WHAT MOTIVATES RUSSIA? THE ROLE OF WAHHABISM IN RUSSIAN
COOPERATION WITH CHINA IN THE SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION
(SCO)

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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This dissertation was made possible by a nationally competitive fellowship from IREX. I received six months of financial support from IREX’s Individual Advanced Research Opportunities Program (IARO) that funds policy-relevant research in Russia, Eastern Europe, and Eurasia. The fellowship was sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and allowed me to conduct field research in Moscow and Kazan between January 2014 and July 2014. I also traveled to Shanghai and Beijing for a total of four weeks to interview Chinese researchers. This fieldwork consisted of archival research and semi-structured interviews with policy experts. I use both qualitative and quantitative approaches including a modified Q-analysis to derive findings.

The dissertation focuses on analyzing Russia’s motivations for participating in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), an understudied, yet vital, regional organization – the largest in the world. The Russian-Chinese relationship is the fulcrum of a broader membership that includes eighteen other members, notably India and Pakistan. My research specifically addresses the question: “Why does Russia cooperate with China in the SCO given decades of political tensions between Moscow and Beijing?” In order to answer this question, I examine three main explanations for Russian participation in the SCO based on geopolitics, economics, and internal security. My
primary hypothesis investigates whether Russia collaborates with China to safeguard itself from Wahhabi-inspired terrorism.

My research concludes with theoretical and policy findings in the final chapter. I will briefly recapitulate four main points. First, anti-Americanism has not translated into a decisively anti-American vector for the SCO. Second, Russia’s rapprochement with China is not primarily due to increases in the sale of natural gas and oil. Moreover, Russia interprets China's plans for trade liberalization as an indirect way of controlling Central Asia. Third, Russian cooperation with China in the SCO is most likely due to the threat of terrorism. Based on Russia's ongoing conflict with jihadi terrorism and its belief that Saudi Arabia is the primary source of Wahhabism, it is important that Central Asia not become an area that could fuel terrorism. Fourth, my findings also include the results of a crucial case study that I conducted in city of Kazan. The results of the case study provide a secondary test of the primary argument and confirm that Wahhabism may in fact present a wider challenge to Russia.
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Chapter 1: Introduction and Outline

Observation

Russia and China have participated in a variety of military exercises under the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).¹ Peace Mission 2007, for example, was the first large-scale land battle exercise conducted on Russian and Chinese territory involving Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. Specifically, the operation drew personnel from the internal security agencies of member governments and traditional military forces, underscoring the operation’s ostensible anti-terror objectives.² According to press reports, “about 4,000 troops and 80 aircraft from China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan were involved in the joint exercises.”³ Of these 4,000 troops, Russia and China contributed 2,000 and 1,600 personnel respectively.⁴

On September 24, 2010, Russia and the SCO initiated another joint military exercise under the banner of Peace Mission 2010 in Kazakhstan, which included the armed forces from China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan.⁵ The Russian Ministry of Defense reported that Moscow contributed “over 1,000 troops, some 130 armored vehicles (tanks, self-propelled artillery systems and infantry fighting vehicles), more than

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100 trucks, and over 10 airplanes and helicopters.”⁶ Along with a contingent of air force and logistical combat groups, China also supplied 1,000 troops of the total 5,000 for Peace Mission 2010.⁷ These drills, similar to those in 2007, were reportedly organized to “test the interoperability of the SCO armed forces in rendering assistance to a member state involved in an internal armed conflict or subjected to a terrorist attack.”⁸

**Puzzle**

Shortly after the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2001, Russia and China engaged in annual joint security operations across Central Asia. Yet this cooperation has been atypical of their broader relationship. Throughout the Cold War period, for example, Soviet-Chinese relations were complex. Rajan Menon encapsulates the commonly held narrative of Sino-Russian relations during this period:

> China and Russia, their embrace of socialism notwithstanding, were fated to be at daggers drawn and would remain so, indefinitely; they could not escape their troubled history; their momentary solidarity had been an aberration. Soviet dissident Andrei Amalrik predicted that the Soviet Union would not last beyond 1984 and that a war with China would be the death blow.⁹

In 1969, Sino-Soviet relations reached their nadir during the military clash in a border dispute over the river island of Zhenbao.¹⁰ In the years after this altercation, “Soviet leaders mounted a massive, relentless military buildup along the frontier, and even hinted to the Nixon administration that they might attack China with nuclear

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weapons.”11 Nixon’s policy of détente in the early 1970s was likely prompted by the poor relations between Moscow and Beijing as a way of finding a seemingly unlikely American ally in communist China.12

Although Sino-Russian relations improved during the 1990s and early 2000s, prejudices and mistrust remain. Despite the seeming mutual support that Russia and China enjoy in the United Nations and in public statements, Zbigniew Brzezinski described the surprisingly conflictual post-Cold War relationship between these two countries:

At the time its empire dissolved, Russia was also facing an ominous new geopolitical situation in the Far East, even though no territorial or political changes had taken place. For several centuries, China had been weaker and more backward than Russia, at least in the political-military domains. No Russian concerned with the country’s future and perplexed by the dramatic changes of this decade can ignore the fact that China is on its way to being a more advanced, more dynamic, and more successful state than Russia. China’s economic power, wedded to the dynamic energy of its 1.2 billion people, is fundamentally reversing the historical equation between the two countries, with the empty spaces of Siberia almost beckoning for Chinese colonization.”13

Since the end of the Cold War, China has overshadowed Russia through the strength of its economic power and growing population, which stands in stark contrast to Russia’s declining population and slow economic growth. China, based on Brzezinski’s assessment, is now simply too powerful for Russia not to fear.14

Alexander Lukin, a professor at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations further characterizes the difficulties of Russia’s relationship with China. After the Cold War, he claims that there were existing fears in the Russian Far East (RFE) over

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14 Ibid., 148.
Chinese immigrants and the remaking of the ethnic character of the border regions. Lukin comments that, “local newspapers and even academic journals began publishing articles arguing that China, under the guise of economic cooperation, pursued a deliberate policy of resettling their surplus population in the northeastern provinces to the RFE and Siberia.”

Lukin further suggests that these fears are “closely tied to the recent history of Soviet-Chinese confrontation and contemporary economic and political realities.”

He concludes that Russia’s apprehension has a tangible basis because of the growing power gap between Russia and China. Russia is becoming economically and politically weaker in comparison to an increasingly stronger and more dynamic China. Moreover, China has ensconced itself in Central Asia, an area of long-held geostrategic interest for Russia, through its development of regional trade and access to hydrocarbon resources.

One would expect Russia to be protective of its interests in this region. Yet Russia has chosen to create a partnership with China in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, an organization that consists of four Central Asian states. Such an organization allows Beijing greater access to Russia’s privileged sphere of interest and, in principle, it gives China an opportunity to expand its economic leverage and military presence at Russia's expense.

Adding to the puzzle, Russia and China are also the primary leaders in the SCO given the relatively large size of their economies, population, diplomatic capability, and military strength. One expert on the SCO even described the organization as a hierarchy of bilateral relationships in which Russia and China occupy the upper-most

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16 Ibid., 834.
17 Ibid., 835.
The dissertation will attempt to resolve this paradoxical cooperation between Russia and China in the SCO.

**Question and Significance**

Russia has not typically cooperated with China because of mutual suspicions originating during the Cold War and the current inversion of their traditional power relationship. However, these two states have shown a tendency to cooperate under the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in areas such as counterterrorism and military exercises, which ultimately raises an important question: "Under what conditions does Russia cooperate with China in the SCO given decades of political tensions between Moscow and Beijing?"

This question is important because the SCO is one of the world's largest regional organizations, which consists of full-members, observers, and dialogue partners. As a measure of its geographic size, the SCO's full-members are Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. The organization's observers are Belarus, India, Pakistan, Iran, Mongolia, and Afghanistan and its dialogue partners include Sri Lanka, Turkey, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, and Nepal. However, the SCO is currently in the process of changing its membership. During its July 2015 summit in Ufa, the SCO initiated accession procedures for two of its observer states—India and Pakistan. With this change, the SCO covers an area stretching from Eastern Europe to East Asia and

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20 Interview with Subject G, interview by Michael Zboray, Shanghai, China, July 23, 2014.
reaches from the Baltic Sea to the South China Sea representing almost half of the world's population.

In addition to this geopolitically diverse membership, the SCO is strikingly the only organization with former Soviet states to contain both Russia and China. The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Eurasian Economic Community (EEC), the Collective Treaty Security Organization (CSTO), and the new Eurasian Union, for example, all encompass Russia and the countries of the former Soviet Union. They all notably exclude, however, the largest economic power in Eurasia—China. Given these unique features, the SCO is significant both intellectually and empirically.

From a theoretical perspective, Russian cooperation with China in the SCO is based on the interplay between conflict and cooperation. The linkages between these concepts can be viewed through several lenses, such as realism, liberalism, and counterterrorism. States can cooperate, for example, when their geopolitical interests coincide through counterbalancing, or they may cooperate regionally by forming interdependent relationships. States may also work together based on common security challenges posed by terrorist organizations.

First, from a geopolitical perspective, the SCO addresses whether two great powers—Russia and China—are counterbalancing against America's concentration of


power in the international system. Counterbalancing coalitions should, in principle, form against a hegemon or rising hegemon in the world.\(^{25}\) Jack Levy and William Thompson refer to this phenomenon as an "iron law" and describe it as "the proposition that near-hegemonic concentrations of power in the system nearly always trigger a counterbalancing coalition of the other great powers . . . ."\(^{26}\) As a method by which weaker states form coalitions against a stronger state, counterbalancing is a typical behavior against the preponderant power, but some argue that there is a lack of counterbalancing and that other types of geostrategic maneuvering are occurring.\(^{27}\) G. John Ikenberry, for example, writes ". . . it is remarkable that despite the sharp shifts in the distribution of power, the other great powers have not yet responded in a way anticipated by balance-of-power theory."\(^{28}\) The idea of soft balancing has therefore become a popular explanation that Stephen Walt articulated in his attempt to explain the apparent lack of balancing against American power.\(^{29}\) Defined as “short of formal alliances,” that can involve, “limited arms buildup, ad hoc cooperative exercises, or collaboration in regional or international institutions,” soft balancing does not ultimately


try to change the balance of power, but it seeks better outcomes within it. As an institution that organizes regular military exercises with the Russian and Chinese armed forces, the SCO could be an instance of this concept.

Commentating on the importance of Peace Mission 2007, for example, a senior Russian defense official, Colonel-General Yuriy Baluyevskiy declared that “the SCO is a young organization, not even 10 years old, but it has already announced itself loudly throughout the world both economically and politically, and today, on the day of the beginning of joint training exercise, in the military respect as well.” In the aftermath of that operation, this assessment resonated among senior scholars and policy makers in the United States. Robert Kagan, a noted expert and realist in foreign affairs, also implied a year later that the SCO could help Russia, China, and possibly Iran form a coalition against the United States. Referring to Peace Mission 2007, he wrote:

Another harbinger was the unprecedented land battle exercises conducted at the same time in Russia, in which thousands of Chinese and Russian forces joined together with those of five Central Asian nations. The exercises followed on the heels of a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and its invited guest, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran.

Land-based military exercises, such as Peace Mission 2007 can be interpreted as examples of how regional powers in Central Asia, such as Russia and China could be preparing their forces for possible conflicts with American interests. Toward this end, President Putin has officially labeled NATO a "foreign military danger" in its newly

released military doctrine in which China will potentially play an increasing role against the United States.  

As a result, the SCO raises questions about the efficacy of the dominate state to react and "to translate preponderant capabilities into effective influence." In other words, if Russia is trying to counterbalance the United States with the cooperation of China, it then highlights America's ability to respond. On an empirical level, can the United States still accomplish its military and economic objectives in Central Asia in light of possible countervailing pressures from the SCO?

Realism, as a core tenet, views security threats from states as the principle external danger in the international system. However, Russian-Chinese cooperation in the SCO may not be primarily about forming a soft balancing coalition. Given the realities of Jihadi fundamentalism among the weakly governed states of Central Asia, the imperatives of internal security might be overriding purely geopolitical reasons for regional cooperation.

If internal security issues are paramount, then the SCO has different substantive implications for America. As an area that comprises the geographic nucleus of the SCO,

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Central Asia is a major logistical hub through which American supplies and personnel have supported operations in Afghanistan. In order to foster political stability in the area, the United States needs to continue checking support for the Taliban and other radical groups that oppose the current government in Kabul. The SCO’s focus on joint combat missions and intelligence sharing could suggest that Russia and China are becoming facilitating factors in regional stability. The SCO may present America with a conduit to engage Russia and China in the War on Terror given Moscow and Beijing’s interest against radical groups such as the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, Hizb ut-Tahrir, and separatists in the Northern Caucasus.

The SCO could also be facilitating the spread of a type of regionalism based not on the "legalisms" of European integration, but rather on the principles of sovereignty typical in East Asia. This potential development takes on extra significance when considering Russia’s own internal debates over its supposed Eurasian identity. Even with its capital firmly located on the European continent, Russia has tried to distance itself from the West. Moscow's involvement in a more Asian type of regionalism would further help draw this distinction. Moreover, in comparison to regional organizations like the European Union (EU) and the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA), which primarily revolve around economic issues, this type of cooperation between Russia and China might also demonstrate how a regional organization can develop around other issues besides commerce.

37 For Asian regionalism, see, Ibid.
Another related area of significance includes liberal ideas of profit maximization and "embedded bilateralism." There is a considerable literature, for example, surrounding the pivotal role of Germany and France in generating stronger multilateral cooperation in the EU, which could parallel Russia and China's position in the SCO. The foundation of early European regional integration hinged on Germany's and France's mutual need for coal and steel. Similarly, Russia’s large natural gas reserves and increasing need to find new regional trade opportunities coincides with China’s demand for energy and its large industrial market. These conditions suggest that access to hydrocarbon fuels, like coal and steel in Western Europe are important issues for economic regionalism through bilateral partnerships.

**Explanations for Russian Cooperation with China in the SCO**

**The SCO as an Instrument for Counterbalancing**

There are several viable explanations for Sino-Russian cooperation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Arguments based on geopolitics, economics, and internal security threats have been the most notable concerns among modern states and policy-makers. The first of these explanations has usually been based on a realist approach to international relations and on the idea of powerful countervailing coalitions.

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In his theory of international politics, Kenneth Waltz asserts that two states can cooperate when they both believe in a mutually beneficial strategy. This strategy ideally maximizes both states' chances of survival in the international system. According to realist theory, the SCO is a geopolitical medium for Russia's strategy against America and the West. Specifically, Russia uses the SCO to regionally counterbalance the United States in Central Asia.

Within realist thought, defensive and offensive realism give two different structural perspectives. Offensive realism focuses on how states maximize their power in order to gain hegemony, yet formal organizations or alliance type structures are difficult to effectively manage and may not provide a country with an optimal strategy for maximizing power. States favor "expansionist policies" because they fear that other states will inevitably seek to dominate their neighbors. This understanding of international relations encourages states to counterbalance through arms buildups, unilateralism, and expansion. It is common for states to be under attack given the natural aggression and revisionism of other actors. Offensive tactics, such as war-making are part of a nation's power-maximizing strategy in which a power could "annex

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44 Ibid., 128-129.
a slice of a the defeated state's territory, break it into two or more smaller states, or simply disarm it and prevent it from rearming.”

Defensive realism, in contrast, gives greater emphasis to balancing behavior and a better perspective on Russia's intent in the SCO. Such coalitions could take the form of hard balancing, a strategy that tries to reduce the possibility of conflict by one state contributing military resources to a threatened state. These resources could include arms or government-made promises to come to the aid of an embattled nation. In addition to hard balancing, there is another kind of balancing based on security-seeking behavior—soft balancing. Some realists suggest that even though the United States possesses the needed preponderance of power to attract counter balancers, traditional hard balancing in terms of formal alliances has given way to soft balancing methods. According to T.V. Paul, the basic principle of soft balancing involves balancing behavior through a "limited arms buildup, ad hoc cooperative exercises, or collaboration in regional or international institutions." Soft balancing is also considered a combination of two perspectives on counterbalancing—Stephen Walt's balance of threat theory and Kenneth Waltz's original

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structural balance of power theory.\textsuperscript{51} As a result, soft balancing is systemic in nature and is a reaction to the perception of threat from another country.

This argument suggests, more concretely, that Russia uses the SCO, an organization founded shortly before the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, as an institutional mechanism for soft balancing the United States in Central Asia. Russia cooperates with China to contain America’s presence in Afghanistan as it seeks recognition as a regional, if not world power. Russia contains America by strengthening its position through diplomacy with China in a region where Moscow remains sensitive to foreign military power. Russia sees the SCO as a possible counterweight to American influence; for example, Russia’s prominent daily online newspaper, The Kommersant indicated that, “Russia is working on strengthening the SCO, so as to turn it into a serious regional organization—political and even military perhaps. A kind of Central Asian NATO.”\textsuperscript{52}

In addition, there are Russian policy experts who substantiate Russia's possible geopolitical motivation. According to Vitaly Shlykov of the Russian Council on Foreign and Defense Policy, Moscow is "responding to the aspirations of America's global hegemony in different ways, and the military-political vector of the SCO is just one of them.”\textsuperscript{53} Moreover, Russia resists American policies designed to promote democracy in the region as alluded to by Sergei Karaganov, head of the Council for Foreign and


Defense Policies to the Kremlin. He remarked that Russia has had a negative attitude
toward America's deeply held interest in democracy during the U.S. invasion of
Afghanistan and said that “Washington wants to expand democracy, which it sees as a
panacea for all social and geopolitical evils…but it is clear to us that any rapid
democratization of these countries (in Central Asia) will lead to chaos.”

Finally, Alexander Dugin, Chair of the International Eurasian Movement, whose
members include leading Russian businessmen and politicians likewise states that “it's
very important that regional powers are showing the will to resolve Eurasian problems
without the intrusion of the US. . . . Step by step we're building a world order not based
on the unipolar hegemony of the US.” The first hypothesis therefore states that Russia
is cooperating with China in the SCO in order to soft balance the United States in Central
Asia.

The SCO as an Economic Instrument for Pursuing New Markets

Liberalism, in general, is a broad field that is associated with a number of
intellectual ideas including strong support for democracy and legitimate government, the
need for private property and free enterprise, open flows of ideas and culture, the
propagation of human rights, and cooperation among states. These ideas are grouped
into more coherent categories that are termed: "commercial or economic liberalism,
human rights liberalism, international organization or institutions liberalism, and
democratic liberalism." 

55 Ibid.
University Press, 2010), 37.
57 Ibid.
According to this explanation, regional organizations like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization can provide the structure for maximizing financial and social benefits that help states cooperate through economic linkages. These linkages may also give states an opportunity to increase their revenues through commercial exchange. Through extended access to foreign markets, national firms can benefit from regional or multilateral agreements and give exporters the ability to increase their profits and sales.58

This need to increase profits forms the basis of commercial liberalism that "focuses on incentives created by opportunities for transborder economic transactions."59 Karl Polanyi also commented on this form of liberalism's emphasis on achieving "maximum money gains" in terms of finding the best market price for goods and services.60 Within the context of international markets, liberalism stresses how firms naturally pursue "expanding networks of commerce" that can provide an outlet for domestic production.61

The regional search for these markets can take place within the organizational context of "embedded bilateralism."62 The European Union, for example, began the regionalization process mainly through the initial efforts of Germany and France. The bilateral relationship between these countries after the Second World War centered on the


62 Ulrich Krotz and Joachim Schild, *Shaping Europe*. 
export of coal and steel from which a larger block of states formed. 63 Similarly, hydrocarbon resources, such as oil and gas play a special role in the relationship between Russia and China. Because countries overwhelmingly depend on these resources for industrial production and transportation, fossil fuels, as compared to other commodities, are more able to bind economies together and to create economic interlocking.64 They also generate an opportunity for Russian oil and gas firms to increase their profits. Given political tensions between the EU and Russia, Russia needs new buyers of oil and natural gas in Asia to safeguard its revenue. Such action is necessary because the sale of hydrocarbon resources has become a significantly important basis for the Russian economy.65

Based on this reasoning, Russia primarily sells oil and gas, along with making various financial investments with China, in order to increase Russia's prosperity and economic development. Specifically, the SCO could help Russia and China come to agreement on natural gas prices and to coordinate infrastructure development. As an indicator of this approach, Russia's June 2000 foreign policy concept stated that “serious emphasis will be made on the development of economic cooperation, including the creation of a free trade zone and implementation of programs of joint rational use of natural resources.”66 Shortly thereafter, a similar statement by the Security Council of the Russian Federation declared in May 2002 that “Russia has to avoid being concerned by

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65 Edward Chow, "China-Russia Energy Relations: Key Drivers and Implications"(Panel Discussion, Columbia University, New York, NY, April 8, 2015).
ideological notions of division between friends and foes. Economic benefits for Russia should become the main factor and criteria for its foreign policy orientations.”

As another general display of Russia’s economic motivation, Russia and other SCO members gathered in Beijing on September 23, 2003 to discuss a commercial agenda. Among the debated topics, multilateral trade and economic cooperation were major concerns, and the members decided that equal rights in terms of trade and investment should be recognized as one of the organization’s priorities. According to the SCO’s description of the event, representatives of each member country wanted to establish a long-term program, “designed to create the most favorable conditions for mutual trade and investment, the best use of regional resources, and gradual transition towards the free movement of goods, capital, services and technologies.”

As part of this move toward SCO regional trade, Russia would likely leverage its abundance of hydrocarbon resources in investment deals and would encourage the sale of energy resources to China. According to Mark Mozur, a gas analyst at PFC Energy, Russian gas giant, Gazprom is primarily interested in China’s eastern market while it develops new gas fields at home and abroad. Gazprom and other energy producers, such as Rosneft, could therefore help develop gas and oil fields in Central Asia and secure long-term sales contracts with the Chinese government. China could also help invest in the appropriate infrastructure in order to deliver the fuel. This ambition parallels

Russia’s stated energy policy to 2030, which names the SCO as a potential forum for a regional energy policy. It states that:

Energy dialogue with the largest countries – consumers and producers of energy resources, as well as with major regional unions and international organizations (Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, Gas Exporting Countries Forum, etc.) is being actively conducted.  

Russian President and former Prime Minister Vladimir Putin similarly suggested that the states in the SCO engage in an "energy dialogue, [an] integration of our national energy concepts, and the creation of an energy club." He continued by saying, “I believe that creating a SCO energy club is a pressing issue, as is more intensive cooperation in transport and communications.”

In addition, Russia would also invest in other joint projects with China such as shared educational institutions. For example, Russia and China approved SCO University in 2010 which functions as a network of existing universities that train new experts in the fields of energy, transport, construction, and information technology. This type of mutual investment would help promote effective economic cooperation through expert contacts and technical know-how. The second hypothesis therefore states: in order to generate the maximum amount of profit while avoiding overdependence on the European market, Russia would primarily like to use the SCO to enhance a stable demand for its hydrocarbon resources in China.

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The SCO as an Instrument for Enhancing Russia's Internal Security

The final argument that the dissertation examines focuses on the linkages between Shanghai Cooperation Organization activities, domestic claims for independence, and the internal threat posed by violent Jihadi terrorism. This explanation focuses on the linkages between Jihadism, Wahhabism, and terrorism and places these concepts within a Russian context. Moreover, given the founding of the SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in 2004, Jihadi terrorism is likely one of the SCO's main regional security issues.

The internal security argument begins by citing the theoretical determinants of terrorism and succinctly classifies the literature on terrorism's potential causes into economic, social and political categories. Research suggests that from an economic perspective, for example, potential terrorists may be motivated by material deprivation and a frustration with their lack of prosperity. Terrorist organizations may take advantage of people who feel excluded from surrounding economic growth, and who

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subsequently create grievances against society. This determinant is particularly relevant since Russia is a poor country with few social safety nets.

Another apropos factor in terms of terrorism is the literature on religious extremism. On a broad level, there are examples from different religions including Sikhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In each case, extremist groups seek to violently shape the world according to their own view. They consist of individuals who believe that they are essentially "purifying the world of injustice, cruelty, and all that is antihuman." By the end of the twentieth century, however, terrorist groups were primarily "Muslim and Arabic." Under the caveat that "most Muslims are not fundamentalists" and that "most fundamentalists are not terrorists," Bernard Lewis writes that there are several forms of "Islamic extremism," including Al-Qaeda, the "fundamentalism of the Saudi establishment," and the "institutionalized revolution of the Iranian hierarchy." Yet these forms of extremism have a common feature: "...the
emergence of revivalist movements promoting a return to fundamentalist Islam. . .” 85

The most threatening form of this revivalism comes through Jihadism which promotes the use of violence against those who reject the supremacy of fundamentalism in their lives. 86

As a form of revivalist Islam found on the Arabian Peninsula, Wahhabism emerged as a religious movement in Saudi Arabia during the eighteenth century. From a Russian perspective, Wahhabism is associated with global jihad and a coalition of Arab states that "... seeks to lead the Islamization of the world. It consists of the richest countries of the Islamic world: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, [and] the United Arab Emirates." 87 This group of Persian Gulf states is also strongly linked with "the idea of creating a global 'Great Islamic caliphate,' which is especially present in Saudi Arabia." 88

The Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs additionally identifies Wahhabism as a form of radical Islam that is associated with like-minded Islamic organizations such as the Muslim Brotherhood and the Taliban. Wahhabis are primarily interested in a puritanical form of early Islam, which by definition rejects the evolution of local religious practices or different interpretations of the faith. They avidly seek to convert those who do not share their principles either through propaganda, or, if necessary, through violence. As evidence of this position in Russia, an official 2009 publication entitled *Islam in the Ideology and Practice of Terrorism*, states that:

Today, the doctrines aimed at the Islamization of the entire world and creation of a caliphate, are designated as "radical" or "non-traditional Islam" (Wahhabism or

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88 Ibid.
Salafism, the Taliban, the Muslim Brotherhood and others). In its actions, the radical Islamic parties often resort to violence and populism, assigning critical importance to the idea of jihad against the idolaters and Muslims, who have strayed from the principles of early Islam. Terrorism is not a solely Islamic phenomenon, but most of today's casualties and destruction, was carried out in the name of Islam. Pursuing certain political ends, the leaders of the radical Islamic movements find ideological means to influence their followers in Islamic religious principles.

In terms of Russia's internal security, Wahhabism has played a destructive role in Russia's Northern Caucasus. As part of the turbulent Northern Caucasus, Chechnya, one of Russia’s Islamic republics has repeatedly challenged Moscow's authority in the region for centuries and claimed independence twice during the 1990's. The first Chechen war for independence occurred between 1994 and 1996 and ended with a ceasefire between the Russian government and the separatists. The second Chechen war, which began in 1999, has yet to reach a clear conclusion; however, by 2009, Moscow declared an end to major military operations in the area. Although the causes of Chechen separatism remain debated, the Russian government believes that, "Muslim extremists are the essence, not a part, of the problem." The reason for this problem is reportedly due to the "ineffective and corrupt regimes of the new Muslim republics" that estrange the local population. Radical Islam, rather than the state, is providing an alternative source of identity to the local people by promoting, for example, Sharia law. Sharia is a credible option for people in the Northern Caucasus because it defines codes of conduct and offers people clear "social discipline after generations of corrupt socialist rule."

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89S.A. Starostina, Islam v Ideologii i Praktike Terrorizma, 4.
92Rajan Menon and Graham E. Fuller, "Russia's Ruinous Chechen War," 36.
93Ibid.
Russian government continues to ignore social problems such as "poverty, inequality, and corruption," political Islam will challenge secular authority.  

As a non-native form of Islam in Russia, Wahhabism enters the country from abroad. Central Asia, for example, is one potential region along Russia’s periphery from which radical influences can infiltrate Russian society. Alexei Malashenko, Russia’s most prominent expert on Islam suggests that Islamic radicalism has already penetrated traditionally tranquil areas of Russia including the Republic of Tatarstan. He writes that radical adherents of Hizb ut-Tahrir (HuT), an Islamic organization with its origins in Central Asia have successfully recruited a portion of Russian Muslims. Malashenko notes that HuT has had a significant presence in Uzbekistan, a country that has formerly had a close connection to Saudi Arabia. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Uzbeks, who were interested in deepening their understanding of the Islamic faith, studied Islam at Saudi educational institutions. These individuals eventually returned to Uzbekistan preaching Wahhabi tenets.

Because of militant Islam’s ability to cross into Russian territory, the Russian government needs a regional approach to fighting Wahhabi-inspired terrorism. According to the 2001 SCO Convention, Russia, China, and their Central Asian partners identified and defined several issues related to instability in the region. Under the Convention,

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94 Ibid., 37.
Russia characterizes terrorism as an “act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or any other person not taking an active part in the hostilities in a situation of armed conflict.” 98 Terrorism also includes an act that by its nature is designed to intimidate a population, or to influence the behavior of a public or international organization. 99 The convention defines separatism as “any act intended to violate territorial integrity of a state including by annexation of any part of its territory or to disintegrate a state.” 100 Extremism is defined as an act “aimed at seizing or keeping power through the use of violence or changing violently the constitutional regime of a state, as well as a violent encroachment upon public security.” 101 These definitions coincide well with the threat posed by a global jihadist network, which will try, if necessary, to establish an Islamic state by force.

After Russia and China signed the SCO Convention, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization created the Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure in Tashkent. This part of the organization is responsible for helping coordinate counterterrorism exercises and for organizing a "data bank" of information regarding terrorist organizations. 102 The SCO has also committed itself to fighting international terrorism through cooperation with the United Nations. According to a statement from the UN Secretary-General:

The SCO has become an increasingly important instrument of security and integration in the Eurasian region. From addressing the situation in Afghanistan and related threats in Central Asia, to managing the consequences of the global

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100 Ibid.
101 Ibid.
financial crisis, the SCO has strengthened collective efforts to ensure peace, security and prosperity.103 As part of this cooperation between the United Nations and the SCO, these two organizations are planning joint initiatives through the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia (UNRCCA) and the Centre on the Implementation of the United Nations Global Counterterrorism Strategy. As an indication of the potential policy link between economic well-being and terrorism, the SCO has already initiated working contacts with United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).104

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization has also actively organized counterterrorism exercises since 2002. However, the exercises in 2005 and 2007 conducted under the banner, Peace Mission garnered much international attention. The 2005 exercise involved roughly 10,000 troops beginning in Vladivostok and ending on China's Shandong Peninsula.105 As mentioned earlier, the 2007 exercise was similarly "another high profile exercise that utilized roughly 4,000 troops from the six original members of the organization and took place in Russia's Ural Mountains and Urumqi, the

capital of Xinjiang." Based on this argument, the third hypothesis states that Russia cooperates with China in the SCO to reduce the threat of insurrection due to Wahhabism.

**Organization of the Dissertation**

The remainder of the dissertation is divided into six chapters that provide background information and empirically test each hypothesis. Chapter 2 examines each of the preceding geopolitical, economic, and internal security arguments through the academic literature on counterbalancing, commercial liberalism, embedded bilateralism, and Wahhabism within the context of Russian cooperation with China in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. It also describes the methodology used to test the hypotheses through interviews and archival information collected during field research in Moscow, Kazan, Shanghai, and Beijing.

Chapter 3 places the background and organizational development of the SCO in the context of the literature on regionalism. It compares the SCO to ASEAN, NAFTA, and the European Union through three forms of sovereignty: guarded, shared, and pooled. By outlining Central Asia's tendency to emphasize state sovereignty and how the SCO's founding documents guarantee non-interference in the domestic affairs of its members, the chapter demonstrates how the SCO applies the guarded sovereignty model. It also outlines the steps that the Russian governments took to establish the SCO in collaboration with China based on archival documents from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Finally, the chapter highlights how the SCO evolved around three main issue areas: security, trade, and energy.

Chapter 4 details the empirical data from twenty interviews with people at various think tanks, universities, and governmental institutions in Moscow. Based on these

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106 Ibid.
interviews, the chapter systematically explains how Russian perceptions support or contradict the geopolitical, economic and internal security hypotheses through statistical and qualitative analysis. The statistical analysis uses Q methodology to help prioritize the importance of each hypothesis and to correlate expert judgment.

Chapter 5 is an empirical analysis of Chinese motivations in the SCO based on interviews with academics and researchers in Shanghai and Beijing. Similar to Chapter 4, it examines the Chinese perspective from the geopolitical, economic, and internal security arguments and analyzes how the Chinese interpret Russian motivations in the SCO. The chapter also investigates to what degree interview subjects saw areas of common interest between Russia and China in the organization. It uses qualitative information and Q methodology to assess confirmatory and contradictory data.

Chapter 6 uses information from discussions with Islamic experts at Kazan Federal University, as well as interviews with religious leaders as part of a case study that examines the domestic growth of Wahhabism in Tatarstan. It serves as an evaluation of the potential for radical Islam spreading into areas of Russia that are beyond the Northern Caucasus. Kazan was chosen as a barometer for this region because it serves as a hub for about 30 percent of the population of Tatarstan, an economically prosperous and socially well-integrated area of Russia. Based on the view that economic well-being reduces the propensity for conflict, Muslims in Tatarstan should reject militant Islam. In addition, based on moderate Islamic tenets, Tatarstan is a model for peaceful relations between Russians and Muslims. If a portion of the Islamic community in the region embraces radical views, then Wahhabism could likely pose a threat for the rest of Russia's Islamic
community. The chapter therefore also acts as secondary test of the internal security argument by examining how deeply Wahhabism has penetrated Russia.

The final chapter coalesces the different strands of the dissertation into a comprehensive perspective on Russia's interest in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Chapter 7 begins by briefly recapitulating the significance of the dissertation's question and hypotheses from theoretical and policy angles. It juxtaposes the policy findings from Moscow, Kazan, Shanghai and Beijing and draws theoretical findings based on how these results compare to the academic literature. It suggests that the most prioritized area of cooperation between Russian and China in the SCO has been internal security. In addition to discussing the findings, the chapter explores the theoretical and policy implications of Russian cooperation with China in the organization. The chapter concludes by identifying and discussing the potential areas for future research on the SCO and related topics.
Chapter 2: Alternative Explanations and Methodology

In this chapter, I delineate three explanations for Russia's motives in cooperating with China in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The first focuses on geopolitical concerns about American involvement in Central Asia. The second emphasizes a greater Russian desire for more economic cooperation with China. The third stresses an internal security concern over growing Jihadi radicalism and claims for independence. This chapter presents the arguments for each arising hypothesis based on the respective geopolitical, economic, and internal security literature. Finally, it details how each hypothesis was tested by field interviews and archival data.

First Argument: Counterbalancing and Structural Realism

The geopolitical explanation asserts that when states rationally dismiss the fear that a joint strategy would give one state a greater military advantage over another, both states can effectively work together. Consistent with this logic, Russia can choose a counterbalancing strategy of cooperation against the United States.

Based on the general principles of realism, states in the international system always seek to maximize their own chances of survival through two primary balancing strategies. The first, internal balancing, increases “domestic –level variable,” such as armies, technological weaponry or economic growth. The second, external balancing aggregates one state’s capabilities with similarly minded states that feel threatened by a common danger. In essence, “the ultimate purpose of any balancing strategy is to reduce

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or match the capabilities of a powerful state or a threatening actor.” Yet not all balance of power theorists agree on the fundamental reasons for balancing. They have thus generated two distinct strands of thought – defensive and offensive realism. This difference leads analysts to give alternate accounts of counterbalancing based on divergent assumptions.

**Defensive Realism and Counterbalancing**

Defensive realism maintains that states mainly seek security under anarchy; however, this search for security leads states to feel more insecure about their own safety as others pursue the same protection. Because of this danger, defensive realists rely on the concept of balance between offensive and defensive capabilities and believe that states can correctly interpret these differences. When states understand the distinctions between offensive and defensive arsenals, they discover that it is easier to defend one’s territory than to attack another’s borders. In order to adopt the best possible strategy, states should then, “pursue military, diplomatic, and foreign economic policies that

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communicate restraint.” Given the abundant means at the disposal of states, it is possible to recognize each other’s benign security-seeking intentions and to avoid conflict.8

The defining characteristic of defensive realism is therefore its preference for moderate polices that generally avoid preemptive attacks due to the overriding emphasis on nonaggressive preferences. If states generally shun aggressive policies, then they should typically avoid military confrontations and attempts to change the balance of power in the international system.9 Therefore, according to defensive realists, states balance against others in order to seek security from potential aggressors.10 This type of behavior prevents the possible rise of any revisionist state that would want to reverse the “power relations among two or more nations” or to reduce the status of a great power.11 States that could alter this distribution of power in the international system face countervailing coalitions as a form of self-help in a world void of any “overarching authority.”12 As Steven Walt explains, “aggression is discouraged because those who

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9 Major changes in the international system such as hegemonic war are only due to “unit-level factors” of individual policy-makers. The rise of Nazi-Germany, for example, was not due to the “pressures of anarchy” that cause security seeking, but was rather the result of a single man’s machinations. See, for example, Matthew Rendall, "Defensive realism and the Concert of Europe," Review of International Studies 32, no. 03 (2006): 525, http://dx.doi.org.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/10.1017/S0260210506007145.
contemplate it will anticipate resistance.” These countervailing coalitions designed to maintain the status quo can be accomplished through hard balancing strategies that are more commonly known as traditional balancing.

