰ Chang and Mott (2006): 107.

¹¹ Johnston (1996): 69-70. See also Andrew Scobell, *China and Strategic Culture* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2002): 4, www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/ssi/culture.pdf (accessed August 20, 2008).

¹² See Sun Tzu, *Art of War*, Lionel Giles (Allandale Online Publishing: 1910). Online access to the entire work can be found at <http://www.yuni.com/library/suntzu.htm> (accessed September 4, 2008). Pay particular attention to Chapter 6: Weak Points and Strong.

Therefore, a country must be prepared to deal with changing conditions at all times and strategize to endure through them, all the while accomplishing the goals set.

China has shown through history to have a very adept ability to react to constantly changing conditions, no doubt due to the constant need to weigh several competing internal conditions with an equal set of compelling external concerns. In that vein of thought, Sun Tzu's philosophy of *Tao* (military capability) and *Shih* (national solidarity), factored heavily into government considerations of Marxian philosophies.¹³ No doubt an influence upon considerations for war was the tutoring of Guo Huaruo, who "stressed that from a Marxist-Leninist perspective the notion of 'not fighting and subduing the enemy'—the core of the conventional interpretation of Sun Tzu—was un-Marxist."¹⁴ This was a consideration that weighed heavily. Therefore, the Chinese government felt China must enter the conflict: "American military actions threaten[ed] China's industrial base in Manchuria" and also "counterrevolutionaries could...undermine [China's] tenuous political control of the mainland."¹⁵ Eventually, the Chinese government agreed

¹³ Chang and Mott (2006): 107.

¹⁴ Guo Huaruo, "Sun Zi [sic] zhu' qian yan" [Preface to "Translation and annotation of *Sun Zi*"], in Guo Huaruo, *Guo Huaruo junshi lunwen xuanji* [Guo Huaruo's Selected Essays on Military Affairs] (Beijing: Liberation Army Press, 1989): 427, as cited in Nadine Godehardt, "Chinese Meaning of Just War and Its Impact on the Foreign Policy of the People's Republic of China," *GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies Working Paper Series 88* (2008), 232. In this case, I had to rely upon Nadine Godehardt's translation and citation of this work, as I currently lack the Chinese language ability to read and translate the text directly.

¹⁵ Thomas J. Christensen, "Threats, Assurances, and the Last Chance for Peace: The Lessons of Mao's Korean War Telegrams," *International Security* 17, no. 1 (1992): 122-57.

to enter the conflict, believing then, as it does now, that “enduring external threats to China...emanat[e] from Washington” and must be taken care of despite the human and monetary cost of war.¹⁶ The justification that Beijing entered the war on the side of the just was icing on the cake in the pursuit of one of Beijing’s most important priorities – a buffer between China and the United States.¹⁷

In China’s decision to support North Korea, just war theory placed China on the side of the defender, the morally correct side. This helped to mediate the fact that China’s military weakness made all the more threatening the strength of the United States on the battlefield. Another consideration is that China may have been predisposed to military force at the time, perhaps due to the belief that war was not just inevitable, but was to be pursued.¹⁸ Therefore, China was perhaps not so much defending North Korea as much as the future of the Communist movement, seen as essential to China at the time. It is this weakness, perhaps, which eventually led to the tense relations between North Korea and China that can be seen today. Prior to 1978, China thought that war would

¹⁶ Andrew Scobell (2002): 27. See also Andrew Scobell’s “Soldiers, Statesman, Strategic Culture and China’s 1950 Intervention in Korea,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 8, no. 22 (1999): 477-497, for additional discussion of China’s rationale prior to entry in the Korean War.

¹⁷ It is interesting to note here that India argued at this time in favor of China’s just entry into the war, and that China was simply defending its border interests. Please see the Truce Talks section of this article for a short discussion of India’s declarations regarding China’s entry into the Korean War support of North Korea. Robert T. Oliver, “A Brief for Korea,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 294 (July 1954), 35, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1029226> (accessed October 15, 2005).

¹⁸ Scobell (2002): 109. Please consult this article as a whole for an excellent explanation of the Chinese belief about the importance of war in international relations.

occur regardless, and that Chinese involvement was important to international involvement,¹⁹ believing it to be a result of China equating Communist class struggle and revolution with the *modus operandi* in the international system.²⁰ Prevailing elements in the decision were China's need for a buffer zone, the manifestations of ideological concerns into policy, and just war theory. These elements all played a role in justifying for the Chinese government's entry into the Korean War and defense of North Korea.

China, North Korea, and the International Community

Also of consideration was China's positioning in the global community. Partnering with North Korea would allow China to begin establishing legitimacy as a country of rising influence, one the United States should be concerned about as a potentially challenging power, or at least as a potentially equal member of the international community.²¹ Chinese strategy toward North Korea evolved through several cycles, beginning during the period of the Korean War in China's policy of leaning to one side.²² In the beginning of the Cold War, the constraints of the current international

¹⁹ Qin YaQing, "National Identity, Strategic Culture and Security interests: Three Hypotheses on the Interaction between China and International Society," in *China and Asia's Security: China in the Globalized World Series 1* (Marshall Cavendish International: Singapore, 2005): 39.

²⁰ Qin (2005): 39.

²¹ Chang and Mott (2006): 109.

²² For a discussion of China's "lean to one side" policy, see Joseph Y.S. Cheng and Zhang Wankun. "Patterns and Dynamics of China's International Strategic Behavior," in *Chinese Foreign Policy: Pragmatism and Strategic Behavior*, ed. Suisheng Zhao (London: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 2004), 180.

system gave China some recognition and influence, although at this point China's role was largely that of a bystander.

China's Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence,²³ were designated as a baseline for interaction with international community members. These guidelines and principles increasingly came to encompass the whole of China's external relations: "mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; mutual non-aggression; non-interference in each other's internal affairs; equality and mutual benefit; and peaceful coexistence."²⁴ In this case, coupled with China's current inward focus and revolutionary zeal, this treaty was designed to ensure continued border security. In addition, China made several other declarations of a desire for peace just after the Korean War, shifting attention from external involvement in war to internal reform. The Constitution of 1954 emphasized "the steadfast policy of our country in international affairs is to work hard for the lofty goal of world peace and progress for mankind;" the current 1982 Constitution, equally affirms an effort to "safeguard world peace and promote the cause of human progress."²⁵ China's

²³ These principles were enacted specifically for China's interactions with India at the time, but it can be said that these principles characterize China's policy toward all nations since their establishment.

²⁴ Jiang Zhuqing, "Five Principles' Still Shaping Global Peace," *China Daily Online*, June 29, 2004, Tuesday, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-06/29/content_343578.htm (accessed September 25, 2008).

²⁵ "China: Arms Control and Disarmament," *White Paper* (Beijing: Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, November 1995) <http://www.nti.org/db/China/engdocs/whteppr.htm> (accessed on September 14, 2008). Also see "China's Endeavors for Arms Control, Disarmament, and Non-Proliferation," *White Paper*, (Beijing, Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, September 2004) <http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/book/140320.htm> (accessed on September 15, 2008).

refocusing byline away from involvement in the Korean War toward internal reform was in stark contrast to North Korea.

China's involvement in the war satisfied the current ideological importance of the Communist movement: "the cause of the revolution had all along developed out of nothing, gone from small to big, developed as a brutal, difficult, death-defying struggle."²⁶ However, the Communist ideology (and the global revolutions encouraged by the movement) would not always be held in high esteem. China was beginning to shift toward a line of strategic thinking that began to devalue a strategic partnership with North Korea, a partnership that had been solidified in the first place to protect China as much as or more than North Korea.

China's Entry into the World Arena: The Post-Mao Era

Before the Korean War, China was suffering economically and experienced little stability, internal or external. Due to this, leaders in Beijing seized upon the Korean War as an opportunity to unite the people internally in the Chinese cause and pave the way for internal growth and stability. By 1958, "the mainland of China is under the firm control of a powerful government, making rapid progress in industrializing key sectors of its economy, undergoing widespread social change under forced draft, and possessed of Asia's paramount military force."²⁷ As China began securing the underpinnings of

²⁶ Liu Zhen, *Liu Zhen Huiyilu*, (*Liu Zhen's Memoirs*), (Beijing: PLA Press, 1990), 337.

²⁷ John M. H. Lindbeck, "The China Problem Today," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 321 (January 1959), 10, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1030975> (accessed on September 6, 2008).

domestic growth and reform, external considerations were also made, but only pursued when directly in line with Chinese national interest and upon the grounds that China wanted no internal interference from an external power.

Prior to the 1970s it can generally be agreed upon that China was largely excluded from inter-governmental organizations in any sphere. With China's entry into the United Nations in 1971, a great sign of complete reversal of the total isolationism of the 1966-68 Cultural Revolution, China began to seek equal recognition in the international arena on a basic scale, solidifying its new direction away from North Korea. According to the Chinese government, China did not seek to become a leader in the global community, having no desire to make itself the target of any threatened nation: "China will never be a superpower and it opposes hegemony and power politics of any kind."²⁸ Chinese capabilities were still developing, and in no position to be challenged or targeted, and so China was content to move slowly in policy, to ensure their growing position.

During Chairman Mao's control of government policy, involvement in organizations such as the United Nations, and policies of a similar nature (encouraging external involvement) were discouraged. As China moved into the next decade, a new principle of "seeking truth from facts (shishi qishi)" was established, moving away from

²⁸ Albert Feuerwerker, "Chinese History and the Foreign Relations of Contemporary China," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 402, no. 1, (July 1972), 3, <http://ann.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/402/1/1> (accessed on September 21, 2008). China's actions post-Cold War, seeking a multilateral world order, can be strongly seen in this 1972 statement. China utilized the conditions of the international system after 1989 turning this thought into action through policy, explained in future pages.

an ideological focus.²⁹ Another key indicator of this shift is the disappearance by 1971 of Lin Biao, author of the “Long Live the Victory of People’s War!” manifesto of 1965, reflecting a new belief that his writing was “intellectually absurd and politically impractical.”³⁰ This demonstrates the mood in the political leadership was changing and that new thinkers were being brought in for a different leadership direction and focus.

Leadership in Beijing shifted to the Central Committee Secretariat and State Council, away from the politburo, meaning for the Chinese government a collectivization of decision-making and less influence from the “whims of an individual leader.”³¹ This new focus is described as “prompting the vision of a peaceful future world as the way toward the promised land of modernity.”³² In this line of thinking, Chinese political thought has moved from the Communist revolutionary line that war is inevitable, to a preference of focused domestic development. In the words of Deng Xiaoping, China should “bide [its] time and build up...capabilities.”³³ With Beijing’s new Open Door

²⁹ Samuel S. Kim, “Thinking Globally in Post-Mao China,” *Journal of Peace Research* 27, no. 2 (May 1990). The research of Samuel S. Kim provides excellent analysis of this new principle to seek truth in facts rather than ideology.

³⁰ Feuerwerker (1972): 10.

³¹ David L. Shambaugh, “China’s National Security Research Bureaucracy,” *The China Quarterly*, no. 110 (June 1987), 284, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/654000> (accessed on September 30, 2008).

³² Kim (1990): 194.

³³ Ralph D. Sawyer, “Chinese Strategic Power: Myths, Intent, and Projections,” *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 9, no. 2 (Winter 2006/2007), 3, www.jmss.org/2007/2007winter/articles/sawyer_cont-defence.pdf (accessed on September 27, 2008).

Policy, launched by Deng Xiaoping, China began to ascend to a new global and regional stature as a country on the move. It is worth noting that North Korea during this period maintained its prior status quo, refusing to change as China was with the times and modernize. Whereas North Korea's policy remained resistant to reform, China's flexibility through time meant that their government policies could change and shift with the times in order to secure continued growth.