A traditional or hard balancing strategy typically “seeks to change the military balance in an actual or (more often) potential conflict by contributing military capabilities to the weaker side through measures such as a military buildup, war-fighting alliance, or transfer of military technology to an ally.” These measures are drawn from classical notions of balance of power principles such as one state preventing the domination of another through a countervailing coalition. These alliances may also be designed in response to levels of threat since there are substantial costs in counterbalancing such as military spending, loss of autonomy, and possible punishment by one’s opponent in the event of defeat. Therefore, coalitions may also be based on the intentions of other states rather than simply on relative power.

As opposed to hard balancing or formal military alliances that seek to challenge the balance of power, there is arguably another category of countervailing coalitions. Recent literature suggests that soft balancing might be occurring due to the perceived lack of hard balancing behavior against the United States. Viewed as a combination of

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14 Robert Anthony Pape, "Soft Balancing Against the United States," 36. For a reference to the military nature of hard balancing, see, Kai He and Huiyun Feng, "If Not Soft Balancing, then what?,” 371.
17 Ibid.
18 Stephen Walt suggested that there was a lack of balancing because powers were too far from the United States or the unipole: Stephen M. Walt, "Alliances in a Unipolar World," 103. For a seeming lack of
Kenneth Waltz’s structural balance of power theory and Stephen Walt’s balance of threat theory, soft balancing seeks to explain the currently perceived lack of counterbalancing coalitions against the United States. Soft balancing is systemic in nature and is an outgrowth of defensive realism’s precept of “security seeking under anarchy,” which maintains that states will balance against threatening concentrations of power. In other words, soft balancing is linked to the distribution of power in the international system with weaker powers counterbalancing stronger powers. Unlike hard balancing, however, it does not necessarily seek to change the “current balance of power but seeks to obtain better outcomes within it.” It is a type of balancing, “short of formal alliances,” which can involve “limited arms buildup, ad hoc cooperative exercises, or collaboration in regional or international institutions.” In a tangible sense, this is a strategy involving diplomacy that counters U.S. policy and, “seeks to limit the ability of the United States to impose its preferences on others.” It can also involve "territorial denial, entangling diplomacy, economic strengthening, and signals of resolve to balance." More generally, there are several conditions under which these soft balancing occurs: first, when the

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hegemon in the international system threatens “second-tier powers,” but is not outright challenging; second, the “dominate state” provides irreplaceable public goods in terms of economy and security; and third, the “dominate state” cannot easily retaliate against its challengers.25

**Offensive Realism and Counterbalancing**

Offensive realists share the neorealist understanding that the priority of all states is survival. However, they disagree with defensive realists on several points. First, they believe that anarchy “provides strong incentives for expansion,” and that “all states strive to maximize their power relative to other states.”26 As a result, they do not believe that states simply seek security for their own defense, but rather that power is the most important objective for self-preservation. States then favor “expansionist policies”

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because they fear that, “other states will use force to harm or conquer them.”

This perception of international politics influences states to counter other states through arms buildup, unilateralism, and expansion. Early realist scholars, such as Robert Gilpin similarly suggest that states seek expansion, who writes that “throughout history a principle objective of states has been the conquest of territory.” Moreover, as part of a general plan of expansion, states pursue power and prestige for their own benefit.\(^{28}\)

Aggressiveness and revisionism within the international system are commonplace and it is common for the status quo to be under attack.\(^{30}\)

By maximizing power, states achieve hegemony through war analogous to how the United States gained supremacy in the Western Hemisphere and to the rise of Imperial Germany during World War I.\(^{32}\) Offensive tactics can indeed lead to effective conquest whereby the victor exploits the weaker state’s economy. Conquest might also mean that a victor will simply, “annex a slice of the defeated state’s territory, break it into two or more smaller states, or simply disarm it and prevent it from rearming.”\(^{33}\)

In comparison with defensive realism, offensive realism takes a different approach to counterbalancing since states seek to maximize power. John Mearsheimer,

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\(^{28}\) Ibid., 128-129.


\(^{33}\) Ibid. Peter Lieberman suggests that exploitative conquest is possible. For example, countries can use information technology that is “Orwellian” in nature against societies. See, Peter Lieberman, Does Conquest Pay? (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 13, 28.
for example, contends that all great powers are revisionists because they are compelled to maximize their power in order to achieve security under anarchy. The absence of a central authority in the world gives “powerful incentives for aggression” and “offensive military action is always a threat.” Among power maximizing strategies, hard balancing or traditional balancing behavior is seen as a reaction to expansion or the threat of expansion that all states naturally pursue. States can counterbalance aggressors through “internal balancing (i.e., rearmament or accelerated economic growth to support eventual rearmament),” and through “external balancing (i.e., organization of counterbalancing alliances).”

However, states cannot easily counterbalance rivals because hard balancing in the form of alliances or coalitions is “often slow and inefficient.” Creating coalitions is time consuming and coordinating joint efforts is challenging. In addition, members often disagree on "how the burdens should be distributed" and endure arguments over "which state leads the alliance." Therefore, balancing is not the first choice for states to alter the

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36 Although written before the divide between defensive and offensive realism, Gilpin still suggests that states seek to maximize power. Gilpin, War and Change, 146-47.
38 Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics, 156.
39 Ibid.,156-157.
concentration of power, instead they prefer buck-passing or, “attempts to get another state to bear the burden of deterring or possibly fighting an aggressor.” This strategy is more likely than counterbalancing when the dominate state does not control a large portion of power relative to others. Otherwise, alliances tend to form when states feel threatened and would unite against the potential hegemon.

Under this strategy, offensive realism de-emphasizes hard and soft balancing and states that the so-called buck-passer state has four options. First, it can pursue good diplomatic relations with the aggressor in the hope of shifting threatening behavior to another party. Second, it can avoid being drawn into a conflict involving another state and the aggressor with the intention of letting others fight costly battles. Third, a state can strengthen its military so that the aggressor becomes intimidated and chooses to fight a weaker state. Finally, a state can let another power grow in strength under the assumption that this other state will be able to contain the aggressor.

**Application of Defensive Realism for Russia**

The reasons for Russia's participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization begin with Russia's reaction to world events since the end of the Cold War and security fears from NATO expansion. When Russians elected Vladimir Putin as president, Putin began returning Russia to international respectability in the eyes of voters and declared his mission “to restore the country's prestige and leading role in the world.”

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continues to declare that Russia is more than, “just a reduced map of the Soviet Union; it is a confident power with a great future and a great people.”45 He also maintains that his country's relations with great powers are ”of great importance for us [Russians] and the entire international system”46 and makes it clear that ”he embraces confrontation with the West, no longer feels constrained by international laws and norms, and is unafraid to wield Russian power to revise the international order.”47 At an annual meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club, Putin also accused the United States of subverting international security and abusing its role as the ”global hegemon” and emphasized the need for a ”new system of relations.”48 At the same meeting, Putin also characterized the post-Cold War system as a unipolar world that provides the pretext for an American dictatorship.

Furthermore, when Secretary of State John Kerry said, “You just don’t in the twenty-first century behave in nineteenth century fashion by invading another country on completely trumped up pretext,” he was describing Crimea's annexation as incongruent with the international system's norms of sovereignty and nonintervention.49


46Vladimir Putin, ”Annual Address to the Federal Assembly” (speech, Kremlin, Moscow, Russia, May 10, 2006) http://eng.kremlin.ru/transcripts/8231. See also, Krebs, ”Living in Alternate Universes,” in The Policy World Meets Academia.


officials reiterated his view when they stated: "International law prohibits the acquisition of part or all of another state's territory through coercion or force . . . . To do so violates the principles upon which the international system is built."\(^{50}\) These comments indicate that Russia's invasion was a direct affront to "the general agreement shared by most states and a fundamental objection to and challenge of the rules of the game."\(^{51}\) Moscow's decision to annex sovereign territory stands against the international consensus governing rules of behavior and suggests that Russia’s dismissal from the G-8 is yet another indicator of Russia's disagreement with an American-led order.\(^{52}\)

Although still a matter of debate, Russia's desire to challenge American power comes from the perception of a hostile and eastwardly advancing NATO and the Pentagon's decision to prevent the emergence of future geopolitical rivals. In an article by Stephen Walt, a noted defensive realist, he suggests that "insecurity" derived from the expansion of NATO was the main motivation for Russia's military actions in Ukraine and the Crimean Peninsula.\(^{53}\) He specifically claims that this insecurity was the "taproot" of Russia's revisionism and that the alliance's advance eastward has done more to "poison relations with Russia than any other single Western policy."\(^{54}\) Walt's argument that Russian fear of Western expansion helped drive Moscow's security-seeking behavior is supported by President Putin's own reasoning of these events:


\(^{51}\)For the theoretical basis of this see, Chan, *China, the U.S., and the Power-Transition Theory*, 32; and Gilpin, *War and Change*, 9, 199.

\(^{52}\)For the idea that membership in international institutions matter regarding accepting the status quo, see, Chan, *China, the U.S., and the Power-Transition Theory*, 33.


When the infrastructure of a military bloc is moving toward our borders, it causes us some concerns and questions. We need to take some steps in response. . . . Our decision on Crimea was partly due to . . . considerations that if we do nothing, then at some point, guided by the same principles, NATO will drag Ukraine in and they will say: 'It doesn't have anything to do with you'. . . . NATO ships would have ended up in the city of Russian navy glory, Sevastopol.55

Russia clearly perceived NATO as a direct threat to its sovereignty that ultimately necessitated a strong military response. Although also a debated issue, Moscow’s purported backing of Ukrainian rebels in the current conflict is the natural continuation of such a reaction. It also suggests a policy consistent with Lieber and Alexander's description of soft balancing that includes providing aid to adversaries and the prevention of regional economic cooperation.56 Before the annexation of Crimea, for example, the European Union pursued a trade agreement with Ukraine that was vehemently discouraged by Moscow.57 Much of the social upheaval that followed Viktor Yanukovych’s ouster surrounded the signing of this agreement with the West which Russia saw as a security threat. Therefore, Moscow’s recent actions suggest that Kremlin leaders sought to maximize Russia's security by blunting American power. Russia's invasion of Ukraine demonstrates that Putin's alteration of the international system's status quo is a matter of Russia’s survival.

As evidence of America's intention to suppress emergent powers, an excerpt from a Pentagon report published in The New York Times stated that the United States’ primary goal was:

56 Lieber and Alexander, "Waiting for Balancing," 126.
to prevent the reemergence of a new rival, either on the territory of the former Soviet Union or elsewhere. . . . This is a dominant consideration . . . and requires that we endeavor to prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to generate global power . . . . Our strategy must now refocus on precluding the emergence of any potential future global competitor.”

During the George W. Bush administration, the government was devoted to also maintaining America's hegemony in the face of potential adversaries through dissuading others from "pursuing a military build-up in hope of surpassing, or equaling, the power of the United States.” Moreover, senior academics at the Princeton Project on National Security, who tried to develop a "bipartisan national security strategy”, followed in these footsteps by stressing three objectives: the development of U.S. military capabilities; the protection of America's "like-minded" allies; and a "balance of power in favor of liberal democracies.” Based on these developments, there are several important implications for interpreting Russia's reaction to the United States: first, by the U.S. government's own admission, America has tried to prevent the rise of peer competitors; second, Russia has expressed its interest in becoming such a competitor; and third, Russia seeks to change the status quo of the international system.


Russian Interest with China in the SCO

Russia remains an important strategic player that can challenge the United States through soft balancing in Eurasia. The soft balancing approach aligns with several of T.V. Paul’s conditions for soft balancing, as mentioned in the earlier section. In substantive terms, Russia can soft balance the United States in the SCO given that Moscow still fears NATO expansion, yet America provides global security in terms of protecting sea-lanes and open international markets; moreover, Russia no longer directly challenges the United States with nuclear or conventional weapons. These circumstances create an opportunity for Russia to take milder actions that indirectly confront American interests. Although Moscow, given its finite military resources, would arguably like to change the balance of power in the international system, Russia is conceivably using the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to contain American policy.

Lacking formal defense commitments and major military transfers, the SCO is not a strict alliance in keeping with traditional hard balancing strategies. Yet considering the institutional and regional context of cooperation between Russia and China, the SCO is possibly a tool for Russia that can frustrate American policy through denying basing

64 For features of hard balancing see, Walt, "Alliances in a Unipolar World."
rights in Central Asia. Given Russia's security fears that the United States and NATO are encroaching upon its borders — the current conflict in Ukraine being the most vivid example — the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan under NATO auspices is another example of Western aggression. Vitaly Vorobyov, a senior researcher at the Center for East Asia and SCO Studies at the Institute of International Studies (MGIMO), who was Ambassador at Large and a special envoy of the Russian president to the SCO, echoed this security fear by suggesting:

One cannot rule out that the U.S. may use Afghanistan to destabilize the situation in Central Asia and around it. Such actions would undermine, above all, the positions of Russia and China in the region and globally. . . . Washington may choose such tactics of departure from Afghanistan in order to stay there (including military presence). . . .

In accordance with this perspective, the SCO wanted a timetable for the withdrawal of American forces from military bases in Central Asia including bases in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in order to hinder the ability of the United States to cooperate with its Central Asian partners. Moreover, Russia used the SCO to limit America's presence outside Afghanistan and across Central Asia when the SCO refused the United States observer status. Observer status would have given the United States an official voice in Central

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Asian affairs and a formal pathway to becoming a full-member of the SCO. Given that SCO decision-making is based on consensus, the United States could have eventually vetoed Russian and Chinese plans in the SCO if it had attained member status.

Russia also uses the SCO to coordinate limited joint-military exercises under the banner of Peace Missions that feature aircraft, air-defense missiles, tanks, and armored vehicles. In the latest iteration, a total of 7,000 troops from China, Russia, Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan engaged in deploying electronic countermeasures, reconnaissance, and mapping and positioning in August 2014. The exercise also featured special forces, early warning aircraft, and airborne troops. Given these developments, the second hypothesis states that Russia is soft balancing the United States in Central Asia by cooperating with China in the SCO.

Second Argument: The Economic Pursuit of New Regional Markets

Many strands of liberalism analyze the place of human rights, democracy, economic wealth, and international organizations. In particular, a major branch of this school of thought is neoliberal institutionalism that emphasizes how organizations help states share information through expertise, establish expectations of mutual gain, enforce agreements, and reduce transaction costs. It suggests that international organizations can facilitate information sharing in order to facilitate cooperation by "establish[ing]


70 Ibid.


focal points for cooperation" and allowing states to make credible commitments for reciprocity.\(^73\) States, in other words, need assurances that everyone will follow the rules in order to "capture the potential gains" of cooperation.\(^74\) There are two main components to this type of "reciprocal behavior" - contingency and equivalence. The first type of reciprocity suggests that states respond in kind to each other's actions whereby cooperation leads to more cooperation and defection only results in more defection.\(^75\) Equivalent reciprocity, on the other hand, indicates that there is some mutual exchange, "where services and favors, trust and affection, in the course of mutual exchanges are ideally expected to find some rough balancing out."\(^76\)

However, rather than focusing purely on the exchange of information, liberal principles offer another explanation for Russian cooperation with China based on profit-seeking, market expansion, and economic interdependence. This argument assumes that interstate relationships consist of multiple issues that have no clear hierarchy in international politics. Countries can place the same importance on international trade as on national security based on one central calculation: it is no longer efficient or practical


\(^74\) Ibid., 45. For more on the purposes of international organizations and how, among other tasks, they can provide rules on regional economic integration and trade in commodities see, Harold K. Jacobson, *Networks of Interdependence: International organizations and the Global Political System* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc, 1979), 260, 273, 278-279.


for nations to attack each other for material or territorial gain.\textsuperscript{77} States, instead, would rather create a "sophisticated economic and trade apparatus" with other countries to derive the most benefit from commercial exchange.\textsuperscript{78} As part of this search for new markets, the argument also considers how bilateral relationships facilitate regional integration.

**Commercial Liberalism**

Commercial liberalism "focuses on incentives created by opportunities for transborder economic transactions" and assumes that the people and states are expressly driven by "market incentives."\textsuperscript{79} Based on this proclivity, states engineer foreign economic policies that reflect the costs and benefits of international exchange for domestic gain. Therefore, the greater the economic benefits for states and private actors, the greater the pressure for commercial cooperation.\textsuperscript{80} Milton Friedman described this inherent behavior in even simpler and more universal terms in a well-known interview with Phil Donahue. In response to Donahue's question concerning capitalism's fundamental lack of social responsibility, Friedman explained that "the world runs on individuals pursuing their self-interests" because every society runs on greed.\textsuperscript{81}

One of the clearest manifestations of this greed is in the form of modern corporations that are "concerned solely with profit maximization" and act independently

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\textsuperscript{80} Ibid., 528.

according to classical liberal principles. This type of behavior is assumed to occur within an "economic system controlled, regulated, and directed by market prices," which, in accordance with Friedman's belief, "orders the production and distribution of goods" through "a self-regulating mechanism." Karl Polanyi, who analyzed the societal context of market institutions, also highlights in *The Great Transformation* how firms act in accordance "with the expectation that human beings behave in such a way as to achieve maximum money gains."

In terms of international commerce, multilateral transaction "arises spontaneously through agents ‘buying cheap and selling dear’ across borders: goods and services are procured as cheaply as possible through imports; exports are sold as profitably as possible" Firms and by extension the states, that these firms help support, naturally pursue "expanding networks of commerce" to realize the most financial benefit. The expansion of international markets helps generate greater amounts of national wealth that can stimulate public investment in public goods, such as transportation and communication systems and in the augmentation of domestic economic development. These new international markets can also provide an outlet for surplus production that domestic consumption cannot satisfy.

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86Ibid., 202. For additional reference to the relationship between markets and profit, see, Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 257, 263.


88Ibid.
As international markets expand, interdependence between states can play a role through international institutions that increase "the ability to link various issues, thereby increasing the costs for states for failing to comply with established rules." These linkages refer to the result of "reciprocal effects among countries or among actors in different countries," which often result from international transactions including "flows of money, goods, people, and messages across international boundaries." These transactions can also come in the form of "joint infrastructure development: transportation facilities such as roads, railways, and ports; communication facilities; joint power generation; joint handling of ecological problems and so on." These exchanges exist not only between governments, but also most importantly between economic interests that "compete for the attentions of government leaders and seek to influence their choices." In the absence of cooperation, businesses might suffer a loss of profit and revenue. The degree to which these interests affect governments also depends on the importance of the good, service, or commodity. A high amount of unessential trade will not be as effective in deterring conflict as even a small amount of trade in a highly sensitive area. Simply put, the more essential the trade, the greater the incentive for cooperation. For example, as the following sections will explain, the hydrocarbon industry has been critical for the Russian and Chinese economies and provides a firm foundation for economic interlocking. Given large Chinese demand and Russia's plentiful

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oil and gas supplies, Moscow and Beijing have, in principle, a strongly complementary relationship. This bilateral relationship also notably parallels the dyadic relationship between France and Germany that was at the heart of the early European Economic Community.

**Market Expansion and Regionalism**

Within regional trade organizations there can also be an emphasis on bilateral relationships between the two most influential powers. A number of scholars have discussed this type of arrangement, which is referred to as a regional subsystem. William Thomason, for example, examines twenty-one possible characteristics of this concept and summarizes regional subsystems through three common characteristics: "general geographic proximity, regularity and intensity of interactions, and shared perceptions of the regional subsystem as a distinctive theater of operations." Although originally meant as a way of identifying regional groupings of states in contrast to the bipolar system of the Cold War, scholars and diplomats such as Philippe de Schoutheete use this idea to describe even smaller groupings of states within an already regional context, namely, France and Germany in the European Union. This concept is based on the

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95 In the context of the bipolar world, an early definition by Karl Kaiser of a regional subsystem was a "partial international system whose members exist in geographical propinquity." See, Karl Kaiser, "The Interaction of Regional Subsystems: Some Preliminary Notes on Recurrent Patterns and the Role of Superpowers," *World Politics* 21, no. 01 (1968):86, http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2009747; For one of the first conceptions of a regional subsystem in comparison to bipolarity, see, Leonard Binder, "The Middle East as
"longstanding conventional wisdom" that the position of France and Germany in Europe is necessary for European integration.\textsuperscript{96}

According to Krotz and Schild, the evolution of Franco-German cooperation in the European Union is one the clearest examples of this type of arrangement.\textsuperscript{97} These two countries demonstrate the importance of the ability of a small coalition to influence a larger grouping of states through so-called "embedded bilateralism" that "captures the intertwined nature of a robustly institutionalized and normatively grounded interstate relationship."\textsuperscript{98} Embedded bilateralism is grounded on three aspects that "make up the main building blocks of Franco-German relations, defining the connection between France and Germany at the center of Europe."\textsuperscript{99} Moreover, this relationship was based on two strategic assets, coal and steel. A key feature of Franco-German reconciliation was creating interdependence between these two vital sectors that were important materials for industrial economies. During the nascent regionalization process, "Coal was the primary energy source in Europe, accounting for almost 70 percent of fuel consumption. Steel was a fundamental material


\textsuperscript{97} Krotz and Schild, \textit{Shaping Europe},10.

\textsuperscript{98} Ibid., 8.

\textsuperscript{99}Ibid., 5. For a slightly contrasting viewpoint that shows the limits of the Franco-German relationship in European integration, see: Helen Wallace, "Institutionalized Bilateralism and Multilateral Relations: Axis, Motor, or Detonator?" in \textit{Motor für Europa?: Deutsch-französischer Bilateralismus und europäische Integration}, ed. Robert Picht and Wolfgang Wessels (Bonn: Europa Union Verlag, 1990), 145-157.
for industry and to manufacture it required large amounts of coal. Both materials were
also needed to create weapons." As a result of pooling their strategic resources under
the European Coal and Steel Community, the threat of conflict diminished and the first
concrete step was taken in creating a united Europe.101

Douglas Webber similarly believes that intergovernmental activity between this
particular pair of countries is an important part of EU policymaking since Paris and
Berlin maintain the closest contacts.102 In his comment that "basically, we should
consider this to be the main task of the tandem," Gilbert Ziebura also implies that these
contacts form the linchpin of broader European integration that supports, "the proper
functioning of Brussels-based institutions."103

The first feature, "regularized intergovernmentalism," refers to how governments,
including their high level officials and regional representatives, participate in intense and
recurring bilateral interactions.104 The second, "symbolic acts and practices," are meant to
"inform bilateral relations between states with a more general social meaning and
purpose. . . . They thus connect the preset dealings of a relationship with the past, and
provide direction for the future."105 Finally, the third, "parapublic underpinning" is

101 Ibid.
103 Gilbert Ziebura, Die deutsch-französische Beziehungen seit 1945: Mythen und Realitäten (Stuttgart: Neske, 1997), 355. See also, Krotz and Schild, Shaping Europe, 10.
105 Krotz and Joachim, Shaping Europe, 77.
usually state-financed and can include youth exchanges and international associations
that socialize their participants and create a collective identity.  

**Interests of Russia with China**

When William Wohlforth suggests, "the bottom line is that Russia’s chief
priorities are and will remain modernization and economic rejuvenation, which create
powerful incentives to maintain productive partnerships with the governments of the
world’s richest and most influential states," he places greater weight on economic
matters than on strictly military issues.  

This analysis echoes President Putin’s comments to a reporter at a June 2007 press conference, when he downplayed zero-sum
competition by saying "economic integration in the post-Soviet area is also immensely
important in terms of ensuring the region's stability . . . the integration project we are
pursuing in the post-Soviet area creates no obstacles for anyone."  

Russia’s most important economic priorities naturally revolve around its
hydrocarbon industry. According to the Central Intelligence Agency, Russia ranked
second in the world in 2013 for crude oil exports and first in the world for natural gas
exports. Moreover, in its attempt to keep its eastern most regions connected with its
European parts, Moscow sees the modernization of energy infrastructure as a medium for

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This strategic and long-standing objective, which aims to develop Siberia and the Far East, creates an opportunity for Russia to cooperate with China and other Asian partners. As a sign of the energy sector's importance, 68 percent of Russia's total export revenues in 2013 was from petroleum products, oil, and natural gas with $102 billion from sales of motor gasoline and distillate fuels. In addition, 50 percent of Russia's 2013 federal budget comprises income from "mineral extraction taxes" and "export costumes duties on oil and natural gas" that provided essential funding for the state. Given this overwhelming dependence on fossil fuels, there is no other Russian industry that provides the greatest opportunity to generate national wealth and that would yield the greatest amount of social welfare, wealth, and profit for individuals, businesses, and elites in government.

Specifically, Gazprom and Rosneft are the largest gas and oil producers that factor most prominently in the policies of the Kremlin due to close political connections. For example, Igor Sechin, director of Rosneft, is a long-standing confidant of President Putin and would naturally have a voice in economic policy. In comparison to Putin's other confidants, Sechin has the reputation of being the president's most loyal and long-
time associate who ultimately became the head of Rosneft in 2012. Sechin's personal fortunes are directly tied to the financial success of Russia's largest oil company that is currently 69.5 percent state-owned. He occupies an ideal position to petition state officials who would also undoubtedly benefit from increased energy sales to China. Gazprom, Russia's major natural gas producer is also heavily controlled by confidants of President Putin who, after his election, "increased his influence over Gazprom's board of directors." In one of Putin's first actions as president, he removed Viktor Chernomyrdin as chairman of Gazprom's board and replaced him with Dmitri Medvedev, another close associate, "who had been Putin's legal advisor in Petersburg, headed his electoral campaign, and had become first deputy head of the Presidential Administration." Finally, Putin was able by 2001 to remove Rem Vyakhirev, Gazprom's CEO under Yeltsin and to replace him with Aleksey Miller, one of the president's coworkers prior to his election. Both companies carry substantial weight within the highest echelons of Russian policymaking.

However, the success of Russia's oil and gas sector relies on maintaining steady sales of these commodities to vital export markets such as the European Union. In 2008, for example, Gazprom received about 59 percent of its revenue from exports to the "EU-27." Such a high percentage of revenue indicates the extent to which Europe represents the main source of revenue and investment for the Russian gas industry. It also reveals that European consumption has provided companies like Gazprom with one of their few

118 Ibid., 281.
119 Ibid.
reliable sources of profit. It was only in 2009 that Gazprom received a profit from its domestic sales while exports to CIS countries return little profit due to regional price discounts.

Yet from Russia's perspective, several factors have raised doubt about the gas industry's relationship with European buyers. "By increasing energy efficiency and increasing the share of renewable in its energy mix, the EU is, in effect proposing curbing fossil-fuel consumption," which can reduce the amount of Russian gas to the region. During a Russian Security Council meeting on "preventing national security threats arising from global climate change," President Dmitry Medvedev stated:

There is the idea of ‘preventive measures’ taken by developed countries as a sort of carbon protectionism. These kinds of decisions, especially unilateral decisions aimed at specific countries or groups of countries, could limit export opportunities for some of Russia’s commodities on international markets and serve as a pretext for increasing unfair competition against Russia. We therefore need to weigh this situation up, discuss it, and propose a scheme that would enable us to contribute to preventing climate change while at the same time maintaining our economy’s competitiveness in our main export sectors. You all understand what I am talking about.

Although Medvedev did not specifically refer to the European Union, he alluded heavily to policies typically promoted in Europe as a danger to the Russian economy. Germany, one of Russia's largest gas markets in the EU, for example, has been one of the leading proponents for a diversified energy landscape that is based on climate-friendly fuel.

121 Ibid.
122 Ibid.
alternatives. According to a 2010 report by the German Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology and the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, the German government intends to:

keep pressing forward with the expansion of renewable energies while at the same time stepping up the pressure for innovation and cost reduction. This is the only way to keep the sectors concerned globally competitive and to contain the costs to consumers... Above all, this means swiftly establishing the competitiveness of renewables on the market in a phased approach...

The report also describes how Germany will help institute its fossil fuel reduction program through efficiency gains. Through the combination of hydrocarbon free fuels and the limited use of the country's present supplies of fossil fuel, the report outlines that:

Energy efficiency will be an even more crucial criterion for the global competitiveness and innovative power of industry in future years. Enhancing energy efficiency is therefore a key issue for industry. Scientific studies reveal that German industry has the potential to save € 10 billion a year. Against this background, the German government will support initiatives by industry, e.g. through the Climate Protection and Energy Efficiency Partnership run by the Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce.

The confluence of Europe's gradual divestiture of hydrocarbon fuels combined with other factors, such as the shale gas revolution, a global economic slow-down, and cheap coal has caused the European market to stagnate for Russia. As President Medvedev alluded, this stagnation has caused Russia to search for secondary markets as Russian gas companies try to find new venues to sell their supply. This situation is particularly acute given Gazprom's over investment in the gas fields in northwestern Siberia that was begun

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125 Germany and Italy are Gazprom's two largest European clients from which 40% of the company's profits are derived. See, Pierre Noel, *Beyond Dependence: How to Deal with Russian Gas*, (London: European Council on Foreign Relations, November 2008), 9.


127 Ibid., 12.

128 James Henderson, "Russia's Changing Gas Export Strategy" (PowerPoint Presentation, Columbia University's Panel Discussion: China-Russia Energy Relations: Key Drivers and Implications, New York, New York, April 8, 2015).
before the downturn in European demand. As a consequence of this bubble, Russia now has a total supply of 800 billion cubic meters (bcm) of gas, yet the current demand for this supply is only around 640 bcm.\textsuperscript{129} As a result, Russia is looking toward Asia as a way of easing its supply bubble caused by both a shift in European policy and economic determinants.\textsuperscript{130}

Edward Chow, Senior Fellow with the Energy and National Security Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies similarly echoed Russia's economic dilemma and Moscow's attempt at a solution by courting China's energy demand. During a panel discussion at Columbia University, Chow stated:

The growing Russia-China Energy relationship is a very natural and understandable relationship that is not particularly earth-shattering in terms of the rationale behind it. You have Russia, the largest oil and gas exporter in the world looking at a China which has become - just last year- the largest importer in the world . . . demand for gas is at a low level right now . . . China will have a big impact on the global gas market and will be increasingly dependent on imports. . . . Russia is facing a European gas market that is stagnant, no big growth in the foreseeable future so wanting to diversify its markets to look at Asia and particular China with a growing market. It is all very natural.\textsuperscript{131}

Finally, James Henderson, Senior Research Fellow at the Oxford Institute of Energy Studies commented that for Russia, "there is a very clear commercial dynamic for the shift" from the European market to the countries of Asia and, in particular, China.\textsuperscript{132} Russian oil and especially natural gas companies are then poised to become major suppliers of energy in Beijing's economic policy.\textsuperscript{133}

\textsuperscript{129}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{130}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{131}Edward Chow, "China-Russia Energy Relations: Key Drivers and Implications" (Panel Discussion, Columbia University, New York, NY, April 8, 2015).
\textsuperscript{132}Henderson, "China-Russia Energy Relations."
\textsuperscript{133}Erica Downs, "China-Russia Energy Relations: Key Drivers and Implications" (Panel Discussion, Columbia University, New York, NY, April 8, 2015).
Relevance of the SCO

Given the perspective that Russia sees the exchange of goods, services, and natural resources as the best method to achieve the "highest levels of material well-being," Moscow would prefer to use the SCO as a trade institution that promotes wealth creation and profit with China. Based on Russia's history with other regional organizations in the post-Soviet space—such as the Eurasian Economic Community, Eurasian Economic Union and the Eurasian Union—the SCO can also function as an economic organization. In order to accomplish these goals, the SCO must help facilitate multilateral trade with China.

Specifically, Putin could attempt to align Russian interests through the much-discussed SCO energy club. Despite a significant supply of Russian hydrocarbons and an equally large demand for energy in China, Russian and Chinese officials have often disagreed over energy prices and pipeline construction. Although there was a well-touted gas deal between Moscow and Beijing in May 2014, the exact price of this gas remains unclear suggesting unresolved contractual issues. An institutionalized energy club may therefore be better able to solve these problems through potential dispute settlement mechanisms than purely bilateral arrangements.

According to Dr. Nivedita Das Kundu, assistant director at the Indian Council for Social Science Research and Valdai Club contributor, Vladimir Putin is trying to resolve such issues through the SCO. She writes, "Russia intends to strengthen the energy club among SCO members in order to develop a joint course of action. The idea of

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formulating a common and strong energy policy within the SCO has been discussed at almost every summit."  

As a key area of cooperation, this energy club intends to "unite oil and gas companies from SCO’s producers, consumers and transit countries in coordination of strategies with the aim of increasing energy security."  

The SCO Business Council, which reportedly includes many Russian energy executives, attaches "special importance" to this project and intends to take the first steps toward creating the club. The Council sees itself as one of the club's main facilitators and plans to establish a nexus between business communities and governmental departments as part of a discussion platform for conducting, "regular practical deliberation on the Organization's energy strategy, opportunities for implementation of joint projects in prospecting, production, processing, transportation and transit of energy resources."  

Furthermore, according to the main editorial and media body of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, this joint-energy venture would help modernize the existing pipelines and general infrastructure required to transport oil and gas to China as well as to develop the Russian Far East. The club would also organize the development and exploration of new hydrocarbon deposits, as well as provide access to electricity markets, trained specialists, and ways of improving energy efficiency. A common SCO energy space would facilitate "price liberalization, harmonization of tariffs for transportation of

137 Ibid.
139 Ibid.
energy resources, development of a common tax base, and coordination among suppliers to avoid unnecessary competition.¹⁴¹ As a promising element in Russia's economic strategy, an emergent SCO energy club would preserve Russia's important Eurasian role in the oil and gas sector and critically sustain the country's economy.¹⁴²

However, energy would not be the only source of interdependence between Russia and China in the SCO. The SCO Interbank Consortium helps finance projects that Russia and China have in common including "ship building, electronics, nuclear energy, production of steel, the defense and space industries, aircraft building, agriculture, information technology, medical equipment, and pharmaceuticals."¹⁴³ In tandem with the Interbank Consortium, the SCO Business Council is working on projects that prevent the spread of infectious disease and provide medical insurance and establishing a "Joint Centre for Catastrophe Medicine." These medical programs would be for the outlying populations of member states and would help combat bird flu, SARS, tuberculosis, and would provide professional childbirth assistance.¹⁴⁴ There is also a "special working group on education" that is currently coordinating international education programs in the SCO under the auspices of "SCO University." The group has discussed the use of facilities at Moscow State University, Moscow State Institute of International Relations, and regional universities to "promote mutual understanding, social and cultural interaction, further modernization of science and education in the SCO member states."¹⁴⁵

The second hypothesis therefore states that in order to generate the maximum amount of

¹⁴¹Ibid.
¹⁴²Ibid.
¹⁴⁴"The Business Council of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization."
¹⁴⁵Ibid.
profit, while avoiding overdependence on the European market, Russia uses the SCO to enhance a stable demand for its hydrocarbon resources in China.

**Third Argument: The SCO and the Formulation of Internal Security**

The final explanation starts with the linkages between Jihadism and terrorism and then explains how terrorism has reportedly threatened the SCO. It also examines, more specifically, the role of Wahhabism in Russia and how it could act as a centrifugal force in Russian society. This argument is based on the proposition that those who commit violent and destructive acts in the name of religion seek, in their own judgment, to change the world for the better. These individuals believe that they are essentially "purifying the world of injustice, cruelty, and all that is antihuman." Scholars have cited this type of religiously based terrorism as a threat to the SCO and one of the main issues addressed by the organization's Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure. The literature on Wahhabism and its role in Russia addresses the basis for this terrorism in the form of radical Sunni Islam that predominates in Gulf-Arab states. Just as ethnically based separatism has been a domestic threat to the integrity of the Russian state, Wahhabism has become another force that challenges the stability of Russia's Muslim regions.

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Theoretical Determinants of Terrorism

The literature on terrorism primarily covers three broad categories of determinants of conflict including economic, social, and political drivers. Researchers have also explored these potential causes across three levels of analysis—the individual, the societal, and the state. The individual level of analysis approaches the subject from a psychological viewpoint and includes research on personality traits and the individual's acceptance of political ideology. This concept notably focuses on two categories: first, "relative deprivation theories" that explain terrorism based on "human frustration" connected to a perceived lack of prosperity; and second, "contagion" that emphasizes how mass media inspire acts of terror by giving terrorists a public forum to garner attention.

On the societal level, prosperity, inequality and regime type are among the prominent factors for the causes of terrorism. Modernization theory, for example, suggests that terrorists take advantage of groups that feel neglected or passed over by the economic growth around them. The result of these feelings supposedly "produce[s] a shift in the distribution of interest so as fuelling the grievances of some groups of the


152 Ibid., 9-10.


154 Lia and Skjolberg, Why Terrorism Occurs, 37.
society...In this view, terrorist organizations would flourish if they are able to collect...
capitalize on the grievances of losers."155 Technological innovations such as quick modes of...
transportation and telecommunication that are frequently associated with modernization can facilitate the ability of these groups to achieve their ends. Specifically, modern technology can empower seemingly insignificant groups of people by making explosives more available in conjunction with electronics that can remote detonate bombs.156

In a related position, economic inequality, which may come from a rise in prosperity for select groups, can also cause disaffected groups to commit terror.157 However, there is also a reverse argument that describes how economic development in fact dissuades terror activity. According to this proposition, increases in wealth and prosperity theoretically increase opportunity costs, which effectively reduce the probability of violent activity.158 This position has been popular among some in the U.S. government, such as Richard Sokolsky, who held a variety of posts including Senior

156 Lia and Skjolberg, Why Terrorism Occurs, 22-23.
Advisor to the Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs.\textsuperscript{159} With his coauthor Joseph McMillian, Sokolsky in the \textit{New York Times} writes:

> Although there is a great deal we do not understand about the causes of terrorism, one major factor is clear: the historic failure of development in a swath of countries running from North Africa to Pakistan. Our foreign assistance should go up by at least $4 billion to $5 billion annually to finance programs that promote modernization and economic opportunity in the Islamic countries of the Middle East and Central and South Asia.\textsuperscript{160}

According to his editorial piece, the distribution of foreign aid should be guided by modernization theory's emphasis on wealth and prosperity as the key drivers for the reduction of terrorist activity across much of the world.

Regime type is another explanation of terrorism at the societal level that examines democracy as a mitigator of violent activity. Based on this argument, "freedoms, openness and popular participation, democracies tend to enjoy greater legitimacy among their population."\textsuperscript{161} As opposed to authoritarian regimes, democracies provide an opportunity for socially restless groups to organize which helps them satisfy their demands without resorting to violence.\textsuperscript{162} Conversely, there is also research that posits that democracies are more prone to terrorist violence because the "free press in democracies attracts publicity-hungry terrorists, that the emphasis on personal liberties and freedom of expression and organization lowers the cost of conducting terrorism, and

\textsuperscript{161} Lia and Skjolberg, \textit{Why Terrorism Occurs}, 19.
that the protection of civil liberties in democracies constrains counterterrorism measures."

Another factor in terrorism can be states themselves. This determinant of terrorism can take the form of state sponsorship and failed governments. An example of state-sponsored terror would be the bombing by Libya of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland in 1988. Highlighting the significance of this type of support, the U.S. State Department maintains a current list of states that support such illicit activity, which includes Cuba, Sudan, and Syria. As a result of this designation, the United States maintains sanctions against these countries that stipulate "a ban on arms-related exports and sales, controls over exports of dual-use items . . . that could significantly enhance the terrorist-list country's military capability. . . [as well as a] prohibition on economic assistance, and [the] imposition of miscellaneous financial and other restrictions." In addition to state sponsors of terror, failed states also help spread international terrorism. Countries such as Sierra Leone and Somalia are among the most noted sources of such conflict which encourages "citizens [to] transfer their allegiances to communal warlords. Domestic anarchy sets in. The rise of terrorist groups becomes more likely." In a study by James Piazza, in which 197 countries from 1973 to 2003 were analyzed, he finds empirical evidence that states undergoing "chronic" failures are

164 Lia and Skjolberg, Why Terrorism Occur, 26-27.
statistically more likely to become victims of terrorists groups themselves and to become hosts of these same groups. Piazza also explains that since failed states lack proper policing and effective government oversight, they more easily operate as safe havens for terrorist groups "to organize, train, generate revenue, and set up logistics." These areas also provide terrorist groups physical territory on which to build institutions and establish de facto businesses for steady revenue.

**Linkages between Terrorism and Religious Extremism**

The linkage between terror and religion is rooted in history and can be found in many faiths. David Rapoport, for example, cites several historical examples of religious terrorism across three religions—Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism. The Thugs, Assassins, and Zealots-Sicarii belonged to each of these religions respectively, and although somewhat obscure to the general public today, they still reveal how no single religion monopolizes the use of violence. Rapoport's study also demonstrates that in cases of Islamic and even Jewish terrorism, perpetrators seek a "human audience" through which to inspire social change. There are also Christian groups that advocate modern-day

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170 Ibid., 471.
174 Rapoport, "Fear and Trembling," 673.
terrorism in the name of fundamentalism such as the "World Church of the Creator" in the United States and the "Exclusive Brethren" church in Australia and New Zealand.\textsuperscript{175}

However, despite the broad confessional spectrum of religious terrorism, terrorist groups by end of the twentieth century were most notably "Muslim and Arabic."\textsuperscript{176} Under the caveat that "most Muslims are not fundamentalists" and that "most fundamentalists are not terrorists," Bernard Lewis also writes that there are several forms of "Islamic extremism" including Al-Qaida, the "fundamentalism of the Saudi establishment," and the "institutionalized revolution of the Iranian hierarchy."\textsuperscript{177} Yet these strands of religious extremism have a common relationship: ". . . the emergence of revivalist movements promoting a return to fundamentalist Islam. . . ."\textsuperscript{178} This revivalism takes various forms, but is essentially a return to the "purest form" of Islam and Islamic values in response to Western and secular society.\textsuperscript{179}

This reactionary phenomenon took the form of Wahhabism in the Arabian Peninsula and then manifested itself in the extremes of Pakistan's independence movement against the Hindu majority in India.\textsuperscript{180} In Egypt, revivalism took the form of so-called "Salafism" that focused on the "purification of Islam" and claimed that it "had a

\textsuperscript{176} Laqueur, \textit{No End to War} (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc, 2003), 30.
\textsuperscript{178} Laqueur, \textit{No End to War}, 30.
\textsuperscript{180} Laqueur, \textit{No End to War}, 30; For revivalism in Saudi Arabia, see, "Islamic Modernism and Islamic Revival."
monopoly as far as truth was concerned.\textsuperscript{181} However, by modern times, Islamic fundamentalism was unique in the sense that it saw itself as the only allowable form of Islam and that all other variants were impermissible. According to this interpretation, Sharia, or Islamic religious law should govern society and violence could best achieve this vision.\textsuperscript{182}

\textbf{Jihadism}

These developments in the Islamic world have taken place under the rubric of Jihadism, an ideology that is "perhaps the most comprehensive, anti-modern, and anti-liberal of any in the world after the demise of communism."\textsuperscript{183} For those who commit violent acts of terror, it is the belief that there is a permanent revolution against all those who try to deny the sovereignty of God in society.\textsuperscript{184}

According to Fahrad Khosrokhvar, Professor at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris, modern jihadist thought comes largely from five historical sources. The first pillar of this Islamic revival movement originates from the time of early Islam when, "a group of radical, puritanical Muslims, the Kharijites" declared war on other Muslims by the assassination the last caliph, Ali in 661.\textsuperscript{185} The second pillar is the emergence of Wahhabism on the Arabian Peninsula that eventually helped form the modern state of Saudi Arabia through an "alliance between the Wahhabi religious movement and the House of Saud."\textsuperscript{186} The third and fourth pillars originate from movements in the late nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century. Most

\textsuperscript{181} Laqueur, \textit{No End to War}, 30.
\textsuperscript{182} Ibid., 31.
\textsuperscript{185} Khosrokhvar, \textit{Inside Jihadism}, 18.
\textsuperscript{186} Ibid., 19-20.
notably, leaders like Seyed Qutb and the Ayatollah Khomeini were prominent figures who modernized and politicized Jihadism. Finally, the fifth pillar consists of the new generation of authoritative Jihadi figures, such as Abu Mohammad Maqdisi whose writing's carry significant influence among radical Islamists and Abu Mus'ab al Suri who promotes the empowerment of new Jihadi organizations that are decentralized and leaderless. 187

A central figure in the contemporary development of religion in Jihadi terrorism and in the ideology of Al Qaeda is Seyed Qutb, an Egyptian who became an Islamic leader in the mid-twentieth century and was one of the main figures of the Muslim Brotherhood. 188 As a religious leader, he taught that "Islam was the only true religion; that all other religions and civilizations were barbarian, evil, and animal-like . . . . The West was the enemy par excellence of the Muslims." 189 Islam had to be observed in its totality lest one's way of life be a "travesty of God's justice." 190 Qutb also argued that the "most basic divisions within humanity were religious rather than racial or nationalist," and that religiously-based conflict was morally justified based on "Islamic values and Muslim law." 191 Specifically, his most important literary work, Milestones consisted of a thirty-volume interpretation of the Koran and was a primary example of this thinking. In Milestones, he wrote that "all existing Islamic states and their rulers were not true

187 Ibid., 20.
Muslims, but pagans against whom relentless war should be waged up to their destruction."  

According to Walter Laqueur, the life of Khaled al Berry offers another representative example of the persuasiveness of religious violence and the "ideological void" that radical Islam can fill.\textsuperscript{193} Al Berry was converted as a boy to Islam by an Islamic cleric, a sheik who gradually convinced him that television and music were inappropriate for a true adherent of Islam. Al Berry reportedly took religion very seriously in his militancy, often discussed jihad, memorized the Koran, and spent much time in prayer.\textsuperscript{194}  

When discussing his religious education, he wrote:

\begin{quote}
We were asked to think of other aspects which require you to sacrifice more, like changing regimes which didn’t apply the word of God. We learnt that we couldn’t do this except by using violence because God doesn’t change our lives and we are tools of God. It was like all revolutionary thinking: you sacrifice yourself for change for the better and for all those poor and unprivileged people.
\end{quote}

His spiritual mentor, the Sheikh also convinced him that all people who did not accept their version of Islam were not equal and that the Koran outlines the ideal vision for the world.\textsuperscript{196}

\textbf{Wahhabism}

As a religion, Wahhabism has been historically practiced as a fundamentalist form of Islam in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Yemen, and the United Arab Emirates while

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{192}]Laqueur, \textit{No End to War}, 33.
\item[\textsuperscript{193}]Ibid., 42.
\item[\textsuperscript{196}]Laqueur, \textit{No End to War}, 42.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
being marginally observed in Bahrain and Oman.\textsuperscript{197} Within this context, it is typically a purely Arabian form of Islam that is "founded on a purist, literal interpretation of the Koran and a limited number of verifiable passages (hadiths) from the Sunna, a sacred compilation of the Prophet’s words and deeds."\textsuperscript{198} It was originally created by “Abdul Wahab [sic]” in the eighteenth century to purify the Islamic faith from Sufism.\textsuperscript{199} From a strictly religious perspective, it belongs to the Hanbali School of Islamic theology and jurisprudence that derives from the eighteenth century teachings of Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab. Most notably, its teachings contrast with other strands of Islam because of its so-called puritanical emphasis on the unity of Islam, legal application of Sharia, and complete rejection of the other schools of Islamic jurisprudence including Hanafism, Malikism, and Shafi'iism.\textsuperscript{200}

John Esposito similarly describes Wahhabism as “very much a puritanical, fundamentalist form of religion” that adheres to an “exclusivist world view” and suggests only one correct interpretation of faith.\textsuperscript{201} In his interview with Joanne Myers at the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, Esposito further explains that Wahhabism played a role in the education of Osama bin Laden and has a tendency to “trip into violence.” He clarifies that since Wahhabism is based on a “mission to spread the faith” in the context of the “believer and the unbeliever” conflict can sometimes

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emerge.\textsuperscript{202} Wahhabism is also financially supported by Saudi Arabia, which uses its oil wealth to “promote it, to build mosques, to pay the salaries of preachers to go all over the world, whether it is the United States for other countries.”\textsuperscript{203} However, many Gulf states have chosen to avoid monitoring individuals who promote extremist causes within their borders. In the cases of Arab governments in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the UAE, officials have not necessarily given funding to radical groups, but rather they have not properly audited the uses of this money through a lack of oversight.\textsuperscript{204}

Wahhabism emphasizes a singular definition of the Tawhid or the notion that there is only one and indivisible God. This understanding is divided into three tenets: first, God is the sole creator of the world; second, no one may apply the name of God or any of its forms to people or objects; and third, one may only worship God alone. In addition to these tenets, Wahhabism prohibits "bid'a" or new worship practices such as local religious costumes.\textsuperscript{205} These religious principles have in-turn led to proscriptions against ten separate activities. According to these prohibitions, faithful Muslims may only worship God himself which leads adherents to avoid invoking spiritual intermediates, such as saints in their prayers.\textsuperscript{206} They must also believe that all non-Muslims are disbelievers and must live according to divine law rather than non-Islamic.

\textsuperscript{202} Ibid.\par
\textsuperscript{203} Ibid.\par
\textsuperscript{204} Ibid. For a statement about financial funding, see also, Brian Glyn Williams, “Allah’s Foot Soldiers: An Assessment of the Role of Foreign Fighters and Al-Qa’ida in the Chechen Insurgency,” in Ethno-Nationalism, Islam and the State in the Caucasus: Post-Soviet Disorder, ed. Moshe Gammer (New York: Routledge, 2008), 164.\par
In addition, believers may not mock Islam or the Prophet Mohammed, gives their support to non-believers in any case against fellow Muslims, and stop practicing the faith. Given these beliefs, some experts conclude that Wahhabis advocate for a return to "pure Islam" as practiced in the times of the Prophet Muhammad. This return to authentic Islam is part of a fight against the "pollution" of the Islamic faith by worshipping local religious leaders and deceased persons. Consequently, Wahhabis rarely visit cemeteries and forbid visiting other pilgrimage areas besides Mecca and Medina. They also forbid all rituals and holidays associated with Islamic scholars, teachers, and the Prophet, and some even threaten Shiite and Sufi Muslims who worship differently than Wahhabis.

**Centrifugal Forces in Russia: Ethnic Unrest and Wahhabism**

In addition to the documented connection between religion and terror, this relationship has sometimes been "overshadowed by ethnic- and nationalist-separatist or ideologically motivated terrorism." By the end of the Soviet Union, there was a heightened dissatisfaction with poor economic conditions and a "disgust" with the "political and moral decay" of the government in Moscow which, "spilled over into a generalized anti-Russian sentiment" among ethnic minorities. Yet this tension was not just limited to non-ethnic Russians, but also to those of Russian heritage. According to

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208 Ibid.
210 Gordon M. Hahn, Russia’s Islamic Threat, 26.
the Russia Public Opinion Research Center, in 1993, “approximately one-third of
Russians were convinced that non-Russians living in Russia were to blame for Russia’s
problems,” and the majority of respondents to this poll believed that, “Russians should
have greater rights in Russia than other peoples.” In conjunction with these sentiments,
Russia was experiencing an “ethnic revival” that stretched from Eastern Siberia to the
Caucasus.

Russia faced ethnic tension to varying degrees in several regions across the
country including Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Khakassia and most notably, the Northern
Caucasus (Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia, and North Ossetia). In at least the first
three instances, so-called ethnic revivalism took the form of ethnic privileges for national
groups in terms of: “basic laws, the promotion of ethnic culture and language, expansion
of native-language schooling, promotion of ethnic symbols, and preferences for member
of the titular ethnic group in top administrative positions.” However, the most
prominent centrifugal forces in the form of independence were in Tatarstan,
Bashkortostan, and of course, Chechnya.

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214 Daniel S Treisman, "Russia's “Ethnic Revival: The Separatist Activism of Regional Leaders in a
http://www.jstor.org.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/stable/25053998. For an ethnic break-down of the different
peoples who favored economic and political autonomy, see, Jessica Eve Stern, "Moscow Meltdown: Can
215 Chuvashia was another area that asked for autonomy, but it was not a center of serious unrest. For
information on the areas in the Volga-Ural region see: Dmitry Gorenburg, "Regional Separatism in Russia:
Ethnic Mobilisation or Power Grab?,” Europe-Asia Studies 51, no. 2 (1999): 245-274, doi:
10.1080/09668139999029; and for details on the Northern Caucasus see, Valery Stepanov, "Ethnic
Tensions and Separatism in Russia,” Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 26, no. 2 (2000): 305-332,
doi: 10.1080/13691830050022820.
216 For information on the first four regions, see, Gorenburg, "Regional Separatism in Russia,” 259.
217 For information on Tatarstan and Bashkortostan, see, Gorenburg, "Regional Separatism in Russia,”
251-255. For a quantitative index of separatism on Russia’s regions see: Daniel S Treisman, "Russia's
Chechnya has had the most alarming relationship with the central government in Moscow given a turbulent history of the roots of Chechen discontent stretching from the czarist expansion of the eighteenth century to the current policies of Russian leaders. In 1850, for example, Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy described the Chechen attitude toward the military presence of Russia:

No one spoke of hatred for the Russians…The feeling which all Chechens felt, both young and old, was stronger than hatred. It was...such a revulsion, disgust and bewilderment at the senseless cruelty of these beings, that the desire to destroy them, like a desire to destroy rats, poisonous spiders and wolves, was as natural as the instinct for self-preservation.

Tolstoy’s emotionally vivid, albeit strictly one-sided, depiction of Chechen disgust for their Russian counterparts reflects the deeply entrenched cultural sentiments between ethnic Chechens and Slavic Russians. This disgust has become an apt harbinger of the most potent separatist conflict faced by Russia after the fall of the Soviet Union. After decades of abuse by the Russian state, including periodic deportation and ethnic cleansing, the leader of Chechnya, Dzhokhar Dudaev declared an independent Chechen state on November 1, 1991, which was followed by a “military-police takeover” six days later by Moscow. As a measure of Chechnya’s resolve, Dudaev, the leader of the erstwhile rebellion stated:

My plan foresaw the creation of a union of Caucasus countries directed against Russian imperialism, signifying a united Caucasus. Our chief goal was the achievement of independence and liberation, acting together with the Caucasus republics which have been oppressed by Russia over the course of 300 years.

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After that, we proposed together to exploit the rich natural resources and oil of the Caucasus and transport it across Turkey to world markets.\textsuperscript{221}

According to this statement, Russia’s conflict over Chechnya was indeed a struggle to retain the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation. Dudaev was determined to create an independent country that was economically based on its own hydrocarbon resources and to sell his nation’s oil to whomever would purchase it. In 1994, three years after the declaration of an independent Chechnya, Russia officially began its first war in the region by sending tanks and mounted infantry into Grozny.\textsuperscript{222} The first campaign in the area lasted until 1996 when Russian forces signed a ceasefire under the Khasavyrt Accords shortly after a Russian missile attack killed Dudaev.\textsuperscript{223}

Unsatisfied by continuing unrest in the war-ravaged republic, Russia re-invaded Chechnya in 1999, shortly after the new Chechen leader, Aslan Maskhadov declared the formal introduction of Sharia law.\textsuperscript{224} However, a new element had emerged by the second campaign to subjugate the region—radical Islam. As Matthew Evangelista writes, “the influence of radical Islamic movements, such as Wahhabism, increased in the wake of the war . . . . Indeed, the precipitating cause of the second war was an August 1999 invasion of Dagestan by Chechen and Dagestani fighters, marching under the banner of Islam and unconstrained by the central government in Grozny.”\textsuperscript{225} The second Chechen war has by many accounts not reached a clear conclusion; yet by 2009, Moscow declared an end to

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\item \textsuperscript{221} Y.V. Nikolaev, ed. Chechenskaya Tragediya: Kto Vinovat (Moscow: Novosti, 1995), 59; Translated in: John B. Dunlop, Russia Confronts Chechnya: Roots of a Separatist Conflict (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1998), 140.
\item \textsuperscript{222} Chechnya Profile," and Olga Oliker, Russia's Chechen Wars 1994-2000: Lessons from Urban Combat (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2001), 5.
\item \textsuperscript{223} "Chechnya Profile," December 9, 2014.
\item \textsuperscript{224} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
major military operations in the area. Although the causes of Chechen separatism remain debated, the Russian government believes that "Muslim extremists are the essence, not a part, of the problem." Although Wahhabism remains a religion mainly practiced in the Persian Gulf, it has also now spread among Muslim communities in Russia and Central Asia. According to the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs:

Wahhabi radicalism and extremism engendered irreconcilable religious differences between Muslims of the North Caucasus and Russia, which will remain for a long time. Politicized Islam, including its Wahhabi species - a fait accompli and the North Caucasus and Russia as a whole.

This recent comment by the Ministry reflects Russia's ongoing struggle with radical Islam that started with the collapse of the Soviet Union. During the 1990's, Islamic groups that supported Chechen separatists in Russia were coming into increasing contact with Saudi Arabia and international organizations associated with the Saudi State. By 1998, insurrectionists in Dagestan included a number of individuals who looked toward the Saudi model of Islam in support of Wahhabi and Hanbali traditions. These traditions often contradicted the local practice of Islam in the form of Sufism, a form of Islam indigenous to Russia and other areas. Sufis venerate saints, whom Wahhabis view as "intercessors between believers and Allah," and their veneration as a violation of their

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227 Menon and Fuller, "Russia's Ruinous Chechen War," 38. Sergey Markedonov suggests that, as part of Russia separatist problem, ethnonationalism and religious rhetoric combined in the Northern Caucasus due to a long history of religious suppression and ethnic cultivation. See, Sergey Markedonov, Radical Islam in the North Caucasus (Washington D.C.: CSIS, 2010), 3.
228 S.A. Starostina, Islam v Ideologii i Praktike Terrorizma, (Kaliningrad: Kaliningradskii Iuridicheskii Institut MVD, 2009), 69.
230 Ibid.
understanding of monotheism.231 Traditional Sufi practices, such as the reading of the Koran at cemeteries and the use of amulets and talismans for prayer are another distinguishing feature between Wahhabi practices and native Islamic rituals.232 The Islamic fundamentalists supported the Chechen national movement and saw the struggle for Chechen independence as the beginning of an Islamic state.233 They also viewed *jihad* as a way of fighting the “regime” which, “allegedly resisted the effective ad-da’wa al Islamiyya (re-Islamisization) of Dagestan.”234

There is also evidence that Wahhabist centers, such as International Islamic Support helped finance activities for fundamentalist education in Russia with the support of the Saudi royal family. Another organization called the Caucasian Center of the Islamic Mission near the Chechen village of Serzhan-Yurt, trained hundreds of Chechens and members from other areas of the Northern-Caucasus in the Wahhabi doctrine and terrorist tactics.235 In addition, “funding from Qatar, Kuwait, Jordan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia” supported the radical Sheikh Muhammad Fathi, a combatant from Afghanistan who constructed boarding schools for “war orphans” and attracted unemployed Chechens to the “Wahhabi-Salafite faith and radical *jihadi* cause.”236 These developments undoubtedly reverberated in the warning given by President Putin in 2000: “If extremist forces manage to get a hold in the Caucasus, this infection may spread up the Volga

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236 Williams, “Allah’s foot soldiers,” in *Ethno-Nationalism, Islam and the State*, 164.
River, spread to other republics, and we either face the full Islamization of Russia, or we will have to agree to Russia’s division into several independent states.”^237

One potentially key avenue for transmitting Wahhabism into Russia is Central Asia. In reference to a shocking attack on two of Kazan's most prominent Islamic clerics, Alexei Malashenko suggests that members of Hizb al-Tahrir, a designated terrorist group by the U.S. Department of State, come from Uzbekistan to spread fundamentalist ideology in Russia.^238 On a broader level, the radicalization of Central Asia began with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the influx of Qur'an's and other religious material from Saudi Arabia into the region.^239 Bayram Balci, a scholar of Central Asia and the Caucasus implies that this influx of religious material was at least partially responsible for reviving the religiosity of secularized Muslims after communism. In the wake of this revival, Central Asian officials reportedly were “deeply concerned about a perceived threat from militant Islamic movements” after the events of September 11, 2001.^240 However, even before September 11th, there were signs that “militant Islamism” was expanding throughout the region.^241 During the summers of 1999 and 2000, members of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), a violent terrorist organization mounted an incursion into Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan from their bases in Tajikistan and

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Afghanistan. In both attacks, which were allegedly attempts to establish the beginnings of an Islamic state, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan needed to mobilize air assets to repel the raiders.

Saudi Arabia also engaged in closer relations with Uzbekistan in 1992 when Islam Karimov made the hajj and visited the Ka'ba, the holiest site in Islam. Karimov's visit to the Ka'ba was considered a special privilege which "carried a clear message: Saudi Arabia expects the Uzbek leader to encourage and facilitate the revival of the Islamic faith in Central Asia" for fifty million Muslims. However, Uzbekistan stopped issuing visas for missionaries from Saudi Arabia after 1994-1995, as a likely sign that Wahhabism was beginning to threaten the state. Yet Uzbeks had still been able to travel to Saudi Arabia as religious students along with like-mined Tajiks and Daghestanis from other parts of the former Soviet Union. When these young men returned home from institutions, such as the Islamic University of Medina they spread Saudi Arabia’s puritanical understanding of Islam within their local communities.

Relevance of Terrorism in the SCO

Scholars have often cited terrorism as a threat to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and one of the main issues addressed by the organization in general.

242 Ibid.  
243 Jim Nichol, *Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2009), 10. Another report notes that these attacks were motivated by establishing drug routes in Central Asia. However, it should be noted that the explanation based on the drug trade is not exclusive of establishing the start of an Islamic state. See, Baran Zeyno, S. Frederick Starr, and Svante E. Cornell, *Islamic Radicalism in Central Asia and the Caucasus: Implications for the EU*, Silk Road Paper, Silk Road Studies Program, (Washington, DC: Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, July 2006), 47.  
244 Balci, Uzbek and Uighur Communities, ¶ 248.  
246 For examples see: Guangcheng Xing, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization in the Fight Against Terrorism, Extremism and Separatism," *Central Asia and the Caucasus* 4, no. 16 (2002), http://www.ca-
Although Russia has had its own challenges in the Northern Caucasus, it is also interested in combating terrorism in Central Asia and maintains a military base in Tajikistan, which ostensibly provides regional security through the positioning of the 201st Motorized Division. Within this context, the SCO maintains an emphasis on the "joint fight on terrorism, religious extremism, and separatism" that was defined by the SCO's Convention in 2001. Under this agreement, Russia, China, and their Central Asian partners have defined terrorism as an “act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or any other person not taking an active part in the hostilities in a situation of armed conflict.” Terrorism also includes an act that by its nature is designed to intimidate a population or influence the behavior of a public or international organization. The convention defines separatism as “any act intended to violate territorial integrity of a State including by annexation of any part of its territory or to disintegrate a State.” Extremism is defined as an act, “aimed at seizing or keeping power through the use of violence or changing violently the constitutional regime of a

248 Ibid., 159-160.
250 Ibid.
251 Ibid.
State, as well as a violent encroachment upon public security." In accordance with this convention, the SCO created the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure that is a manifestation of the organization’s regional security objectives. The RATS complements the SCO’s security objectives and is tasked with developing proposals on how to coordinate cooperation among the member states as well as how to fine tune the responsiveness of other SCO bodies in meeting the challenges of the SCO convention’s three evils of separatism, extremism, and terrorism. Consequently, the RATS assists national authorities in policing security affairs as well as collecting and analyzing information pertinent to matter involving terrorism, separatism, and extremism. With regard to the RATS, one SCO expert suggests that:

with instability in Uzbekistan, the possible resurrection of the IMU, as well as a deteriorating relationship with the U.S., SCO and RATS is seeking to replace the U.S. and show preparedness in case it faces a similar situation as for example the Beslan raid, not least due to the high risk nature of the INP. Third, RATS is increasingly showing that it is the pragmatic arm of SCO. In divergence from the power-politics involved in exercises such as Peace Mission 2005 this summer, RATS seems to engage in exercises that could prove valuable for anti-terrorism in the future.

Given its Regional Anti-terrorist Structure based in Tashkent, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is well suited to monitor and share information about these threats. The Russian government even agrees on RATS definition of terrorism. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, for example, cites verbatim the June 15, 2001 Shanghai Convention definition of the SCO’s "three evils" of terrorism, separatism, and

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252 Ibid.
255 Ibid.
extremism. A common definition of terrorism helps Russia use the RATS for blacklisting suspected terrorists and as a regional clearing house for intelligence gathering. The RATS is tasked with maintaining a joint database on international terrorist organizations and their members, and in 2009, the SCO considered upgrading this database with information about illegal arms, ammunition, and explosives. In the same year, members approved the SCO Anti-Terror Convention which allowed security officials from member-states to use their own national procedures to pursue transnational threats. The Convention also provides grounds for the expedited exchange of terrorist suspects between security agencies by avoiding extradition procedures and international legal commitments. As a further indication of the institutionalization of the RATS, all officials within this structure are protected by "diplomatic-style" immunity. Based on this argument, the third hypothesis states that Russia cooperates with China in the SCO to reduce the threat of insurrection due to Wahhabism.

Methodology

Under the auspices of IREX's Individual Advanced Research Opportunities Program (IARO), I conducted field research in Russia from January 2014 to July 2014 during which I analyzed archival documents from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and completed semi-structured interviews with academics, journalists, and policy experts. I conducted two-thirds of my fifty interviews in Moscow and Kazan and

257 Starostina, Islam v Ideologii i Praktike Terrorizma, 8.
260 Cooley, Great Games, 103.
261 Ibid.
completed the remaining interviews in China. While in China, I spoke with SCO specialists in Shanghai and Beijing for a total of four weeks.

**Interviews**

During my field work in Moscow, I interviewed people at the following institutions: the Federation Council, the Institute for World Economics and International Relations (Russian Academy of Sciences), the Institute of Far Eastern Studies (Russian Academy of Sciences), The Moscow Times; the Higher School of Economics, the Institute of CIS Countries, the Russian Institute for Strategic Studies, the Moscow Carnegie Center, the Moscow State Institute for International Relations, the Center for Strategic Conjecture, and the Central Asian Analytic Group. In China, I spoke with researchers at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the China Institute of International Studies, which is affiliated with the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Shanghai Institutes of International Studies, Shanghai University, and Tongji University.

These institutions provided me with access to researchers and staff, who were able to comment on Russia's relationship with China within the specific context of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. They also offered contact with people who studied Russia's approach to counterterrorism, economic objectives, and geopolitical motivations and who could evaluate their roles in the SCO. However, accessibility to personnel was the primary issue during my field research due to the reluctance to share information and a complex political climate between the United States and Russia over events in Ukraine. As I was often limited by the willingness of people to conduct an interview, I visited locations that would welcome visitors.
The average interview lasted one hour, during which I started with several general questions about the reasons for Russian cooperation with China in the SCO. I asked, for example, "From your perspective, what are Russia's goals in the SCO?" and "Are these external or internal goals?" In order to test each hypothesis, I continued with questions about the core tenets of each hypothesis such as balance of power principles, the sales of hydrocarbon resources, and the activity of Islamic terrorist groups. When posing questions about the SCO as a counterbalancing organization, for example, I asked about the reasons for the SCO's denial of the United's States' petition for observer status in the organization as well as how Russia defines its strategic interest in Central Asia. I also inquired about whether Russia had any trade or infrastructure projects in the SCO for transporting goods and commodities, such as oil and gas. As a way of investigating the role of Wahhabism in Russian-Chinese cooperation, I asked questions about the involvement of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states in Russia and China. I asked, for example, if Saudi Arabia or any other Middle Eastern countries were involved with sponsoring religious education, NGO's, or other activities in the Northern Caucasus, Tatarstan, or Xinjiang. Additional questions probed the extent to which Russia and China exchange information in the Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure of the SCO as a possible response to Gulf-funded terrorism—see Appendix A for a full list of questions.

I also conducted a card sort to measure quantitatively each respondent's opinion of the hypotheses under the rubric of Q methodology, a method that measures a person's agreement or disagreement on an issue. Twenty of the fifty interviewees chose to complete the card sort. This group of twenty people is collectively known as the P-set.  

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This method is ideal for a relatively small sample of people. See, Dan Thomas, and Bruce McKeown. *Q Methodology*, (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications 1990), 45.
I asked each expert within the P-set to examine the twenty-five cards with phrases that completed the prompt: "Russia cooperates with China in the SCO in order to . . ." Each phrase pertained to one of the three explanations for Russia's interest in the SCO. One phrase read, for example, "sell oil or natural gas," whereas other statements read: "counter American influences" and "confront transnational threats from Islamic groups." See Appendix B for the full list of statements.

The phrases were then sorted into piles by the interviewees based on their relative importance. This collection of cards, known as the "Q-sample," was created according to a partly "deductive design" because it uses the "theoretical considerations" of the literature related to the hypotheses. This approach is also known as an "unstructured sample" that combines ideas from published sources and other statements presumed to be relevant to each argument. Respondents therefore prioritized the importance of profit maximization, hydrocarbon resources, counterbalancing American power, military exercises, and counterterrorism with regard to Russia's relationship with China in the SCO.

Once the interviewees read all the phrases, they ordered the cards on a chart in the form of a pyramid. Statements of less importance were placed on the left, and statements of greater importance were placed on the right. These statements aligned with numbered columns on the chart with "-4" as least important and "+4" as most important. The column in the middle was reserved for neutral statements. Respondents were asked to place a maximum of two cards on either end of the chart with an increasing number of cards in each column toward the center. Participants were asked to place a decreasing

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263 Ibid., 25, 28-29.
264 Ibid, 28.
number of statements toward the ends in order to prioritize the reasons for cooperation. Respondents had to think carefully about the most important statements and to assign the highest value only to the most salient cards.

In order to conduct a secondary test of my primary argument, I completed separate interviews over a two-week period in Tatarstan with faculty at Kazan Federal University, Kazan State Technological University, the Russian Islamic University, the Center of Islamic Culture, and the Council of Ulema of the Russian Association of Islamic Agreement. These institutions provided academics and religious leaders with whom I was able to discuss the recent history of Islamic revivalism in Russia, within Kazan, and, more generally, Tatarstan. It was important to capture how Islam is practiced within this context in order to characterize more precisely the sources, the extent, and possibly the systemic danger of Islamic radicalism in Russia. Access was again an issue and determined my ability to visit certain locations. Yet, based on their religious training or educational background, the researchers in these places were qualified to speak about Islam in Russia and radical tendencies, if any, within Tatarstan’s Muslim community.

I chose Kazan specifically because it is the capital of Tatarstan and serves as an economic and societal hub for about 30 percent of the area's population. It also hosts many researchers and religious officials who study the local practice of Islam. As a "crucial case," it tests, in principle, whether a proposition holds true in the most unlikely of circumstances."265 In this case, by identifying radicalism in an area that is a peaceful social model for Orthodox-Muslim relations, I was able to explore whether Wahhabism is a systemic challenge for Russia. Furthermore, based on the proposition that wealth

reduces conflict, if a portion of the inhabitants of Tatarstan, one of Russia's wealthiest regions, share militant views, then Wahhabism is probably present in less developed areas. It also provides a strong basis for an auxiliary test of the internal security argument because the area's relative tranquility. To investigate these subjects, I asked questions about how Islam is practiced among Tatars in comparison to the countries in the Persian Gulf and about the reported activity by so-called Wahhabis in violent attacks on moderate Islamic leaders in Tatarstan. For a full list of questions, see Appendix C.

**Archives**

As part of my hypothesis testing, I collected transcripts of diplomatic meetings, governmental reports, annotated summaries of academic articles, and policy commentaries on Sino-Russian relations from the Archive of the Russian Foreign Ministry as well as literature on Wahhabism from the scientific library at Moscow State University. I also accessed the following archives in Moscow: the Central Archive of the FSB, the State Archive of the Russian Federation, the Operational Archive of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Services, the Archive of the President of Russia, and, the State Archive of Russian Political and Social History. However, nearly all my archival information was obtained from the Russian Foreign Ministry.

**Data Analysis**

The information was coded into several categories. First, the coding process involved categorizing questions and responses by whether they were supportive or contradictory with regard to the arguments of each hypothesis. Data that clearly identified characteristics of the hypothesis in the context of the SCO were labeled "confirmatory." This category includes information that directly emphasized a part of the hypothesis,
pertinent regional issues, or referenced an aspect of the argument in which the hypothesis is embedded. Finally, information that negated the hypothesis either directly or indirectly was considered "contradictory."

In order to obtain additional insight from the Q data, I created a series of charts using the number of times each q-value, ranging from -4 to +4 was assigned to statements characterizing a specific hypothesis. Afterwards, I aggregated the results that dealt specifically with each hypothesis to assess more clearly the comparative importance of each argument.
Chapter 3: Russia, China, and the Development of the SCO within Central Asian Regionalism

Introduction

This chapter will describe how the Shanghai Cooperation Organization developed to respond to the needs of its two largest and most pivotal states, Russia and China within the context of Central Asian regionalism. Toward this objective, the SCO is comparable to other institutions that guard national decision-making due to Moscow and Beijing's shared perspective on non-interference and respect for each other's internal affairs.

The chapter first explains the geopolitical importance of Central Asia through highlighting the perspective of Halford Mackinder and Zbigniew Brzezinski. The second section demonstrates how the history of Russian and Chinese interests reflects the significance of the region and the main concerns of both governments. Through the examples of ASEAN, NAFTA, and the EU, the third and fourth sections outline the theoretical models of regionalism and how the traditional or Westphalian notion of sovereignty best applies to integration in Central Asia. The fourth section also describes the primary issue areas among Central Asian states with a subsection on the roles of Russia and China. The final part of the chapter begins with the early development of the SCO and how the institutional design of the organization ultimately reflects Central Asia's tendency toward the guarded sovereignty model of regionalism. The section concludes by examining the SCO through three commonly discussed subjects in the region—security, trade, and energy.

Geostrategic Importance of Central Asia

As subject UU, a Russian researcher based in Uzbekistan explained, "Central Asia is a meaningful area of Eurasia. It is a zone of common interest for Russia and China."
Therefore, the internal situation in Eurasia cannot be regulated just bilaterally.\textsuperscript{1} Russia and China need regional partners to help control such a large area of space, namely cooperation with the founding members of the SCO—Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan.\textsuperscript{2} Moreover, from Moscow’s viewpoint, regional security is closely tied to geopolitics because of America’s military presence in Central Asia, an area where currently “the major world powers—including the United States, China, and Russia—are especially manifest.”\textsuperscript{3} Halford Mackinder and Zbigniew Brzezinski aptly describe this manifestation in two seminal works: *Democratic Ideals and Reality: A Study in the Politics of Reconstruction* and *The Grand Chess Board*.