In the 1980s China began to get more proactive in these organizations, moving beyond just membership into a more responsive role. China focused upon “*system-maintaining* and *system-exploiting*...Beijing began to ask what IGOs could do for China...and was more and more concerned with the stability of the existing capitalist world system as a *sine qua non* for fueling its modernization drive.”³⁴ Beijing only increased its role in international organizations, in particular the United Nations, which China declared a successful way to maintain stable world peace. China additionally applied for membership on the UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, with the encouragement of the Soviet Union.³⁵ North Korea, ever the reclusive nation, sought none of these advances and continued the status quo, resisting reform and making its relationship with China increasingly tense. Chinese policy had slowly made China part of the international community in a responsible manner, taking part in international institutions and paying more attention to the rules governing the global system. North Korea continued to travel in the opposite direction and by this point both countries were

³⁴ Kim (1990): 193.

³⁵ Kim (1990): 196.

very far apart in terms of goals, policies, and strategic focus. Relations between the two countries were tenuous at best, and China began to look elsewhere for partnership to satisfy its goals post-Cold War.

CHAPTER 2

Change in the 1990s: A Fleeting Alliance

China's focus shifted to a new "ism" between their entry into the Korean War and the first North Korean nuclear declaration, refocusing upon the goal of capitalism instead of communism: the "export of revolution" morphed into a solid "peace and development" baseline, the beginnings of which could be seen in the Five Basic Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. With a new economic focus, China sought partnerships with those who would be most advantageous to the internal development of the country.³⁶ The current structure of the system also allowed China to begin building relations with others based upon "'peaceful rise' or 'peaceful diplomacy,' regardless of the ideology of the other government.³⁷ It was not a question of choosing sides as in the Cold War, but now a focus on working together with anyone and everyone who could benefit China's goal of economic growth and power. Therefore, China integrated into international sphere beyond membership in international organizations by engaging countries bilaterally and multilaterally, at the cost of solid relations with North Korea.³⁸ China was slowly setting

³⁶ Dittmer (2006): 101.

³⁷ Dittmer (2006): 109.

³⁸ Stephanie Hsien and Chae-Jin Lee, "China's Two-Korea Policy at Trial: The Hwang

in, getting more comfortable, and finding its place in the new international order, and the shift away from North Korea is a strong indicator of this taking place.³⁹ The Chinese government's responsible policies were making North Korea's irresponsible policies, and failing economy as a result, all the more threatening to the growth and security of China.

China also began to restructure internal strategic priorities. Ideological considerations took a backseat to rising issues of national development and security initiatives.⁴⁰ The new "ideology" for China was capitalism clothed in the rhetoric of a Communist government. The political process in Beijing continued decentralization, increasing policy dialogue in a multi-layered way, opening the political process in a way that would have never been envisioned possible during the Mao period.⁴¹ Jiang Zemin described this phenomenon, saying that "channels of decision making have become increasingly diversified and complex—we find, for example, that the circle of decision makers has grown progressively wider, as new talent and new ideas have been

Chang Yop Crisis," *Pacific Affairs* 74, no. 3 (Autumn 2001), 321, <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0030851X%28200123%2974%3A3%3C321%3ACTPATT%3E2.0.CO%3B2-7> (accessed on October 7, 2008).

³⁹ Robert G. Sutter, "China's Modernization and Asian Security," in *China's Global Presence: Economics, Politics, and Security*, ed. David M. Lampton and Catherine H. Keyser (American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research: Washington, 1988), 205.

⁴⁰ Sutter (1988): 206.

⁴¹ David Lampton, "China's Foreign and National Security Policy-Making process: Is it Changing and Does It Matter?" in *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform*, ed. David M. Lampton (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001): 12.

incorporated via the Leading Small Groups.”⁴² A key indicator of the Chinese government taking the focus off inevitable war was the lessening influence of the People’s Liberation Army in decision-making.⁴³ Therefore, “while the ‘leaders of Mao’s generation were willing to use force to serve China’s security, and more broadly, foreign policy goals whenever necessary...[recently] in most cases, China sent strong warnings or protests or engaged in negotiations’ prior to employing armed force.”⁴⁴ Affirming a shift in China’s policy, Deng Xiaoping said, “We need at least twenty years of peace to concentrate on our domestic development.”⁴⁵ China in the early 1990s sought to find itself, determining national priorities and dealing with an entirely new power alignment

The Chinese government response after Tiananmen Square revealed a struggling and changing China, responding to international pressure and punishments with good behavior, seeking stronger integration and a more positive perception in the international community. The violent oppression of the protestors at Tiananmen Square was disastrous for positive Chinese perception worldwide, and reflected a new era in which China, to benefit and use the system, must also accept the social and moral responsibilities accorded with membership. The international community response to

⁴² Dittmer (2006): 109.

⁴³ Jiang Zemin, *Theory on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics*, (Beijing: Party Literature Research Center, 2002): 522.

⁴⁴ Scobell (2002): 6.

⁴⁵ Deng Xiaoping, *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping: A New Approach to Stabilizing the World Situation 3*, (February 1984)
<http://web.peopledaily.com.cn/english/dengxp/vol3/text/c1170.html> (accessed on September 28, 2008).

the actions of the Chinese government and PLA were devastating – economic sanctions and diplomatic ostracism. Beijing leadership as a result began even more solidly turning the focus inward upon peaceful development, with a renewed “emphasis on ‘peaceful evolution’ [that] bespoke a basic reevaluation of the opening policy, leading to the formulation of ‘identity realism’: economic opening was profitable and would continue, [with]...greater emphasis on patriotic education, including reincorporation of pre-Revolutionary Chinese history...shift[ing] the focus from glorious communist revolution to the foregoing national humiliation [guochi].”⁴⁶ Economic development and regional and global security considerations had officially taken the place of Communist revolution. Capitalism, the enemy of China’s Communist movement in the 1950s, was now the movement of choice.

Post-Cold War, Chinese external relationships were cultivated with a variety of countries in the international arena, regardless of ideology or geopolitical positioning: “The acceptance and promotion of partnerships among major boundaries reflect an attempt on the part of China to redefine its position in the new international strategic pattern. The partnerships also reveal a strategic idea offered by China as an emerging major power in the post-Cold War era.⁴⁷ At this point, considering the Chinese relationship with North Korea, particularly the resistance encountered in Pyongyang at the mention of internal reform or cooperation with the international system, was continuing to place a lot of strain upon the relationship. North Korea’s nuclear

⁴⁶ Dittmer (2006): 102.

⁴⁷ Cheng and Wankun (2004): 180.

declaration in particular, potentially destabilizing the region, terrified a new China desperate to maintain regional stability for continued development.

Chinese-North Korean relations struggled throughout the first nuclear crisis but were shored up because China was also dealing with an internal crisis (Tiananmen) that had called into question successful transition into the international system. China therefore was not in a position to pressure and punish North Korea in a serious way.⁴⁸ Doing so risked Pyongyang continuing irresponsible behavior and doing something to punish China for that action. The destabilization of the shared border or, the worst case, the region, was too high a price to pay for China. As Chinese policy showed a tendency toward increased responsibility in the international arena concerning nuclear weapons and material by signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), the Chemical Weapons Convention, and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), Pyongyang continued in the opposite vein, eventually pulling out of the NPT to pursue weapons development. China as a signatory to the CTBT is a key development, as the Chinese government had previously refused to sign the document in order to finish (according to the completion standards of leaders in Beijing) their nuclear testing. It is also “particularly significant given the importance China attaches to its nuclear arsenal as a symbol of its great power status and as the ultimate guarantor of Chinese sovereignty against ‘nuclear blackmail and hegemony.’”⁴⁹ This new responsibility reflects the

⁴⁸ Zisis (2006).

⁴⁹ Bates Gill and Evan S. Medeiros, “Foreign and Domestic Influences on China’s Arms Control and Nonproliferation Policies,” *The China Quarterly*, no. 161 (March 2000): 68 <http://0-www.jstor.org.bianca.penlib.du.edu/stable/655981> (accessed on September 26, 2008).

Chinese understanding of nuclear weapons not just as a method of shoring up superpower status, but also that they can be a destabilizing force should they end up in the wrong hands. Just because China has nuclear weapons does not mean China wants other countries to have them as well, particularly not their irresponsible partner, North Korea.

Sinuiji Special Administrative Zone: China Says No

China had no problem showing North Korea who was in control when it came to the Sinuiji Special Administrative Region. A growing economic opportunity with high hopes on the China-North Korean border, had been developing between the two nations. The idea behind this cooperation was encouraging mutually beneficial reform on the part of North Korea. China had contributed to the project, investing as a potential way to open North Korea to outside investment and economic reform. Here, the Chinese government tried to pass along to North Korea through joint policy the new feeling of responsibility that China espoused in policy.

Demonstrating, though, that little in North Korea had changed, Kim Jung-il selected as manager a man known more for his ability to deliver favors to Kim than his business prowess, Yang Bin.⁵⁰ As a response to questionable business practices, China jailed Yang Bin, refusing to be associated with this corrupt and irresponsible choice by the North Korean government. Also plausible for severing association with this project was Pyongyang's lack of information given to the Chinese government: This "gives

⁵⁰ Scott Snyder, "Beijing in the Driver's Seat? China's Rising Influence on the Two Koreas," *Comparative Connections*, (January 2003): 97, www.csis.org/media/isis/pubs/0204qchina_korea.pdf (accessed October 29, 2008).

credence to views that relations between Beijing and Pyongyang have deteriorated markedly...as Kim Jong-il has evidently focused his primary time and attention on wooing Russian President Vladimir Putin at the expense of relations with Beijing.”⁵¹ The Sinuiji Special Administrative Region, with its promised economic reforms, stands contrary to Pyongyang’s nuclear behavior. It does continue to shore up the belief that North Korea does not want to change in the international system, but rather continue to take that system hostage, in a sense, to remain the same country it had always been. The Chinese government could not put up with this behavior.

Describing the differences evident at the Chinese-North Korean border, a picture emerges describing the changes that have occurred on the Chinese side and the lack of change on the North Korean side: "thirty years ago, the two sides of the river were virtually identical, but now, it seems they couldn't be more different.' China had incorporated tourist sites along its border;⁵² North Korea had done no such thing, remaining ever suspicious and preparing for the next inevitable outbreak of war.⁵³ The dismal state of the North Korean economy, the result of continued pursuit of “Communist utopia,” is in stark contrast to China’s rapid growth, and speaks to Beijing’s abandonment of Marx.⁵⁴ China sought to work with North Korea in one of a couple areas to encourage

⁵¹ Ibid: 98.

⁵² Kevin Platt, “Stone's Throw Away, Worlds Apart,” *Christian Science Monitor* 89, November 30, 1997, <http://www.csmonitor.com/1997/0930/093097.intl.intl.6.html> (accessed September 18, 2008).

⁵³ Victor D. Cha and David Kang, *Nuclear North Korea*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 124.

⁵⁴ Platt (1997).

reform, and North Korea's desperation for some flow of income encouraged the cooperation of leaders in Pyongyang, but only to a certain extent. North Korea would not change or reform for economic success, whereas China would. The partnership of one very flexible country and one very inflexible nation could not last.

From Pyongyang With Love: More of the Same

The threat perception in Pyongyang is a cyclical process and North Korea creates the conditions that cause increased suspicion. North Korea's threat perception and wariness is heightened in response to the targeting of the global community, and North Korea's continued irresponsible behavior continues to make it a target, which in turn raises Pyongyang's perception of threats, etc. The cycle just continues over time. China does not want attention drawn to itself for negative or destabilizing action and a solid relationship with North Korea could suggest in some way that China agreed with Pyongyang's policies. Beijing though could not deal with North Korea with ease or with a consistent hard-line approach, instead reacting as a result of changing conditions, the focus though always being Chinese economic growth. The risk in dealing with North Korea is huge and the danger posed to Chinese internal growth very real, so China had to tread carefully when dealing with Pyongyang. This proved to be a very delicate balancing act.