Mackinder’s work lays the foundation for how states can interpret the importance of ground forces and the strategic importance of geography. Victory in geopolitics revolves around controlling the so-called “Heartland” or “Pivot Area” of Eurasia that is only accessible over land.\textsuperscript{4} It comprises nearly all of Russia, the entirety of Central Asia, parts of Eastern Europe, and the lands extending to the Arabian Peninsula and India. Specifically, he writes:

The Heartland, for the purposes of strategical thinking, includes the Baltic Sea, the navigable Middle and Lower Danube, the Black Sea, Asia Minor, Armenia, Persia, Tibet, and Mongolia. Within it, therefore, were Brandenburg-Prussia and Austria-Hungary, as well as Russia a vast triple base of man-power.\textsuperscript{5}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1} Subject UU, email communication to Michael Zboray, March 11, 2014.
\item \textsuperscript{4} Halldor J. Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality: A Study in the Politics of Reconstruction* (Washington, DC: National Defense University, c1942), 78
\item \textsuperscript{5} Ibid. Mackinder even describes the interior of Africa south of Sahara as a second heartland that, by definition, is unnavigable from the ocean, *Democratic Ideals*, 58.
\end{itemize}
A country controlling such an area can utilize the human and natural resources to potentially draw enough power to conquer other regions of the world. This possibility is based on two facets: first, the ability of land-based resources to support sea power; and second, the geographic characteristics of Eurasia that make it an insulated land mass due to the world’s oceans.\(^6\) Since sea power would not be able to attack such a production base, the Heartland’s insularity would provide war-making capabilities for the controlling country with extra protection. Mackinder therefore names Eurasia the “World-Island” from which a country may safely amass its resources to conquer all other continents. To further demonstrate the great potential of Eurasia and its most geostrategic region, Mackinder describes the immense industrial and agricultural opportunity that this pivot area provides. He writes:

The vast potentialities of the Heartland....[where] industries are growing rapidly in such localities as the southern Urals, in the very pivot of the pivot area, and in the rich Kuznetsk coal basin in the lee of the great natural barriers east of the upper Yenisei River. In 1938 Russia produced more of the following foodstuffs than any other country in the world: wheat, barley, oats, rye and sugar beets...It was bracketed with the United States in the first place as regards iron, and it stood second place in production of petroleum. As for coal, Mikhaylov makes the statement that the resources of the Kuznetsk and Krasnoyarsk coal basins are each estimated to be capable of supplying the requirements of the whole world for 300 years.\(^7\)

Combined with its agricultural and energy-rich qualities, the strategic depth of the Heartland provided by the plains of Eastern Europe along with mountains, frozen tundra, desert, and other geographical barriers, creates the ideal bastion for an aspiring power.

\(^6\) Ibid., 95-99. Mackinder uses the Heartland theory to explain the limits of British power via its navy against the geographically fortified positions of the Russian Empire occupying much of Central Eurasia. Britain would never have been able to extend its Eurasian conquests unless Russia withdrew from the Heartland.

\(^7\) Ibid., 200-201.
Once a country controls Eastern Europe and the remainder of the adjoining pivot area, the entire landmass of Eurasia would be under its control. Thus, Mackinder famously wrote:

Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland:
Who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island:
Who rules the World-Island commands the World.\(^8\)

Similarly, Zbigniew Brzezinski’s *The Grand Chessboard* uses Mackinder’s dictum as a reference point for contemporary politics.\(^9\) Both Brzezinski and Mackinder agree in principle that the Eurasian continent is a key area from which a state may project its power. However, with a focus on the United States, Brzezinski brings Mackinder’s logic into the twenty-first century by discussing the contemporary geopolitical pressures that the term, World-Island generates. For example, he writes:

Eurasia is the globe's largest continent and is geopolitically axial. A power that dominates Eurasia would control two of the world's three most advanced and economically productive regions. A mere glance at the map also suggests that control over Eurasia would almost automatically entail Africa's subordination, rendering the Western Hemisphere and Oceania geopolitically peripheral to the world's central continent.\(^10\)

Based on this analysis, Brzezinski writes that for America, the “chief geopolitical prize is Eurasia” and that for centuries political relations were controlled by “Eurasian powers” that fought over territorial conquest. As history’s great powers have already experienced, America’s future as a world leader hinges directly “on how long and how effectively its preponderance on the Eurasian continent is sustained.”\(^11\) Yet unlike Mackinder, Brzezinski identifies five geopolitical pivots in comparison to the uniquely positioned Heartland of the "World-Island." He believes that these pivots include France, Germany, Russia, China, and India. In his opinion, these powers maintain the most

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\(^8\) Ibid., 106.
\(^10\) Ibid, 31.
\(^11\) Ibid., 30.
important relationships for Eurasian politics because of their capacity "to exercise power or influence beyond their borders" and thereby, to affect American interests.\textsuperscript{12} Russia is still important because it continues to harbor “ambitious geopolitical objectives” that might be realized when it regains its momentum. Needless to say, China is a major regional actor in Asia that strategically engages the United States over Taiwan and Russia with regard to Central Asia.\textsuperscript{13}

In this context, Brzezinski also asserts that an "anti-hegemonic" coalition between Russia and China would be the "most dangerous scenario" for America.\textsuperscript{14} Since such an alliance would be united by complimentary grievances, “it would be reminiscent in scale and scope of the challenge once posed by the Sino-Soviet bloc; [although] this time, China would likely be the leader and Russia the follower.”\textsuperscript{15} In order to avoid such an event, the United States would have to adeptly manage its positions “on the western, eastern, and southern perimeters of Eurasia simultaneously.”\textsuperscript{16} America’s most central interest is to, “help ensure that no single power comes to control this geopolitical space and that the global community has unhindered financial and economic access to it.”\textsuperscript{17}

This analysis resonates with Alexander Dugin, a former professor at Moscow State University who was described by \textit{Foreign Affairs} as "Putin's brain" for the Russian

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., 40-41. France and Germany are the most important western pivots because they both would like a united Europe and are at the forefront of such a development. They can also exert regional power that, when taken together, extends from North Africa to Russia.

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., 44-45. Germany, Russia, France, China are also identified as historical powers in Eurasia by realists, see: Jack S. Levy, and William R. Thompson, "Balancing on Land and at Sea: Do States Ally against the Leading Global Power?,” \textit{International Security} 35, no. 1 (2010): 7-43, doi:10.1162/ISEC_a_00001.

\textsuperscript{14}Zbigniew Brzezinski, \textit{The Grand Chessboard}, 55-56.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 55.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.,148.
president’s embrace of Dugin’s Eurasianism and anti-Western political philosophy.\textsuperscript{18}

Dugin's Eurasian perspective on world politics promises the reassertion of Russian preeminence by helping reconcile, "the often contradictory philosophies of communism, religious orthodoxy, and nationalist fundamentalism."\textsuperscript{19} In 1997, Dugin described Mackinder's heartland theory as the basis of geopolitics by writing:

The first and most striking entry of Mackinder was his report," The Geographical Pivot of History, "published in 1904 in" Geographic Magazine."In it, he outlined his vision of the foundation of history and geography that was developed in subsequent writings. This text of Mackinder can be regarded as a major geopolitical text in the history of the discipline, as it not only summarizes all previous lines of "political geography" but formulated the basic law of the science.\textsuperscript{20}

Gennadii Ziuganov, leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation and one of the country's major geostrategic thinkers also believes in the application of Mackinder's logic. He writes:

Interest in Mackinder's geopolitical concept of the twentieth century faded, then erupted with renewed force. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and judging by the persistent expansion of NATO into Eastern Europe, there was a renaissance of its concept. At least the leadership of the North Atlantic Alliance operates in full compliance with ideas of British geopolitics: to establish control over Eastern Europe to control the Heartland, which means - to dominate the world.\textsuperscript{21}


\textsuperscript{20} Aleksandr Dugin, \textit{Osnovy Geopolitiki - Geopoliticheskoe Budushchee Rossii} (Moscow, Russia: Arktogeya, 1997), 44.

Together, these two major geopolitical thinkers reveal the popular thought of the upper echelons in Russian society. They demonstrate Russia’s proclivity toward regional thinking and the relationship between Russia’s geographic surroundings and its security.

**Historical Interests of Russia and China in Central Asia**

**Promotion of a Multipolar World**

Since the end of the Cold War, Russia and China have discussed their relations in multiple contexts that cover geopolitics, trade, and Islamic fundamentalism in their near abroad. These discussions have been reflected in the broader context of regionalization in Central Asia and in the eventual development of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Following the geopolitical logic outlined in the previous section, Russia has believed in the possibility of strategic cooperation with China since the end of the Cold War. The head of the Institute of Far Eastern Studies, one of Russia's most reputable institutes for Asian studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences sent a letter to the Deputy Minister of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in which he details how Russia viewed itself during the 1990's as a "well-respected" world power despite its poor economic condition. In conjunction with this perception, Russia construed one of the reasons for the cooperation espoused by China to be disagreement over the "U.S. monopoly on the world stage" and alluded to the safeguarding of sovereignty through the promoting "peace on the basis of equality of all countries." 

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22 From a report mailed to Aleksandr Nikolaevich Panov (Zamestitel' Ministra MID RF) from the director of IDV RAN, M.L. Titarenko The report was sent on 27. 12. 1995 and was entitled, *Sotrudnichestvo Rossii i Kitaia po mezhdunarodnym problemam* that was from III-rossiisko-kitaiskoi nauchno-prakticheskoi konferentsii between 4-5 October 1995 in Beijing, Fond 100, Opis 82, Dela 9, Papka 353, Listi, 78, Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVP RF).

23 Ibid.
Within this context, the Russian and Chinese governments emphasized an increased need to respect sovereignty in international affairs as an approach to "form[ing] a new system of international relations based on more equitable guidelines."\(^{24}\) This priority became apparent in a meeting between G.F. Kunadze, Russian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, and his Chinese counterpart, Tian Zengpeii. These two officials emphasized a need for the "principle of respecting sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression and non-interference in the internal affairs of each other."\(^{25}\) Beyond being a common refrain among diplomats, this mantra was institutionalized on June 7, 2002 in Article 2 of the Charter of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.\(^{26}\)

Given that Central Asia is in a position of such importance, Russia and China have been eager to ensure stability in this region. However, such stability first required clear national borders that were not well defined before the official establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on June 15, 2001. Russia, China, and the states of Central Asia thought it was necessary to demarcate their sovereign territory through diplomatic negotiations in order to establish boundaries for trade and national security.

According to one academic dean at the Moscow State University of International Relations, there is always one key requirement for any trade or international transaction with your neighbors—clearly defined borders.\(^{27}\) If Russia, China, and the states of Central Asia wanted to achieve cooperation on economic and political matters in the


\(^{25}\) Ibid.


\(^{27}\) Interview with Subject AA, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, June 19, 2014.
future, they first needed to fully recognize their shared borders.\(^{28}\) (For a map of Central Asia, see Map 1 in Appendix E.)

**Border Demarcation**

After the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia and China exchanged ideas on border demarcation and related topics. For example, A. Parakhin, Deputy Commander of the Border Troops of the Russian Federation at the Russian Ministry of Security sent a letter to G.F. Kunadze, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, in which he describes the steady progress of Russian and Chinese diplomatic efforts to formalize their mutual border with the assistance of several neighboring Central Asian countries. Specifically, he writes that "the resumption of negotiations on border issues has resulted in an agreement to delineate the boundary along the greater portion of the Sino-Russian border. (signed May 16, 1991) The parties have begun demarcating the border."\(^{29}\)

Parakhin adds that the delegations from Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan "will continue to work to resolve border issues at the frontiers of these countries with China. Thus, cooperation in this area continues and it must have positive results."\(^{30}\) In the third part of the letter, he connects the issue of finalizing the border with a favorable expansion of business ties between Russia and China and with the creation of an "atmosphere of genuine good-neighborliness, friendship and mutual understanding."\(^{31}\)

\(^{28}\)Ibid.


\(^{30}\) Ibid.

\(^{31}\) Ibid.
Trade and Investment

In the wake of border negotiations in Central Asia, Russia also wanted to develop and diversify its trade with China. In a memo concerning topics for President Yeltsin to discuss with Li Peng, Premier of the People's Republic of China, Yeltsin was advised to encourage "comprehensive business ties" with China in terms of a long-term development program for Siberia and the Russian Far East. Moreover, in a draft memo of key concepts for one of President Yeltsin's visits to China, his agenda called for "Cooperation with China in the realization of bilateral and multilateral projects of large-scale economic development of Siberia and the Far East through the establishment of joint ventures, joint areas of economic activity, [and] attracting the investment of China."  

According to the memo, this request for increased trade in the form of economic development was a result of the "deformed character" of trade between Moscow and Beijing. Yeltsin was advised to express his dissatisfaction with Russia's overreliance on the export of "industrial raw materials" in exchange for "Chinese consumer goods." In an additional effort to remedy this imbalance, Yeltsin wanted to create a joint Russian-Chinese project to develop industries based on the technology sector that would mirror "Eureka," a European intergovernmental network designed to create "market-oriented

32 Pamiatka - k vozmozhno besede Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii B.N. El'tsina s prem'erom Gossoveta KNR Li Penom, Fond 100, Opis 79, Dela 9, Papka 343, Listi 12, Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVP RF). See Also, Kontseptsii Ofitsial'noho Vizita Prezidenta Rossii v Kitai by the MID RF noiabria 1992 goda, 100, Opis 79, Dela 9, Papka 343, Listi 58, Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVP RF).
34 Ibid.
R&D and innovation projects."\(^{35}\) Presumably, this project was intended to help transform Russia's resourced-based economy into one that could produce high value-added goods.

**Jihadi Terrorism**

In addition to trade and economic development, the Russians and the Chinese discussed the threat of terrorism and its respective sources. Officials in both Moscow and Beijing recognized the danger from Central Asia during the 1990s and were the first to identify the global nature of terrorism in general. A senior Russian diplomat, who has worked for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization since its inception, explained that Russia, China, and their Central Asian partners concluded that terrorism and extremism were trans-border phenomena. Terrorism is not limited to one particular country, a fact that the United States began to understand only after September 11th.\(^{36}\)

Similarly, Andrei Kozyrev, Russia's first foreign minister after the fall of the Soviet Union and his Chinese colleague, Qian Qichen sought to cooperate over the threat of Islamic fundamentalism. Speaking for the leaders of Russia and Central Asia, Kozyrev stated that "in any event, we would like to depend on a mutual understanding with you in one form or another - in the political aspect - on combating religious extremism in the Central Asian region."\(^{37}\) Russian diplomats were aware that the Chinese had a significant concern regarding Islamic radicalism along their borders after the disintegration of the Soviet Union; and they planned on cooperating with China over the "stability of the Central Asian states of the CIS, and ably strengthening the opposition to Islamic

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\(^{36}\) Interview with Subject Q, interview by Michael Zboray, Beijing, China, March 13, 2015.

\(^{37}\) *Zapis’ Osnovnogo Soderzhaniia Peregovorov - Ministra Inostrannykh Del RF - A.V. Kozyreva s Ministrom Inostrannykh Del KNR Tsian’ Tsichenem - Pekin, 27 ianvaria 1994 goda, Fond 100, Opis 81, Dela 8, Papka 349, Listi, 70, Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVP RF).*
fundamentalism in the South Asian sub-region."  

While planning presidential meetings with the Chinese government, for example, Moscow considered how the Chinese "see the main threat . . . from Central Asia in connection with the spread of Islamic fundamentalism there . . . [and how] the spread of Islamic fundamentalism causes concern in China and the Central Asian countries." Russian officials thought that:

In all likelihood, Chinese leaders will be interested in an exchange of views on Islamic fundamentalism. Beijing is experiencing definite unease about the growing influence of Islam in Chinese Xinjiang, as well as the activation of the Islamic factor in the Central Asian republics of the former USSR. It would be possible to initiate the development of coordinated positions of Russia and China on these issues.  

Revealing the accuracy of this assessment, senior Russian and Chinese officials including Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen conducted negotiations on these issues and maintained that Central Asia was a clear area of interests for both Moscow and Beijing in terms of their "common desire to prevent the spread of Islamic fundamentalism in this region, which is fraught with destabilization." During the negotiations, Qian said, "we cannot lose vigilance against Pan-Turkism and other manifestations of national extremism." Kozyrev added that his country also thought there was a pressing problem in the region and highlighted that the type of conflict in Tajikistan could "penetrate into other Central Asian states."

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38 Kontseptsiia Ofitsial'nogo Vizita Prezidenta Rossii v Kitai by the MID RF noiabria 1992 goda, Fond 100, Opis 79, Dela 9, Papka 343, Listi 55, Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVP RF).  
39 K Razrabotke Kontseptsii Vizita Prezidenta, 53.  
40 Ibid.  
41 Zapis' Osnovnogo Soderzhaniia Peregovorov, 70.  
42 Ibid. 71; For additional information on China's fear of pan-Turkism, pan-Islamism, and apprehensions over Turkish diplomacy in the region, see, Hasan H. Karrar, The New Silk Road Diplomacy: China's Central Asian Foreign Policy Since the Cold War (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009), 6, 54.  
43 Zapis' Osnovnogo Soderzhaniia Peregovorov, 70.
Tajikistan were likewise interested in gathering Chinese support for humanitarian aid and for finalizing border agreements that would solidify the region.\(^4\)

From the Chinese perspective, Beijing saw the threats in Central Asia emanating from "inflammatory literature from Turkey, weapons from Saudi Arabia, and drugs from Pakistan and Afghanistan . . . [that] enter through illegal channels via Pakistan."\(^4\) In the context of these dangers, China was ready to provide "mutually beneficial trade and economic ties with this region" and to fill what Beijing saw as a regional "vacuum" in which "foreign powers" seek influence.\(^4\) Chinese officials also wanted to simultaneously develop trade ties with Russia while promoting the "expansion of trade, [and] economic development by strengthening and improving means of communication" across Central Asia.\(^4\) This economic development was discussed in tandem with the "danger of Islamic fundamentalism and national separatism" and with resolving border settlements along China's western frontier and the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union.\(^4\)

Beyond the inherent interest in a stable Central Asia and a "stable status on its northern border," Russia saw China as a very reliable partner in international affairs.\(^4\)

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\(^4\) Ibid. 70-71.
\(^4\) Otchet - o vizite Kitaiskoi Narodnuiu Respubliku delegatsii Komissii Soveta Natsional'nostei Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR. The Report was signed by the Chlen Prezidiuma Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR Predsedatel' Komissii Soveta Natsional'nostei po voprosam sotsial'nogo razvitiia soiuznykh i avtonomnykh respublik, avtonomnykh oblastei i okrugov - Iu.K. Sharipov - 20 Sentiabria 1990 g., Fond 100, Opis 77, Dela 7, Papka 337, Listi 41-41, Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVP RF). Hasan Karrar also notes that Afghanistan, country located in the greater Central Asian region, was an ideological vacuum during the Soviet invasion. Saudi Arabia was eager to fill this void with its interpretation of Sunni Islam that disregards classical Islam and seeks a return to a puritanical Islamic society. See, Karrar, New Silk Road Diplomacy, 43.


\(^4\) Ibid.

\(^4\) Ibid.

\(^4\) A report entitled, Vntropoliticheskaia Situatsiia v KNR i Aktual'nye Voprosy Rossiisko-Kitaiskikh Otносений" k vizitii v KNR, Ministra inostrannykh del Kozyreva A.V. This report was presented with a letter from IDV to Aleksandr Nikolaevich Panovu, Zamestiteliu MID RF signed by Zam. direktora
Given Russia's sensitivity in relation to Central Asia, Russia still felt that China would respect Moscow's interests. Russia saw China as a country that tried to "avoid being drawn into international conflicts," and as a state that strongly upheld the aforementioned principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other nations including that of Russia. The Russians also believed that China deliberately tried to avoid competition with them by:

abstaining from being a “winner” in the sphere of free-market pricing activities connected with the active struggle for political influence in Central Asia, from attempts to force Russia out of this region, from encouraging separatist tendencies within the RF [Russian Federation], itself, as well as from supporting opposing powers in political struggles at the federal level.\(^{50}\)

These were Russia's fundamental considerations during the formative years of Russian-Chinese relations after the tensions of the Soviet period, which helped lay the foundation for future cooperation in Central Asia. Russia saw its relationship with China and future “possibilities for cooperation between the two countries, as guarantors of stability in the vast border region.”\(^{51}\)

**Regional Organizations and Sovereignty**

Russia, China, and the states of Central Asia have had three institutional options for implementing regional cooperation over these historical issues. These options primarily concern the degree to which states grant each other power over their own affairs. As one of the hallmarks of the international system, sovereignty remains a key principle in international relations and a notable feature of many international organizations. Yet not all organizations are designed to treat sovereignty in the same

\(^{50}\) Ibid.  
\(^{51}\) Ibid.
manner. The degree to which institutions guard, share, or pool their sovereignty can vary by region. In North America, for instance, sovereignty can be limited to regulate economic agreements as in NAFTA. By comparison, states in Europe have completely relinquished a portion of their national authority to create a comprehensive system of political integration and a common currency in the EU. Yet, in other parts of the world such as East and Southeast Asia, states still place a high priority on maintaining their full sovereignty in organizations such as ASEAN.  

Amitav Acharya and Alastair Ian Johnston describe institutional design as the "formal and informal rules and organizational features that constitute the institution and that function as either the constraints on actor choice or the bare bones of the social environment within which agents interact, or both." They suggest that among these rules, member identity and ideology determine the characteristics of the organization and the degree to which state sovereignty is maintained. They write, for example, "liberal states, particularly when interacting with other liberal states, will be willing to accept a  

higher level of intrusiveness.\textsuperscript{55} Liberal democracies like the United States, France and Germany are more likely to accept limits on their sovereignty than the largely authoritarian or illiberal states of Russia, China, and Central Asia.\textsuperscript{56}

There are three major perspectives on sovereignty as they relate to the operations of regional organizations. The first and oldest perspective is the classical Westphalian interpretation that treats states as autonomous actors. More precisely, it "means both internal supremacy over all other authorities within a given territory, and external independence of outside authorities."\textsuperscript{57} Under this interpretation, states protect their decision-making abilities and exercise total control over the affairs within their borders. ASEAN is a good example of a regional organization that has practiced this type of guarded sovereignty since its inception in 1967. As Yuen Foong Khong and Helen E.S. Nesadurai note: "Notwithstanding the expansion in the scope of ASEAN institutions, institutional design in ASEAN remains wedded to state sovereignty as an initial preference, which results in a high degree of autonomy in determining domestic policy."\textsuperscript{58} The respect for Westphalian authority has guided ASEAN's decision-making in

\textsuperscript{55}Acharya and Johnston, “Comparing Regional Institutions,” 17.


the direction of "accommodation and consensus" through the ASEAN Way. This institutional feature helps maintain harmony and non-confrontation among members that must abide by:

[The] respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity and national identity of all ASEAN Member States...respect for the right of every Member State to lead its national existence free from external interference, subversion and coercion....non-interference in the internal affairs of ASEAN Member States.

The second perspective on institutional design is sovereignty sharing that enables states to arbitrate binding agreements within organizations. Stephen Krasner conceptualizes this form of international authority as "arrangements under which individuals chosen by international organizations, powerful states, or ad hoc entities would share authority with nationals over some aspects of domestic sovereignty. . . . Ideally, shared sovereignty would be legitimated by a contract between national authorities and an external agent."

NAFTA, for instance, arbitrates trade contracts among Canada, the United States, and Mexico. Specifically, Article 2001 of NAFTA created the North American Free Trade Commission (NAFTC), a structure that is responsible for "resolving disputes" arising from differing interpretations of agreements. Although there is no physical location or headquarters for the NAFTC, it operates in the form of meetings among its

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members. This Commission is responsible for implementing each chapter of the Agreement, including those that concern binding dispute resolution. Chapters 20, 19, 14, and 11 all focus respectively on conflict resolution regarding general disputes, anti-dumping, financial services, or investments between states or private parties included in the Agreement. In many cases, bi-national panels of experts decide disagreements between the parties; and they either force states to comply with their judgment or to allow enforcement through domestic courts or other international organizations such as the World Bank's International Center for the Settlement of Investment Disputes.

Compared to NAFTA, an organization that "comprises a weak executive, a non-existent legislature, an uneven set of adjudicator mechanisms...and almost [emphasis added] no coercive capacity," the EU demonstrates the third perspective on sovereignty in which some states have altered traditional notions of inter-state relations in order to foster both political and economic integration. Rather than preserving their sovereignty, many European countries have abdicated control over traditional state functions, such as regulating national currency. In his description of the European Union, Robert Keohane

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63 Ibid.


writes how EU states cede a portion of their power to a supranational authority by
"[breaking] sharply with the classical tradition of state sovereignty." 67 He explains that
"Sovereignty is pooled, in the sense that, in many areas, states’ legal authority over
internal and external affairs is transferred to the Community as a whole, authorizing
action through procedures not involving state vetoes." 68 Pooling sovereignty lies at the
heart of the European project started by the "founding fathers"— Konrad Adenauer,
Hallstein, Sicco Mansholt, Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Paul-Henri Spaak, and Altiero
Spinelli—who wanted to establish "a peaceful region, especially after the devastating
experience of the Second World War . . . they saw the solution in questioning state
sovereignty and building supranational institutions. In Europe, "regional cooperation was
about transcending the nation-state." 69

Examples of pooled sovereignty are the "European single market for goods and
services" and the use of qualified majority (QM) voting on these matters. 70 This type of
system, introduced by the Single European Act and revised by the Treaty of Nice, avoids
consensus in the Council of the European Union and weighs the votes of every European
state on the basis of population. 71 QM voting creates the possibility for some states to be

67 Keohane, "Ironies of Sovereignty," 748.
68 Ibid; Robert Keohane and Stanley Hoffmann made an early reference to this concept in 1991, see, Jeffrey
Lewis, "The Council of the European Union and the European Council," in Routledge Handbook of
69 Busse, "Constructivism and Southeast Asian Security," 47. For the founding fathers, see, "The Founding
history/founding-fathers/index_en.htm.
70 "Overview: Pooled Sovereignty," Oxford Index, Oxford University Press 2014, accessed April 25, 2015,
71 For the Single European Act, see, Stephanie Novak, Qualified Majority Voting from the Single European
Act to Present Day: An Unexpected Permanence, (Notre Europe, November 2011), 1. For the Treaty of
Nice, see, "Qualified Majority," Europa, accessed April 25, 2015,
outvoted by others on issues relating to their national control. The dissolution of trade barriers in the common market through this system "demonstrated that EU member states valued the benefits of the abolition of trade barriers more than those that would have been associated with retaining the right to veto."\(^{72}\) QM voting in the Council therefore represents one of the ways supranational authority has permeated traditional sovereignty in the region.

**Regionalism in Central Asia: Sovereignty and Issue Areas**

Central Asian regionalism is best compared to the first model of integration that relies on a traditional notion of state sovereignty.\(^{73}\) The Westphalian understanding of state behavior best describes how the countries of Central Asia have interacted with each other and with external actors, such as Russia and China since the end of the Cold War.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Central Asia emerged as a region with five independent states: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. During this period, these newly created states were primarily concerned with maintaining their own sovereignty and political integrity.\(^{74}\) As part of safeguarding their...
political independence, they tried to "forge national identities" in order to solidify their sovereignty. However, this approach to state-building has had "a centripetal effect on the relations within the region" in which the resulting rhetoric from this process has not favored regionalism or "shared sovereignty."\textsuperscript{75} Because of the common need to consolidate statehood, countries have not been able to coalesce into a larger entity that would place restrictions on their foreign policies.

The inclination toward sovereignty in regional affairs has also been shaped by several type of regimes found among these states.\textsuperscript{76} Central Asian governments are organized around key figures who were prominent leaders in the Community Party. Islam Karimov, for example, was the Communist Party leader in Soviet Uzbekistan and eventually became president of Uzbekistan shortly after the fall of the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{77} In his bid to stay in power, Karimov won referendums to extend the terms of his presidency from five to seven years and also won re-election as his country's president in 2007 and 2015.\textsuperscript{78}

These leaders have generally seen regionalism as a method of "impinging upon their newly won sovereignty "and a way "to reduce their ability to act unilaterally."\textsuperscript{79} This reluctance to participate in a wider international agenda with neighboring countries also symbolizes the commitment of Central Asian leaders to strongly centralized government.


\textsuperscript{79} Bohr, "Regionalism in Central Asia," 498
and emphasizes "political control rather than political negotiation." Regional cooperation is seen as a potential infringement on their power, which discourages leaders to share their authority with partners. These leaders interpret international structures as vehicles for possible "regional intervention" and a challenge to their political authority.

Within this context, Central Asian regionalism has largely tried to proceed on economic and security grounds. The economies of Central Asia have been primarily based on

"raw materials—mainly, cotton, minerals, oil, and natural gas." Since many of the Central Asian economies export a "limited range of commodities with substantial overlap among them," this reliance on natural resources has limited the extent to which trade could expand. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, for example, export mainly gold, electricity, cotton, and aluminum while Turkmenistan primarily exports cotton and natural gas. Moreover, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan produce cotton, gold, oil, and metal products which create a significant amount of competition among these countries.

83 Bohr, "Regionalism in Central Asia," 496.
84 Ibid.
Based on the competing nature of these economies, there has been a great deal of rhetoric about economic regionalism that has been accompanied with an abundance of signed agreements and institutions; but the actual degree of implementation has been small. According to the United Nations, this lack of integrative economic activity is "a striking feature of trade policy in Central Asia" despite "the many regional and bilateral agreements" that have been signed at the "highest political level." Rather than changing trade patterns, these arrangements have mainly tried to establish either a customs union based on the EU model, or the "economic union of pre-independence days." Not only have these efforts not resulted in creating a single market modeled around the European integration, but Central Asian statesmen have also been unwilling to fully integrate their economies into a single entity such as the Soviet Union. The effect of this lack of regionalism has been a "path of policy autonomy" among the five states.

In addition to economics, security affairs have played a major role in the regional dynamic of Central Asia and have typically involved Russia. Moscow has taken such a prominent position in security matters that there are currently no regional organizations in the area that do not include Russian membership. Specifically, Russia's cooperation

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87 Ibid.

88 Richard Pomfret, "Regional Integration in Central Asia," 47; Central Asia also exhibits the lowest level of trade integration in the post-Soviet space and prioritizes trade outside the region. See, Evgeny Vinokurov et al., *The System of Indicators of Eurasian Integration*, (Almaty: Eurasian Development Bank, 2010), 60, http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/22227/.

89 For Moscow's prominent role in security regarding crime, border guards, and military cooperation, see, Maria Raquel Freire, "Russian Policy in Central Asia: Supporting, Balancing, Coercing, or Imposing, "*Asian Perspective* 33, no.2 (2009): 131-132,
with states in the region has arguably been aimed at a variety of causes including the United States and Jihadism. For instance, the Central Asian states began to perceive the color revolutions that began in Georgia in 2003, Ukraine in 2004, and Kyrgyzstan in 2005 as being supported by the "US and Western pro-democracy efforts." This perception led to the belief that the U.S. presence was interfering with the internal affairs of states and that this influence was a threat to the survival of regional regimes.

Given this concern, Russia has been involved in a bigger conflict with the West, in which Central Asia is only a component. Although the United States has withdrawn many of its forces from Afghanistan, and no longer uses military bases in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, the U.S. military has still "expressed interest in increasing its commitment. . .[and is] willing to provide military equipment and technology to support Turkmenistan's efforts to secure its border with Afghanistan." Russia is also set to expand the presence of the 201st Motorized Rifle Division from 5,900 to 9,000 personnel and is also supposedly planning to expand military aid to the region in the form of $1.2 billion to Tajikistan.

91 Collins, "Economic and Security Regionalism," 274; Freire, "Russian Policy in Central Asia," 142; For another reference on regime security, see also, Allison, "Virtual Regionalism," 189; China's post-Soviet policy toward Central Asia was also concerned with the excessive growth of primarily the United States, see, Ablat Khodzhaev, "The Central Asian Policy of the People's Republic of China," China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly 7, no. 1 (2009):15.
93 Ibid.; Russia has long maintained troops in Tajikistan which President Putin has encouraged since 2000, see, Jim Nichol, Central Asia: Regional Development and Implications for U.S. Interests (Congressional
This type of military involvement can be buttressed by the Collective Security
Treaty Organization (CSTO) which consists of Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan,
Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan. Russia enjoys significant privileges in this organization,
such as the right to veto foreign military installations in member states.\(^9\) The CSTO has
also cancelled all contacts and plans of cooperation with NATO in the wake of the
Ukrainian crisis and has reportedly turned toward the SCO for "security matters in the
Asian region."\(^9\) More specifically, these organizations could focus on areas such as
"narco-trafficking or the coordination of information counter-terrorism."\(^9\)

**Russian and Chinese Interaction in Central Asia**

As two of Central Asia's most significant neighbors, Russia and China "have
special economic and political interests" around which revolve the economics and politics
of the five former Soviet republics.\(^9\) Central Asia's relationship with these two countries
affects their economic development and regional security.

Due to the limited scope of Central Asia's market, there are few opportunities for
intraregional trade to expand without other states. If these newly independent states are to
develop, Russian and China, in principle, can help integrate the area through access to

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\(^9\) Ibid.; For the SCO as an organization possibly directed against US pro-democracy efforts, see, Collins, "Economic and Security Regionalism,"274..


new markets.\(^98\) China's growing economy can provide Central Asia with new trade opportunities and access to East Asia through the Trans-Eurasian railway and the Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan-Xinjiang Highway.\(^99\) Between 1992 and 2005, the trade volume between China and Central Asia had actually increased sixteen times, demonstrating China's growing involvement in the region since the end of the Cold War.\(^100\) For China, Xinjiang is a particularly important connection to Central Asia for China through the burgeoning Horgos free-trade zone between western China and Kazakhstan.\(^101\) This linkage is part of the broader Silk Road initiative that "dovetails perfectly with China's bid to develop its relatively poorer, underdeveloped central and western regions" and parts of Central Asia as a way of resolving ethnic tensions among its Han and Uyghur populations.\(^102\) Chinese leaders also think that increasing the general level of prosperity in and around the Xinjiang region will help reduce the threat of terrorism.\(^103\) Consequently, the city of Horgos in Xinjiang has already experienced an 80 percent

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\(^98\) Bohr, "Regionalism in Central Asia," 497. Kazakhstan is an important link that can help transit goods to China, Russia, and Europe. See, for example, "Znachenie Proekta "Zapadnaia Evropa-Zapadniy Kitai" v Razviti Regionov Kazakhstana," Novyi Put' v Evropu, accessed May 2, 2015, http://europe-china.kz/info/86.


\(^100\) Karrar, The New Silk Road Diplomacy, 4.


increase in revenue from economic activity due to its new position as a "land port" for the Silk Road Economic belt that links Kazakhstan, Russia, and Germany.  

Russia also has been an important trading partner for Central Asia, having been its main trading partner after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. However, dependence on Russia as an export market has been reduced since the 1990s and "all five regimes have found ways to establish ties" beyond their immediate vicinity. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, for instance, have diversified their export partners to include countries such as China, Turkey, Switzerland, France, Germany, and Iran. As of 2008, Kazakhstan had the most diversified export market to Europe compared to its Central Asian neighbors with only 12 percent of its exports traveling to Russia. Nevertheless, these states still receive a significant portion of their imports from Russia: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan respectively receive approximately 36 percent, 37 percent, 32 percent, and 25 percent of total import volumes from Russian trade. Moreover, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, in particular, are within Russia's economic orbit in the form of remittances as suggested by The Economist in 2013. Tajikistan is first in the world on the World Bank's list of countries dependent on such

107 Ibid., 7-9.
wealth transfers indicating a heavy reliance on Russian sources of income as migrant Tajiks search for work in Russian cities. 109 (See Appendix D)

Yet Tajikistan's reliance on remittances is actually setting the stage for greater economic competition between Russia and China. In light of the recent decline in the Russian economy, China is promising $6 billion worth of investment in Tajikistan. Such an investment would be equivalent to two-thirds of Tajikistan's GDP which pales in comparison to the Russian $6.7 million aid package to Dushanbe. 110 In addition, China has encroached on Central Asia through the Silk Road Fund, a program designed to finance, at least partially, the Silk Road Economic Belt, an initiative to regionalize China with Central Asia through the construction of railways, roads, and pipelines. 111

Beyond infrastructure and trade, China now accounts for almost 20 percent of the world's energy consumption and imports more than 50 percent of its oil for energy-intensive industries, such as steel, aluminum, automobiles, electronics and chemicals. 112 The need for sustainable energy sources to meet this demand has turned Beijing toward Central Asia and particularly toward Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. 113 As part of this energy strategy, China's national energy company, China National Petroleum

113 Ibid.
Corporation (CNPC) signed energy deals with Uzbekneftgaz in 2004 and 2006; by 2012, Uzbekistan was supplying China with natural gas via pipeline.\textsuperscript{114} China has also invested in Kazakhstan's oil industry and has purchased large amounts of natural gas from Turkmenistan which conflicts with Russia's desire to consolidate control over "the export route[s] of Central Asia's oil and gas."\textsuperscript{115} This new "China-Central Asia pipeline matrix" has already provided China with 40 percent of its imported gas while Central Asian gas exports to Russia have declined by 60 percent.\textsuperscript{116}

\textbf{Development of the SCO}

Given the centrality of sovereignty in Central Asian regionalism and the historical interests of Russia and China in the region, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was created from the border negotiations that first began in the 1990's and gradually expanded in scope to include trade, energy, and security issues. After the Soviet Union's collapse in 1992, which left the newly independent states of the U.S.S.R. seeking agreements with China, Russia, China, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan began to negotiate their mutual borders.\textsuperscript{117} In order to facilitate cooperation, these countries established the Shanghai-Five, an "advisory group" that began working on two treaties: the Shanghai Agreement on Confidence Building in the Military Field, in 1996; and, the Agreement on


\textsuperscript{117}Interview with Subject Q.
Mutual Reduction of Military Forces in the Border Areas, in 1997. The purpose of these agreements was the final resolution of border disputes among the five founding countries which helped delimit 97 percent of the Russian-Chinese border. During these talks, the parties also decided to expand their cooperation through a new agenda based on "economic cooperation, the expansion of transport infrastructure . . . the construction of oil and gas pipelines," and, most significantly, on regional security in the form of terrorism, separatism, and extremism.

By 1999, the Shanghai Five had signed the Bishkek Declaration, a statement on behalf of the heads of the three Central Asian countries and of Russia and China regarding mutual efforts to fight "international terrorism, national separatism, and religious extremism" as well as to establish a multipronged approach to solve these issues. The Declaration was intended to be a model for all signatories to counteract what one SCO diplomat and lead negotiator referred to as a predictable situation in the SCO countries. Shortly after the Bishkek Declaration, the Shanghai Five countries signed the Dushanbe Declaration that "endeavor[ed] to transform the Shanghai Five into

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121 Interview with Subject Q, interview by Michael Zboray, Beijing, China, March 13, 2015.
a regional structure for multilateral cooperation in various fields." It also affirmed their opposition to the "interference in the internal affairs of other States, including interference under the pretext of 'humanitarian intervention' and 'protection of human rights,' and reinforced each other's support for efforts to defend the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and social stability of the five States." The Dushanbe Declaration also outlined the issues that the SCO would eventually consider such as trade, energy, and security. The signatories also expressed their concern over the conflict in Afghanistan and emphasized their consensus on combating international terrorism, national separatism, religious extremism, and drug trafficking, which included support "for the positions of principle of China on the issue of Taiwan, and of the Russian Federation on the resolution of the situation in the Chechen Republic." In addition, the parties declared their intention "to achieve a new level of multilateral cooperation" in the energy field and to use every means to encourage the establishment and development of a trade and economic partnership within the framework of the Five."

One year later, on June 15, 2001, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was officially formed with Uzbekistan as the sixth full member. The six states signed the Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as well as the Shanghai Convention that defined terrorism, separatism, and extremism as threats.

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123Ibid., 4-5.
124Ibid., 4, 10.
125Ibid., 6.
A year later, the SCO Charter was signed by these six countries enshrining the principles of "mutual respect of sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity of States and inviolability of State borders, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs . . . [and] the equality of all member States." The Charter's respect for the independence and internal decision-making of its members serves as a public commitment to the region's practice of traditional sovereignty. The SCO is not allowed to make rules or take actions that would contradict the standard practices or domestic legal principles of its signatories. Article 17 of the SCO Charter states that "the decisions taken by the SCO bodies shall be implemented by the member-states in accordance with the procedures set out in their national legislation." The SCO may not infringe upon this legislation and must accommodate every state's laws within its framework.

The regard of the SCO for non-interference in the internal affairs of its members highlights how Central Asian leaders have embraced the guarded sovereignty model of integration and have been cautious about other forms of integration that would mirror organizations like the EU or NAFTA. According to a senior Russian diplomat at the SCO Secretariat, the SCO was modeled instead on ASEAN's functional form, a typical example of a Westphalian-based organization. In comparison to the SCO Charter, the ASEAN Charter also mandates:

"[the] respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity and national identity of all ASEAN Member States. . . [the] respect for the right of

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128 Ibid.
129 Interview with Subject Q.
every Member State to lead its national existence free from external interference, subversion and coercion... non-interference in the internal affairs of ASEAN Member States.”

Moreover, both organizations adhere to decision-making based on consensus that helps protect the national integrity of all parties. The SCO's Shanghai Spirit and ASEAN's ASEAN Way similarly institutionalize this approach in symbolizing "a set of procedural norms which are usually lumped together. . . [including] the principle of seeking agreement and harmony, the principle of sensitivity, politeness, non-confrontation, and agreeability." In the words of the former SCO Secretary-General Zhang Deguang, the Shanghai Spirit is "represented by mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect of different civilizations, and pursuit of common development.” His comments strongly echo the June 6, 2001 Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization that credited the Shanghai Spirit to "the process of the development of the Shanghai Five, characterized... as] an invaluable asset gained by the countries of the region over the years of cooperation.”

The SCO believes that such a spirit will develop "and in the new century will become the norm in relations among the State members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization." Consequently, SCO members see this sovereign model of international affairs as an "important and constructive force" in the "state-to-state and regional cooperation" for this century. Taken together, these two approaches represent a "non-integrationary culture" that forms the basis of the guarded sovereignty model.

**Issue Areas in the SCO**

Within this framework, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has focused on a broad policy-based agenda that originated after the Cold War. According to the Charter, the SCO was founded in 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... to facilitate comprehensive and balanced economic growth, social and cultural development in the region...for the purpose of a steady increase of living standards...

According to this list of goals, the SCO officially states its priorities at the state level among which trade, energy, and security are the most notable. Trade and economy, for instance, primarily function at the inter-state level, while law enforcement and counterterrorism measures typically operate at the domestic level. Yet the Charter...

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135 Ibid.
highlights a need for the collective action of all members to achieve these objectives through a regional format.

Security Issues

The SCO has been seen as a platform for combating the "three evils" of separatism, terrorism, and religious extremism within the broader context of the "growth of Islamist oppositions since the late 1990s." The Shanghai Convention of 2001 is the first document that defines the SCO's fight against these terms with direct references to the Bishkek Declaration of August 25, 1999, the Dushanbe Declaration of July 3, 2000, and the Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization of June 15, 2001. Article 1 of the Convention defines terrorism as any act "intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian . . .or to cause major damage to any material facility, as well as to organize plan, aid and abet such act. . . ." It defines extremism as any act "aimed at seizing or keeping power through the use of violence or changing violently the constitutional regime of a State. . ." and separatism as any act "intended to violate [the] territorial integrity of a State by annexation of any part of its territory or to disintegrate a State, committed in a violent manner, as well as planning and preparing, and abetting such an act . . . ."

Shortly after signing the Shanghai Convention, the SCO members began their first bilateral exercise during which China and Kyrgyzstan held a two-day SCO military drill in October 2002 under the name Exercise-01. The SCO held its first multilateral exercise with China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan August 6-12, 2003, under the banner name Coalition 2003. The exercise with about 1,300 soldiers took place in the Kazakh border city of Ucharal and China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

In addition to these early antiterrorist maneuvers, both the Secretariat in Beijing and the Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure in Tashkent were established in 2004. The Secretariat is responsible for providing "informational, analytical, legal, organizational, and technical support of the activity of the Organization" as well as for helping to coordinate interaction among members and SCO institutions including the RATS. Originally mandated by the Shanghai Convention in 2001, the RATS is tasked with assisting members with the "staging of counterterrorism exercises" and with creating a data bank to share information on "global challenges and threats." The SCO members also refined their laws on terrorism in the same year that Russian President Vladimir Putin signed an amendment to Articles 57 and 205 of the Russian criminal code, which

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143 Ibid.
introduced a life sentence for terrorism connected with lethal attacks or actions illicitly using nuclear energy.\textsuperscript{147}

During the following year, the SCO reaffirmed its commitment to fighting terrorism and stated that it will cooperate with the United Nations and other regional organizations. Toward this end, the SCO committed itself to develop a unified index of terrorist organizations including their property and financial assets.\textsuperscript{148} In connection to counterterrorism, the SCO continued its annual set of land battle exercises under the banner of Peace Missions.\textsuperscript{149} The first Peace Missions of 2005 and 2007 were the first to generate a significant amount of attention.\textsuperscript{150} The August 2005 bilateral SCO exercise between Russia and China was much larger than the previous exercises in 2002 and 2003 and took place over the course of one week. An estimated 10,000 troops participated in the operation beginning in Vladivostok and ending on China's Shandong Peninsula.\textsuperscript{151} China contributed the clear majority of soldiers to the operation, and the commander of the Russian contingent, Colonel-General Vladimir Moltenskoy recommended future SCO

Two years later the SCO did in fact coordinate Peace Mission 2007 described by China as "another high profile exercise that utilized roughly 4,000 troops from all six full-members of the organization and took place in Russia's Ural Mountains and Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang." According to Vassily Kashin of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute of Far Eastern Studies, such an exercise helps the SCO assign roles for each party during a militarized crisis. In such a scenario, the Central Asian countries, for example, would play a supporting role in a major counterterrorist operation while forces from Russia and China would engage the enemy with air power and ground units.

Given anti-Western rhetoric by the Kremlin, however, Beijing's strategic objection to the American military in Central Asia and the use of heavy military equipment such as strategic bombers and AWACS, these exercises might have been part of an attempt "to undermine Western security projects" in the region. This assessment gained more credibility two years later when the SCO issued its Yekaterinburg Declaration of the Heads of the Member States of the SCO, which maintained that the SCO was playing an increasing role in establishing a multipolar world. The Declaration stated that:

Serious changes are taking place in the contemporary international environment. Aspiration to peace and sustainable development, promotion of equal cooperation became the spirit of the times. The tendency towards true multipolarity is

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irreversible. There is a growing significance of the regional aspect in settling global problems.\textsuperscript{156} 

However, during these military maneuvers, the SCO members signed the Protocol on Establishment of the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group between the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in 2005.\textsuperscript{157} The agreement laid the foundation for the Declaration of the Special Conference on Afghanistan convened under the auspices of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Plan of Action of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on Combating Terrorism, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in 2009. The Special Conference and the Plan of Action stressed the importance of combating the opium trade and terrorism through various means including a dialogue between the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan over "denying sanctuaries and dismantling the extremist and terrorist network and ideological centers."\textsuperscript{158} The SCO also encouraged the "full operationalization" of the Central Asian Regional Information Coordination Center for managing regional efforts against narcotics and the development of "social and economic" projects including those "aimed at comprehensive regional development, in particular, construction of a united

infrastructure network and energy corridor. . ."\(^{159}\)

Through these initiatives, the SCO actually supported cooperation with the United States and NATO. Russia, China, and the Central Asian states were interested in multilateral cooperation on these problems and "welcome[d] the fact that ISAF in cooperation with the Government of Afghanistan joined the fight against drug production and proliferation in Afghanistan and supported its wide-ranging participation in multilateral efforts in this area."\(^{160}\) The SCO also encouraged its members and observers to invest more in "combating [the] terrorist threat using the capacity of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure to a greater extent...and consider taking part in transiting non-military cargoes need by ISAF."\(^{161}\)

In July 2015 the SCO, made another substantial development in its security agenda by announcing the ongoing ascension of India and Pakistan as full members. In September 2014, Russia and China reportedly agreed on finalizing the procedures for enlargement during the organization's summit in Dushanbe.\(^{162}\) The 2014 agreement on accession came amid discussions on counterterrorism and stability in Afghanistan at the summit with President Xi Jinping stressing the need to “focus on combating religion-involved extremism and internet terrorism.”\(^{163}\) Xi Jinping also seemed to imply that countries in the region should not have to rely on extra-regional actors and should focus


\(^{161}\) Ibid.


on coordinating collective efforts.\textsuperscript{164} Before the start of the summit, China's ambassador to Tajikistan similarly emphasized that “SCO members are determined to turn Afghanistan into a country with genuine peace, stability and development, and \textit{will} make concerted efforts with international community in this end.”\textsuperscript{165}

\textbf{Trade and Development}

In addition to its security initiatives, the SCO attempted to launch a number of economic projects. China, for example, has advocated strongly for a free trade zone in the SCO since 2003 and for creating a SCO Development Bank to which Beijing has already committed $10 billion.\textsuperscript{166} Such a trade project would help connect the Central Asian market to other parts of Eurasia and could make the SCO a hub for goods passing from China to Europe. According to the foreign ministers of the SCO states, the organization:

\begin{quote}
emphasizes the importance and the vital need for the full integration of Central Asia into the global system of political, trade and economic relations based on equality, mutual benefit and democratic ideals. Ministers believe that the Central Asian region, which has by virtue of its geographical location a huge transit potential, should be an integral part of intercontinental transport corridors.\textsuperscript{167}
\end{quote}

A 2003 seminar in Beijing for the official state members of the SCO similarly emphasized the creation of a transportation hub in Central Asia. At the time of the

\textsuperscript{164} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{165} Ibid; There is another view on the anticipated accession of India and Pakistan put forth by Li Lifan of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. According to Li, the inclusion of India and Pakistan is part of China’s "New Maritime Silk Road" strategy that gives China and Central Asia access to the Indian Ocean. See, Joshua Kucera, "What Does Adding India And Pakistan Mean For The SCO?," \textit{The Bug Pit - Eurasianet}, October 7, 2014, accessed, June 9, 2015, http://www.eurasianet.org/node/70346.
meeting, there were thirty checkpoints for trade between Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan that formed a customs network for trade cooperation between China and other SCO members. Through these checkpoints, China exported textiles, electronics, and consumer goods while it imported oil, timber, fertilizer, and rolled-steel.\textsuperscript{168} Under the auspices of the SCO, China has linked this regional economic integration to its Silk Road project to form an economic corridor between China and Central Asia through energy pipelines and roadways.\textsuperscript{169}

In order to facilitate this trade, China wanted to install a computerized system that would facilitate this customs network utilizing electronic document transmission.\textsuperscript{170} Five years later, the SCO scheduled a three to four year project called, "The High-Speed Data Highway Project of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization" (Vysokoskorostnaiia Informatsionnaia Magistral' Shankhaiskoi Organizatsii Sotrudnichestva) that aimed to:

improve the construction of the information infrastructure of the SCO member states, to promote cooperation between the parties in the field of computer science and telecommunications, and thus, stimulate economic development in the member states of the SCO and its international influence.\textsuperscript{171}

The telecommunication infrastructure was planned in the form of high-speed fiber-optic cables capable of sending information at a rate of 2.5 gigabytes per second along two connected rings. The first ring connects the cities of Almaty, Astana, Samara, and

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Tashkent, while the second links the cities of Urumqi, Almaty, Bishkek, Tashkent, Andijan, Osh, and Kashi. There is also a third, auxiliary ring that connects Dushanbe, Osh, Andijan, and Tashkent.\(^{172}\) (see Map 2 and Map 3 in Appendix F) In total, the project was projected to cost $49.4 million with Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan bearing the majority of the cost.\(^{173}\)

In order to help facilitate such projects, the SCO has secondary institutions that function independently from the Secretariat such as the Interbank Consortium and the Business Council.\(^{174}\) The Interbank Consortium was created on October 26, 2005 with the "main goal of creating . . . a mechanism of funding and banking services for investment projects supported by the governments of the SCO member-states."\(^{175}\) Almost every member has a financial institution associated with the Consortium including the Development Bank of Kazakhstan; the State Development Bank of China; the Bank for Development and Foreign Economic Affairs of the Russian Federation; the State Savings Bank of the Republic of Tajikistan; and the National Bank for Foreign Economic Activity of the Republic of Uzbekistan. These banks help finance infrastructure projects and assist in stimulating the export of goods among members.\(^{176}\) The Consortium's counterpart institution, the SCO Business Council was created on June 14, 2006, with headquarters in Moscow, and it "brings together the most influential members of the business communities of the six countries with the aim of boosting economic cooperation

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\(^{172}\) Ibid.
\(^{173}\) Ibid.
\(^{174}\) Interview with Subject Q.
\(^{176}\) Ibid.
in the framework of the Organization."\textsuperscript{177} The Council helps establish links between the business and financial establishments of the SCO countries in order to promote multilateral projects and to harmonize economic legislation among members.\textsuperscript{178}

In 2008, the prime ministers of SCO member countries approved the "Plan of Measures for the Implementation of the Program of Multilateral Trade and Economic Cooperation among Member-States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization"— an index of projects that listed eighty-five on-going or long-term projects for the organization. These projects cover a wide range of areas including agriculture, trade and investment, standardization of technical measures to reduce non-tariff barriers, and technological development.\textsuperscript{179} Between 2008 and 2009, the SCO tried to develop measures to harmonize trade regulations and certifications among its members which involved the Russian Ministry of Economic Development; Ministry of Economic Development of Kyrgyzstan; the Committee for Technical Regulation and Metrology of the Republic of Kazakhstan; and the standardization agencies of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.\textsuperscript{180} During this period, the SCO also started working on long-term road development projects with China, Russia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan. They focused on the construction of the Volgograd-Astrakhan-Atyrau-Kundard and Aktau-Beineu-Kungrad highways as part of the E-40 international transport route that stretches from


\textsuperscript{178} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{180} Ibid., 6.
France to the Kazakhstan-China border. Between 2008 and 2012, Western Europe-Western China, a second, related transportation project, was undertaken with assistance from the Russian Ministry of Economic Development; the Kazakh Ministry of Transport and Communications; and, the Chinese Ministry of Communications. With regard to agriculture, SCO members have cooperated in creating new sprinkler systems and irrigation techniques for regional water supplies and they have regularly engaged in sharing information on laser leveling for fields and drainage systems.

Following the commemoration of its tenth anniversary in 2011, the SCO reaffirmed its financial commitment to large-scale trade and development projects in its Astana Declaration. Along with expressing a desire for peace, stability, and good neighborliness between its members, the Declaration expresses the intention of SCO members to expand their markets across Eurasia. Section VIII of the Declaration specifically reflects the continued importance of infrastructure projects by stating that:

The SCO member states intend to advance major joint projects in such areas as transport and communications, agricultural production, innovative and energy-saving technologies, trade and tourism. Creation of the relevant funding mechanisms will be expedited. The implementation of these projects will significantly boost mutual trade, create new markets, give essential impetus to the regional development and diversify transport corridors between Asia and Europe.

**Energy Objectives**

In conjunction with the SCO’s trade plans, the organization has tried to expand its agenda to include energy projects that incorporates the oil, gas, and uranium deposits in

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183 Ibid., 12-13.
the region. At the December 2005 conference in a Tashkent entitled "Energy in Central Asia: Trends and Prospects," officials first formulated the idea of a "specialized mechanism" for coordinating the individual energy needs of SCO members. During his 2006 visit to Shanghai, shortly after the conference, President Putin suggested the creation of an SCO energy club in which the organization would function as a "unified energy market." He thought that a common energy market would help SCO countries better "export oil and gas to world markets" and would serve as the basis for mutual economic growth. Kazakhstan's President Nazarbayev supported Putin's idea and suggested that an SCO energy club would be a way to more fully involve all the SCO countries. He believed that the network of pipelines exporting oil and natural gas throughout Russia, Kazakhstan, China, and Central Asia could be the natural basis for President Putin's plan for a single market. The Prime Minister of Kazakhstan, Karim Massimov similarly reiterated that the SCO should become an institution that brings together the energy interests of its members by stressing that:

The existing system of pipelines in the SCO space connecting Russia, Central Asian countries and China is already a major the basis for the creation of a unified energy space of the SCO . . . [the] SCO has all the ingredients for the creation of an energy community in which you can harmonize the interests of producers, transporters and consumers of energy resources.

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In a speech given at Peking University in 2008, the former president of Russia, Dmitry Medvedev, reinforced Putin's comments about starting large-scale energy projects in the SCO. He said, "I believe that we can do much to enhance a variety of areas, projects that exist as part of our work on the Shanghai organization. We have a number of major energy projects that bind both Russia and Kazakhstan, and China."\textsuperscript{190} That same year, Valery Yazev, Speaker of the Russian State Duma and President of the Russian Gas Community told a Chinese journalist that energy will "undoubtedly" become one of the SCO's foremost areas of cooperation because the organization includes countries that purchase, sell, and transit oil and gas. The SCO Energy Club would be a natural development in the organization because of Russia's large supply of energy resources and China's growing demand for additional power sources.\textsuperscript{191}

By 2009 the SCO was able to draft a protocol between customs agencies for exchanging information on the movement of energy and determined that cooperation in this sector was an important precondition for the economic development of the region.\textsuperscript{192} In the same year, the Yekaterinburg Declaration highlighted the "determination [of members] to further advance mutually beneficial cooperation in this field . . . with the aim of ensuring effective, reliable and environmentally safe energy supplies" for the improvement of regional living standards.\textsuperscript{193} In support of this view, Sergey Chernyshev,
Director of the Department for Economic Cooperation with CIS Countries in the Russian Ministry of Economic Development committed the Ministry to President Putin's vision of an SCO energy club that would focus on sharing power-saving technology. The President of Russia's special representative to the SCO and national coordinator of SCO Affairs for the Russian Federation, Leonid Moiseev added that:

[The] Energy Club, in concept, is designed to harmonize national energy strategy and development plans, provide a platform for discussion of common programs and projects, as well as to address issues related to their implementation . . . This club or forum - no matter how one calls it - could be the brain and an information center that would facilitate the coordination of long-term programs in the field of fuel and energy complex. It could develop common policy guidelines to help create a common infrastructure that would serve in the implementation of joint projects.

A year later, Moiseev further described how this format could be a multilateral energy dialogue that could proceed along two complementary tracks. The first would be an official structure "in the framework of a special working group of senior commission officials at meetings of energy departments." The second would include informal round tables on energy issues that could facilitate the regional formation of new legal frameworks for international cooperation in the energy sector.

Another possible track could have included managing shipments of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) from the Sea of Azov. According to the SCO Business Council, around 2007, Russia was interested in increasing its ability to export LPG through maritime routes to parts of Turkey and Eastern Europe. These plans would have circumvented conventional land routes from Russia that pass through Ukraine by

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constructing a Russian export hub in the city of Azov. This hub, with a total cargo capacity of four million tons, would have been connected to the sea ports of Istanbul, Varna, Ismit, Samsun, and Burgas. Russia expected to coordinate its LPG shipments with Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan which would have contributed at least 40 percent of the actual volume shipped. However, the development of the Azov project has been slow and by 2012, it was still considered only a "promising" project for the area.

At a conference in Moscow in 2010, entitled "Nuclear Cooperation in the SCO Area," the SCO Business Council was entertaining the idea of introducing nuclear power into the energy club concept. The conference was also sponsored by two leading business and scientific entities in Russia. The first was the Business Sobranie of Russia, an entity that tries to develop a community of "business, government, and society representatives" for Russia's economic development. The second was the National Research Center - Kurchatov Institute, an organization dedicated to the development of nuclear science and technology. The conference moderator, Yevgeny Velikhov said that the use of nuclear power is inevitable and that the countries of the SCO understand that long-term application of atomic energy is a critical piece of the world's sustainable development. He also emphasized that Russia should play a central role in

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implementing nuclear power in the SCO countries given Russia's considerable experience with the technology.²⁰²

Sergei Luzyanin, Deputy Director of the Institute of Far Eastern Studies, and Director of the Center for Strategic Problems of Northeast Asia and the SCO focused his comments at the conference on the regional demand for uranium and outlined three models of cooperation.²⁰³ The first is based on bilateral cooperation between Russia and Kazakhstan through a joint venture to mine uranium and to use it for commercial purposes. The second is a multilateral format between Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan to extract and to process uranium. The third involves a joint venture between Moscow and Beijing primarily to export nuclear fuel to China and to enhance China's capacity to enrich its own nuclear fuel through centrifuge production.²⁰⁴

China recently praised the idea of an SCO energy club with Wei Xiaowei, a representative of the Department of International Cooperation in charge of Chinese energy policy expressing China's active participation in implementing the club. According to the Chinese, the club will be a semi-official organization bringing together government agencies, research institutions, and commercial organizations.²⁰⁵ Shortly after China's public endorsement of the club, Kazakhstan held the Second International Energy Forum of the SCO Countries in Aktau, which discussed logistical operation in the Caspian-Volga region for petrochemicals, oil refining, gas, and coal.²⁰⁶ By the following year, Kazakhstan

²⁰²Ibid.
²⁰³Ibid.
²⁰⁴Ibid.
became the official chairman of the SCO Energy Club and led the first meeting under the auspices of the 2014 World Petroleum Congress in Moscow.\textsuperscript{207}

Russia continues to promote its interest in the organization's hydrocarbon agenda by recently inviting petrochemical specialists from SCO countries to the Oil and Gas Forum and the 23rd International Exhibition entitled, "Gas, Oil, and Technology" in Ufa. The program was organized by the Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation and was divided into twenty separate conferences on oil, gas, chemicals, and petrochemicals.\textsuperscript{208}

**Conclusion**

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is an institution that reflects the reality of Russian and Chinese interests in the region. Stemming from border negotiations with the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union, the SCO has grown in scope to include security, trade, and energy issues. Yet the most concrete achievements thus far have been in the security realm with more limited developments in terms of economic cooperation. The SCO's Peace Missions and coordinated efforts regarding Afghanistan have been the most tangible signs of the organization's interests in anti-terrorism and the stability of Central Asia. In terms of economics, China has a special interest in trade and development while Russia promotes a potentially high-profile energy club based on hydrocarbon and uranium deposits. These activities have been embedded within Central Asia's preference for national autonomy and a regional model based on guarded sovereignty. The SCO reflects the Westphalian approach to integration that prioritizes


consensus, territoriality, and independence unlike other prominent organizations such as the EU and NAFTA.

Given the geostrategic importance of Central Asia and Eurasia, the SCO's priorities are important to analyze in the larger context of Russia's foreign policy. As a power eager to regain its former stature, Russia's motivations to cooperate with China may signal a challenge to America's position in the security architecture of Europe and Asia. Russia, for example, could use the SCO's Peace Missions as a way of strengthening its neighbors' militaries in order to limit the need for American presence in its near abroad. However, Russia could also complement America's fight against the Taliban and the "War on Terror" through the SCO's initiatives on Afghanistan and Kabul's status as a SCO observer. The main reason for Russian's participation likely relates to one of the SCO's primary purposes—security, trade, and energy. These interests serve as the basis for investigating the foundation of cooperation between Moscow and Beijing.

The following chapters examine these areas in closer detail through a total of fifty field interviews conducted in Moscow, Kazan, Shanghai, and Beijing. Chapter four specifically analyzes how Russia perceives its purpose in the SCO in relation to the organization's development across geopolitics, economics, and internal security. It also evaluates how much each area contributes to cooperation with China in terms of how the SCO helps Russia achieve its foreign policy objectives. Since Russia's main motivation in the SCO may differ from China's primary interest in the organization, chapter five looks at these areas from Beijing's perspective. It compares the intentions of the two countries by juxtaposing how the Chinese understand their reasons for participation with how China interprets Russia's motivations. Finally, within the abundance of information
regarding the SCO's security priorities, chapter six focuses on whether terrorism is a systemic threat to Russia and functions as an auxiliary test of the internal security hypothesis. It features an in-depth analysis of Wahhabism in Tatarstan as a barometer for the spread of Islamic radicalism across Russia.
Chapter 4: Russian Perception of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Introduction

This chapter presents the data from twenty field interviews conducted over a six-month period in Moscow. The interviews were designed to systematically test the geopolitical, economic, and internal security hypotheses through qualitative and quantitative approaches. The first part of the hypothesis testing focuses on Russia's possible geopolitical competition with the United States. This perspective analyzes the counterbalancing argument and concentrates on Russia's intention to soft balance the United States through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. It attempts to specify the potential ways in which the SCO works to block American influence in Central Asia, which has been Russia's traditional sphere of influence. It also presents information that suggests Russia may be more interested in cooperating with the United States and its NATO allies through the SCO than challenging America's presence in the region.

The second part examines the economic hypothesis by investigating Russia's motivation to increase international trade and energy sales through the SCO. In particular, it considers the basis for Russia's need to maximize its profits by pivoting toward China and the Asian market. Since Russia is confronting an uncertain market for natural gas in Europe, the SCO appears to present Russia with an opportunity to expand its economic partnership with China. In addition, this section reveals information regarding Russia's cautiousness toward Chinese trade in conjunction with whether Russia has actually prioritized any economic interests in the organization.

The final part of the hypothesis testing focuses on Russia's need for internal security by examining confirmatory and contradictory data on Russia's motivation to
combat Wahhabism through the SCO. It focuses on the threat of terrorism to Russia and the importance of Central Asia to Russia's national security. It tests the degree to which the SCO helps Russia confront Jihadi terrorism and whether Russia has emphasized a counterterrorist role in the organization. It also weighs the possibility that rather than fighting Wahhabism, the SCO suppresses human rights in the name of regional stability.

The population of interviewees in Moscow consisted of Russian foreign policy specialists who were knowledgeable about Russia's relations with China and the United States. The sample of people included a variety of experts from academia, think tanks, and the media, who either had specifically studied the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as part of their work on Russian-Chinese relations, or who had researched Russia's priorities in international affairs. Interviewees were selected from premier Russian academic institutions—the Higher School of Economics (HSE), the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO), and two institutions at the Russian Academy of Sciences: the Institute for Far Eastern Studies (IFE) and the Institute of World Economics and International Relations (IMEMO). The researchers at IFE were specifically based at the Institute's Center for the Study of Strategic Problems of Northeast Asia and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The Center has published monographs on economic, military, and political assessments regarding security in Northeast and Central Asia and articles on the main avenues of development in the SCO. They focus heavily on Russia's relationship with China and Central Asia. Respondents were also recruited from policy analysis institutes—the Carnegie Moscow Center, the Institute of the CIS Countries, the Fund for Public Diplomacy, the Center for Strategic Conjecture, the Central Asian Analytic Group, the journal, Russia in Global Affairs, and
the Russian Institute of Strategic Studies (RISS). In addition, reporters and editors who publish articles for media outlets were interviewed. One journalist publishes for *The Moscow Times* and a second one works for INFO SCO, the SCO's primary information portal. Finally, there were government officials from the SCO Secretariat and the Federation Council's Committee on International Affairs, who commented on Russia's primary motivation for cooperation with China in the SCO.

The semi-structured interviews were based on a combination of specific and open-ended questions and were conducted in two parts. The first part consisted of a set of questions that provided a general context for the interview and established a dialogue about Russia's motives in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. These initial questions also encouraged respondents to comment on two subjects: first, about the key areas of cooperation between Russia and China; and second, how this cooperation pertained to the SCO in Central Asia.

The second part consisted of a set of questions that was more specific and tested each hypothesis by inquiring about Russia's position on the American invasion of Afghanistan, international trade, hydrocarbon resources, and terrorism in Russia and Central Asia. These questions, for example, probed whether Russia views oil and natural gas as important factors in cooperating with China, and whether Russia's motivation is a reaction to U.S. presence in Central Asia. In order to help evaluate the relative importance Russia places on the geopolitical versus the economic hypotheses, these questions also examined whether Russia prioritizes military or economic cooperation with China. The final set of questions investigated whether Saudi Arabia and other Gulf
states have contributed to terrorism in Russia and Central Asia, and to what degree Russia uses the SCO for countering this terrorism.

The second part of the interview featured a Q-sort on the reasons for Russian cooperation with China in the SCO. This exercise helped test each hypothesis by quantifying and prioritizing expert judgment on each explanation. Respondents were instructed to rank twenty-seven statements on a board regarding each hypothesis in order to assess the relative importance of counterbalancing, international commerce, and Jihadi terrorism. The Q-sort used a numerical scale with discrete values ranging from minus four to positive four. Negative values were used for statements of less relative significance and positive values were used for statements of greater relative significance. Researchers were able to only place two statements under the minus four and positive four categories at the end of the board, but could place an increasing number of statements toward the zero category in the center. This structure allowed researchers to prioritize the statements with the most and the least relative importance at the ends of the board, while leaving a greater number of spaces for neutral statements in the middle.

The remaining sections of the chapter present the information from the interviews based on whether the data supported or contradicted each of the three hypotheses from Chapter 2. The next section contextualizes the actual results of the interviews and sets the context in which Russia cooperates with China in the SCO. It describes the challenges that confront Russia when working with China and how the SCO helps overcome these obstacles. The second, third, and fourth sections explain, respectively, the degree to which soft balancing, trade and energy, and Wahhabism account for Russia's motive for cooperation. Each of these sections is divided into two parts. The first part presents the
qualitative data from the interviews, while the second part analyzes the quantitative data from the Qsorts. A series of graphs helps illustrate the findings by representing the number of times each Q-value, ranging from minus four to positive four, was assigned to statements related to one of the hypotheses. The chapter concludes by assessing the results and by describing how the internal security hypothesis best explains Russia's participation in the SCO as well as how the remaining chapters coincide with the findings.

**Context of Russian Cooperation with China**

According to a senior journalist and political analyst, the Soviet Union and China were supposedly "brothers for the ages and fought American hegemony" during the Cold War.\(^1\) Yet these countries have remained suspicious of each other.\(^2\) Based on my interviews, Russia generally focuses on three particular areas of concern—demographic pressure in Russia's border region, control of resource, and influence in Central Asia. However, the SCO could still help preclude conflict between these two powers by finding common ground through consensus-building.

According to a ranking researcher, the Chinese can possibly claim that 1.5 million square meters of Russian land are Chinese territory.\(^3\) Augmenting this possibility, China still maintains that this area was unjustly taken by the Russian Empire over the centuries.\(^4\) This potential for conflict makes cooperation between leaders in Moscow and Beijing difficult. Russia's main concern in this regard does not stem from any potential Chinese military invasion of this conquered territory, but rather from the loss of the Russian Far

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\(^1\) Interview with Subject QQ, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, July 8, 2014.
\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Interview with Subject MM, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, March 26, 2014.
\(^4\) Interview with Subject DD, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, February 24, 2014.
East (RFE) to Chinese economic interests and an influx of Chinese labor. At present, there are only 1.3 people per kilometer in the RFE, an area roughly the size of Iran, while China’s population of about 110 million in the neighboring northern regions has dwarfed the Russian population. The provinces of Heilongjiang and Jilin, for example, have a population density of 84.1 and 144.9 people per kilometer, respectively. These statistics come amid a significant decline in the RFE’s population, which has shrunk by 20 percent to 6.28 million people since 1991. Within the next ten years, this number is expected to contract further from 7.4 to 4.7 million people. This fact prompted President Putin to state that if the current trend continues, “Russians in the border regions will have to speak Chinese, Japanese and Korean within a few decades.” He added that the development of the RFE is “the most important geopolitical task” for Russia. According to subject DD, if there is no substantial Russian presence in the country’s eastern-most region, then Chinese labor and business investment can claim de facto control over this sparsely populated region.

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5 Ibid.
9 Ibid. For Russia's current population in the RFE of 7.4 million, see, Zeihan, "Analysis: Russia's Far East Turning Chinese."
10 Bowen and Rodeheffer, "Is Russia Losing Control of Its Far East?"
11 Ibid.
12 Interview with Subject DD.
Russia’s fear of China's economic influence also extends to Central Asia, a traditional zone of Russian influence. Although China maintains that it is not interested in encroaching on Russia's presence in Central Asia, Russia continues to doubt China's regional intentions. Specifically, "Russia worries about the growth of Chinese economic influences especially in strategic sectors, such as gas and atomic energy (supplies of uranium, etc.)." These have been areas that Russia has usually controlled either directly or through cooperation with its Central Asian neighbors. An increase in Chinese investment in these key industries risks displacing Russia's leverage over strategic natural resources.

Leaders in Moscow are discontent with China's expanding presence and appear to have limited options for containing China's influence. In the words of a researcher at the Institute for Far Eastern Studies, "we see that the power of China in the post-Soviet space of Central Asia is growing, but [Russia] can do nothing." In the judgment of an analyst at the Institute of CIS Countries, Central Asia is now an informal Chinese economic zone given that China has promised to increase investment in the Tajik economy by two billion dollars. Tajikistan, for example, has become "in practice a colony of China". Moreover, China is interested in funding infrastructure projects, such as road construction, electricity lines, and pipelines in the region, which increase Chinese

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13 Interview with Subject MM.
14 Subject UU, email communication to Michael Zboray, March 11, 2014.
15 Interview with Subject PP, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, March 31, 2014.
16 Interview with Subject GG, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, May 21, 2014. Quotations from Russian interviews were translated and verified with the assistance of Olga Sinzin unless otherwise noted.
17 Interview with Subject OO, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, March 14, 2014.
18 For the reference to Tajikistan as a Chinese colony, see, Interview with Subject II, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, April 1, 2014.
leverage in developing countries. In the process, China has an opportunity to replace non-Chinese corporations already operating in the area with strictly Chinese enterprises.

Yet Russia perceives the growth of Chinese influence in the region as less threatening than American or European influence in the post-Soviet space. Along with the threat of terrorism, this perception has helped open the possibility for greater cooperation between Russia and China in the wake of U.S. involvement in Afghanistan and Central Asia.

Russia views the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as a pathway to engage China on issues of mutual concern. As one researcher based in Uzbekistan commented, "the main factor is the closeness of approaches to the formulation of international relations." In other words, the SCO helps Russia and China find common ground on security and economic issues through a legal framework. Such a framework encourages both sides to show restraint with contentious issues by providing an official "structural basis for trust" and serves as a medium for reducing competition between governments.