This tension explains why Beijing was hesitant to take a hard-line approach to the North Korean nuclear ambitions. Instead, China took a more moderate approach in dealing with North Korea. An example of this is Wu Jianmin's statement that China

seeks a resolution through “patient consultations,” and that “evidence that North Korea had nuclear weapons was ‘not convincing’. . . . We have held all along that dialogue is more effective than pressure. To bring pressure to bear is not appropriate now.”⁵⁵ China, familiar with the results of economic sanctions from personal experience after Tiananmen, and recognizing that the North Korean economy was barely surviving as it was, did not wholeheartedly endorse economic sanctions against Pyongyang.⁵⁶ China could not afford to increase the suffering in North Korea and suffer increased North Korean dependency. China’s reluctance was also the result of hesitancy to allow foreign bodies and countries to have influence domestically in North Korea; by extension, this implied that perhaps internal issues in China could be dealt with by outside interference.⁵⁷ Domestic development and economic growth was also of paramount concern as China became comfortable with its position in dealing with North Korea.⁵⁸ The Chinese government did not want to anger the leaders in Pyongyang and so China abstained from voting after Hans Blix issued a report to the UN urging North Korea to work with the International Atomic Energy Agency and the General Assembly supported the motion in a 140-0 vote.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Michael J. Mazarr, *North Korea and the Bomb: A Case Study in Nonproliferation* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1995), 115.

⁵⁶ Ibid: 130.

⁵⁷ Ibid: 115.

⁵⁸ Ibid: Michael Mazarr provides a clear discussion of the evolution of Chinese strategic goals at this point in Sino-North Korean relations.

⁵⁹ Ibid: 133. See also Victor D. Cha and David Kang’s book *Nuclear North Korea*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), particularly page 124 for a very thorough

Beijing's attitude toward North Korea increased in tension as China began to learn the rules of the game and include itself into the global community. As China began to experience the economic partnership benefits of peaceful cooperation, the Chinese government no doubt would have liked North Korea to move in the same direction, emphasizing the political and economic benefits of peaceful engagement. This policy had a two-fold purpose, stabilize North Korea's aggressive policies and decrease North Korea's present and future dependency upon China. Pyongyang disagreed and continued their pursuit. China slowly increased its power in the system,⁶⁰ and enjoyed the benefits, China slowly and incrementally began to put pressure upon North Korea to do the same. Beijing did not want to continue to lose face over Pyongyang's irresponsible behavior.

China dealt with many different issues in this period, acclimatizing to the international system, reevaluating national and international strategic goals, and finally, how to balance these new focuses with a waning desire to partner with North Korea. China at the beginning of the 1990s was not in a strong enough position to place real pressure upon Pyongyang,⁶¹ but this would not always be the case.

North Korea: Pushing China's Buttons

A new regional and domestic role for China is revealed through participation in

analysis of North Korea's positioning and outward relations during the nuclear crises.

⁶⁰ Samuel S. Kim, *The Two Koreas and the Great Powers* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 59.

⁶¹ Ibid: 64.

the Six-Party Talks. China's new focus for the North Korean alliance is far more indicative of desiring responsible membership in the global community, with pragmatism playing a far larger role.⁶² Essentially, "it has become one of China's important strategic tasks to maintain the stability of the international society and the region where it is located. China regards international society as the important guarantee of China's national interests rather than a threat to China's security."⁶³ The Chinese government post-Cold War, recognized that the international system has benefits, and tried to take advantage, stating that countries "should seek converging points in their common interests, expand mutually beneficial cooperation and work together to take up the challenge facing mankind for survival and development."⁶⁴ Pyongyang has been nowhere near as successful as Beijing in normalizing relations with the European Union members and Russia as China develops stronger relations on a global scale.⁶⁵ This should come as no surprise considering North Korea's repeated irresponsible nuclear actions, threatening to destabilize the region and angering nations around the world.

China furiously responded to North Korea's nuclear test, changing to an attitude

⁶² Hsien and Lee (2001): 321.

⁶³ Qin (2005): 37-38.

⁶⁴ Jiang (2004): 522.

⁶⁵ Yinhay Ahn, "North Korea in 2001: At a Crossroads," *Asian Survey: A Survey of Asia in 2001* 42, no. 1 (January 2002): 52, <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0004-4687%28200201%2F02%2942%3A1%3C46%3ANKI2AA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-Z> (accessed September 21, 2008). This statement was made in 2002, but the same conditions are generally true today.

of punishment instead of diplomacy.⁶⁶ The nuclear tests were a loss of face and a “slap in the face.”⁶⁷ Threats to China’s international and domestic perception at this point were unacceptable. China responded strongly, supporting UN Security Council Resolution 1718, and imposing sanctions upon Pyongyang, a position China was unwilling and unable to take a decade earlier.⁶⁸ China’s power and perception in the international arena is rising, as its relationship with North Korea declines. Patience also seems to be wearing thin among some Chinese leaders with North Korea's aggressive military and failing economy, refusing to condone the situation with a personal visit: "A delegation... including high-ranking [Communist] Party officials...rejected an invitation to visit Pyongyang."⁶⁹ The continued nuclear situation was the straw that broke the camel’s back, and Beijing’s annoyance is made clear through policy. Also clear is China’s new role in the international system as a major player.

China Pushes Back: A Hard-Line Policy for North Korea

Beijing’s efforts to encourage North Korea into a position with a greater stake and

⁶⁶ Zissis (2006): 1.

⁶⁷ Jeremy Paltiel, “*China and the North Korean Crisis: The Diplomacy of Great Power Transition*,” in *North Korea’s Second Nuclear Test and Northeast Asian Security*, ed. Seung-Ho Joo and Tae-Hwan Kwak, (Ashgate Publishing Limited: London, 2007): 97.

⁶⁸ M. Taylor Fravel and Evan S. Medeiros, “China’s New Diplomacy,” *Foreign Affairs*, (November/December 2003): 1, <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20031101faessay82604/evan-s-medeiros-m-taylor-fravel/china-s-new-diplomacy.html> (accessed September 3, 2008).

⁶⁹ Platt (1997). Platt in this case discusses the comments of a Chinese government worker in Beijing.

heightened responsibility reflect China's growing ability and power when compared with the response to North Korea's first nuclear crisis. Beijing has been applying pressure behind the scenes in Pyongyang to decrease North Korea's economic and political dependence,⁷⁰ an attitude reversal from the first round of talks in the early 1990s regarding North Korea's nuclear ambitions and program. China's effort in the Six-Party Talks now is regarded far more highly than in the early 1990s; in particular, this serves as an indication of the importance of these talks in Chinese political affairs, Beijing assembled hundreds of experts to work on drafts of the agreements.⁷¹ China is approached as not just an equal power in these talks, but as a very important member of talks, a position relished in Beijing. Additionally, leaders in Beijing encouraged Six-Party Talk members to provide Pyongyang with face-saving measures to return to the talks after negative rhetoric from the United States labeling North Korea as an "outpost of tyranny" and Kim Jung Il a "tyrant."⁷² China's efforts have been beneficial, as North Korea is more involved in these talks than during the first nuclear crisis in the early 1990s, even if that involvement leads to more frustration at times than positive results.

⁷⁰ Fravel and Medeiros (2003): 1. The authors discuss Beijing's hard-line approach to North Korean nuclear misbehavior. Recently, China "had boldly stepped into the fray, suspending crucial oil shipments to North Korea, sending high-level envoys to Pyongyang, and shifting troops around the Sino-Korean border. ... And China has not let up the pressure since." The article continues outlining the ways China is taking a far more involved role in regional and international arenas far bolder than before, an indicator of the success of Beijing's economic reform and development.

⁷¹ Kim (2006): 68.

⁷² "Rice Names 'Outposts of Tyranny,'" *BBC News Channel Online*, January 19, 2005, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/4186241.stm> (accessed September 6, 2008).

At this time, the beginning of the 21st century, China is described to have made “a monumental contribution to the maintenance of peace and stability in Asia and the world over and the sound development of international relations. Peace and development remain the overriding themes of the times.”⁷³ Involved globally now, and gaining legitimacy, China focuses on a variety of domestic and international issues at all levels. Finally, the most telling sign of the decay of the China-North Korea relationship, indications exist suggesting Beijing would be unwilling to support North Korea were it attacked by another nation, part of Article II of the 1961 treaty with North Korea.⁷⁴ China does not need or want regional instability, particularly as considerable growth is the new Chinese theme, nor would the Chinese government ever risk China’s growing position to fight a war with little reward for the winner.

China’s participation in the Six-Party Talks is a key indication of the regional role potential for China. Fairly recently, “President Hu urged relevant parties to continue to strengthen coordination and cooperation, push forward the talks and strive for the gradual establishment of a mechanism for peace and security in Northeast Asia.”⁷⁵ It can be safely assumed that this hint toward a mechanism in Northeast Asia, while it could mean an encouragement to solidify the Six-Party Talks membership into a formal, permanent

⁷³ Jiang (2004).

⁷⁴ Shen Dingli, “North Korea’s Strategic Significance to China,” *China Security* (Washington, DC: World Security Institute, Autumn 2006): 26.

⁷⁵ “China, Russia Pledge to Increase Strategic Coordination,” November 24, 2008, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-11/24/content_10401918.htm (accessed November 25, 2008).

framework, could also mean the development of an organization in which China plays a more central, controlling role (see Chapter Four). President Hu spoke further, indicating a strong interest in increased Russian involvement and partnership.⁷⁶ It is left to the reader to wonder if, perhaps, this was merely a reference to a potential new role for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to fulfill. Could this be the case? It is very unclear, and differing Chinese and Russian goals about the future of the Korean Peninsula, would seem to make this unlikely. Despite other similar challenges, Russia and China have overcome many impasses in order to work together successfully, succeeding where North Korea has failed. China has learned to compromise in order to accomplish its goals and work with others in the current system.

China's increased participation in the Six-Party Talks and increasing participation in international organizations (governmental and non-governmental), reflects a desire to become part of the system while encouraging North Korea to do the same (whether or not leaders in Pyongyang want to join). The Talks could not be without China, as Beijing convinced North Korea to join and has maintained pressure upon the Pyongyang government to prevent North Korea from disappearing.⁷⁷ It is possible that this may rein in some of North Korea's rogue state actions.⁷⁸ It is also possible that China's regional

⁷⁶ Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in San Francisco, Hu Jintao Holds Talks with His Russian Counterpart Putin, March 26, 2007, <http://www.chinaconsulatesf.org/eng/xw/t306902.htm> (accessed September 29, 2008).

⁷⁷ Joseph Cirincione, Jon B. Wolfsthal, and Miriam Rajkumar. *Deadly Arsenals: Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Threats* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005), 283.

⁷⁸ Ralph C. Hassig and Kongdan Oh, "North Korea: A Rogue State Outside the NPT Fold," *Brookings Institute Online*, (March 2005),

influence is overblown and should not be invested in too highly. China's level of influence is debatable.

Beijing does obviously have influence, as one main provider of aid to North Korea, although the level of influence is up for debate. Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Christopher Hill has described China as "key" to the success of the Six Party Talks.⁷⁹ A final point, "who has more potential leverage to bring North Korea in line – in ways that could dramatically expand China's regional influence and "space," if indeed a U.S. troop presence in South Korea proves unsustainable – than Beijing?"⁸⁰ Clearly, China seeks benefit at home by becoming involved in the process forcing North Korea to be more responsible. These benefits come in the form of continued economic growth, enhanced international prestige, recognition that China is a necessary power player, and a separation of China from North Korea, so China no longer has to suffer when Pyongyang's irresponsible policies are played out. The Chinese government has successfully positioned China as a successful power who will continue to play a role far into the future.

China: External Policy Change, Internal Decision-Making Change

Since 1979 there has been a growing proliferation of differing channels of

http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2005/0301northkorea_hassig.aspx?rssid=north+korea (accessed September 16, 2008).

⁷⁹ Interview with Christopher Hill, U.S. Embassy, Beijing, China, 9 April 2008, <http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/2008/04/103376.htm> (accessed October 10, 2008).

⁸⁰ Snyder (2003): 99.

discussion where international relations and policy are concerned. Meetings and discussion about various international security topics are held regularly, encouraging and opening consultative channels, “decentraliz[ing] the foreign policy network and increase[ing] the diversity of opinions reaching the top leaders.”⁸¹ The top leadership though has become more collectivized.⁸² Along with the pluralization of global involvement and diplomacy, Beijing has experienced a similar phenomenon in the decision-making process. This is a variance from the past when the paramount leader possessed total control over the decision-making process, limiting consultations (if any) to the few closest, most trusted advisors. President Hu Jintao does not make decisions completely alone as Chairman Mao largely did, but consults other bodies for opinions and recommendations.⁸³ The actual effect these policies have upon the decision-making process is indeterminable, but the fact remains that they are solicited, reflecting a definite change from past policy. Chairman Mao never felt pressure to even give lip service to the process of consultations in decision-making but President Hu Jintao does. Now, “important decisions are made after soliciting opinions from democratic parties and people with no party affiliation.”⁸⁴ This change indicates the growing outward focus of

⁸¹ Shambaugh (1987): 284. His entire paper presents a very thorough analysis of the development of a multilayered national security bureaucracy in the Chinese government.

⁸² Shambaugh (1987): 284.

⁸³ Yan Liang, ed., “CPC Solicits Opinions on Government Reform and Leader Lists,” *Xinhua Online*, February 28, 2008, Thursday, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-02/28/content_7682176.htm (accessed October 2, 2008).

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

Chinese government policy, and a (however superficial) acceptance of the responsibilities associated with the international system.

To accomplish its goals, China is opening up in more ways than originally anticipated and the effect upon the highest levels shows this. China now values more regional security, economic advancement and prosperity,⁸⁵ as well as enhancing its reputation. Leaders in Beijing, “openly admit that China’s development goal is ‘a rich state and a strong army’ (fu guo qiang bing).”⁸⁶ To contribute to the attainment of this goal, China began emphasizing the peaceful intentions of the country, saying that a growing China does not pose a threat.⁸⁷ This pronouncement seeks no doubt to prevent any anti-China alliances, and to serve as a form of deterrence. This new direction for Chinese government policy manifested itself in relations with other countries as well in post-Cold War.

Although China’s relationship with North Korea shifted from that of siblings to a parent chastising a disobedient teenager, China still engages North Korea. Leaders in Beijing recognize that they cannot afford not to talk to their neighbor, however unruly. Although North Korea is of less importance as a buffer zone and is now more of a liability, China maintains the cost of relations to protect regional stability. So, in a way, North Korea remains a high strategic priority on China’s list, but at a much greater cost

⁸⁵ For a discussion of the shift in Chinese priorities to valuing economic growth see Harry Harding, “Discussion of ‘International Political Economy from a Chinese Angle,’” *Journal of Contemporary China* 10, no. 26 (February 2001).

⁸⁶ Johnston (1996): 236.

⁸⁷ Sawyer (2006/2007): 18.

and with far more limited benefits. China has found a far more stable and secure way to maintain the strategic buffer zone and concurrently pursue economic growth and development – developing relations with Russia in a multi-layered way unlike that of the Sino-North Korean relationship. The Sino-North Korean alliance failed as China rose and strategic goals changed. The Chinese government now set its eyes upon cooperation with Russia to attain post-Cold War goals.

CHAPTER 3

A Bold Outward Direction: Sino-Russian Relations

When the Cold War ended and the international system began to adjust, China assessed the situation and became alarmed at the growth of a uni-polar system. In response, policymakers in Beijing began formulating policies to counterbalance the growing weight of the United States in the international arena. This perspective is best described by Yan Xuetong, director of Tsinghua University's Institute of International Studies, who unabashedly said, "the world should prepare for a uni-polar world order and a unilateral US global strategy. The US is the world's only superpower, [and] pulling out of the ABM shows that they know they don't need to care about what others say."⁸⁸ Spurred on by a desire, at minimum, for continued equal recognition with other countries, China began moving in a direction that ideally, over time, would allow the country to play a significant regional and international role. China did not want this role to extend only to the political or military arenas, however.

In this new era, soft power can be as powerful as hard power, and should be used

⁸⁸ Robert J. Saiget, "China Fearing US Domination in Post-Cold War World, Analysts Say," *Agence France-Presse*, December 16, 2001, <http://www.spacedaily.com/news/bmdo-01zzq.html> (accessed September 25, 2008).

as often if not more. According to Yan Xuetong, soft power is “the ability to mobilize a country, both internally and externally,” and hard power is defined as military power.⁸⁹ The Chinese government has been working hard to increase the presence and power of the country globally through alternate methods such as cultural exchanges, language study, increasing tourism domestically and abroad, to name a few. Internally, China has continued instituting a strong government to unify the people and encouraging pride in the growing nation and its potential, to discourage factions that may wish to cause unrest or challenge the status quo. In developing legal structures internally and regionally with neighbors, China also attains the good graces and assistance of other nations, allowing the Chinese government to more easily maintain control of the internal population. In the case of border disputes or problems (to be detailed far more specifically in further sections), instead of pulling out hard power options, Beijing can engage in dialogue or rely upon social institutions to smooth over the tenuous area/issue. It is with these goals in mind that China sought economic development as well, for a prosperous happy people with opportunity benefiting from the system is far less likely to fragment and seek a change in that system. Though the system is largely still under development, and should not be confused with China’s growing economic power, according to Yan.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Yan Xuetong, “The Path for China to Increase its ‘Soft Power,’” *Brookings Institute Online*, (March 2005) www.brookings.edu/articles/2005/0301northkorea_hassig.aspx?rssid=north+korea (accessed October 7, 2008).

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* It is interesting to note here though that while economic power differs from soft power according to Yan, the Chinese government is utilizing economic growth and capitalism as a method of unification for the Chinese people, much in the same way Communism and revolution were used previously.

Also in the post-Cold War period, China began even more swiftly moving in the direction of economic pursuits. After all, even China's Communist Party has "long since discarded Marxist interests as the organization discusses ways of embracing entrepreneurs into its membership."⁹¹ A new direction and partnership in the post-Cold War era are needed to solidify China's broader regional focus, the provision of security, development opportunities, and regional ties of the non-North Korean type. Russia provided this opportunity, building relations in the post-Cold War era upon a new base of equality, seeing China as a partner instead of simply a tributary state part of the communist movement and, unlike North Korea, contributing to the stability of the region and providing a counter balance to the influence of the United States (a role previously filled by North Korea).

At the end of the Cold War, as the Sino-North Korean relationship took a turn for the worse, China's relations with Russia did the opposite. Challenged by the collapse of the global communist movement, the Tiananmen sanctions and diplomatic isolation, China sought a new avenue to begin opening the closed doors of diplomatic relations with others. China found the answer in Russia, a country that had equally experienced the collapse of the communist movement and suffered economically. From Moscow's "most worrisome ideological opponent, China has become in the post-Cold War international order a valued strategic partner."⁹² From the perspective of the governments

⁹¹ Richard Kraus, "China in 2003: From SARS to Spaceships," *Asian Survey* 44, no. 1, (January/February 2004): 151.

⁹² Elizabeth Wishnick, "Russia and China: Brother's Again?" *Asian Survey* XLI, no. 5 (September/October 2001): 798.

in Beijing, the same sentiment is accorded for the post-Cold War years.⁹³ The relationship between China and Russia, initially a politically beneficial relationship, developed into a much more demanding and rewarding partnership, with multilayered frameworks for cooperation.

In solidifying ties and taking the first steps toward a regional, multilateral apparatus, China and Russia recognized that in order for their countries to function best, all abilities should be equal at economic, social, and legal status: “Establishing a harmonious society and increasing government political ability mobilization requires reform of social institutions to make them compatible with the increase in production capacity.”⁹⁴ Essentially, growth will only continue as long as all elements of a country are supportive, contributive, and grow alongside economic progress. Each country worked to improve internally to better growth, but found that even faster, more stable growth could be found in partnership. The Chinese government had long recognized that an internally united people would allow for greater continued growth and worked to stem the problems associated with minorities seeking change. Russia and China cooperated here with enlightened self-interest, enacting policies to benefit themselves and their partner internally.

China did not stand to benefit alone from this relationship, as Russia too wanted to increase its regional and international positioning in the post-Cold War era. In 1996,

⁹³ Song Yemin, “Sino-Russia, Russia-U.S., Sino-U.S. Relations, and Interaction among the Three,” *International Research Exchange Board (IREX)*, Washington, D.C., (February 1997): 14.

⁹⁴ Yan (2005): 2.

with the induction of Evgenii Primakov as Foreign Minister in Russia, the prior more pro-Western policies were dropped in favor of the cultivation of partnerships with China and India. Encouragement of an alliance between the three countries was on the agenda, but particularly with China.⁹⁵ Elizabeth Wishnick, an analyst of Sino-Russian relations, describes Russian interests from an interview with Prime Minister Igor Ivanov, where he said that Russia has proven to be “[eager] to promote its interests in Asia.”⁹⁶ In this new system, although the recognized superpower was the United States, the potential existed for a more extensive multi-polar opportunity. Other commonalities existed between Russian and Chinese policy interests and strategic goals. Some of these common interests included opposition to national missile defense (NMD, mainly American), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) growth, and finally “intervention in the Kosovo conflict served to shore up Sino-Russian strategic coordination and military cooperation.”⁹⁷ Russia and China recognized this and seized upon it in their interactions, initially politically and eventually in a multi-layered context.

Increasing trade between Russia and China was one of the goals during the late

⁹⁵ Wishnick (2001): 800.

⁹⁶ Wishnick (2001): 799, Igor Ivanov as cited in Elizabeth Wishnick’s work: Interview with Igor Ivanov, *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* (Independent Newspaper), June 15, 2001: 6. For a discussion of Russia’s rising regional influence, also see Kim Woosang, Kim Yongho, and Yang Seung Ham, “Russo-North Korean Relations in the 2000s: Moscow’s Continuing Search for Regional Influence,” *Asian Survey* 44, no. 6 (November/December 2004): 794–814.

⁹⁷ Paula J. Dobriansky, “Be Wary When the Bear Sides with a Dragon,” *Los Angeles Times* September 18, 2000, <http://www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/4522.html##1> (accessed October 17, 2008).

1990s, stabilizing and bettering ties as well as creating opportunity. In 1997, for example, Russia and China signed an agreement permitting Russian construction of a \$3 billion nuclear power plant in east China.⁹⁸ Cooperating in markets such as energy, arms sales, investment, and the purchasing of property in each country increases the ties as well as the exposure each country has in the other. In 1999, the Asian Financial Crisis encouraged both countries to scale down their cooperation, but not end it. They simply had to be more creative to maximize benefit for cost. This thought process, coupled with the increased economic participation, has also led to increased strategic partnerships in the security and political arenas. The encouragement of a multi-polar world where no hegemonic power has the ability for singular control (i.e. the United States) is of particular concern for both China and Russia.⁹⁹ In this goal, the betterment of the partner can allow the other nation to succeed as well, for if Russia or China rises faster than the other, it may create a new hegemonic system, which is not the goal of their partnership. So, each cooperates to keep the other partner in check, even while contributing to that partner's global and internal success and stability.