As a researcher at the Higher School of Economics and faculty member of the Department of World Economy and International Affairs stated:

Firstly, if there were no SCO in reference to Russia and China, relations would not be positive and friendly as they are now. If there were no SCO, Russia and China would already have been squeezed into open geopolitical confrontation [and] open geopolitical rivalry in Central Asia. The existence of the SCO helps

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19 Interview with Subject II, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, April 1, 2014; see also, Interview with Subject OO.
20 Interview with Subject OO.
21 Interview with Subject QQ.
22 Subject UU, email communication to Michael Zboray, March 11, 2014
23 Interview with Subject CC, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, February 14, 2014; Interview with Subject NN, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, March 25, 2014.
24 Interview with Subject QQ; For the SCO as a medium for restraint, see, Interview with Subject VV, interview by Michael Zboray, Kazan, Russia, June 10, 2014; and, Interview with Subject OO. For the need to reduce conflict and increase mutual understanding, see also Interview with Subject Q, interview by Michael Zboray, Beijing, China, March 13, 2015.
smooth this out, the geopolitical rivalry. It does exist, but it is not obvious. Secondly, the relations between the countries would have more of a suspicious quality, the degree of suspicion and the degree of hostility would be significantly higher.²⁵

However, as part of finding mutual ground with China on economic and security issues, Russia needs a mechanism to ensure the "friendly containment" of China, so that China does not encroach too far into Moscow's sphere of influence.²⁶ For example, according to a source at INFO SCO, Russia cannot permit China to dominate the organization and to take a dominant role in the economic affairs of Central Asia.²⁷ In principle, Russia could create a policy of containment for China through the SCO's consensus based forum. As a result of the SCO's unanimous decision-making process as stated in Article 16 of the SCO Charter, Russia can institutionally block Chinese initiatives, such as the SCO Development Bank. The SCO presents Russia with a way to blunt Chinese expansion through institutional obligations.²⁸ The SCO's consensus based decision-making likely helps states hedge against Chinese ambitions by blocking unilateral action. On a purely bilateral level, subject LL suggests that China exhibits too much bargaining power, but within the SCO's multilateral framework, Russia and the states of Central Asia can collectively pressure China without direct confrontation.²⁹ Serving primarily to create discussion and agreement among states, the Council of National Coordinators is the body in the SCO where states can place diplomatic pressure

²⁵ Interview with Subject JJ, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, April 17, 2014.
²⁶ Interview with Subject LL, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, March 20, 2014.
²⁷ Interview with Subject JJ; See also, Interview with Subject EE, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, April 3, 2014.
²⁸ Interview with Subject LL.
²⁹ Interview with Subject LL.
on members.\textsuperscript{30} According to the SCO Charter, the Council holds meetings at least three times a year and is responsible for bringing together foreign ministers, heads of government (prime ministers), and heads of state to make organizational decisions.\textsuperscript{31} It has substantial influence in this capacity and plays a critical role in the decision-making process of the SCO.

\textbf{Geopolitical Hypothesis Results: Confirmatory Data}

\textbf{Qualitative Information}

\textbf{Russian Perception of American Policy}

Despite the end of the Cold War and the attempted "reset" by the Obama administration, Russian leadership still sees the United States as an active geopolitical threat according to a researcher at the Russian Academy of Sciences.\textsuperscript{32} Based on his assessment, the governing political hierarchy does not believe that the United States has effectively changed its foreign policy in twenty-five years, indicating an ongoing rivalry between Russian and American leaders. As an expert on the SCO, he explained that:

The politics of the United States toward the Soviet Union is the politics toward Russia. Nothing has changed. For the United States, Russia is a geopolitical adversary and that remains the case. We see that very clearly . . . In regard to China, relations have greatly improved in comparison to the 60's and 70's . . . cooperation covers all areas: political, military, military technology, and economic cooperation. But with the United States even the smallest traces of cooperation that existed militarily, politically, folded and stopped in connection to the Crimean vote to return to Russia. For this reason, it is not Russia that is worsening relations with the United States. It is the United States that is worsening relations with Russia. The main goal that was set in the 90's was that there should be no government in Russia that would rival the United States. The United States continues to work toward that end.\textsuperscript{33}

\textsuperscript{30} Interview with Subject Q, interview by Michael Zboray, Beijing, China, March 13, 2015. It should be noted that subject Q did not say diplomatic pressure (the author's interpretation), but referred to a process of discussion. Subject Q said that the Council find agreement through discussion.


\textsuperscript{32} Interview with Subject MM.

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.
Based on his assessment, America's objective after the fall of the Soviet Union was to prevent a prosperous and internationally respected Russia from building a functioning state. The perceived responsibility for this failure in Russian-American relations rests solely on the United States and its policies directed at countering Russian influence. America's interference in the government of Ukraine and the subsequent annexation of Crimea was the defining break in relations between America and Russia. Yet in contrast, the relationship between Russia and China is more cooperative and less antagonistic because Russia does not perceive Chinese interference in Russian affairs.

Given the relatively good relations between officials in Moscow and Beijing and the perception of long-standing animosity between American and Russian leaders, the same researcher estimated that the greater part of the cooperation between China and Russia is centered on America's malign intent. He suggested that:

The strengthening in relations between Russia and China is a reaction to the actions of the United States. They have strengthened relations by 60 to 70 percent in response to the actions of the United States. As neighbors of course we should cooperate. We see a mutual benefit in this. But, we also see a mutual threat. The United States sees both China and Russia as its geopolitical adversaries, not rivals, but adversaries that need to be completely torn down. “34

With regard to Central Asia, the United States is also perceived as a divisive force in regional affairs. According to a leading expert in the field of Central Asian and Middle Eastern politics at the Russian Institute of Strategic Studies, American policy in the region is designed to contain Russia by separating it from its former Soviet republics. He stated that:

American politics is aimed at breaking away the region of Central Asia from Russia. All these projects in Central Asia, such as attempts to redirect transport routes from Central Asia, not to the North of Russia, but elsewhere—to the south,

34 Ibid.
for example, for bridge building to Afghanistan; and attempts to build oil pipelines around Russian territory; gas pipelines through the Caspian Sea, from Turkmenistan to Azerbaijan and into Europe. The goal is to destroy relations that had existed between the Soviet Union and this region. China does not do this, at least not openly. The Russian government naturally sees a threat from American politics. From time to time, the governments in the region also claim that American authorities are participating in attempts to overturn governments—both successfully, as in Kyrgyzstan, and without success, as in 2005 in Andijan in Uzbekistan. America tries to establish a segment of the population as pro-American. But China does not to create this type of segment in the population.\textsuperscript{35}

China's reliability as a partner is again based on its non-interference in the internal politics of other states and particularly in the countries along Russia's southern periphery.\textsuperscript{36} Russia, for example, does not believe China has supported color revolutions, such as the 2005 Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan. In fact, Russian Security Council Secretary Nikolay Patrushev and Yang Jiechi, a member of the State Council of China, announced a "readiness" to prevent such events from occurring in the region.\textsuperscript{37} This position is an important factor in Russian-Chinese relations because of Moscow's ongoing policy in Central Asia that is directed toward safeguarding regional influence. Russia has steadfastly tried to maintain its historical, cultural, political, and economic influences in Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, which have been typically associated with Russia's imperial (tsarist and Soviet) legacy and the spread of the Russian diaspora across Central Asia.\textsuperscript{38}

In the judgment of subject RR, as Russia's conflict with the West continues, it will increasingly turn toward China for support.\textsuperscript{39} Subject RR continued to explain that unlike

\textsuperscript{35} Interview with Subject RR, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, April 16, 2014.
\textsuperscript{36} For additional commentary on U.S. interference in governmental change, see, Interview with Subject LL.
\textsuperscript{38} Interview with Subject QQ; For additional information on the preservation of Russian influence in Central Asia, see, Interview with Subject OO; Interview with Subject HH, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, June 2, 2014; and, Interview with Subject GG.
\textsuperscript{39} Interview with Subject RR, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, April 16, 2015.
the United States and Europe, China has less anti-Russian bias in its society. The Chinese are choosing not to emphasize past tensions with Russia and do not place obstacles in the way of Russian business interests. The EU, for example, tried to block Russian aircraft manufactures from purchasing a 5 percent share in Airbus and the EU continues to develop an energy policy that is less reliant on Russian sources.  

The Role of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and American Power

According to three analysts from the Institute of CIS Countries, *Russia in Global Affairs*, and the Russian Institute for Strategic Studies, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization helps Russia compete with the United States and Europe. China is generally viewed within this relationship as a partner that supports Russia in its confrontation with the West and avoids publicly criticizing Russia on geopolitical matters, such as Ukraine.

The main goal of Russian cooperation with China in the SCO is the preservation of Russia's influence in Central Asia, which was placed in jeopardy by America's presence in the region. I interviewed one researcher, who focuses on Central Asian based institutions, such as the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Eurasian Economic Community, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, one of the SCO's objectives "is to counteract the USA and their allies in their plans for the strengthening of control in Eurasia."

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40 Ibid.
41 For a general statement about competition with the West see, Interview with Subject OO; Interview with Subject QQ; and Interview with Subject RR.
42 Interview with Subject QQ. For information on how Russia wants the SCO to wield political significance, see, Interview with Subject II.
43 Interview with Subject II; For Russian and Chinese fear of the USA in Central Asia, see, Interview with Subject FF. interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, February 27, 2014.
44 Subject UU, email communication to Michael Zboray, March 11, 2014.
Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute for Far Eastern Studies. The subject similarly commented that NATO's operations in Afghanistan and activities in the heart of Central Asia undoubtedly played a role in fostering closer cooperation between SCO members. Consequently, Russia may have seen the role of United States as a potential wedge between members. Subject MM suggested that America's application for observer status in 2005 was denied on the grounds that the United States was not actually interested in working with the SCO and would try to disrupt the organization. Instead, the subject suggested that the United States was supposedly more focused on interjecting itself to create artificial conflict that would inhibit effective cooperation in the SCO. The researcher specifically said that "the main task of the United States in the SCO would be to ruin the organization, which is why Russia and other countries were also against it." America would have introduced new points of tension into the institutional dynamic of the SCO at a time when the organization was still solidifying ways in which members could work together.

On a global level, Russia sees the SCO as a step toward a multipolar international system and an "alternative to the Western world." The organization is seen as part of a "general [anti-American] trend in Russian foreign policy," which according to a senior reporter who publishes with The Moscow Times, is one of the leading forces driving Russia in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. From the perspective of a researcher with the Higher School of Economics at the Faculty of World Economy and International

45 Interview with Subject NN.
46 Interview with Subject MM.
47 Ibid.
48 Interview with Subject NN.
49 Interview with Subject PP, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, March 31, 2014; For information on a multipolar world, see, Interview with Subject NN.
50 Interview with Subject PP.
Affairs, the SCO is a global response to the hegemony of the United States, which coincides with Russia's turn toward Asia and the regional balance of power in the Asia-Pacific. Russia sees China as a country with similar interests in the "global game" in which both countries seek multipolarity in the context of preponderant American power.51 Russia perceives a multipolar system as a world where it is an independent actor in global politics and where it uses the SCO toward this end. As a leader in the organization, Russia can put forth or sponsor ideas for systemic change. At a dual meeting of BRICS and SCO members in 2009, Russia encouraged the SCO to begin replacing the dollar as the international reserve currency. President Medvedev said, "There can be no successful currency system, and particularly a global system, if the financial instruments that are used are denominated in only one currency."52 His top economic policy aide, Arkady Dvorkovich also stressed that China, Brazil, and India purchase rubles instead of dollars as part of their currency reserves.53

In addition to reducing the economic status of the dollar, Subject QQ, a reporter and political analysts on Russian affairs in Central Asia interpreted the SCO's Peace Missions as another tool for symbolically challenging American power. In his opinion, these exercises are intended to demonstrate Russia's military standing. He stated that these operations are "attempts by our generals to win prior wars," indicating that the Russian military perceives these armed operations as a statement against American hegemony.54

51 Interview with Subject LL; and, Interview with Subject DD.
53 Ibid.
54 Interview with Subject QQ.
Quantitative Information

According to Graph 1, there was considerable support for the geopolitical hypothesis from respondents. The responses were mostly positive with 70 percent of the rankings falling between positive one and positive four when respondents were considering statements consistent with the geopolitical argument. Only 10 percent of the responses were neutral indicating a high degree of certainty. However, out of a total of thirty values, interviewees assigned a ranking of positive four only three times for realist statements. The two most common responses were positive one and positive three, representing about 27 percent and 20 percent of the rankings respectively. The majority of positive responses (57 percent) was between one and two, representing 40 percent of the total number of assigned rankings. The median value of the realist statements was positive one, which indicates that the central tendency among respondents was mild agreement relative to other statements. The results of the quantitative data suggest that the Q-sort respondents viewed the realist hypothesis the most strongly in comparison to the other explanations for Russian participation in the SCO.
Geopolitical Hypothesis Results: Contradictory Data

Qualitative Information

The contradictory data is largely based on the perception that a counterbalancing strategy against the United States contradicts Russia's regional interests, and that such a strategy is either absent in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization or ineffectual. The information was classified as contradictory if it described behavior that was contrary to the expectation of a counterbalancing power. Cooperation with the United States in the greater Central Asian region, for example, was considered contradictory. In addition, information that deprioritized Russia's interest in expelling the United States from the SCO area was regarded as contradictory.

According to a senior analyst at the Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia's apprehension of the United States in Central Asia does not automatically signal counterbalancing intentions.\textsuperscript{55} Despite high-level voices such as Leonid Kalashnikov, a

\textsuperscript{55} Interview with Subject GG.
member of the Russian Duma, who expressed his dismay over Putin permitting America to use Russian territory to ship supplies to Afghanistan through the Northern Distribution Network, this route remained open to American transport between February 2009 and May 2015.\textsuperscript{56} In addition, the rejection of America's application for observer status in the SCO is also not a significant sign of soft balancing because of the organization's Eurasian membership. Subject SS, who works for INFO SCO thought that Russia and other SCO members simply did not see a natural place for the United States in an organization consisting only of neighboring states.\textsuperscript{57}

In terms of the hierarchy of Russian interests, America may present more of a benefit to the Federation than a danger. In the opinion of an SCO researcher at the Russian Academy of Sciences, the acute danger posed by regional security problems, such as terrorism and illicit drug trafficking were more important than the possibility of more remote geopolitical threats from the United States.\textsuperscript{58} In particular, Russian politicians welcomed the United States' entry into Afghanistan because American and Russian leaders share an abiding interest in defeating the Taliban and in reducing the flow of narcotics from Afghanistan's poppy fields.\textsuperscript{59} These are common and clear threats that "influence upon the national interest of Russia" and make international action in Afghanistan understandable.\textsuperscript{60} The American military commitment to Afghanistan helps stabilize these tangible security challenges for Russia causing leaders in Moscow not to

\textsuperscript{56} For the comments of Kalashnikov, Joshua Kucera, "Putin: We're Not Going to Block U.S. Military Transit," August 18, 2014, accessed, August 18, 2015, http://www.eurasianet.org/node/69601. For the beginning and end date of the NDN, see, John C.K. Daly, "Russia shuts Northern Distribution Network," The Jamestown Foundation, June 15, 2015, accessed August 18, 2015, http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=44034&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=7&cHash=e5432484b967adaa9a0305dc2319c64#.VdOf6bJViko.

\textsuperscript{57} Interview with Subject SS, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, April 24, 2014.

\textsuperscript{58} Interview with Subject HH.

\textsuperscript{59} Interview with Subject GG.

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
want the United States to completely withdraw from the region. According to a researcher at the Russian Academy of Sciences, these overlapping objectives were the basis for SCO-based cooperative initiatives between Western nations and Russia. He stressed that:

Many view cooperation through the SCO as countering the expansion of the European states and the United States into Central Asia. And the issue they generally cite as an example of this is the issue the SCO raised with the United States—that the United States must very clearly and precisely state its intentions as to when they would withdraw their troops . . . But that was not the primary intent, because the SCO frequently helped the United States and ISAF troops.. He added that SCO members have helped the United States by arranging troop itineraries; coordinating American troop movements and the placement of military bases; and, resupplying military forces. In terms of military resupply, he cited Russia's agreement with NATO that allowed the United States to use Russian territory and, specifically, the city of Ulyanovsk as a supply hub for the combat mission in Afghanistan.

In reference to the SCO military exercises, a political analyst and reporter on Central Asian affairs suggested that the SCO's Peace Missions were not necessarily threatening to the United States. He further suggested that any contrary assessment would be designed to fuel greater defense spending on behalf of the American military, rather than being an honest evaluation of these operations. Specifically, he claimed that "the

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61 Interview with Subject JJ, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, April 17, 2014; See also, Interview with Subject OO.
62 Interview with Subject MM.
63 Ibid.
64 Ibid.
combined danger and combined military threat between Russia and China does not exist.

Subject PP, a well-respected Russian reporter, also suggested that these exercises were not directed at the United States. The SCO military operations are too small in size to be training exercises for rehearsing war game scenarios against the United States. He said that "the level of these exercises is very limited," which reduces their strategic value. He added: "Our countries [Russia and China] and our generals are not ready to work together." The reporter's claim about the challenges of military cooperation may have validity. Joseph Nye states that Russia's commitment to the "right to first use of nuclear weapons" is likely motivated in part by "anxiety over China's conventional military superiority." In addition, Professor Anatoliy Bolyatko, a former Soviet major general, stated that in the past only a small number of Chinese soldiers have trained in Russia and contacts between armed forces have usually just occurred between senior officers.

In conjunction with these positions, a member of the Valdai Club likewise concluded that:

American politics is a factor for Chinese-Russian relations, but it is only one of the factors, not the main reason for the existence of the SCO, and it is not the main portion of the SCO's agenda. The SCO allows Russia and China to make joint statements that the United States must leave the region, but this does not dominate the agenda. It is only one of the issues.

He also believes that American actions across the greater area of Central Asia are in the long-term interest of the Russian government, but he presented a larger problem for

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65 Interview with Subject QQ.
66 Interview with Subject PP.
67 Ibid.
70 Interview with Subject JJ.
China. He thinks that tensions between the United States and China are more significant through the lens of the SCO than conflict between the United States and Russia. As a result, he said that the Chinese are more eager than the Russians to use the SCO as an instrument to dislodge American influence in Central Asia. A senior researcher at the Center for Strategic Conjecture reiterated this viewpoint by saying that:

Under no circumstances is the SCO against the United States. . . . We understand that the SCO was created so that China could become a global actor. . . . If the Chinese try to transform the SCO into an instrument of influence, then Russia will block that path. . . . In the SCO, there is nothing in reality or anything in declarative statements that contain an anti-American orientation.

He implied that as an originally Chinese concept, the SCO was founded more on China's global ambitions rather than on Russia's intent to contain American influence. Leaders in Moscow are more focused on blunting China's advances into Central Asia than precluding American expansion.

Quantitative Information

There was a small amount of disagreement with the geopolitical hypothesis in terms of the Q data in Graph 2. Of the 30 rankings, 20 percent of the results were negative. Specifically, there were three values of negative four and three values of negative one. The results suggest that there was a small group of people who did not think that the SCO was about Russian counterbalancing. The majority of people who responded negatively had a high degree of certainty that Russian motives in the SCO did not concern the United States. One respondent from the Federation's Council's Committee on Foreign Affairs drew a stark distinction between two of the realist statements. Although he ranked statement 10 regarding the creation of multipolar world

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71 Interview with Subject JJ.
72 Interview with Subject EE.
in the positive one category, he assigned a negative four to statement 11 concerning countering American influence. Even though Russia may see the SCO as an instrument to augment its position in the world, it may not necessarily come at the expense of cooperation with the United States.

![Graph 2: Geopolitical Hypothesis](image)

**Economic Hypothesis on Trade Results: Confirmatory Data**

**Qualitative Information**

**Russia's Economic Objectives in Relation to China**

According to an official in the Federation Council's Committee on International Affairs, Russians believe that economic cooperation with China will improve their country's living standards. He explained: "You can't say that Russia doesn't want free trade with China or China doesn't want free trade with Russia. . . .You do need a stable partner economically. . . . It's just about earning money."\(^{73}\) When discussing whether military or economic cooperation with China is important, he believes that Russia focuses

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\(^{73}\) Interview with Subject KK, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, May 30, 2014.
on ensuring a suitable living standard, but "both fields are important." Toward this end, Russian cooperation with China has been based on the availability of Russian energy resources and Russia's capacity to exploit oil and gas for the state's maximum benefit. Following the instability in Ukraine, Russia's traditional export market in Western Europe became less reliable and increased the need to find alternative places for trading gas.

In terms of Central Asia, one of Russia's economic objectives has been greater control over the rich deposits of uranium in Kazakhstan, which contain 27 percent of the world's total supply. Historically, economic cooperation has also involved sales between the Russian defense industry and the Chinese military. However, according to a member of the Valdai Club and scholar at the Higher School of Economics, the Chinese have improved their capacity for replicating Russian technology and designs, which may have reduced the profitability for Russian arms companies. His opinion on the reduced profitability of the Russian arms industry has some basis in fact. Tai Ming Cheung writes that Russian military officials wanted to jointly develop fighter aircraft, warships, and electronic systems with the Chinese, but "the discovery of illicit Chinese copying appears to have scuppered these initiatives in the past few years." He also writes that the Chinese defense industry has been secretly adapting Russian weapons systems for domestic production by substituting Russian parts with either Chinese or foreign ones. Specifically, "platforms such as the Su-27 fighter and advanced defense electronic

74 Ibid.
75 Interview with Subject HH; and Interview with Subject QQ.
76 Interview with Subject II.
78 Interview with Subject JJ.
systems such as the radar and data-link systems . . . have all been successfully copied by
China, much to the consternation of Russian suppliers."\(^8^0\)

Russia's economic objective within this context is to supply oil and gas to as
many countries as possible, such as those in South East Asia, Japan, and South Korea.\(^8^1\)
China is naturally an important part of Russia's larger plan for expanding its energy sales
in Asia.\(^8^2\) Moreover, by expanding its market share into a variety of Asian countries,
Russia is less reliant on Chinese demand, which helps prevent a strictly asymmetric
relationship.\(^8^3\) Russian energy exports to China hinge on Russia's ongoing need for new
gas contracts with neighboring countries and continued Chinese demand for cleaner
burning fossil fuels, such as natural gas.\(^8^4\) China also depends on external sources of
energy, which means that it must import 70 percent of its oil and 30 percent of its gas for
its economy.\(^8^5\) Yet Russian-Chinese energy cooperation has encountered pricing
obstacles with Russian gas companies demanding higher prices than the Chinese
government is willing to pay.\(^8^6\) Russia receives about $358 per 1,000 cubic meters of gas
from Western countries, which is almost twice the price China is willing to negotiate.\(^8^7\)
According to a researcher at the Institute for CIS Countries, China is trying to negotiate a
price closer to $200 per 1,000 cubic meters by leveraging Russia's uncertainty in the
European market.\(^8^8\)

\(^8^0\) Ibid., 140.
\(^8^1\) For the general importance of oil and gas, see, Interview with Subject JJ.
\(^8^2\) Ibid.
\(^8^3\) Ibid.
\(^8^4\) Interview with Subject NN.
\(^8^5\) Interview with Subject HH.
\(^8^6\) Interview with Subject OO.
\(^8^7\) For the dollar amount Russia wants at which Russian wants to sell gas, see, Interview with Subject GG.
According Subject OO, China is only willing to pay $200 per unit for gas.
\(^8^8\) Interview with Subject OO.
President Putin's energy plans for China have also encountered recent obstacles based on a reduction of Chinese demand for natural gas. Chinese energy consumption is "the lowest it has been in this century," which will likely precipitate lower price levels if a similar level of supply for oil and natural gas remains. As a further complication for Russia, China is planning to develop domestic shale gas reserves and to import terminals designed to receive liquefied natural gas from other countries. These conditions will likely give China an increasing amount of negotiating leverage over Russia when discussing energy sales.

The Role of the SCO in Meeting Russia's Economic Objectives

According to a scholar of political science and specialist in Islamic affairs in Russia and Central Asia, the SCO is an economic organization. Moreover, according to three other experts, the first priority of both Russia and China in their relationship is economic cooperation involving natural gas, oil, and infrastructure. Given the importance of the hydrocarbon industry for the Russian economy, it is important for Russia to maintain a reliable group of investors to support the energy sector. China offers Russia a strong and stable partner to help finance its energy production and to "exchange raw materials." China can lend money to Russia on better terms than European banks, which can facilitate Russia's economic development notably in terms of building oil and

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81 Interview with Subject II.
82 Interview with Subject TT, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, April 14, 2014; Subject UU, email communication to Michael Zboray, March 11, 2014; and Interview with Subject VV.
83 Interview with Subject VV.
gas pipelines.\textsuperscript{94} The SCO's Interbank Consortium could help facilitate these transactions given that it consists of one financial institution from each SCO country. This network helps the SCO finance the construction of infrastructure and other new potential projects by providing banking services and funds for economic development.\textsuperscript{95} However, the SCO is still in the early stages of developing concrete steps toward energy cooperation despite President Putin's earlier plan for an energy club uniting SCO energy producers and consumers.\textsuperscript{96}

With regard to trade, Russia is mainly concerned with developing infrastructure, such as roads and railways that will help connect SCO members economically. Specifically, Russia wants "strategic railway roads" that can serve as a "bridge between China and Europe. . . . It is an extremely expensive project. So, if China gives its money, why not."\textsuperscript{97} In principle, this infrastructure network will help stimulate the Russian economy and will provide a larger market for Chinese goods in Russia and Central Asia. Russia and China reportedly wanted to create a free trade zone along these travel routes, but the SCO's Central Asian members were anxious about the consequences of an oversupply of cheap Chinese goods in their markets.\textsuperscript{98} As Alexander Cooley notes, there is "high degree of paranoia about Chinese economic intentions" in the public perception in the region. Local merchants along Central Asia's border with China believe that they are losing their profits to Chinese merchants.\textsuperscript{99}

\textsuperscript{94} Interview with Subject RR.
\textsuperscript{96} Interview with Subject MM.
\textsuperscript{97} Interview with Subject GG.
\textsuperscript{98} Interview with Subject MM.
Quantitative Information

Respondents supported the liberal hypothesis in approximately half of the cases when they selected a liberal statement according to Graph 3. Overall, 30 percent of the 105 liberal rankings were positive. However, 20 percent of the values were neutral, which may indicate an elevated level of uncertainty within the group. About 15 percent of the assigned Q-values were very supportive with values of either positive three or four. In terms of mildly supportive values, respondents used positive one and positive two about 22 percent of the time when evaluating liberal statements. The most positively ranked statement focused on the importance of the linkage between the Russian and Chinese economies (statement 6) with a total of eight positive values ranging from one to four. This result suggests that there is a general economic motivation for Russia in the SCO. Three of those rankings were very supportive with values of three and four. The median score, however, was zero indicating that the respondents were highly divided overall. Interviewees were split in their opinions of the economic hypothesis with statements on international trade and the construction of infrastructure also receiving median scores of zero.
Economic Hypothesis Results: Contradictory Data

Qualitative Information

The Difficulty of Economic Cooperation

According to one Tashkent-based analyst who studies the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, "Russia does not have an understanding of the economic meaning of relations with China and therefore no strategy, no plan of action."\textsuperscript{100} He suggested that Russia does not view its relationship with China through an economic lens and does not have a serious plan for facilitating commerce with China. This may be partly due to Russia's resource-based economy that offers few manufactured goods for Chinese consumers and businesses. This type of one-sided reliance on Chinese demand prevents the Russian economy from developing in other areas and hinders trade relations in general.\textsuperscript{101}

\textsuperscript{100} Subject UU, email communication to Michael Zboray, March 11, 2014
\textsuperscript{101} Interview with Subject RR.
Central Asia has also been an impediment to trade between Russia and China in the SCO because of Central Asia's underdeveloped economies. The Central Asian members have objected to trade liberalization with China from the fear that a glut of Chinese products would slow the development of their own economies. According to subject SS, they have successfully prevented multilateral trade negotiations from occurring by voicing this objection through the SCO's consensus-based decision-making process. Russia is also concerned that these products might draw money away from the Russian economy as Central Asian migrants send money home to purchase Chinese-made goods. According to an academic at the Higher School of Economics:

Russians make jobs because many of the people from Central Asian countries can come to Russia and work here . . . Russia will never tolerate a situation where the Central Asian market is open to Chinese goods. People from Central Asian countries go to Russia to make money to buy these goods. So, Russia is not about feeding China, and that explains the Russian interest.

In addition, energy relations have remained on a purely bilateral level between Russia and China and have taken place outside the framework of the SCO. In the opinion of a leading expert at the Russian Academy of Sciences, there have been no significant SCO economic projects in the last twelve years. Based on this assessment, the SCO does not likely influence the sale of oil and natural gas since these sales mostly occur outside of the organization. However, this assessment might not be completely accurate. As discussed in Chapter 3, the SCO Business Council has in fact sponsored trade, agricultural, and communication's projects. One example is the SCO High-Speed

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102 Interview with Subject SS.
103 Interview with Subject HH.
104 Interview with Subject SS.
105 Interview with Subject LL.
106 Interview with Subject QQ; Interview with Subject GG; Interview with Subject MM; Interview with Subject FF; Interview with Subject EE.
107 Interview with Subject GG.
108 Interview with Subject II; and Interview with Subject QQ.
Data Highway Project connecting Almaty, Astana, Samara, and Tashkent through a high-speed fiber optic cable capable of transmitting information at a rate of 2.5 GB per second.¹⁰⁹

In terms of energy cooperation, the Chinese government and Rosneft recently signed a 30-year gas contract worth $400 billion, which is illustrative of the purely bilateral context of energy relations.¹¹⁰ Moreover, China is in the process of shifting its economy from "energy-guzzling heavy industry" to "leaner service sectors" that do not require large amounts of fuel.¹¹¹ This economic shift has likely stalled the gas deal between Russia and China. However, according to a researcher at the Higher School of Economics, this type of integration may simply develop over a very long period of time. Energy is a very challenging economic sphere to institutionalize for any organization. An example is the European Union, which has seen tremendous advancement in the continent's integration, but has also witnessed a clear lack of progress regarding a common energy policy.¹¹²

Challenge to Russian Leadership in the Region

According to the subjects that I interviewed, Russia also believes that China is using the SCO to exert greater economic influence in Central Asia in an attempt to control the region politically. They are concerned that China could translate its financial

¹¹² Interview with Subject LL.
resources through investments and loans into political leverage over Russia. As one researcher at the Russian Institute of Strategic Studies (RISS) explained, "Within the SCO, the one with the most money will determine the rules of the game". As a consequence, Russia interprets China's plans for trade liberalization as an indirect way of controlling the SCO and as a method of converting Central Asia into a de facto part of China. Referring to this approach, subject JJ at the Higher School of Economics stated that "this is already happening with Kyrgyzstan . . . Russia does not want to allow the SCO to focus on economics. Economic issues in the Central Asian region should both be discussed and promoted in the Eurasian Economic Community (EuAsEC)." If Russia wants to compete with China economically, it will need to limit its internal market through organizations that exclusively comprise states of the former Soviet Union. Subsequently, the EuAsEC excludes China, yet still incorporates every other SCO member including Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. By imposing trade barriers against China with neighboring SCO states, Russia may be able to challenge China's economic expansion in effective ways. The Eurasian Union, for example, was designed to restrict Chinese trade through customs fees for Chinese businesses wanting to export goods to the Union's members. Based on an interview with subject QQ, another goal of the organization was to prevent the re-export of Chinese goods from Kyrgyzstan to Russia, thereby directly undercutting Chinese support for an SCO trade agenda.

113 Interview with Subject RR.
114 Interview with Subject JJ; Interview with Subject AA, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, June 19, 2014.
115 Interview with Subject JJ, interview by Michael Zboray, Moscow, Russia, April 17, 2014.
116 For Russia's need to limit internal markets, see, Interview with Subject RR.
117 Interview with Subject HH.
118 Interview with Subject QQ.
A senior reporter and political analysts, who publishes for *Russia in Global Affairs*, similarly added that "Moscow views China's economic projects very cautiously because China wants to legalize its economic expansion into Central Asia through the SCO."\(^{119}\) From this perspective, Chinese exports have become a "security threat" in the context of Central Asia and the former Soviet Union as officials in Moscow believe they have greater power over trade deals through bilateral negotiations.\(^{120}\) Russia also has a negative perception of the Chinese Silk Road Economic Belt because it diverts trade away from Russia and the Russian-led Eurasian Union and transmits Chinese influence by helping modernize Central Asia.\(^{121}\)

Russia has similarly frowned upon China's idea of the SCO Development Bank because of a high level of Chinese funding for the project, which has already totaled $10 billion in preferential loans.\(^{122}\) Chinese negotiators proposed that each country's economic size and financial contribution to the bank would determine how many votes a country could cast in the bank's decision-making process. Given that China's nominal GDP of $9.24 trillion far exceeds Russia's nominal GDP of about $2 trillion, China would clearly have held the ranking position in the institution.\(^{123}\) Based on this situation, Russia most likely believed that such a structure would have essentially legitimized Chinese influence in Central Asia in order to diminish Moscow's capacity to respond to Chinese investment.

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119 Ibid.
120 Interview with Subject JJ.
121 Interview with Subject RR; and Interview with Subject FF.
Quantitative Information

Based on Graph 4, the second half of the Q data on the economic hypothesis presented contradictory results. When considering the liberal statements, interview subjects ranked them negatively 43 percent of the time. More specifically, respondents ranked them very negatively 16 percent of the time and mildly negatively 27 percent of the time when considering liberal positions. As a whole, the group was most negative on statements 3 and 7 regarding the increased use of oil and natural gas. Statement 7 received a median score of negative three and statement 3 received a median score of negative one. Only two subjects ranked statement three on the sale of oil and gas highly positively, while the majority assigned negative values ranging from negative one to negative three. These results suggest that the sale of Russian hydrocarbon resources is not a critical factor in relations between Russia and China in the SCO.
Internal Security Hypothesis Results: Confirmatory Data

Qualitative Information

Threats to the Internal Security of Russia

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia faced emergent threats along new fronts that did not involve the United States or its Western allies in NATO. The perception of an existential threat from within the newly created Federation became real for Russians in the form of separatists regions and acts of terrorism. There were a number of Russian regions that wanted to declare their independence and to become self-contained political entities such as Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Chechnya, and Kalmykia. According to a journalist who has reported on Russia's security issues, "the threat of the collapse of Russia was very real in the 1990's. Russia passed through two bloody wars in Chechnya. . . . and we [still] have huge problems in the Northern Caucasus . . . we have such separatists groups of radical Islamists everywhere . . . . Russia will have these problems for the next few decades." The Volgograd bombing shortly before the 2014 Olympics in Sochi and the ongoing unrest in Dagestan, a region that still considers itself a colony of Russia, are salient examples of how these internal threats still manifest themselves in Russia.

The conflict in the Northern Caucasus, according to subject CC was funded in part by Islamic charities, through which Arab benefactors were able to transfer money into the conflict-torn region. Specifically, Russians perceive Saudi Arabia as the primary source of radical Islamic ideology, not only in Russia, but also across Central

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124 Interview with Subject HH.
125 Interview with Subject PP.
126 Interview with Subject FF; Interview with Subject SS.
127 Interview with Subject CC.
Asia and the Middle East. They also believe that Saudi Arabia has direct relations with terrorist communities in the Northern Caucasus, as well as being a chief financer of global terrorism in general. A member of the Valdai Club, a specialist in international affairs, described Saudi Arabia "[as] one of the major exporters of terrorism, [an] exporter of Wahhabist ideology, radical Islam to Russia and to the countries of the Middle East and Central Asia." He also contends that Russia sees different sources of terrorism in the world. With regard to the geopolitical conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran, Russia supports Iran—not necessarily because the Iranian regime is anti-American, but because Saudi-sponsored terrorism is more damaging to Russia than Iranian terrorism. In his assessment, Iran's support for radical Islam has been confined mainly to anti-Israeli operations and groups like Hezbollah, unlike Saudi-funded terrorism that has been aimed directly at Russia. Before the Olympics in Sochi, for example, there was a report that if Russia did not withdraw its support for the Assad regime, Saudi Arabia could facilitate terror attacks through proxies in Chechnya. According to As-Safir, a Lebanese newspaper linked to Hezbollah, Prince Bandar head of Saudi Arabia's intelligence services allegedly said to President Putin, "I can give you a guarantee to

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128 Interview with Subject JJ.
129 Ibid; For a statement on Saudi-supported Wahhabism in Dagestan, see, Interview with Subject QQ.
protect the Winter Olympics next year. The Chechen groups that threaten the security of the games are controlled by us."\textsuperscript{132}

The claim of subject JJ that Iranian terrorism is mainly focused on Israel has some basis. Since Iran's revolution in 1979, the country has been "one of the world's most active sponsors of terrorism."\textsuperscript{133} According to Ray Takeyh, Senior Fellow in Middle East Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, Ruhollah Moosavi Khomeini, the original leader of the revolution thought that the "creation of a Jewish state that displaced Palestinian Muslims" was an "unforgivable sin."\textsuperscript{134} Iran saw Israel as the center of a struggle between "good and evil, light and dark" for the purity of Islamic civilization that required the "liberation of Jerusalem" from Jewish hands.\textsuperscript{135} Iran uses proxy forces toward its revolutionary ends including Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah, all of which have been in long-term conflict with the Jewish state.\textsuperscript{136} However, Iran's sponsoring of terrorism does have a wider dimension that extends to Syria, Iraq, Latin America, and Africa.\textsuperscript{137} While Iran has reduced its operations in European and Gulf

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{136} Ibid., 87-89.
\end{thebibliography}
states, Iranian terrorism is heavily directed at the United States, a close ally of Israel. In Syria, for example, Iranian support for the Assad regime has a strong anti-American component. In 2014, Alaeddin Borujerdi, chairman of the Iranian parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee and "an influential government insider" said that "We have won . . . . The regime will stay. The Americans have lost [the conflict in Syria]." In Iraq, where Iranians have facilitated attacks against American forces, the Iranian government uses Shia organizations, such as the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq, the Badr organization, and the Dawah political party. In addition, Iran uses its Revolutionary Guard and the Qods Force to provide weapons and training to militant groups as part "a robust program to exert influence in Iraq in order to limit American power-projection capability in the Middle East, [to] ensure the Iraqi government does not pose a threat to Iran, and [to] build a reliable platform for projecting influence further abroad [sic]." American leaders and commentators have also voiced concerns due to the Obama administration's nuclear agreement with Iran. In response to the transfer of money to the Iranian government for sanctions relief, David Brooks writes that "Iran will use its $150 billion windfall to spread terror around the region and exert its power."