China and Russia also cooperated in the area of military exercises and arms sales. Beginning in the early 1990s, both countries began shifting the focus of their political/economic alliance to, slowly, that of a military alliance as well. China and Russia's goal of countering U.S. influence would be unsuccessful were buildup of

⁹⁸ Sergei Blagov, "Russia and China: Friends in Business, But Asian Axis Not Imminent," *Asia Times Online*, March 11, 1999, <http://www.atimes.com/c-asia/AC11Ag03.html> (accessed September 29, 2008).

⁹⁹ Ibid.

military lacking as well. China's desire to counter U.S. military hegemony is so strong that China, normally secretive even to allies concerning military activities and capabilities, has been working with Russia strongly to accomplish this. The Chinese government alone does not share this belief,¹⁰⁰ but is characteristic as well of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). According to an advisor to the Pentagon, "Communist China views the U.S. as an 'inevitable foe' and is preparing for a military confrontation."¹⁰¹ Russia has been selling to China submarines, missiles, fighters, destroyers, and strategic aircraft used for "troop movement, air-to-air refueling and AWACS-type duties."¹⁰² This cooperation is not only involving the trade of arms. Military cooperation in the upper levels of both countries' military establishments, lends credence to the idea that this partnership is one of strength, with much potential for an even stronger future. This is not to say, however, that the countries will combine forces and fight as one (with united strategic goals) anytime soon. These confidence-building measures are indicators of what could be in the future, but what is also not here now.

Strategic military arms purchases from Russia aid the Chinese in their goal of a targeted military buildup, focusing upon being technologically elite and not manpower

¹⁰⁰ This view is up for debate as there are two schools of thought within the Chinese government, one viewing America as a threat to be countered and the other seeing America as a country to be learned from. For a discussion of Chinese perceptions of America see Scobell (2002): 22-29.

¹⁰¹ "Expert: China Sees U.S. as Top Enemy," *NewsMax.com Online*, September 9, 2005, <http://archive.newsmax.com/archives/articles/2005/9/8/161513.shtml> (accessed October 20, 2008).

¹⁰² Peter Brookes, "Sino-Russian Strategic Romance," *Military.com*, March 27, 2006, <http://www.military.com/opinion/0,15202,92359,00.html> (accessed October 10, 2008).

buildup in traditional terms: “In the past three years, the People's Liberation Army has moved quickly to implement a new military strategy that relies heavily on this kind of technological know-how. In the future it even wants to add such high-tech gizmos as laser beams to zap U.S. satellites that monitor battlefields, bombs emitting electromagnetic pulses that blind missile guidance systems, and computer attacks that could put U.S. command networks on the fritz.”¹⁰³ As China pursues the goals of modernization in military terms, its partnership with Russia gives it increased access to hardware as well as additional political power from an ally also interested in power of its own. It is harder for the U.S. to criticize Chinese government policy when Russia is standing not too far behind. China’s targeted military buildup is complimented by partnership with Russia, and in turn, Russia benefits monetarily from the sales of its weapons and machinery.

When President Vladimir Putin took office in 2000, he did so at a time when Chinese and Russian concerns had never been so aligned. Agreements had been signed enhancing the economic cooperation and benefit for both countries, building trust and creating opportunity for added growth and stability. Both countries had unstable regions seeking independence and both countries desired to maintain internal stability in the (thus far) stable regions. China and Russia have supported each other’s regional interests when it comes to issues both countries view as domestic concerns not for international involvement. Specifically, “Chinese leaders supported Russia’s effort to subdue the

¹⁰³ Matthew Forney, “China’s New Game,” *Time Magazine Online*, September 23, 2002, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,501020930-353668,00.html> (accessed October 23, 2008).

Chechnya militarily, and Russia has firmly backed China's position on Taiwan."¹⁰⁴ Not long after this, in 2001, both countries signed the Treaty on Good Neighborliness, Friendship, and Cooperation, a significant move toward solidifying positive political relations (in 1980 during the Cold War China had refused to renew this treaty).¹⁰⁵

The Here and Now of Sino-Russian Cooperation

The current financial crisis has also encouraged increased cooperation for Russia and China, bi-laterally and within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Comments from the top leadership in Beijing support this strategic focus: "Chinese President Hu Jintao said [recently] that China and Russia should strengthen strategic coordination at a time when the global political and economic structures are undergoing the most profound changes since the end of the Cold War."¹⁰⁶ Continuing to show flexibility with changing conditions as well as a recognition that the system is changing. China is playing a role in this shift, and is seeking to understand these changes in order to take advantage of them for the betterment of Chinese growth and establishment in the world order. Chinese and Russian cooperation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is a key example. The next chapter explores the multilateral and multilayered cooperation in the SCO, from inception to the present, focusing upon how the organization services China's new needs

¹⁰⁴ Wishnick (2001): 801.

¹⁰⁵ "NPC Ratifies Sino-Russian Treaty on Good Neighborliness, Friendship, and Cooperation," *People's Daily Newspaper Online*, October 28, 2001, http://english.people.com.cn/english/200110/28/eng20011028_83335.html (accessed October 26, 2008).

¹⁰⁶ "China, Russia Pledge" (2008).

as well as continuing to serve the purpose of the old strategic concerns.

CHAPTER 4

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: A Basic History

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization traces its origins to the Shanghai Five organization, formed in April of 1996, but could be said to trace back even further to the blossoming relations between China and Russia. The organization was founded recognizing three main goals of combating terrorism, extremism and separatism. Original members China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan and Tajikistan, met in 1996 and 1997 to “strengthen confidence-building and disarmament in the border regions... [signing] the Treaty on Deepening Military Trust in Border Regions and the Treaty on Reduction of Military Forces in Border Regions.”¹⁰⁷ Membership at this time made sense in that all states shared a border with China. In January 2001 Uzbekistan applied for membership and joined the Shanghai Five. The group was officially renamed the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as a result, and based its activities upon two main documents, the Declaration on the Establishment of the SCO and the SCO Charter. These basic tenets of the organization are fairly flexible and vague, allowing the SCO to adapt to future concerns and deal with current problems. As membership grew, so did

¹⁰⁷ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China Government, *Shanghai Cooperation Organization*, January 7, 2004, <http://www.fmprc.gov/cn/eng/topics/sco/t57970.htm> (accessed November 1, 2008).

the purposes and goals of the organization, with specific purposes becoming unclear.

According to the Charter of the SCO, the organization has various diverse and multilayered “goals and tasks”, “principles”, and “areas of cooperation”, all of which service all members and reflect the designing hand of China. The purposes of the SCO are:

“to strengthen mutual trust, friendship and good neighborliness [sic] between the member States; to consolidate multidisciplinary cooperation in the maintenance and strengthening of peace, security and stability in the region and promotion of a new democratic, fair and rational political and economic international order; to jointly counteract terrorism, separatism and extremism in all their manifestations, to fight against illicit narcotics and arms trafficking and other types of criminal activity of a transnational character, and also illegal migration; to encourage the efficient regional cooperation in such spheres as politics, trade and economy, defense, law enforcement, environment protection, culture, science and technology, education, energy, transport, credit and finance, and also other spheres of common interest; to facilitate comprehensive and balanced economic growth, social and cultural development in the region through joint action on the basis of equal partnership for the purpose of a steady increase of living standards and improvement of living conditions of the peoples of the member States; to coordinate approaches to integration into the global economy; to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with the international obligations of the member States and their national legislation; to maintain and develop relations with other States and international organizations [sic]; to cooperate in the prevention of international conflicts and in their peaceful settlement; to jointly search for solutions to the problems that would arise in the 21st century.”¹⁰⁸

Several of the described purposes of the SCO are identical to the Chinese government’s Five Principles of Peaceful Co-Existence, which direct China’s independent relations with other countries around the world. As an establishing member of the SCO, and one of the most powerful, China has the ability to shape and direct the future of the SCO.

¹⁰⁸ The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, *Charter of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization*, June 2002, http://www.sectSCO.org/news_detail.asp?id=96&LanguageID=2 (accessed September 15, 2008).

The Chinese government has, in this design, created an organization that will act in a manner similar to that of China itself, and therefore will act to further the goals of Beijing in a way that China alone cannot. Several countries working together in a regional organization holds much more potential future power and has far greater ability to stabilize a region in desperate need of assistance.

The principles upon which the SCO was founded uphold priorities similar to that of the Chinese government as well. The principles of the SCO are:

“Mutual respect of sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity of States and inviolability of State borders, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, non-use of force or threat of its use in international relations, seeking no unilateral military superiority in adjacent areas; equality of all member States, search of common positions on the basis of mutual understanding and respect for opinions of each of them; gradual implementation of joint activities in the spheres of mutual interest; peaceful settlement of disputes between the member States; SCO being not directed against other States and international organizations [sic]; prevention of any illegitimate acts directed against the SCO interests; implementation of obligations arising out of the present Charter and other documents adopted within the framework of SCO, in good faith.”¹⁰⁹

The Chinese government has long sought equal treatment when involved in the international arena.¹¹⁰ Further, since moving out of prior isolationist policies, China has long maintained that domestic issues should be resolved without outside interference, from another country or any inter-country organization. According to Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, "It can be imagined and understood that any country should not

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ “Chinese FM: Non-interference necessary condition for harmonious world,” *NewsGD.com*, March 6, 2007, <http://www.newsgd.com/news/chinakeyword/npc&cpcpc2007/200703060040.htm> (accessed October 1, 2008).

interfere in the internal affairs of another country."¹¹¹ Specific examples where the Chinese government maintains this rhetoric is when speaking of Tibet or Taiwan, which the Chinese government feels are internal issues to be resolved by China alone. Within the SCO, the main areas of cooperation are:

“Maintenance of peace and enhancing security and confidence in the region; search of common positions on foreign policy issues of mutual interest, including issues arising within international organizations [sic] and international for a [sic]; development and implementation of measures aimed at jointly counteracting terrorism, separatism and extremism, illicit narcotics and arms trafficking and other types of criminal activity of a transnational character, and also illegal migration; coordination of efforts in the field of disarmament and arms control; support for, and promotion of regional economic cooperation in various forms, fostering favorable environment for trade and investments with a view to gradually achieving free flow of goods, capitals, services and technologies; effective use of available transportation and communication infrastructure, improvement of transit capabilities of member States and development of energy systems; sound environmental management, including water resources management in the region, and implementation of particular joint environmental programs and projects; mutual assistance in preventing natural and man-made disasters and elimination of their implications; exchange of legal information in the interests of development of cooperation within SCO; development of interaction in such spheres as science and technology, education, health care, culture, sports and tourism. The SCO member States may expand the spheres of cooperation by mutual agreement.”¹¹²

These goals are congruous with the membership of the organization, all focused upon countries with regional membership, perhaps explaining why the United States was denied observer status with the SCO.

Current membership in the SCO consists of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, detailed in the beginning of the SCO history.

There are additional countries that have special status within the SCO and participate, and

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² “*Charter of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization*” (2002).

although they have no power within the organization they share certain benefits of regional economic and security cooperation by participating. India, Iran, Mongolia, and Pakistan have observer status, Afghanistan is an occasional attendee, and Turkmenistan is an occasional observer. Occasional representatives from the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations also attend sessions of the SCO. Belarus has also applied for membership status, however there is no guarantee of success due to the country's location in Europe. Although the SCO meetings include many more countries than the official six member countries, there are no official or pending plans to expand the organization. There is also no legal framework currently existing within the SCO design to allow for the admittance of additional membership.¹¹³ The desire of member states to develop framework for expansion is also questionable, as increased membership could make the organization unwieldy and unable to accomplish goals or remain focused.

The SCO holds annual summits in rotating country capitals, moving in alphabetical order according to the countries' names in Russian language.¹¹⁴ Summits began in China in 2001. Members have also participated in military exercises called Peace Missions. The first occurred in 2003, phase one in Kazakhstan and phase two in China, and the second exercises were held in 2007. Joint exercises were also held between China and Russia in 2005, although outside of the SCO framework. They are

¹¹³ For a discussion of the SCO's current enlargement mechanisms (or lack thereof) please see Richard Weitz, "SCO Fails to Solve Its Expansion Dilemma," *CACI Analyst*, September 19, 2007, <http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/4697> (accessed September 24, 2008).

¹¹⁴ "Charter of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization" (2002).

significant, however, because the success of these operations led to increased confidence and contributed to increased SCO military cooperation and activity. Russia's Permanent Representative to the SCO, Grigory Logninov in 2006 said the SCO does not seek to become a NATO-esque military cooperation organization; however, because the SCO serves to protect the security of its members, and is aware of the potentially devastating effects of "terrorism, extremism and separatism," member states are required to cooperate in military affairs.¹¹⁵ Therefore, military cooperation is basically an extension of economic and political cooperation, ensuring that the latter two continue unabated and with greater success.

What is the SCO?: Through the Rhetoric

While the SCO's intentions and plans may be helpful to members, it remains ambiguous to outside observers. This in itself is indicative of China's involvement, as China is not well known for its transparency or clear intentions when making decisions or policies. In this case it works to China's favor, for the organization is not locked in one key direction; rather, it can be molded and changed as needs are to be met over time. Evan Feigenbaum, Deputy Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs, addressed the SCO with more questions than answers: "What does the Shanghai Cooperation Organization actually do to promote enduring cooperation in this part of the world? Is it a security group? A trade bloc? Something else? What is the Shanghai

¹¹⁵ Iza D, "SCO Gets Ready for Joint Military Exercise," *World Student Press Agency*, August 20, 2007, <http://www.studentpa.info/spip.php?article248> (accessed September 18, 2008).

Cooperation Organization members' vision of their own organization?"¹¹⁶ From current constructs, the organization serves its exact purpose – to remain small enough to address the concerns of member states while retaining the potential to become a larger, more powerful organization in the future. With an unclear purpose, it leaves every door open for new opportunities, projects, communication, and cooperation of any kind. “What should the Shanghai Cooperation Organization’s agenda be? Ask a Russian, ask a Chinese, ask a Kyrgyz, ask an Uzbek. You will hear four different answers. Some want to focus on security, some on economics, some on the so-called “three evils,” and others on pressuring international non-governmental organizations.”¹¹⁷ This is particularly important in the post-Cold War world where states are not the only entities posing threats and offering new opportunities for success, be it economic, social, political, etc. If the purpose is indeed to counter U.S. influence in the region, then broad, sweeping goals allows the SCO to accomplish this goal in any sphere and through any means necessary, assuming the member states can continue to cooperate and accomplish the mission. Thus far the member states have been concentrating efforts on a small scale, slowly building confidence between members and allowing the organization to continue to develop in accordance with stated goals.

¹¹⁶ U.S. Department of State, Speech by Evan Feiganbaum, “The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Future of Central Asia,” Speech given at the Nixon Center, September 6, 2007, <http://www.state.gov/p/sca/rls/rm/2007/91858.htm> (accessed September 2, 2008).

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

The SCO: China's New Problem Solving Calculus

“As proven by history, force cannot fundamentally resolve disputes and conflicts, and the security concept and regime based on the use of force and threat to use force can hardly bring about lasting peace. It is the common call of people to discard the old way of thinking and replace it with new concepts and means to seek and safeguard security. Against this backdrop, the new security concept featuring dialogue and cooperation has emerged as one of the trends of the times.”¹¹⁸

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which officially assumed form in 2002, is hosted in Shanghai, a significant undertaking when one considers that it is the first multi-lateral organization to be hosted within China's borders. This alone signifies the importance Beijing accords to this organization and its future. It also signifies China's potential influence within the organization as a host country. As the Chinese government began considering such an undertaking, several considerations were at play. After the end of the Cold War, and particularly from the mid-1990s, potentially destabilizing non-traditional security threats began to enter the minds of Chinese policymakers very seriously, specifically “terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, narcotics and human trafficking, environmental degradation, the spread of infectious diseases, and

¹¹⁸ People's Republic of China Government, *China's Position Paper on the New Security Concept*, July 31, 2002, <http://www.china-embassy.ch/eng/xwss/t138294.htm> (accessed September 17, 2008). It is interesting to consider here George McTurnan Kahin, “The Asian-African Conference Ithaca,” New York: Cornell University Press, 1956): 54-55, for a discussion of the statement of Chou En-Lai at the Bandung Conference: “We should leave aside out different ideologies, our differing state systems, and the international obligations which we have assumed by joining this side or that side. We should instead settle all questions which may arise among us on the basis of common peace and cooperation.” It is here wherein one may see the beginnings, in Chinese thought, of the justification for an organization like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, although it would not be until the 1990s that this line of thought would manifest itself clearly in Chinese government policy through the SCO.

natural disasters.”¹¹⁹ As these issues demanded more and more attention from Chinese policymakers, more time was paid considering potential effects. In the post-Cold War era, enemies were no longer clear, and with that came the recognition that non-traditional security challenges must be met with non-traditional solutions. No longer would military buildup be enough to deter a threat from making an attack.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization arose as a result of these new, non-traditional security challenges, and serves as evidence that China recognizes its national security issues to be bound up in international security affairs.¹²⁰ War was to be avoided. For China to continue development uninterrupted, a deepening of the regional security blanket was necessary. A shift was taking place, decidedly downgrading North Korea as a strategic buffer zone¹²¹ to a regional risk to be managed, giving the buffer zone role to the developing Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a regional organization with the potential to wield political, economic, and perhaps one day, military power. Backing this new focus on peaceful development was the power transition in November 2002 from Jiang Zemin to Hu Jintao. This is the first time such a leadership change has occurred in China peacefully, without purges or violence.¹²² With a new leadership platform, China decided to pursue its goal of solidifying regional security issues in the form of the

¹¹⁹ Evan S. Medieros, “China’s International Behavior: Activism, Opportunism and Diversification,” *Joint Force Quarterly*, Aspen Institute, (2007): 3.

¹²⁰ Shambaugh (1987): 304.

¹²¹ Medieros (2007).

¹²² Kraus (2004): 149.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

The creation of a multilateral organization dedicated to resolving current issues and challenges in a peaceful, more transparent forum, is in direct line with China's new direction. In China's Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, the goals for interaction in the global community are "mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; mutual non-aggression; non-interference in each other's internal affairs; equality and mutual benefit; and peaceful coexistence."¹²³ China's involvement in the SCO exemplifies this as all members interact with one another as equals in each forum, respect one another's territory through the agreement of non-intrusiveness, and seek to stabilize the region with economic, social, cultural, and political cooperation.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization afforded China an ideal opportunity to remedy several issues. In this new neo-realist world, non-traditional threats posed a huge risk. The attack in New York on September 11th illustrated to every nation just how great this threat was, and made clear how necessary unorthodox solutions were in this new century. The cooperation of Russia and China has resolved several issues for both countries and provided new opportunities. However, both recognized that a deepened and broader partnership could accomplish the same goals with even greater results. China recognized that there were certain issues best handled by the cooperation of many, and not the tremendous effort of one. In the SCO, China seeks to solve several problems that could one day threaten (or currently threaten) the strength and stability of China internally, as well as continued successful economic development and involvement

¹²³ Jiang (2004).

internationally. This is a fairly well rounded approach, revealing a new outlook for China of not only pursuit of national interest, but rather enlightened self-interest, where others benefit alongside a rising China.

Combating Terrorism, Religious Extremism, and Separatism

To better deal with issues of terrorism, the SCO Anti-Terrorism Center was founded in January 2004 and initiated at the following annual SCO meeting the same year in June. Particularly after the attack in New York on September 11th, China became very interested in combating potential terrorist attacks and threats multilaterally. Threats in the post-Cold War era are generally of a nontraditional security form and as such require different solutions and strategic positioning. The Anti-Terrorism Center within the SCO is focused upon preventing attacks upon all members in the region, to prevent a threat from originating in one country, entering another, and destabilizing the entire region.¹²⁴ The 2005 Astana summit meeting in part centered upon dealing with the issues of terrorism. A declaration was issued as a result, stating that the main goals and purposes of SCO cooperation in anti-terrorism efforts are that the:

“...SCO member states will suppress, within their territories, any attempts to organize and carry out terrorist attacks, including those aimed against the interests of other states; they will refuse shelter to persons accused or suspected in terrorist, separatist, or extremist activities and will extradite such persons upon appropriate requests on the part of another SCO State in strict compliance with the existing legislation of the Member-States.”¹²⁵

¹²⁴ Additional details regarding the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of Shanghai Cooperation Organization can be found on the SCO website at <http://www.sectSCO.org/fk-03.html> (accessed September 8, 2008).

¹²⁵ The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, *Declaration by the Heads of Member-States*

This implies several levels of cooperation, showing the desired depth and reach of the organization. While the member states are still building confidence between one another, no doubt working together to resolve issues of terrorism will contribute immensely to that goal.

A looming concern in China is the control of the internal population, preventing religious extremism and separatist elements from causing problems. This concern is legitimate, for “regional rivalry and outright animosity not only persist, but have even intensified among a populace still significantly fractured according to traditional geographical, cultural, and linguistic lines.”¹²⁶ In several border regions there is growing tension, and concern from Beijing, that these areas may cause continued unrest, particularly in Xinjiang. Tibet was dealt with brutally after a protest in March of last year, and still remains a part of China proper. Should Xinjiang decide to agitate aggressively enough to seek separation from China, members of the SCO would provide China with verbal and similar non-intrusive support to take care of the problem internally. One of the main tenants of the SCO is to allow each member country to deal with such issues internally, without outside assistance or involvement. Keeping outside influence out has always been one of China’s main concerns – outside interference in what Beijing considers internal affairs (two main examples are Tibet and Taiwan) and is

of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, July 5, 2005, Astana, Kazakhstan, <http://eurasianhome.org/xml/t/databases.xml?lang=en&nic=databases&intorg=9&pid=27> (accessed September 5, 2008).

¹²⁶ Sawyer (2006/2007): 26.

cited as a main security goal for the 21st century.¹²⁷ No doubt this outlook will continue for some time to come.

Viewing the ethnic minority issues plaguing the Central Asian states, no doubt China saw problems in those countries that the Chinese government fears and wishes to prevent at all costs. Chinese investment in these countries, continued policies of enlightened self-interest, bettering their stability and independence, both benefit those countries and China. The goal of involvement is, hopefully, the issues plaguing those countries will never spread to China or motivate separatist elements within China.¹²⁸ Particularly of interest to leaders in Beijing was the potential response from China's Turkic minorities upon the Central Asian states achieving independence. To mitigate this threat, "China's Kazakh and Kyrgyz population were eventually offered limited opportunities to immigrate to newly independent homelands, which dampened the potential security threat that they posed."¹²⁹ As China has increased involvement in these countries, the Chinese government wants to maintain friendly relations, meaning "regimes that are happy to allow an open-door policy regarding Chinese economic interests and to share Beijing's definition of which groups constitute security threats."¹³⁰

¹²⁷ *China's Position Paper on the New Security Concept* (2002).

¹²⁸ U.S. Congress, United States Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission), Hearing: "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization Changing the "Playing Field" in Central Asia," September 26, 2006: 4. Dr. Brill Olcott in her testimony discusses Beijing's pragmatic outlook when viewing involvement in Central Asia, focused at all times upon the benefit for Beijing.