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Importance of Central Asia to Russian Internal Security

According to subject AA, Russia prioritizes the stability of Central Asia in terms of the region’s intractable problems such as Jihadi terrorism and drug-trafficking. Central Asia occupies an important position in the realm of Russian national security because it acts as a buffer between Russia and the spread of Jihadi radicalism. The Russian military maintains the 201st Motor Rifle Division in Tajikistan toward this end and to prevent Taliban infiltration into Tajikistan. Russia has to ensure that these threats do not cross from Central Asia into the Northern Caucasus from where they could spread into other areas of the country including other Islamic areas, such as Tatarstan. Military conflict in Central Asia could also cause a stream of refugees into Russia that could place additional financial burdens on the state and strain the resources of local government. With the recent attacks in Paris in November 2015, it is also possible that a certain, albeit small percentage of these refugees, could be terrorists.

The strength of Central Asian governments is another factor in the security calculus. The "pre-failed" states of Central Asia are politically fragile and have weakly institutionalized governments that are especially vulnerable to "soft security" issues, such as terrorism and social upheaval. According to subject JJ, a researcher at the Higher School of Economics, and subject GG, an SCO researcher at the Russian Academy of

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142 Interview with Subject AA. He also references to the fear of western democracy.

143 Interview with Subject SS; For a general statement on competition between Russia and the Islamic world, see, Interview with Subject OO.

144 Interview with Subject SS.

145 Subject UU, email communication to Michael Zboray, March 11, 2014; see also, Interview with Subject OO.

146 Interview with Subject GG.

147 Interview with Subject JJ; see also, Interview with Subject DD.
Sciences, they suffer from "economic and social problems," such as poverty, and lack a clear mechanism for the peaceful transition of power.\textsuperscript{148} In opinion of subject JJ, Uzbekistan, for example, is a highly authoritarian state, where there will likely be conflict over the government's leadership after President Islam Karimov dies. The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and Hizb ut-Tahrir (HuT) are radical extremist groups that may take advantage of such a situation by encouraging a civil war.\textsuperscript{149} HuT, a cell-type organization, is also present in Russia and is extremely radical in its ideology. Although HuT claims it is non-violent, they are reportedly fervent in their belief in an Islamic state.\textsuperscript{150} Yet both organizations could threaten Russia by recruiting members through economic incentives and offering transportation into Russia.\textsuperscript{151} Subject JJ also suggested that in Kyrgyzstan, government leaders in Bishkek are hardly able to control their own country. The state is essentially divided in two with the northern and southern portions operating almost independently.\textsuperscript{152} He suggests that Kazakhstan also faces the


\textsuperscript{150} Interview with Subject CC.

\textsuperscript{151} Interview with Subject QQ. For a general statement on Central Asia being a supplier of terrorists, see, Interview with Subject HH.

\textsuperscript{152} Interview with Subject JJ. For additional information on the political divide between North and South Kyrgyzstan, see, Valentinas Mite, "Kyrgyzstan: North-South Divide is a Factor in Politics," \textit{Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty}, March 24, 2005, accessed August 25, 2015, \url{http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1058107.html}; Bruce Pannier, "Future Kyrgyz Government Faces
problem of Islamization and potential conflict over who will control the country's abundant energy resources in the event of President Nazarbayev's death. Finally, Tajikistan is a country with endemic corruption, where state institutions are unaccountable and fail to work properly; however, in each of these cases, security and terrorism are the main problems in subject JJ's judgment. He also says that in comparison to the 1990s, this threat of terrorism has grown, given the weakness of each state in the region and poor socio-economic conditions.

According to a senior editor at the Russian Institute of Strategic Studies, Central Asia is also partially unstable due to authoritarian policies in the region. States in Central Asia create the conditions for extremism due to their lack of voter participation in fair elections, which drives the roots of dissent underground. This dissent can involve Islamism and can pose a danger to the current governments in terms of establishing a

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154 Subject JJ.
caliphate. Specifically, there are groups that would prefer to impose religious authority as opposed to a secular legal system.\textsuperscript{155}

In addition, Saudi Arabia tries to exert its influence on Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and the other states of Central Asia through their financial largesse and the region's porous borders.\textsuperscript{156} As a result, governments in Russia and in neighboring countries monitor the political and economic activity in the Persian Gulf, since terrorists from the Middle East are able to travel to Central Asia and Russia.\textsuperscript{157} According to a journalist and political analyst who frequently writes about Central Asian affairs, "Russian intelligence services are very concerned with what Saudi Arabia and Qatar finance . . . In all of Central Asia, there is the influence of Salafist émigrés originating from Saudi Arabia."\textsuperscript{158} The Saudis have large amounts of liquid cash from selling oil on the world market, and they use their assets to support regional Islamic activities by distributing literature designed to promote their centrality in the Islamic world.\textsuperscript{159} The Saudis try to propagate their own Hanbali understanding of Islam that contrasts with the Hanafi school of Islam commonly found in Central Asia. Hanbali Islam tends to be the most conservative school of Islam, while Hanafi Islam is more liberal in its doctrines.\textsuperscript{160}

However, Uzbekistan is especially cautious of Wahhabism because of emigration to Saudi Arabia by its citizens and the possibility that Saudi Arabia could influence the

\textsuperscript{155} Interview with Subject RR. The subject also talks about nationalist forces that want to withdraw state boundaries.

\textsuperscript{156} Interview with Subject II; For information on Uzbekistan, see, Interview with Subject NN.

\textsuperscript{157} Interview with Subject JJ.

\textsuperscript{158} Interview with Subject QQ.

\textsuperscript{159} Interview with Subject RR.

From Russia's perspective, leaders in Moscow would prefer local communities to handle the teaching and practice of Islam, rather than have outside influences dictate what Muslims should believe.

Afghanistan is also a serious military threat to Russia which will increase with the possible withdrawal of coalition troops. According to estimates, "it will take maybe one year or a year and a few months for the Taliban to move through the area and to begin deployment in Central Asia." Subject PP added that "Central Asian countries are weak authoritarian regimes with . . . . an unbelievable level of poverty." He implied that this combination of factors helps radical Islam flourish and aids the spread of Taliban ideology. In the past, Russia used to consider Kazakhstan as the most significant buffer between itself and the spread of radical Islam; but "recent domestic developments" and porous borders have cast doubt on this certainty. As a consequence, Russia still needs NATO troops and Chinese financial assistance in the region to contain the Taliban.

**The Role of the SCO in Confronting Internal Security Threats**

According to a Russian official in the SCO, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization originated from joint border negotiations between Russia, China, and the states of Central Asia during the 1990's. By 1998, however, Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan felt that they could cooperate on a much wider scale, which could go beyond military reduction measures in the region. It was a sign that Russia was trying to pay less attention to geopolitical by attempting to place greater

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161 Interview with Subject RR.
162 Ibid.
163 Interview with Subject PP.
164 Ibid.
165 Ibid.
166 Interview with Subject DD.
167 Interview with Subject Q; see also, Interview with Subject MM.
168 Interview with Subject Q.
focus on regional or local conflicts that simmered during the Cold War. The eventual emergence of the SCO was a sign for Russia that the face of international security was changing into a post-Cold War paradigm, in which ideology and traditional military strategy mattered less than in the past.\textsuperscript{169} The Fergana Valley, for example, has become a major source of terrorism in Central Asia, which could still lead to greater conflict. In the estimation of an expert on Central Asia, terrorism in Central Asia is still potentially as threatening as it was for Russia immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{170}

Moreover, as the Taliban rose in stature in Afghanistan during the middle to late 1990s, Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan began to discuss the threat of terrorism and the likelihood of cross-border attacks. They decided that terrorism in each of their countries could not be handled independently and that such a problem needed international cooperation. An official from the SCO Secretariat explained that "the SCO was born from the idea that you need to confront and to fight these threats collectively these threats —these threats being the so-called new challenges, the non-traditional ones" and that everyone needed to unite against this "non-traditional" threat.\textsuperscript{171}

This idea was supposed to serve as guide for all the other countries that would later join the SCO as members, observers, and dialogue partners.\textsuperscript{172} These five states began formulizing the foundation of the SCO with the 1999 Bishkek Declaration, a statement that pledged their collective support for fighting "international terrorism, national

\begin{footnotes}
\item[169] Interview with Subject FF.
\item[170] Interview with Subject OO. The interviewer also describes how the entire Kyrgyz army had to be mobilized to stop 300-400 Islamic militants passing through Central Asia on the way to Uzbekistan.
\item[171] Interview with Subject Q.
\item[172] Ibid..
\end{footnotes}
separatism, and religious extremism." The Declaration also referred to the Wahhabi-inspired Taliban as a source of terrorism for the signatories by expressing "deep concern about the continuing military confrontation in Afghanistan, which poses a serious threat to regional and international peace and security."

After the official inception of the SCO, the organization was still clearly focused on internal security initiatives when it consented to cooperating with the United States through the "Statement by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on Combating Terrorism, Illicit Drug Trafficking, and Organized Crime." The document fully supported the combined efforts of the Afghan government and the international community by ensuring the "social and economic development, building democratic institutions, strengthening [the] operational capability of the Afghan national army and police and enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement bodies." It also declared support for the activities of the International Security Assistance Force regarding terrorism and preventing financial support for terrorist activities through the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG) in which Russia, China, and the United States are participating members. The EAG also names the

SCO as an observer organization that is obligated to present annual reports on its anti-terrorism efforts. The SCO Statement also commits its members to working with the United States and NATO by:

combating [the] terrorist threat using the capacity of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure to a greater extent, and the practice of joint SCO counter-terrorism exercises, and we invite Observer States and other countries concerned to participate in the collective efforts, including those related to creating the 'anti-terrorist security belt,' and consider taking part in transiting non-military cargoes needed by ISAF.

A faculty member at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations also believes that "the core questions that were considered within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization were security issues." The most important objective for Russia has been working with the Chinese to provide regional security against radical Islam in its form of the three evils—terrorism, separatism, and extremism. A researcher with the Center for Asia and the Middle East at RISS also said that the "main purpose [of the SCO] was to fight the three evil of terrorism, extremism, and separatism as they are called in China. . . . [and] to prevent the possibility of . . . violence and political instability of Central Asia. . . . This is the main thing that Russia and China should strive for in the SCO."

In order to confront the three evils, Russia and China established "one of the most important parts of the SCO"—the Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure that enables

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177 Statement by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on Combating Terrorism, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime, The Secretariat of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.
178 Interview with Subject AA.
179 Interview with Subject HH; For an additional statement on the three evils, see, Interview with Subject JJ; Interview with Subject SS; Interview with Subject MM; For a statement on the three evils and radical Islam, see, Interview with Subject PP.
180 Interview with Subject FF.
information sharing across intelligence agencies.\textsuperscript{181} The RATS maintains a list of terrorist organizations and individuals so that members can use a common data base to effectively monitor threats and to coordinate counterterrorism operations.\textsuperscript{182} Specifically, the RATS has recently given greater attention to the virtual manifestations of these threats that have grown in technological sophistication since the start of the SCO.\textsuperscript{183} In 2013, the members of the RATS Council of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization expanded anti-terrorism activities by signing agreements on measures “to combat the use or potential use of computer networks for terrorist, separatist and extremist ends.”\textsuperscript{184} The Council also used the meeting to approve a strategy for investigating and stemming the flow of money that terrorist groups derive from "illegal drug-trafficking," as well as a "mechanism" for providing security at international events.\textsuperscript{185} According to the First Deputy Director of the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB), Sergei Smirnov, the RATS will establish a special center for dealing with cyber threats and drug-trafficking that will merge the efforts of each member's security agencies.\textsuperscript{186}

The RATS has also directly engaged the Afghan government on these matters. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan invited Zhang Xinfeng, Director of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, to hold talks with Mohammad Ibrahim Qasemi, Deputy National Advisor of the Afghanistan

\textsuperscript{181}For the quotation, see, Interview with Subject KK; For the idea of information sharing, see, Interview with Subject EE. According Subject RR, Russia fully supports the SCO's anti-terrorist center and military training exercises. See, Interview with Subject RR.

\textsuperscript{182}Interview with Subject MM; Interview with Subject GG; Interview with Subject JJ; Interview with Subject SS; Interview with Subject NN.

\textsuperscript{183}For a statement on the growing sophistication on cyber terrorism, see, Interview with Subject NN.


\textsuperscript{185}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{186}Ibid.
National Security Council. They reportedly discussed the activities of terrorist organizations in the Middle East and Central Asia and the cooperation between Afghanistan and the RATS. As the basis for this cooperation, the two parties signed the "Protocol between the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on Cooperation Against Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism." Finally, according to a leading researcher at the Center for Strategic Conjecture, the SCO has helped legalize formal security cooperation regarding terrorism through the organization's military exercises.

This kind of cooperation comes amid the Taliban's purported plans for a Central Asian emirate and Russia's use of Central Asia as a buffer between itself and Afghanistan. In the words of subject SS, "when America has to leave Afghanistan, the SCO will stand one on one with Afghanistan." The comments suggest that after America's departure, Russia, China, and other SCO members will largely shoulder the burden of dealing with the remaining Taliban forces and extremist elements in the country. According to an analyst at the Russian Academy of Sciences, even the best outcome in Afghanistan will still leave "a mission for the SCO." If the United States and its coalition allies successfully subdue the Taliban and maintain a functional

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188 Ibid.
189 Interview with Subject EE. The subject at first said that the SCO plays no role against terrorism, but then revised his statement to include SCO military exercises as counterterrorism operations.
190 Interview with Subject QQ; For the comment on a Central Asian emirate, see, Interview with Subject JJ.
191 Interview with Subject SS.
192 Interview with Subject MM.
government in Kabul, terrorist fighters will still likely spread into the surrounding countries of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan.\textsuperscript{193}

**The Role of China and the SCO in Security and Economic Development**

Countries like Kazakhstan that did not readily acknowledge internal security problems have still been interested in helping the Russians and the Chinese coordinate regional security efforts.\textsuperscript{194} Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, there has been a lack of economic progress in Central Asia along with a rise in political Islam.\textsuperscript{195} Stability in these countries depends on economic development "to avoid crisis" and "economic depression".\textsuperscript{196} Subject HH also believes that "this is a particular danger for the countries of Central Asia, especially for smaller ones, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan."\textsuperscript{197} According to a SCO researcher, the need for the significant economic development of Central Asia became important because "the better people live, the more they are satisfied with their lives, the less they are radicalized."\textsuperscript{198} Moreover, in the words of the Russian official at the SCO Secretariat, "terrorism is tied to the economy and extremism is tied to culture."\textsuperscript{199} As a result, the Russian government has likely been interested in using the SCO as a medium for engineering a development model for resolving violent conflict. Given the Russians' own struggle with separatism in the Northern Caucasus, they believe that China's efforts in Xinjiang might be able to offer a template for combining economic growth and social stability.\textsuperscript{200}

\textsuperscript{193} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{194} Interview with Subject RR.
\textsuperscript{195} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{196} Interview with Subject HH.
\textsuperscript{197} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{198} Interview with Subject NN.
\textsuperscript{199} Interview with Subject Q.
\textsuperscript{200} Interview with Subject VV.
In the context of Russia's internal security, China's most significant contribution may only be in the economic realm. Based on the assessment of a journalist who reports frequently on Russia's security concerns, "in terms of the SCO, Russia has a lack of resources and cannot address poverty in this region . . . China is deeply involved economically. Russia wants to use China for the economic development of Central Asia." Consequently, China has proposed many loans for Central Asian countries, which coincides with an informal consensus within Russian foreign policy circles on China's role in the region. Specifically, Russia was supposed to be responsible for hard security matters in the region, yet leaders in Moscow eventually concluded that it was impossible to stabilize Central Asia through military strategy alone. The Central Asian members of the SCO would need economic development to lower the threat of terrorism and China could provide such assistance. This logic also likely extends to Afghanistan where "there is no alternative but the SCO." Other organizations such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization do not include Pakistan or China which limits their effectiveness in solving "the primary foreign threat to Central Asia," namely Islamic radicalism in Afghanistan. This threat has become more acute with the rise of the Islamic State. Based on the assessment of a Russian official in the SCO, Islamic extremists will eventually fill the power vacuum in Afghanistan and will pose an even greater threat than Al-Qaeda.

201 Interview with Subject DD.
202 Interview with Subject PP.
203 Interview with Subject AA.
204 Interview with Subject JJ.
205 Ibid.
206 Interview with Subject Q.
Quantitative Information

Based on the information depicted in Graph 5, the Q data for the internal security hypothesis offered partial support the argument. When considering internal security statements, respondents ranked the statements positively about 38 percent of the time and assigned a neutral value about 17 percent of the time. When ranking positive statements, respondents used highly positive three and four values 29 percent of the time to assess Russia's motivation in the SCO, but they used mildly positive one and two values 71 percent of the time. However, when considering the total number of internal security rankings, only 11 percent were highly positive and 27 percent were mildly positive. Statements 20 and 23 regarding confronting transnational threats from Islamist groups and monitoring organizations, such as the IMU and HuT, received a median value of positive one. These statements exhibited a mostly positive mixture of rankings. Most respondents who ranked these statements thought that they were relative to Russia's reasons for participating in the SCO. The median value for all the internal security statements was zero indicating that the overall central tendency of respondents was neutral. As a result, respondents were closely divided in their opinions of internal security.
Internal Security Hypothesis Results: Contradictory Data

Qualitative Information

There are several contradictory perspectives regarding the SCO as a counterterrorist organization. The first position suggests that terrorism in Central Asia and the Northern Caucasus is simply a facade used by authoritarian leaders to stay in power or an issue used by politicians to mask issues of corruption. Authoritarian leaders justify the repression by claiming they are simply engaging in anti-terrorism measures.\(^{207}\)

As an indication of the political climate in Central Asia, in 2015, Freedom House ranked Uzbekistan "worse of the worst" with a ranking of 7 (on a scale from one to seven) in both political rights and civil liberties. Kazakhstan and Tajikistan were similarly ranked as "not free," while Kyrgyzstan received the only "partly free" ranking.\(^{208}\)

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The second position suggests that corrupt local leaders have created unrest among the population and have blamed outsiders for the violence. Terrorism in Russia's Northern Caucasus, for example, might not have any serious foreign influence, but might originate instead from the local population's discontent with corrupt officials in government. People looking for foreign scapegoats can easily exaggerate warnings about threats concerning Saudi Arabia.

In Central Asia, Western leaders, eager to befriend Central Asian leaders, such as Islam Karimov will use terrorism to rhetorically support the regime. On May 13, 2005, for example, the Uzbek government along with the RATS claimed that terrorists attacked a prison in Andijan to free twenty-three detainees on charges of Islamic extremism; however, NGOs like Human Rights Watch do not readily acknowledge this connection to terrorism and refer to these detainees as "successful businessmen" in their public descriptions. In terms of actual events, according to Radio Free Europe, a "band of men" seized the local government administration building after "armed men" attacked a police station, army barracks and jail, "freeing several hundred prisoners." There was

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209 Interview with Subject OO.
210 Interview with Subject PP.
211 Interview with Subject CC.

also an attempt to take over the Uzbek National Security Service headquarters in Andijan after the prisoners were freed.\textsuperscript{214}

After the prison raid, the government was accused of massacring citizens who were reportedly protesting government policies and the original arrest of the twenty-three detainees.\textsuperscript{215} The Uzbek government made a statement later blaming "religious extremists" for the massacre.\textsuperscript{216} During this period, a female doctor in the city told the BBC that she saw at least 500 bodies from the killings at a local school that was turned into a temporary morgue.\textsuperscript{217} Two days after the reported massacre, the fifty-year-old father of a reported victim said, "Karimov's people shot women and children. I saw young men with their hands up, shouting 'Don't shoot'. But they just shot them."\textsuperscript{218}

From the perspective of a researcher at the Institute of World Economic and International Relations, the SCO was covering-up one of the worst massacres in the former Soviet Union by claiming that the Uzbek government was countering terrorism. According to the researcher, there was no Islamic extremism in Andijan, but rather a self-governing network of elites that could have supplanted Karimov's government.\textsuperscript{219}

A third counter-position is the notion that the SCO's fight against the three evils of terrorism, separatism, and extremism is purely a Chinese invention. Although Russia struggles with these security challenges, it does not pursue them through the SCO.\textsuperscript{220} To

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{214} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{216} "Factbox: Andijon Timeline," \textit{Radio Free Europe}.
\item \textsuperscript{218} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{219} Interview with Subject CC.
\item \textsuperscript{220} Subject UU, email communication to Michael Zboray, March 11, 2014; and Interview with Subject OO.
\end{itemize}
the extent these threats exist, Russia can control them without the help of China.\textsuperscript{221} Moreover, the SCO's activities regarding these threats amount to no more than empty talks due to Russia's investment in security organizations like the CSTO, and the independent counterterrorism activities of the national security apparatus of each SCO member.\textsuperscript{222}

**Quantitative Information**

According to Graph 6, respondents ranked the internal security statements negatively 46 percent of the time. The most frequent negative value was one, which subjects assigned about 23 percent of the time when considering statements 20-27. The negative one value also represents nearly half of all negatively ranked statements associated with the hypothesis, which suggests that disagreement with the hypothesis was present, but limited. As a further indication of disagreement, the percentage of highly negative values was low at 16 percent. Statements 26 and 27 had median values of negative one which suggests an overall slight lack of relevance for protecting moderate Islam in Russia and monitoring NGO's affiliated with the Middle East. The highest positive value that statement 27 received concerning monitoring Middle Eastern NGOs was zero indicating its low relevance. Statement 26 also had a low degree of relevance, but there were respondents who assigned positive values including a positive two. In comparison to statement 27, there was less group certainty regarding the low level of importance for statement 26. On balance, the quantitative data did not provide completely conclusive results since there was almost an equal amount of Q data against the argument.

\textsuperscript{221} Interview with Subject LL. 
\textsuperscript{222} Interview with Subject II.
as there was for it. In terms of in-depth analysis of the arguments relevance, the qualitative data presents a more decisive picture.

![Graph 6: Internal Security Hypothesis](image)

**Conclusion**

This chapter has presented data on three possible hypotheses for explaining Russian cooperation with China in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Each explanatory section offered confirmatory and contradictory information based on geopolitical, economic, and internal security perspectives. This final section evaluates each hypothesis and suggests which perspective best applies to Russian motives in the SCO.

The geopolitical argument offers a persuasive account of Russian intentions. Based on an interview with a researcher at the Russian Academy of Sciences, hostility and mutual distrust dominates the Russian-American relationship. The antagonism that began during the Cold War persists today and provides a strong foundation for this first hypothesis. According to a former military officer, the American government did not
want to see a strong government in Russia that could challenge U.S. hegemony.

According to subject RR, an expert in Central Asian and Middle Eastern affairs, Russian leaders have reportedly seen American involvement in Central Asia as similarly hostile. He suggested that America inserts itself into the internal affairs of Central Asia with the intention of separating the region from its historical connection to Russia. In his professional judgment, China does not promote anti-Russian feelings in the population and has a greater respect for Russian interests. Consequently, Russia feels more secure with Chinese activity along its southern periphery than with American participation. China's respect for Russia's regional priorities makes China a convenient ally against the perception of American interference.

Within this context, the SCO, at least in principle, can be a counterbalancing instrument. The SCO did not admit the United States as an observer despite America's overwhelming security interest in Afghanistan. Russia has also advocated for less reliance on the U.S. dollar as the world's reserve currency and has suggested that the SCO could sponsor such a plan with Chinese support. The SCO Peace Missions may also be a way for Russia to increase the prestige of its military in relation to U.S. forces. However, the subjects could not specify how Russia and China might have designed the SCO to realistically counterbalance the United States. Soft balancing is a possibility, but one that appears limited to specific moments in time and one that does not capture the largest part of the organization's narrative. As an example, subject PP, a researcher at the Higher School of Economics characterized the SCO as a step toward a multipolar world, but was not able to describe how the SCO functions as a counterbalancing organization.
By comparison, the contradictory perspective on the geopolitical hypothesis has a more tangible basis. In 2009, the SCO actually approved cooperation between its members and ISAF in order to combat the spread of illicit drugs and terrorism from Afghanistan. Moreover, according to subject MM, Moscow allowed NATO to use the Russian city of Ulyanovsk as a supply hub for combat missions in Afghanistan. These examples of cooperation between the United States and Russia suggest that the Russian government is interested in using American military power as at least one way of enhancing security in Central Asia. Russian leaders appear to seriously consider the potential for spillover effects from Taliban attacks in Afghanistan and consequently, may have focused on this threat in the SCO to a greater degree than on purely geopolitical concerns. However, as subject JJ implied, given a general hostility between officials in Moscow and Washington, this does not mean Russia would not prefer an alternative approach to American intervention. Yet this likely preference for a solution free of American involvement in Afghanistan and in the greater region does not mean that anti-American intentions dominate the SCO agenda.

The economic hypothesis has some persuasive aspects; for example, Russia's export market for its hydrocarbon resources in Europe is less reliable than in the past. There is also no dispute that sales of oil and natural gas contribute most significantly to Russia's federal budget. China is obviously a natural market for Russian energy suppliers and Russian companies need a steady stream of investment which Chinese businesses can offer. Additionally, Russia would like transport routes that connect Europe with China using Russian territory. In principle, the SCO has mechanisms to facilitate international finance and infrastructure development through the SCO Interbank Consortium and
Business Council. However, there appears to be a noticeable amount of apprehension about Chinese economic expansion by Russian leaders. In an interview with subject LL at the Higher School of Economics, Russia will reportedly not help China economically if trade relations come at the expense of Russian business. From a Russian perspective, an increased availability of low cost Chinese products mainly benefits Chinese producers. Moreover, energy relations between Russia and China have not substantially developed in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and have even stalled outside the organization. China, for example, recently suspended Power of Siberia 2, a high profile natural gas project linking gas fields in western Siberia with the Chinese market.²²³

Most importantly, there is also the perception that regional trade and investment between Russia and China diminishes Russia's political influence in Central Asia. Specifically, Russia did not support China's proposal for an SCO development bank because it would have likely hindered Russia's ability to direct its own financial assistance to its former satellite countries. Given the lack of tangible developments in regional trade, energy projects, and the investment bank, it is not likely that the economic hypothesis is the best describes descriptor of Russia's motives in the SCO.

The internal security argument has several strong points for explaining Russia's participation in the SCO. The interview information suggests that this hypothesis has a convincing basis given the combination of Russia's domestic struggle with Wahhabism in the Northern Caucasus and the potential for its transmission from Central Asia. In the case of Central Asia, Afghanistan appears to be the central factor for SCO members that affects the potential spread of Islamic radicalism in the region. Given Central Asia's

importance as a buffer area for Russia, leaders in Moscow have a strong interest in the region's stability.

Subject JJ believes that Central Asia comprises states with significant economic and social challenges that could realistically pose a danger to its governments. There are terrorist groups, such as HuT, IMU, and the Taliban that would like to take advantage of instability. This threat possibly helps explain the presence of Russia's 201st Motor Rifle Division in Tajikistan, a country that has recently suffered the defection of one of its top police commanders to the Islamic State. Moreover, given the likelihood that other individuals from Central Asian who left to fight with the Islamic State will eventually return home, Russia's concern about the internal security of its buffer zone appears well founded.

The development of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure in the SCO is an indication that Russia is trying to mitigate this danger through cooperation with China. Although the SCO does not publicize the details of its counterterrorism capabilities and activities, the RATS does minimally act as a hub for exchanging information and coordinating counterterrorist initiatives. Representatives of the RATS, for example, have attended several SCO military exercises including Peace Mission 2012 and Peace Mission 2014. However, China's most significant contribution to Russia's security in Central Asia may be investment and economic development. Russia's military assets in the region may not provide enough of a guarantee against a surge in the activities of

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terrorist groups. According to subject AA, a faculty member at MGIMO, Russian leaders have generally acknowledged that Russia cannot ensure stability in Central Asia on its own. As a Russian SCO official additionally commented, there is a strong perception that a connection exists between economic growth and a decline in terrorism. Within this context, the SCO is the only regional institution in which Russia and China could realistically coordinate their economic plans with the Central Asian states.

The data against the internal security hypothesis mainly suggests that terrorism is not a serious threat in Central Asia. The reported massacre in Andijan, Uzbekistan by Uzbek authorities is the primary example. NGO's, like Human Rights Watch suggest that Uzbekistan's claim of fighting terrorism is at best exaggerated and that terrorism is only an excuse for repression by the government. Toward this end, leaders may use the SCO as a way of covering-up human rights abuses. The claim that SCO members have used the threat of terrorism for repressive tactics and policies may be accurate, but the events in Andijan do not adequately negate the internal security argument. As cited in the previous section, information from the Council on Foreign Relations indicates that the imprisoned men in Andijan were part of an organization formerly affiliated with the terrorist group, HuT. Both narratives could be true without contradicting the internal security hypothesis.

Based on the information from the interviews, Russian cooperation with China in the SCO is most likely due to the threat of terrorism. Although there is evidence suggesting that Russia may be participating in this organization for other motives, such as counterbalancing or the need to sell oil and gas, the internal security hypothesis is still the best explanation of Russia's interest in two ways. First, the counterterrorism narrative
best matches the long-term activities of the SCO with the regional threats to Russia's
security. Second, it has the least developed amount of contradictory evidence compared
to the realist and liberal hypothesis.

Given the early development of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure in 2004 and
the organization's annual counterterrorism exercises, the SCO is an organization oriented
around regional security. With the threat of Afghanistan to stability in Central Asia,
Russia's crucial buffer region against radicalism has clearly occupied the members of the
SCO. Based on Russia's ongoing conflict with Jihadi terrorism, it is important that
Central Asia not become an area that could fuel separatist violence in Russia.

Russia and the United States share the goal of combating the Taliban and
preventing the spread of radical Islam. In that regard, soft balancing the United States in
Central Asia would be counterproductive to Russia's security along its southern
periphery. As long as radical Islam simmers in Russia's Northern Caucasus and
neighboring states, America's presence in Central Asia and the U.S. war against terrorism
is in Moscow's long-term interest. While it is clear that Russia still sees the United States
as an adversary, it is less clear how Russia has institutionalized this perspective into the
core agenda of the SCO.

SCO member states have even cooperated with the United States to contain
terrorism with the assistance of American allies in ISAF. The pre-failed states of Central
Asia with weak governments and impoverished populations are fertile grounds for a
Taliban-style government and Wahhabist ideology. Extremist groups, such as the Islamic
Movement of Uzbekistan, Hizb ut-Tahrir, and the Islamic State seek to take advantage of
these conditions in order to propagate militant religious authority. In the process, they could export terrorism to Russia and cause social unrest and political instability.

The next chapter examines how the Chinese view their role in the SCO along the same geopolitical, economic, and internal security lines. It juxtaposes these perceptions with how the Chinese understand Russia's main interest in the organization and identifies if researchers believe in similarly ranked priorities. Finally, given a large amount of information regarding the internal security hypothesis, Chapter 6 serves as a secondary test of this argument by investigating the potential threat Wahhabism poses to Russia's Islamic community as a whole.
Chapter 5: China's Perception of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Introduction

Comparable to my analysis in Chapter 4 on Russia, this chapter examines how the Chinese understand their own reasons for cooperating with Russia in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and how the Chinese view Russia's participation in this organization. The Chinese perspective is important to understand because China and Russia were the organization's two most vital founding members. The Chinese-Russian relationship has formed the fulcrum of cooperation in the SCO since its beginnings in 1996 with the Shanghai Five. This early grouping of SCO states consisted of Russia, China, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan and addressed the demilitarization of their common borders after the collapse of the Soviet Union. As a sign of China's importance, Beijing hosts the organization's Secretariat that is responsible for coordinating SCO activities. China also has the single largest economy of any member and one of the most significant militaries in the organization. As the SCO's largest financial actor, China "spearheaded" the initiative to develop the Moscow-based SCO Business Council and pledged at least $8 billion dollars to create the SCO Development Bank in 2010.¹ The Chinese government also underwrote billions of dollars of preferential loans to SCO members in 2009 and 2012.²

² Fenwick, "Chinese Investment."
The purpose of this chapter therefore examines China's perspective on the SCO's primary purpose through geopolitical, economic, and internal security lenses. My objective was to uncover the largest area of interest between Russia and China underpinning the SCO. Given the centrality of the Russian-Chinese relationship, Chinese scholars and analysts could provide additional information on Russian and Chinese motivations. In order to gather this data, I based my field work in Shanghai and Beijing because of the relative abundance of SCO experts compared to other cities.

The interviews were conducted at a number of think tanks, universities, and research centers over a total of four weeks. These locations were the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the China Institute of International Studies, which is affiliated with the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Shanghai Institutes of International Studies, Shanghai University, and Tongji University. Although I conducted these interviews under a confidentiality agreement, which precludes disclosing the names of individuals, I selected these interviewees because of their work on issues relating to the SCO and Chinese foreign affairs. Almost all experts cited in this chapter conduct research at institutes and centers associated with subjects focusing on Russian, East European, and Central Asian studies, the economic and political affairs of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and the dynamics of Sino-Russian relations.

In addition to studying the SCO, one Beijing-based researcher specializes in analyzing the nexus between energy and security in Central Asia and conducted large-scale survey research in the former Soviet Union. Other researchers specialize in the Russian economy and have worked in organizations, such as the Shanghai Cooperation
Organization Research Centre, the National Council of China Society of Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies, and the Center for Shanghai Cooperation Organization Studies. Frequently, these men and women also hold senior-level positions in their organization, such as dean, vice president, director, and deputy director and have many years of experience in their field. A number have also worked for the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, have written numerous policy briefs, and have contributed to well-known Chinese newspapers, such as *The People's Daily*.

Each interview included questions about the possible motivations for China's and Russia's interests in the SCO in each interview. By asking Chinese analysts the same questions from my Moscow interviews and by coding the answers in the same way, I investigated the extent to which Chinese perceptions of Russia's motivations in the SCO coincide with the hypotheses in Chapter 2. I began with general questions about cooperation between Beijing and Moscow in the context of the SCO and how each respondent would characterize Russian and Chinese foreign policy priorities. I then asked more specific questions pertaining to Russian and Chinese interests concerning the geopolitical, economic, and internal security hypotheses.

In order to understand China's geopolitical view, I asked why the United States was denied observer-status in the SCO and why some analysts have viewed the SCO as an anti-American institution. To test a purely economic view, I inquired about the extent to which Beijing's desire to expand trade and to locate new sources of energy played a role in the formation of the SCO. Finally, I asked to what extent Wahhabism has been a factor in China's internal security. At the end of each interview, the interview subjects ranked Q statements from the Moscow-based interviews in order to prioritize Russia's
reasons for cooperating with China in the SCO. Statements that respondents felt were strongly relevant were ranked on a scale with positive numbers ranging from one to four, while statements that seemed less relevant were ranked with numbers ranging from negative one to negative four. Positive four is the highest value that denotes the highest level of relative significance, while negative four denotes the lowest value of relative significance. If respondents were unsure or felt neutral about a statement, they could select a value of zero.

I divided the data from these interviews into four primary sections. The first section contextualizes how China perceives its broader relationship with Russia in Central Asia and how China interprets the importance of the SCO within Russia's historic sphere of influence. The next three successive sections concentrate on testing geopolitical, economic, and internal security arguments. The second section therefore analyzes how China interprets its own objectives in the organization. The third section examines how China views Russia's reasons for participation in the SCO. The fourth section analyzes to what degree Chinese experts believe Russian and Chinese interests overlap.

Each of the three hypothesis testing sections is divided into three subsections. The first subsection tests the geopolitical perspective of soft balancing and the possibility that the SCO is challenging US interests in Central Asia. The second subsection uses notions of wealth creation to focus on the development of trade and energy relations. The third subsection investigates to what degree Wahhabism influences the decision to participate in the SCO. These subsections primarily use qualitative data from the interviews and some secondary sources, such as news reports and scholarly articles to independently
verify information from interviewees. In the sections that focus exclusively on Russian motivations, I also use bar graphs to illustrate the results from the Chinese Q sorts.

Consistent with Chapter 4, I divided the information into confirmatory data and contradictory data. I define confirmatory data as information that positively identifies China's or Russia's support for counterbalancing, economic development (such as trade promotion and hydrocarbon purchases), or subverting terrorism as the primary purpose of the SCO. Contradictory data is defined as information that suggests Russia or China does not prioritize geopolitical, economic, or internal security concerns for participating in the SCO.

**Context of Russian-Chinese Cooperation**

The context of China's cooperation with Russia in Central Asia begins with China's own perception of its relationship with Russia in the region. On a bilateral level, Chinese relations with Russia function well, yet in the estimation of subject G, China encounters difficulty when officials try to cooperate with Russia in Central Asia.³ One Chinese researcher openly described Central Asia as "Russia's woman" based on the researcher's off-the-record conversations with an unnamed Russian official.⁴ On the basis of this assessment, the Chinese government appears to be mindful of Russian sensitivities in this newly independent area of the former Soviet Union. In the opinion of another researcher who studies the SCO within the context of economic development and energy cooperation between Central Asia and China, this tension originates from a generally negative perception in Russia of Chinese dominated institutions.⁵

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³ Interview with Subject G, interview by Michael Zboray, Shanghai, China, July 23, 2014. Unless otherwise noted, quotations in Russian were translated and verified with the assistance of Olga Sinzin.
⁴ Interview with Subject K, interview by Michael Zboray, Shanghai, China, July 21, 2014.
⁵ Interview with Subject G; See also, Interview with Subject K.
government views China very instrumentally and believes that the Chinese are strictly a means to an end. Given subject AA's interpretation, Russia does not exhibit any special affinity for China that unites leaders in Moscow and Beijing. If Chinese activity in Central Asia facilitates Russian objectives, then Russia will choose to cooperate.