¹²⁹ Ibid: 5.

¹³⁰ Ibid: 6.

Essentially, as long as the relationships serve China's interests, they will continue to strengthen.

The Chinese government alone cannot successfully deal with China's internal issues (particularly when the destabilizing force comes from another country), a revelatory statement considering China's prior isolation from the world community. This new policy also demonstrates the shift in the thinking Beijing leaders' and its reflection into policy as China becomes more involved with SCO members, both within and outside the framework of the organization. Through collaboration with the individual governments of the Central Asian states, China can help to stabilize their internal issues and those plaguing China as well; action is mutually beneficial. Beijing strongly recognizes the current and future potential of increased regional security, which could lead to China's enhanced security and progress, socially, economically, and politically. Not only will these goals be accomplished, but also China's standing in the international community and as a regional player will continue to rise. China does not only want increased political power, however, seeking to partner with member states for increased economic benefit as well.

China's Economic Benefits and Challenges in the SCO

In expanding economic cooperation with Central Asian members of the SCO gives to China expanded access to the energy resources of these countries. In these smaller countries, China is competing with Russia to tap into energy reserves, but "to some degree, both recognize that the partial pooling of efforts to be to their individual

advantage.”¹³¹ Although China collaborates with Russia within the SCO, Beijing is in the end out to service itself with involvement in Central Asia.

Trade and investment with the Central Asian states is increasing from China as well. In one particular project, China and Kazakhstan are working together to build an oil pipeline, to bring oil from the country into China. As China develops, it is vitally important that progress is not inhibited by an inability to obtain energy resources. The Central Asian countries help the Chinese government allay their fears of this possibility. Zhang Deguang, SCO Secretary General, at a June 6th press conference in Beijing, spoke of the “great importance” of security cooperation for China within the SCO, detailing the establishment of a group “to study cooperation projects, cooperation orientation and the implementation of cooperation projects in this sector.”¹³² Thus far the greatest success for China has been through bilateral energy agreements with Central Asian states, however studies are being conducted and joint projects are up for consideration which will allow member states to cooperate together. The energy cooperative framework of the SCO is still under development, currently working to China’s advantage as members work together to increase the vitality of future efforts. Leaders in Beijing can call upon the responsibility of Central Asian states to act in the interest of the SCO and the region in partnering with China on energy projects.

The wealth of Russia and China allows Central Asian states to benefit the smaller,

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Interview with SCO Secretary General Zhang Deguang, “Image Improvement,” *Beijing Review*, June 6, 2006, <http://www.bjreview.cn/EN/06-24-e/w-3.htm> (accessed September 3, 2008).

less wealthy and successful states to rebuild infrastructure and for other development projects, offering credit and financing opportunities.¹³³ In 2003 SCO members signed an agreement to work toward an eventual free trade area for SCO members.¹³⁴ A year later, plans were solidified into a directive detailing 100+ specific actions to be taken to ease and increase trade between member states. At a September meeting, Wen Jiabao, Chinese Premier, described his desires for SCO members. Premier Wen,

“wanted members to set as a long-term objective the establishment of a free trade area within the SCO; elaborate a series of more immediate measures such as improving the flow of goods across the member-states and reducing non-tariff barriers such as customs, quarantine, standards and transport services; and create large projects on economic and technological cooperation, giving priority to those in transportation, energy, telecommunication, agriculture, home appliances, light industry and textiles.”¹³⁵

Premier Wen highlighted several markets where he hopes SCO membership will advance, helping both the organization as a whole and, naturally, China in particular. Each of those industries is important in China and cooperation will ensure access to good and services China needs to continue its rise. China’s participation in the SCO reveals the foresight of the Chinese government, and the continued importance of economic growth in the strategic goals of Chinese policy. Ensuring economic growth is not limited to discovering new trade partners and opportunities, but also ensuring the stability of

¹³³ “SCO Holds Summit on Security, Stability, and Cooperation,” *Xinhua/People’s Daily Online*, August 16, 2007, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90777/6241668.html> (accessed September 19, 2008).

¹³⁴ “From the Regions: China Intensifies Trade Talks,” *Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest*, October 1, 2003, <http://web.archive.org/web/20071024121832/http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/03-10-01/story3.htm> (accessed September 26, 2008).

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

border areas and the region as a whole. Economic growth does not depend upon the internal stability of China alone, but also the external stability of border areas and countries in the Asian region.

Border Disputes: A Thing of the Past?

One of the main goals in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is utilizing partnerships to stabilize and prevent future border disputes. China and Russia have experienced the benefits, through agreements they have ensured that their 2,600-mile border is no longer an area of conflict, as it was intensely “from the 1960s to the late 1980s. After squandering scarce funds on border defense and stunting the economic growth of their border regions, the two neighbors now are working to settle any outstanding issues [and] to deepen confidence-building measures.”¹³⁶ There is reason to be concerned about remedying these expenses to bring Chinese military expenditures down for issues able to be fixed with peaceful means. China has been involved in many disputes located in border areas that were dealt with through the use of force or all out war:

“According to the data set on foreign policy crises generated by Jonathan Brecher, Michael Wilkenfeld, and Sheila Rosen, [China] has been involved in eleven foreign policy crises through 1985 and has resorted to violence in eight (72 percent), proportionally more than the other major powers in the twentieth century. Comparable figures for the U.S., the USSR, and the UK from 1927 to 1985 are 18 percent, 27 percent, and 12 percent, respectively. And according to the researchers, the Chinese use of violence has been what they label “high intensity,” involving “serious clashes” or “full-scale war.” Second, these crises were all located along China’s borders. Territorial disputes were thus crucial

¹³⁶ Wishnick (2001): 807.

drivers in most of these crises.”¹³⁷

One goal of an organization like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is to make full-out war over border disputes a thing of the past, ideally. Thus far this has proven to be true. China has resolved all of its border disputes with neighbors, not wishing to drain resources by becoming involved in an unnecessary conflict. China’s rising star must continue to rise with uninhibited and uninterrupted development and innovation. China accords the SCO with much responsibility and has invested greatly to ensure that China’s borders remain stable. With North Korea threatening to destabilize the region, a progression described in Chapter One and Chapter Two of this paper, securing all other borders and being prepared for whatever Pyongyang may do becomes of heightened importance.¹³⁸

Although Russia and China have resolved a majority of border disputes, two islands remain under debate, revealing underlying suspicions and tension despite the best efforts of China and Russia. Tarabarov/Yinlong and Bolshoy Ussuriiskiy/Heixiazi are both sought by China and Russia, Russia fearing that the city of Khabarovsk Krai would be under strategic threat if the buffer space were lost and China wanted to extend its territory.¹³⁹ Although it is possible that this conflict could be shuffled down the list of

¹³⁷ Alistair Iain Johnston summarizes the research results of Jonathan Wilkenfeld, Michael Brecher, and Sheila Rosen, in “Cultural Realism and Strategy in Maoist China,” in Peter Katzenstein ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996): 216-68.

¹³⁸ You Ji, “China and North Korea: A Fragile Relationship of Strategic Convenience,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 10, no. 28 (August 2001): 6.

¹³⁹ Wishnick (2001): 807.

priorities as Russia and China continue to work together, no doubt some degree of tension will continue to plague the relationship. The suspicion on both sides also suggests that despite the best of alliances, it just might not be good enough to prevent real conflict.

Military Cooperation: Joint Military Exercises and Arms Sales

When the SCO members began to work together on security issues, it was only natural that member states would begin collaborating on the level of military events. This is not to say that members have jumped in feet first and combined forces, but symbolic and real joint measures have been taken since the organization began forming in the mid-1990s. Cooperation in the SCO builds upon initial agreements in the 1990s and early 2000s, detailed in the prior analysis of rising Russo-Chinese relations in a regional and bi-lateral manner. Current arrangements deepen military cooperation through joint exercises, building confidence and partnership between members.

Despite this successful cooperation, it remains to be seen if the other member states of the SCO would rise to its defense in a NATO-like manner were a member state challenged militarily by another nation. At this point in time the alliance is nowhere near the level of cooperation and integration, particularly for Russia and China. Although they may host military joint exercises, both countries still act in their national interest and not the national interest of the organization as a whole when it comes to armed conflict. The SCO is a long way from acting cohesively as a military unit, despite political and economic cooperation and progress.

For China, a desire to participate in confidence building military exercises with others is balanced with traditional Chinese thought regarding China's national interest.

President Hu Jintao stated that:

“We must always follow the guidance of Mao Zedong's military thinking, Deng Xiaoping's thinking on building the armed forces in the new period and Jiang Zemin's thinking on building national defense and the armed forces, and take the Scientific Outlook on Development as an important guiding principle for strengthening national defense and the armed forces. We must implement the military strategy for the new period, [and] accelerate the revolution in military affairs with Chinese characteristics.”¹⁴⁰

The key statement here is the call to prior Chinese strategy and military thought, which pulled China slowly away from North Korea and may pull it away, eventually, from Russia. The Chinese characteristic of military development may eventually conflict with the Russian characteristics and desires when implementing into policy. This military cooperation has raised eyebrows all over the world as countries debate the intentions and purpose of a military component of the SCO. Donald Rumsfeld, in response to the SCO's 2005 military exercises that there is no reason to panic: “I mean, countries do that... We are obviously observing what takes place, but I didn't see anything in it that was threatening...”¹⁴¹ Is this viewpoint correct or is the SCO, and China as a main country driving SCO policy, shaping itself as an anti-U.S. force in the region? What is

¹⁴⁰ People's Republic of China, 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, “Hu Jintao's Report: Hold High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Strive for New Victories in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in all Respects,” Section IX, October 15, 2007, <http://cxqv.bokee.com/viewdiary.18864038.html> (accessed October 1, 2008).

¹⁴¹ “Rumsfeld: China-Russia drill no threat,” *China Daily*, November 25, 2005, www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-08/25/content_472093.htm (accessed September 18, 2008).

the purpose of the SCO in Asia for China? How does the SCO serve China's interests? The exact purpose of the SCO is up for debate; one element heavily debated is whether the SCO serves to counter U.S. influence in the region.

A 21st Century Anti-U.S. Buffer Zone?

The SCO has repeatedly stated that it is not directed against any country: "the SCO is neither a bloc nor a closed alliance, is not directed against any individual countries or groups of states and is open for broad cooperation with other states."¹⁴² It is often said that the SCO military cooperation could be leading toward the eventual goal of providing a balance to the influence of NATO in the region. This, however, is contradicted by the fact that NATO's Partnership for Peace counts among its members all five Central Asian states.¹⁴³ Member states also repeatedly enforce the idea that the SCO is not meant to be a military bloc. The United States has also played a key role in Central Asia. In Tajikistan, for example, the United States contributed over \$40 million dollars toward securing the borders once the country regained border security responsibility from Russia.

The SCO is credited with maintaining that the bases established by the US in the

¹⁴² Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Department of Information and Press, *Declaration by the Heads of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization*, June 7, 2002, Section V, <http://www.in.mid.ru/bl.nsf/900b2c3ac91734634325698f002d9dcf/cbc1ea4d4c4c826a43256bd400330c09?OpenDocument> (accessed September 15, 2008).

¹⁴³ "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Future of Central Asia," (2007).

region are temporary.¹⁴⁴ After the U.S. began the war with Afghanistan, these bases should be slowly dismantled and removed. Both Russia and China view the bases as the U.S. enforcing its presence in the region, a region where both countries would like to exert their influence to tap into vital energy resources. In Uzbekistan, SCO members, particularly Russia and China, are credited with pressuring the government to force the U.S. to withdraw troops from the Karshi-Khanabad Air Base.¹⁴⁵ The SCO in July 2005 issued an official declaration calling for the removal of U.S. troops from bases in Uzbekistan. By the end of 2005 U.S. forces were completely withdrawn from Uzbekistan. Although the SCO's influence can be debated (some say the SCO declaration only hastened an already made plan for U.S. removal¹⁴⁶), the SCO did have some influence. Increasingly the SCO has been putting influence upon its membership to act to benefit the SCO as a whole, lending credence to the potential future (more powerful) presence of the organization in the region. These actions are only in the beginning stages, however, as American influence is still present in the region and the power of the SCO as a whole is still being established.

The removal of U.S. troops from Uzbekistan is the beginning of a hoped rollback of American influence from the region, allowing China and Russia (both bi-laterally and

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Lionel Beehner and Preeti Bhattacharji, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization," *Council on Foreign Relations Backgrounders*, April 8, 2008, <http://www.cfr.org/publication/10883/> (accessed September 30, 2008). It is worth noting, however, that the authors note that although the SCO pressured Uzbekistan, relations between the U.S. and Uzbek governments were already in bad shape.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

multilaterally within the SCO) to fill the void. Russia is said to be “[operating] [u]nder the working title "Creeping Expansion Of Mysterious And Unpredictable China" on one side, and "Concerns About the Aggressive Policies of the United States in the Region" on the other, [and] is strengthening its cooperation in the military-political and military-technical spheres in the framework of such alliances as the CIS and CSTO, especially with the countries of Central Asia.”¹⁴⁷ Increased influence from Russia and China in the region will help Uzbekistan (money can be extended from the SCO for regional development projects) as well as giving Russia and China access to Central Asian energy resources. Finally, the Central Asian states can provide a strategic buffer zone for China as American influence declines. The *Asian Times* quoted David Wall from the *Washington Times*, as saying that "an expanded SCO would control a large part of the world's oil and gas reserves and [a] nuclear arsenal. It would essentially be an OPEC [Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries] with bombs."¹⁴⁸ While this perspective may be alarmist, it may also be accurate in its forecasting of the future of the SCO. Unfortunately, a clear answer will have to wait until the organization develops further. Uzbekistan appears to be, for the SCO, the “steering country,” allowing the SCO to demonstrate its will through Uzbek action.¹⁴⁹ So, perhaps the SCO in this case is

¹⁴⁷ Sultan-Khan Zhussip, “Russia Expands Its Military Presence in Central Asia,” *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty*, November 12, 2008, http://www.rferl.org/content/Russia_Expands_Its_Military_Presence_In_Central_Asia/1348368.html (accessed October 28, 2008).

¹⁴⁸ Daniel Kimmage, “Iran and the ‘OPEC with bombs,’” *Asia Times Online*, June 15, 2006, www.atimes.com/atimes/middle_east/hf15ak01.html (accessed October 2, 2008). David Wall is professor at the University of Cambridge's East Asia Institute.

¹⁴⁹ Akihiro Iwashita, “The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Japan: Moving

providing China and Russia the necessary camouflage needed to accomplish their national goals in the name of regional security and the SCO.

Also lending credit to the anti-U.S. influence in Asia line of thought, is the presence of Iran at meetings as an observer nation. Both China and Russia have had long-term relationships with Iran on a bilateral level, dealing both economically and militarily. These relationships have come under fire recently due to Iran's nuclear ambitions. It is worth noting here that both Russia and China have been hesitant to embrace Iran fully at the meetings and are even more hesitant to consider the country for permanent membership in the SCO, thus mitigating the anti-U.S. nature of Iran's involvement. China in particular is of concern because allowing Iran to join could cause "China's original interest [in the SCO] – to neutralize its western neighbors – will not have been lost but submerged amid other issues."¹⁵⁰ This is of particular concern with SCO expansion for China – that the Chinese not lose their influence over the direction and future of the organization. Allowing Iran entry could have that cost with unequal benefit. Finally, "China and Russia are wary of making Iran a full member on the grounds that Iranian membership could give the SCO more of an anti-American tone."¹⁵¹ It is worth adding here that it would give the SCO an *overt* anti-American tone, for Iran is not shy about speaking negatively about American presence and influence in the region.

Together to Reshape the Eurasian Community," *Brookings Institute*, January 28, 2008: 2, www.brookings.edu/articles/2008/0128_asia_iwashita.aspx (accessed November 1, 2008).

¹⁵⁰ Beehner and Bhattacharji (2008): 2.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

Russia and China in the SCO have been far more hesitant to target the U.S. directly in communiqués, instead characterizing their regional organization as directed against no one state.

The 2005 declarations for U.S. troop removal in Central Asia are as pointed as the SCO gets when it comes to anti-American rhetoric. Therefore, it is worthwhile to consider the exact wording of the 2005 Astana Declaration:

“We support and will continue to provide our support to the efforts of the international coalition that carries out the antiterrorist operation in Afghanistan. Today we note the positive dynamics in the stabilization of the internal political situation in Afghanistan. Some SCO member-states have provided their on-ground infrastructure for the temporary deployment of the coalition troops, as well as their territory and air-space for the purposes of military transit in the interest of the antiterrorist operation. Taking into account the completion of the active combat phase of the antiterrorist operation in Afghanistan, the SCO member-states consider it necessary that the relevant members of the antiterrorist coalition take a decision on the deadlines for the temporary use of the abovementioned infrastructure facilities and military presence on the territory of the SCO member-states.”¹⁵²

Some perspectives support that the SCO does not pose any threat to the U.S. According to Martha Brill Olcott, Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, stated that, “Today, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization does not pose any direct threat to U.S. interests in Central Asia or in the region more generally, although its annual meetings have, most particularly in 2005, become an opportunity for member states of that organization to vent their frustration with the U.S. in general and U.S. critiques of their non-democratic political systems in particular.”¹⁵³

¹⁵² *Declaration by the Heads of Member-States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (2005).*

¹⁵³ U.S. Congress, United States Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe Helsinki Commission, Testimony of Dr. Martha Brill Olcott, *The Shanghai Cooperation*

Is the SCO directed against the U.S. because of these actions or could there be another reason for U.S. suspicion? The United States often laments the lack of transparency from China (and the SCO) as one reason for concern about the organization's potential anti-U.S. intentions. However, one familiar with Chinese philosophy will know that "virtually all military writers from Sunzi [sic] (Sun-tzu [sic]) onward stressed the need for secrecy, pondered its nature, and articulated highly sophisticated measures for its preservation."¹⁵⁴ Although referring here to specifically military planning, this theory has embedded itself into Chinese government and public life as well.¹⁵⁵ There is some concern from the United States that China's military buildup, and the joint military exercises of SCO members, may be an element of an anti-U.S. strategy.¹⁵⁶ In this statement lies the possibility that Russia and China created the SCO to have a viable and valid platform for voicing their concerns about U.S. uses (or abuses) of power, essentially a legitimate forum for discussion; one the U.S. would have to pay attention to and which has legitimacy in the international arena. The actual anti-U.S. intentions of the SCO are as vague as its mission and intentions, but it does allow China the opportunity to meet with like minds and discuss ways to develop their power at the expense of the U.S., both in the Central Asian region and potentially globally.

Organization Changing the "Playing Field" in Central Asia, September 26, 2006, www.carnegieendowment.org/files/MBO0906.pdf (accessed November 2, 2008).

¹⁵⁴ Sawyer (2006/2007): 3.

¹⁵⁵ Sawyer (2006/2007): 4.

¹⁵⁶ For details about U.S. government opinions regarding Chinese buildup of military capabilities, please see the 2005 and 2007 *Annual Report to Congress*.

It is key to note that in all Chinese philosophy concerning international relations, emphasis is placed upon thinking and planning long term; compare that drawn out strategy with the more western short-term planning style, at times only weeks ahead.¹⁵⁷ As a result, this could be a factor complicating U.S. perception of Chinese strategy and action post-Cold War.¹⁵⁸ China brings this strategy to the SCO as well, focusing upon slowly and carefully managing the buildup and growth of the organization. With this focus, Beijing can maximize individual benefits as well as broader organizational benefits. The SCO itself has continued to affirm its planning is peaceful and not pointed against any specific entity, successfully maintaining vague policy goals and upholding the Chinese virtue of secrecy.

Conclusion

While the methods of achieving Chinese strategic goals may have changed, at the heart of all the changes lies an interest on the part of China to hedge U.S. influence in the region (and global community), solidify economic growth, continue to seek a strong China and a multi-polar world, and in all cases, act in the national interest of the Chinese state. The priorities of the Chinese government have shifted over time, from uniting in the defense of North Korea and the Communist movement to presently developing a

¹⁵⁷Shambaugh (1987): 277.

¹⁵⁸ The perceived anti-U.S. elements of Chinese strategy could simply be a misunderstanding of strategic thinking. This paper will not consider this topic in depth, but for a comparison of U.S. and Chinese strategy see David L. Shambaugh, "China's National Security Research Bureaucracy," *The China Quarterly*, no. 110 (June 1987): 277, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/654000> (accessed on September 30, 2008).

multilateral organization with much potential to wield power in several different parts of Asia. Chinese relations with North Korea are currently strained and full of tension regarding several topics, but are absolutely necessary to maintain for the strength and stability of the region. Paying this price to maintain Chinese growth outweighs the risk posed by a North Korean collapse. As China's priorities changed and the relationship became more of a liability, China found a new mutually beneficial relationship with its neighbor in the north, Russia, to pursue a capitalist revolution at the expense of the old Communist ideology. This relationship deepened and expanded into the SCO.

The Russia-Chinese partnership has a foundation, which, thus far, has carried the relationship fairly well through the challenges in the 21st century. Chinese strategic priorities of border security, maintained economic growth, pursuing targeted military development, and energy security, to name a few, are well served through cooperation with the Russian government since the end of the Cold War. Where the relationship is weaker, however, lies in the underlying tensions in the relationship, particularly mutual suspicion on the part of both the Russian and Chinese governments, each wondering what the other would do as a strong power in a world without U.S. hegemony.

Despite these suspicions, their partnership continues due to the high mutual benefit. Although "China and Russia aren't perfect strategic partners...their concerns about American global power, EU/NATO expansion, more Orange/Rose/Tulip revolutions and Japan's higher international profile, are encouraging the long-time rivals to give each other a second look."¹⁵⁹ It is this underlying mistrust in particular that will

¹⁵⁹ Brookes (2006).

inhibit complete cooperation between the governments, in particular intelligence sharing and military cooperation. However, the relationship is currently beneficial for both and will continue strongly in part due to the countries joint founding of and involvement within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. This organization makes it all the more important for Russia and China to maintain healthy relations.

As China deepens its relationships with member states in the SCO, and ponders partnership with other regional states, at the core of strategic considerations is China's national interest. For China, the SCO is a growing buffer zone in Asia against international interference in the region and internally, a forum where concerns can be voiced and policies enacted that are not exactly in line with the current norms of the international system. Is China creating for itself an organization with the potential to wield power in the region or on a global scale? Or is the SCO developing so strongly due to the fact that it offers so many opportunities to satisfy Chinese strategic goals in the 21st century? Unfortunately, a clear answer to these questions still cannot be accessed. The SCO must be watched closely as it develops, particularly Chinese involvement, to ascertain a clear idea of China's future goals in the SCO.

The SCO is still taking shape, so the answers to these questions are as uncertain as China's future positioning in the international arena. The future of the Russo-Chinese relationship is also uncertain. Could relations eventually become as strained as Chinese-North Korean Relations? Absolutely, it could happen; but with foundations stronger than that of the Chinese-North Korean relationship, the future looks much brighter. The future should be brighter as long as Russia continues to satisfy the concern at the heart of

China's strategy – the continued strength and growth of the Chinese nation, satisfying new challenges and priorities with ancient strategic foundations and economic growth.

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