In light of this diplomatic challenge, China takes steps to act deferentially toward its northern neighbor. China does not see itself as a controlling power in Central Asia in contrast to Russia's political leverage in the region according to an analyst at the China Institute of International Studies. Before publicly articulating a position on Central Asia or taking action in the region, China anticipates Russia's possible reaction. One Chinese academic explained that "China always thinks about what Russia will do" because the Chinese leadership prioritizes its relationship with Moscow and avoids decisions that Russian leaders would find troubling. As a sign of assurance, for example, China made an official statement in 2013 that it would not interfere in the internal politics of Central Asia and particularly in the domestic affairs of Kyrgyzstan, which underwent a color revolution in 2005. Moreover, President Xi Jinping said that China would respect the national development of Kyrgyzstan and would oppose external influences on the region.

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6 For analysis on how Russia views China instrumentally, see, Interview with Subject AA, Moscow, Russia, June 19, 2014.
7 Interview with Subject L, interview by Michael Zboray, Shanghai, China, July 14, 2014.
8 Interview with Subject D, interview by Michael Zboray, Beijing, China, March 17, 2015.
9 Interview with Subject I, interview by Michael Zboray, Shanghai, China, July 28, 2014.
10 Interview with Subject D; Both Russia and China were concerned about the effects of the color revolutions and the threat it posed to the leadership of Central Asia. See, for example, interview with Subject F, interview by Michael Zboray, Shanghai, China, July 18, 2014.
Recognizing Russia’s unease toward foreign powers so close to its borders, the Chinese believe that in a larger context, the SCO is a forum for moderating its relationship with Russia. As subject N stated, if there was no SCO, "both China and Russia would seek more influence in the Central Asian countries."\textsuperscript{12} In his judgment, there would be a greater amount of regional competition in the form of "power politics" between Chinese and Russian leaders without the SCO as a mediating forum for institutional negotiation.\textsuperscript{13} This type of formal dialogue offers the Chinese a way of showing what one researcher at the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies called "respect" for Russia.\textsuperscript{14} By "respect," subject L meant that to prevent political discord, China needs to include Russia in major decisions in the region. Otherwise, conflict between Russia and China would occur from unilateral Chinese activity.\textsuperscript{15}

In the opinion of subject B, the Chinese see the SCO as a streamlining platform for this dialogue process through which they can respectfully communicate with Russia and simultaneously negotiate with Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan.\textsuperscript{16} The SCO summits, for example, are platforms that help China understand the needs of the Central Asian states and strengthen multilateral ties.\textsuperscript{17} The SCO has held summits since 2001 during which the members have discussed issues ranging from approving a regional counter-narcotics strategy at the summit in Astana on June 15, 2011, to a

\textsuperscript{12} Interview with Subject N, interview by Michael Zboray, Shanghai, China, July 29, 2014.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14} Interview with Subject L.
\textsuperscript{15} For example, Russia was threatened by China's New Silk Road project when the Chinese government first announced the plan. See, Jack Farchy, "China's Great Game: In Russia's Backyard," \textit{Financial Times}, October 14, 2015, accessed March 28, 2016, http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/d35d34ca-6e70-11e5-aca9-d87542bf8673.html#axzz3pPgLyaQR.
\textsuperscript{16} Interview with Subject B, interview by Michael Zboray, Beijing, China, March 10, 2015.
\textsuperscript{17} Interview with Subject D.
"nuclear-weapon-free zone" in Central Asia at the summit in Beijing on June 7, 2012.\(^\text{18}\)

These issues are two important examples for both Russia and China over which the SCO can facilitate communication with regional partners.\(^\text{19}\)

**Chinese Views on the Geopolitical Hypothesis for China**

**Confirmatory Data**

As one of the formative precursor documents of the SCO, the Bishkek Declaration of August 25, 1999, set the founding principles of the organization. The Declaration affirmed the success of the Shanghai Five's border negotiations between Russia, China, and the states of Central Asia and concluded that this process contributed to "ensuring security and stability in the region."\(^\text{20}\) This process of ensuring "long-term stability" also depended in part on the "multi-polarity" within the international system that could "promote the building of a just and rational international political and economic order."\(^\text{21}\) A year later on July 5, 2000, the Shanghai Five signed another formative SCO document, the Dushanbe Declaration. This Declaration also mentions Russia's and China's "basic interests" in the "trend towards the establishment of a multipolar world."\(^\text{22}\) The signatories objected to "neo-interventionism" and the

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\(^{19}\) Narcotics is a major problem that originates from Afghanistan and traverses Central Asia before entering Russia and China. See, interview with Subject D; Interview with Subject C, interview by Michael Zboray, Beijing, China, March 16, 2015; Interview with Subject K; and Interview with Subject F.


\(^{21}\) Ibid., 5.

\(^{22}\) UN General Assembly Security Council, A/55/133-S/2000/682, Annex to the letter dated 11 July 2000 from the Permanent Representatives of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, Dushanbe Declaration of the Heads of
"interference in the internal affairs of other States" under the pretext of "humanitarian intervention" and the "protection of human rights." The same issues of multipolarity and non-interference eventually appeared in the SCO Charter two years later.

Despite these allusions to the declining hegemony of the United States, many analysts in Beijing and Shanghai limited their comments regarding the role of the United States on China's decision to cooperate with Russia in Central Asia. They generally downplayed the role of the United States in the SCO's decision-making process. However, some researchers seemed candid about China's general geopolitical concerns over the American military. Within the context of U.S.-Chinese relations and Central Asia, a researcher suggested that the SCO is a response to China's apprehension of American encirclement. When I asked if there was anything else he would like to add to the interview, the subject commented on Beijing's distrust of U.S. policy toward China, explaining that:

The USA sends it military all over the world and they do this under the guise of maintaining stability or to preserve peace. But after the military actions, look what happens in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Egypt, is that peace? In April, we had a meeting among Russia, China, and USA. The USA representatives said that they want to leave Afghanistan and conduct a strategic rebalancing to the Asia-Pacific. Namely for the purpose of a stable order so that China can develop faster. But is that really the case? The USA is holding China back and they provoke territorial conflicts, for example, working militarily with Japan. The USA supports the Philippines and Vietnam in their territorial arguments.

These comments suggest that the SCO is part of a broader Chinese strategy that is skeptical of American intentions and of the competency of U.S. policies. Subject K


Ibid., 5; For neo-interventionism, see, UN General Assembly Security Council, A/55/133-S/2000/682.


Interview with Subject K.
believes that the American government does not want China to grow more powerful and that U.S. leaders actively undermine China's authority through supporting the grievances of other states in Asia.

An academic at Shanghai University expressed a similar view regarding China's regional objectives. This subject emphasized that at the SCO's current stage of development, the Chinese government wants to focus on humanitarian, cultural, and economic programs in the SCO in order to make Central Asia "very stable and very safe" for China. According to this subject, these priorities are important because the United States is trying to contain a rising China by pivoting to the Asian-Pacific region. By developing Central Asia across these three dimensions, China could create a "secure area" as a bulwark against potential hostility from the United States.

These statements combined suggest that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is a regional reaction to U.S. actions on a global level. China's disapproval of America's position on the territorial disputes in East Asia, America's failure to maintain peace after international interventions, and Washington's avowed rebalancing strategy toward the Pacific have created the conditions for Chinese counterbalancing through the SCO.

**Contradictory Data**

Another Chinese analyst claimed that the SCO is not a military organization, but rather an institution that ensures Central Asia's regional security in relation to "non-traditional threats." The SCO has a broad agenda that also focuses on economics and culture without a military component. Experts in Shanghai maintain that America insists on seeing counter-alliances where none in fact exist, and that China would prefer

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26 Interview with Subject I.
27 Ibid.
28 Interview with Subject H, interview by Michael Zboray, Shanghai, China, July 29, 2014.
cooperation with the United States far more than conflict.\textsuperscript{29} An expert in Russian and Central Asian studies claims that the SCO is actually an open organization given its diverse affiliate that include: Sri Lanka, Mongolia, Belarus, and most notably, Turkey—a long-standing NATO member.\textsuperscript{30} Moreover, according to subject L, an SCO expert, if the SCO were any kind of an anti-American alliance with Russia, the organization could not be effective against a "super power."\textsuperscript{31} In the judgment of subject I at Shanghai University, China needs advanced nations for balancing the United States, while the SCO mainly consists of "third world" countries that provide Beijing with little leverage.\textsuperscript{32} He believes that counterbalancing is generally ineffective against the United States and cited the demise of the Warsaw Pact as a warning for China not to risk repeating the mistakes of the past.

Instead, China reportedly has higher priorities, such as its own economic development, in which the United States is a major trading partner. According to subject I, Chinese leaders would prefer that the SCO cooperate with as many states as possible as part of its efforts to raise the standard of living of its citizens and implied that counterbalancing would hinder this effort.\textsuperscript{33} The subject stated that, "there is much talk about a rising China, but we still have a very long way to go. . . . We don't want to set up another group against NATO. It is not a smart choice for China."\textsuperscript{34} In his assessment,
China is more interested in creating the Silk Road Economic Belt to further China’s development, for example, than in forming an anti-American coalition.\textsuperscript{35}

However, if the SCO is a completely open organization, it still remains unclear why the United States was denied observer-status in 2005.\textsuperscript{36} Two Chinese analysts who study the SCO suggested that American participation would have only complicated the workings of the SCO.\textsuperscript{37} They implied that the United States might have hindered the organization’s agenda. However, they were not clear if China thought that the United States viewed American membership as a deliberate way of slowing the SCO decision-making processes, or if the United States would have simply been too difficult a partner on a practical basis. Moreover, according to subject E, the rules for observers were not clearly defined by 2005, which hindered the official admission of the United States.\textsuperscript{38} He also mentioned that the United States’ application was interpreted by the SCO only as a tentative inquiry into the organization rather than a formal request for affiliation.\textsuperscript{39}

Although the SCO Secretariat has not released the exact details of the current admission procedures, Zhao Huasheng, Director of the Center for Russia and Central Asia Studies, and Director of the Center for Shanghai Cooperation Organization Studies at Fudan University speculated on four general guidelines. In a 2013 article, he wrote that these guidelines should be based on geographic, political, efficacy, and agenda-driven principles. In terms of geography, he believes that SCO members should only come from Central Asia and surrounding regions, which excludes states in North America and

\begin{tabular}{ll}
\textsuperscript{35} & Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{37} & Interview with Subject L and Subject P, interview by Michael Zboray, Shanghai, China, July 14, 2014. \\
\textsuperscript{38} & Interview with Subject E, interview by Michael Zboray, Beijing, China, March 11, 2015. \\
\textsuperscript{39} & Ibid. \\
\end{tabular}
Europe. Second, the prospective state will need to abide by SCO rules and regulation. Third, potential new members should not decrease the efficacy of the SCO since the organization makes major decisions on the basis of consensus. States that might block the internal approval process of the SCO would not likely be successful candidates. Finally, he writes that conscientious candidates should not have plans that might alter the existing institutional agenda.\textsuperscript{40} Alexander Lukin, Director of the Center for East Asian and SCO Studies at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirms a part of Zhao’s speculation. Lukin claims that:

Under the regulations, a state wishing to become a full member of the SCO must be located in the Eurasian region, have diplomatic relations with all SCO member states, maintain active trade and economic ties with them, have the status of observer or dialogue partner, and not be under UN sanctions. . . . In the security field, international obligations of states wishing to join the SCO must not conflict with international treaties and other documents adopted by the SCO. In addition, an applicant state must not be involved in an armed conflict with another state(s).\textsuperscript{41}

Based on Lukin’s description of the regulations for new members, the United States does not meet the first requirement for admission. Since it is not located in the greater Eurasian region, the United States is clearly ineligible for full member status and would not be a viable candidate for observer or dialogue partner status.


China’s View on the Economic Hypothesis for China

Confirmatory Data

The Bishkek Declaration of 1999 also makes a limited allusion to China's economic motives in the SCO. Section six of the document mentions "silk route diplomacy," which is an early reference to China's current projects involving the New Silk Road, which connects Chinese trade to Europe via Central Asia. The declaration also notes that "the great significance of trade and economic cooperation . . . shall continue . . . on a bilateral basis and at the same time [the parties] shall intensify the search for ways of developing multilateral cooperation in this sphere."\(^{42}\) The Dushanbe Declaration of 2000 contains more references to trade and even cites the "great energy potential of the countries of the Shanghai Five."\(^{43}\) It also claims that China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan:

will use every means to encourage the establishment and development of a trade and economic partnership within the framework of the Five, including matters relating to the improvement of the investment climate and the business environment in their countries, the granting of favourable terms for the conduct of normal business activities by citizens and enterprises of the other countries of the Five . . . .\(^{44}\)

Given the energy and trade aspects of these two foundational declarations, economic interests are unsurprisingly considered the second pillar of the SCO and rank highly in the Chinese analysis of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.\(^{45}\) In the judgment of a Chinese scholar of Russian, Central Asian, and SCO Studies, this pillar is set within a hierarchy of bilateral relationships in which Russia and China occupy the upper level, followed by Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, and then Kyrgyzstan and


\(^{44}\) Ibid. The SCO Charter also mentions as one of the organization's goals the facilitation of all members' economic growth. See, "Khartiia ShOS," Sekretariat ShOS.

\(^{45}\) For a general statement on the intertwined nature of the SCO and economics, see, Interview with Subject A.
Tajikistan.\textsuperscript{46} Within these three echelons, the SCO works as a mediator for multilateral cooperation, yet bilateral dealings between members still form the basis of the process.\textsuperscript{47} Emphasizing the hierarchal importance of Russian-Chinese relations in the SCO, a senior researcher of Russian and Central Asian studies also explained that "if Russia and China were not part of the SCO, the organization would not exist."\textsuperscript{48} As an additional indicator of this relationship's significance, the SCO also conducts all official communication in Russian or Chinese.\textsuperscript{49}

Yet China prioritizes economic development in its relationship with Russia. China has already invested heavily in the SCO to encourage economic growth in Central Asia and northwestern China in the estimation of several researchers.\textsuperscript{50} As an example, China has invested $10 billion in preferential loans which will principally be issued by the SCO Development Bank and has contributed additional financing to an "anti-crisis fund" in the event of a budget or balance of payments deficit in one of the SCO countries.\textsuperscript{51} According to the SCO Secretary General, Dmitry Mezentsev, the SCO Bank “will be focused on financing multilateral infrastructural projects.”\textsuperscript{52} Toward this end, China appears to be hoping that such investments will help stimulate the development of its own economically impoverished areas. From the perspective of another researcher in Shanghai, who studies Russian and Central Asian affairs:

\textsuperscript{46} Interview with Subject G.
\textsuperscript{47} Interview with Subject L.
\textsuperscript{48} Interview with Subject K. For a similar comment, see, Interview with Subject F.
\textsuperscript{49} Interview with Subject L; For an additional comment on Russia and China as leaders in the SCO, see, interview with Subject P.
\textsuperscript{50} Interview with Subject N; and interview with Subject E. See also, interview with Subject L.
[the SCO] is an organization for multilateral cooperation [and] with its help, China can work with the countries of Central Asia and Russia . . . the SCO helps China with its own internal goals, especially with developing northwestern China [the Uyghur Autonomous Region], which is not as well developed economically as compared to southeastern China.\(^{53}\)

This comment is based on the fact that the majority of trade between China and Central Asia travels through Xinjiang, which makes the future of this Chinese region heavily reliant on regional trade and China's access to neighboring markets.\(^{54}\) In order to realize these interests within the SCO, leaders in Beijing prioritize the new Silk Road Economic Belt that connects China with Europe via Central Asia.\(^{55}\) This project plans to build and renew road and railway links in Eurasia to enhance commercial exchanges through transportation conduits, fiber-optic networks, energy pipelines, and the reduction of trade regulations. Financing for the Silk Road will supposedly originate from the Asian Infrastructure Bank, the Silk Road Fund, and the BRICS New Development Bank.\(^{56}\)

During the 13th Meeting of the Council of Heads of Government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in December 2014, for example, China introduced an initiative to launch the Silk Road Economic Zone with SCO members. According the SCO Secretariat, however, it is an ongoing process that requires additional consultation.\(^{57}\)

\(^{53}\) Interview with Subject L. For an additional statement to this effect, see, Interview with Subject I.

\(^{54}\) For Xinjiang's economic reliance on Central Asia, see, Interview with Subject B.

\(^{55}\) Interview with Subject N. Central Asia is the main trade route over land with Europe, see, interview with Subject H. Based on a Financial Times report, the Silk Road idea originated from the commerce ministry, suggesting that the plan was at least initially free of geopolitical ambition. See, Charles Clover and Lucy Hornby, "China's Great Game: Road to a New Empire," Financial Times, October 12, 2015, accessed October 23, 2015, http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/2/6e098274-587a-a11e5-a28b-50226830d644.html#axzz3pPgyaQR.\(^{56}\)


Economic development has been a primary Chinese objective since many areas outside of China's major cities are extremely poor. A Chinese scholar at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences described how "in places outside of Shanghai, China is very far behind economically. It first needs to resolve its internal problems. They are very concerned that the quality of life is poor in China." By opening Central Asia to Chinese markets, China can possibly create opportunities to create prosperity for its people. As one possible avenue for the SCO, China can seek energy from Kazakhstan or other SCO states to eventually create a broad platform for cooperation given that 60 percent of China's oil is imported. One view from an economic specialist at the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies is that in order to create broad access to these markets more effectively, China is currently trying to build an SCO free trade zone based in the city of Xian. Such an initiative coincides with China's interest in new markets, technology, equipment, and offers of financing options to Central Asia.

Based on an interview with subject F, a researcher at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, infrastructure is a key component of China's plan for regional economic development within the SCO. There is a fundamental need for a reliable and efficient transportation system that can create the basis for roads and railways connecting China to Central Asia. But Beijing cannot repair or reconstruct this network alone. Because much of the deteriorating Soviet-era infrastructure in Central Asia is integrated,

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58 Interview with Subject F.
59 Interview with Subject G. Oil, gas, agriculture, and manufactured goods are part of this expanding market, see, Interview with Subject I. For China's oil and gas demand, see, Interview with Subject H; and Guang Pan, "China's Strategy as Chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization" (lecture, Columbia University, February 8, 2012).
60 Interview with Subject M, interview by Michael Zboray, Shanghai, China, July 14, 2014
61 For China's economic interests in Central Asia, see, interview with Subject A.
62 Interview with Subject F.
renovations need to be made on an international level.\textsuperscript{63} China cannot simply repair a road, for example, leading to China that starts elsewhere in Central Asia. It needs the support of neighboring countries to coordinate such as task. As a result, China has subsequently tried to engage Russia over infrastructure projects as way of finding common ground in the region according to another researcher.\textsuperscript{64} A researcher at the China Institute of International Studies similarly said that Russia and China signed an SCO agreement in December 2014 on facilitating ground trade between China and Europe in support of China's foreign trade agenda.\textsuperscript{65} He was referring to results of the 13th Meeting of the Council of Heads of Government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States in December 2014 during which the prime ministers of the SCO members generally acknowledged the progress made on "international road transportation facilitation."\textsuperscript{66} As part of this initiative, Kyrgyzstan is already in the process of building three roads with SCO funds.\textsuperscript{67}

\textbf{Contradictory Data}

China's economic interests in hydrocarbon resources, cotton, and non-ferrous metals in Central Asia were also described as secondary interests in comparison to its regional security concerns.\textsuperscript{68} Although a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences believes that Chinese trade with Central Asia is "very important for the development of Xinjiang," the researcher implied that trade alone was not generally the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{63} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{64} Interview with Subject L.
\item \textsuperscript{65} Interview with Subject D.
\item \textsuperscript{66} Joint Communiqué of the results of 13th Meeting of the Council of Heads of Government, \textit{The Secretariat of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization}.
\item \textsuperscript{67} Interview with Subject D.
\item \textsuperscript{68} Interview with Subject B.
\end{itemize}
main regional consideration for China.\textsuperscript{69} Although China imports 48 percent of its gas and oil from Central Asia, the instability created by the restive Uyghur population in northwestern China still outweighs China's regional imports of energy.\textsuperscript{70}

In addition, rhetoric about oil and gas coordination through the SCO has not produced concrete results based on the assessments of two researchers.\textsuperscript{71} Gas deals have been largely bilateral arrangements between China and Russia or between China and countries in Central Asia outside of the SCO framework. One of the major recent pipelines built in the area between China and Turkmenistan, for example, that crosses Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan did not actually occur under the auspices of the SCO.\textsuperscript{72} Moreover, China receives natural gas from a total of four major gas pipelines coming from Turkmenistan, a country unaffiliated with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.\textsuperscript{73}

Rather than pursuing a purely commercially-driven or developmental approach to purchasing energy, China's economic outreach to Turkmenistan may be geostrategic. Oil, a vital element in any industrial economy is a strategic asset for China that the U.S. Navy can blockade.\textsuperscript{74} In 2013, for example, China imported 64.5 percent of its consumed oil, much of which arrived via ocean transport.\textsuperscript{75} China's industrial and transportation sectors are "irreplaceably reliant on oil . . . and will become even more so in the foreseeable

\textsuperscript{69} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{70} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{71} Interview with Subject M; see also, interview with Subject G.
\textsuperscript{72} Interview with Subject D.
\textsuperscript{73} Interview with Subject B.
future." In the assessment of Xunchao Zhang, this mode of transportation suggests that China's reliance on oil is a liability for the country because Beijing does is not fully capable of protecting these shipments. According to one estimate, if the United States blockaded 87 percent of China's oil imports, China's GDP would decrease by approximately 6.6 percent and would cause a destructive economic effect.

The success of such a hypothetical blockade would depend on China ability to receive oil shipments via land transport. In addition to Turkmenistan, Russia and Kazakhstan could provide oil to China. Russia is critical in this scenario because it is the only state that could theoretically resupply enough oil to meet all of China's demand. Given Russia's nuclear arsenal, the United States would be reluctant to overtly attack a strictly Russian-based transport system, thereby reducing the effectiveness of any embargo.

An analyst at the China Institute for International Studies estimated that, aside from energy, China is Russia's primary trading partner and ninety-seven billion tons of goods were reportedly traded between these two countries in 2014. While the EU still accounts for the largest share of Russian trade, China is actually Russia's single largest economic partner according to the 2013 Russian Foreign Trade Statistical Bulletin. However, according to subject D, China is not interested in trading with Russia through

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77 Zhang, "A U.S.-China War in Asia."
78 Mirski, "Stranglehold: The Context, Conduct and Consequences."
79 Ibid.
the SCO because of difficulties with unresolved tariff barriers and currency issues between all the countries.\(^8^2\)

**China’s View on the Internal Security Hypothesis for China**

**Confirmatory Data**

After Russia, China, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan agreed on the official demarcation of their borders through the Shanghai Five, the Chinese government adjudged the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to be an instrument for addressing the intensification of international terrorism rooted in "extreme religious activities and ethnic problems."\(^8^3\) The Shanghai Five was a critical first step in this process because without clearly defined borders, it reportedly would have been more difficult to monitor the flow of people and materials between Xinjiang and the neighboring areas of Central Asia.\(^8^4\) In the assessment of subject E, it was clear that any problem in Central Asia would eventually permeate into China through Xinjiang.\(^8^5\) As a result, the SCO began with an early focus on the so-called "three evils" of terrorism, extremism, and separatism to create a platform for security and stability for the region.\(^8^6\) Two subjects I interviewed estimated that for China, this emphasis on "non-traditional" security, such as terrorism, came before its economic considerations in the SCO.\(^8^7\)

\(^8^2\) Interview with Subject G.
\(^8^3\) Interview with Subject I. For another reference to China's struggle with terrorism after the Cold War in the context of the SCO, see, Interview with Subject J, interview by Michael Zboray, Shanghai, China, July 28, 2014.
\(^8^4\) For the importance of security and borders between northwest China and Central Asia, see, Interview with Subject B.
\(^8^5\) Interview with Subject E.
\(^8^6\) Interview with Subject N; and Interview with Subject C. For the link between terrorism and the SCO, see, interview with Subject M. For the connection among Central Asia, Xinjiang, the three evils, and the SCO, see, Interview with Subject D.
\(^8^7\) Interview with Subject L. For emphasis on security and non-traditional security see, Interview with Subject D.
China specifically saw unrest among the Uyghur population in Xinjiang and the East Turkestan Islamic Movement as the encapsulation of these three evils.\textsuperscript{88} Based on my series of interviews, the Chinese believe that terrorism partially originates from Islamic extremists in training camps in Central Asia, an area that operates as a "rear area," or safe haven, where terrorist groups reconstitute.\textsuperscript{89} By "reconstituting," these interviewees implied that these groups are able to evade Chinese authorities by escaping into the surrounding areas of Central Asia. In their assessment, this region also serves as a transportation hub for fighters traveling between China and the Middle East. A scholar at Shanghai University, for example, described how terrorists move between Xinjiang and Kyrgyzstan, emphasizing the need for a regional solution based on "very good relationships with Central Asian countries."\textsuperscript{90} He said that "this is the main concern of the Chinese government if you want to resolve the problem of terrorism in Xinjiang."\textsuperscript{91} Yet actual acts of terrorism might only be part of the problem in Central Asia. From the perspective of a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, extremist ideology based on Islamic interpretation is more prevalent in Central Asia than actual acts of terrorism that occur more frequently, for example, in Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{92} However, in the judgment of Subject A and Subject I, there is a simmering ideological element that threatens stability through potentially violent attacks.

\textsuperscript{88} Interview with Subject H; and Interview with Subject G.
\textsuperscript{89} For information about the "rear area," see, Interview with Subject I; interview with Subject A; and Interview with Subject D. For the importance of security in northwestern China, see, interview with Subject H. For information on the connection to the Middle East, see, interview with Subject H. Subject H also said that Uyghurs have also gone through Southeast Asia as an alternative route to the Middle East. For a similar statement, see also, interview with Subject C.
\textsuperscript{90} Interview with Subject I. For an example of terrorists training in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, see, Interview with Subject H.
\textsuperscript{91} Interview with Subject I.
\textsuperscript{92} Interview with Subject A.
Subject I emphasized that the internationalization of extremist religious principles from the internet is part of this radical ideological problem. This subject mentioned that "a teenager, just seventeen or eighteen years old, who conducted terrorist attacks against innocent [people]" is a representative example of a larger segment of people who believe that "they can go to heaven [and] can marry beautiful girls." Online videos and digitized propaganda materials circulate these ideas on the internet and promote Jihad in Xinjiang. It is important to note that none of the interviewed scholars blamed any internal policy of the Chinese government for instigating violence in Xinjiang, but rather attributed the terrorism to these external influences. One expert even explicitly said, "It is not because of the central government's policy against this region."

In connection with radicalization, some Uyghur customs have been changing over time. In Xinjiang, some women are adopting "Wahhabi" customs and dressing contrary to their ethnic tradition in a manner of dress similar to the "Gulf countries." According to this academic, "they used to like music [and] songs," but now things like "dancing and

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93 Interview with Subject I.
94 Ibid.
95 Interview with Subject H.
97 Interview with Subject I.
“music” at wedding ceremonies have disappeared to some extent, and ethnic garb has been replaced with black “covers.” China is now worried about people traveling from the Persian Gulf to China in order to promote a change in Uyghur or Chinese culture. As a measure of this influence, he cited what in his opinion is a high concentration of mosques in China. He even commented that "you may compare them [in number] to Persian [Gulf] countries . . . they get funding from Saudi Arabia."99

At a round table interview, another scholar at Shanghai University differentiated the Islamic population into the three main groups: liberal Muslims, conservative Muslims, and fundamentalist Muslims.100 With regards to fundamentalist Muslims, he said, "the challenge [to China] came from Saudi Arabia and also Turkey in the 1990s or late 1980s. In the past, the Muslims in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region were very liberal."101 They "drank, smoked, [and] danced," practices that were replaced by Islamic garb and Islamic customs, such as restrictions on shaving. Another SCO expert at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences also agreed that there is support for Uyghurs from the Middle East and especially from Saudi Arabia.102 Uyghurs are an ideal group for Middle Eastern and Central Asian sponsors to support because of each group's adherence to Sunni Islam. Yet subject H indicated that Chinese Muslims in Xinjiang are not a monolithic group. There are two groups of Uyghurs that work in tandem. The first group

100 Interview with Subject J.
101 Ibid.
102 Interview with Subject H. See also, Interview with Subject C.
comprises those who support the spread of Islamic Jihad while the second group focuses on the creation of an independent country. However, these two factions work together to advance both of their goals.¹⁰³

In the opinion of another scholar at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent influx of non-native Islamic influences from the Middle East, as well as Turkey, has compounded the radicalization of Chinese Uyghurs and has posed a potential security risk. Foreign sponsors from Turkey and Saudi Arabia have funded an Islamic revival in Central Asia based on the religious vacuum created by Communism and the attempts by Central Asian governments at the politicization of the Islamic faith since the early to mid-1990s.¹⁰⁴ However, this revival has been an opportunity for religious extremists to take advantage of people who lacked their own knowledge of traditional and non-violent Islamic practices.¹⁰⁵ In an assessment by Sun Li, Deputy Director of the Institute of Russian, Eastern European and Central Asian Studies he offered the opinion that "extremist ideology is permeating Central Asian countries, especially among young people and college students. It poses a severe threat to future national stability."

¹⁰³ Interview with Subject H.
¹⁰⁴ Interview with Subject B.
When Central Asia became a group of independent states, according to subject B, leaders in the region tried to co-opt Islam as an instrument for political control and thereby diminished the fundamental tenets of the religion. In response to this, "foreign Islamic forces" encouraged Central Asian youth to study abroad and to learn how Islam is practiced outside of the region.\textsuperscript{107} Central Asian students studied in Saudi Arabia and Turkey, which according to a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, has caused rifts in the relationships between Uzbekistan and Turkey as well as Saudi Arabia and Tajikistan.\textsuperscript{108} According to subject B, in 2009, for example, Uzbekistan closed Turkish stores and restaurants, and about two years later, Tajikistan mandated that all of its students return from schools in Saudi Arabia. In connection with religious education, in subject B's opinion, these same "Islamic forces," provided people with support by helping youths find jobs when governments were powerless to solve high levels of unemployment.\textsuperscript{109}

Subject G, another SCO and Russia expert similarly thought that these influences in Central Asia have affected western China. Subject G provided a unique perspective since the subject had visited the SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure in Tashkent. While in Uzbekistan, he had access to non-public information about security threats to SCO members. During our conversation, subject G focused on Wahhabism and the states of Saudi Arabia and the UAE, for example, and emphasized that the Saudis are a significant financial contributor to Central Asian terror groups with links to Xinjiang, such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and possibly Hizb ut-Tahrir.\textsuperscript{110}

\textsuperscript{107} Interview with Subject B, interview by Michael Zboray, Beijing, China, March 10, 2015.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{110} Interview with Subject G.
researcher also cited Qatar's support for radical Islam in Afghanistan through the Taliban's political representation in Doha as an indication of how Wahhabi influences are seeking to spread into Central Asia.\(^\text{111}\) The researcher included Turkey, although a secular society, as a negative Islamic influence on China's Uyghur population. He asserts: "We are concerned about Xinjiang . . . I think there is a lot of connection [with] Saudi Arabia and Turkey. Turkey is also moving into traditional Wahhabism . . . Turkey has supported many religious schools in Xinjiang . . . [and] Turkey gives financial support to Hizb ut-Tahrir in Xinjiang."\(^\text{112}\)

Subject G did not give further details on Turkey's activity in Xinjiang, but there is a precedent for such activity. Turkey and China have experienced a history of difficult relations for decades over Turkey's support of Xinjiang's Uyghur population. In 1991, the prime minister of Turkey met with Yusuf Alptekin, the exiled political leader of the Uyghurs. Alptekin advocated for an independent Xinjiang and asked Turkey to support Chinese separatists.\(^\text{113}\) During the meeting, Alpetkin told the prime minister that "unless Turkey takes immediate protective steps, the Turkic people of Eastern Turkestan (Xinjiang) will disappear."\(^\text{114}\) In 1992, Alpetkin also met with the Turkish president, who was sympathetic to the Uyghur cause, and gave him the flag of Eastern Turkestan.\(^\text{115}\) The gesture was supposed to represent the political sympathy that Turkey officially had for


\(^{112}\) Interview with Subject G.

\(^{113}\) Yitzhak Shichor, Ethno-Diplomacy: The Uyghur Hitch in Sino-Turkish Relations (Honolulu: East-West Center, 2009), 24.

\(^{114}\) Ibid.

\(^{115}\) Ibid., 25
Chinese Uyghurs. In response to Alpetkin’s actions, the president reportedly said, "I declare that I have taken delivery of the Eastern Turkestani cause."116

By 1996, China was still monitoring Turkish support for Uyghur separatists through its military attaches and intelligence operations.117 In response to Chinese pressure, the Turkish interior minister stated that the Turkish government would not support any kind of terrorist activity in China. However, China was not assuaged by Turkey's assurances and continued to press the point of non-interference. In an indirect reference to the Shanghai Five, the SCO's precursor, Chinese president Jiang Zemin said in 2000 that China and the states of Central Asia will respect each other domestic affairs and that Turkey should follow their example.118

In terms of Wahhabism, Turkey's lack of strict border enforcement with Syria has roused accusations that the Turkish government has deliberately permitted the presence of Jihadists within its borders so that these fighters are able to enter Syria. According to Martin Glasenapp of Medico International, a German humanitarian organization based in Frankfurt am Main, stated that based on his visits to the border area the Turkish government is allowing a "trail" of Jihadists to cross through its border.119 During the course of his field work, he spoke with Turkish mayors and local officials who openly

116 Ibid.
117 Ibid., 33.
said that Jihadists have received medical treatment in Turkish hospitals and weapons to fight in Syria.\textsuperscript{120}

Other senior-level researchers remarked that there is a considerable amount of support for Jihadi terrorism beyond Central Asia including the SCO observer states of Afghanistan and Pakistan.\textsuperscript{121} According to an analyst at the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies, terrorists travel to these two countries in order to learn bomb-making skills and to return to Xinjiang to commit acts of violence.\textsuperscript{122} Given this connection, China is worried that the withdrawal of NATO troops from Afghanistan will permit the Taliban or other terrorist elements to expand into the region.\textsuperscript{123} A scholar at Tongji University views the question over a possible Taliban resurgence in Afghanistan as the biggest issue confronting both the SCO and China.\textsuperscript{124} An indication of the level of concern is that "China and other SCO member states were interested in playing an important role in the security field in Afghanistan because Afghanistan may cause . . . terrorism to spread to neighboring countries."\textsuperscript{125} "The Soldiers of the Caliphate," a new terrorist group in Kazakhstan based along the Afghan-Pakistan border called has probably already been funded by the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. Since 2011, this group has targeted the Kazakh government and has committed at least seven attacks in Kazakhstan.\textsuperscript{126}

\textsuperscript{120} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{121} Interview with Subject H. For an additional reference to Afghanistan and even Kazakhstan, see, Interview with Subject F.
\textsuperscript{122} Interview with Subject K.
\textsuperscript{124} Interview with Subject K; see also, Interview with Subject N.
\textsuperscript{125} Interview with Subject N.
\textsuperscript{126} Interview with Subject G; See also, "Kazakh Security Committee Admits Terrorist Group is a Threat," \textit{Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty}, December 4, 2012, accessed May 12, 2015, http://www.rferl.org/content/kazakh-security-committee-admits-terrorist-group-is-threat/24788871.html;
As a potential solution to the conflict in Xinjiang and the stability of Central Asia, the Chinese see economic development as a pathway to stability, citing that the SCO has developed one hundred projects for creating new infrastructure and other developmental goals set to begin by 2016.\footnote{Interview with Subject D.} Remarking on this nexus between economic development and security, an SCO specialist clarified that "[from] China's perspective, if the SCO did not have an economic function, it could not solve the security problem because the root of the three evils is economic [backwardness] . . . . The Chinese think that the economic problem is the root of terrorism."\footnote{Ibid.} Subject D maintains that poverty stricken lifestyles breed unhappiness with the government and highlighted the Ferghana Valley as an economically deprived area of Central Asia that exhibits a high level of terrorist activity.\footnote{Interview with Subject D.} He believes that this economic deprivation creates opportunities for terrorist organizations to generate potential supporters by exploiting feelings of dissatisfaction and failure among the population.\footnote{Ibid.} The Chinese also appear to believe in the circular nature of this relationship in which further instability perpetuates the pattern of unemployment and poverty.\footnote{Interview with Subject E; and Interview with Subject D.} An example cited by an analyst suggested that the Color Revolution in Kyrgyzstan was a source of instability that caused a decline in living standards and provided the bases for further unrest. He suggested that development cannot occur in an unsafe environment and that energy projects such as pipelines first need protection from

potential terrorist attacks. His claim that the Color Revolution in Kyrgyzstan damaged the country economically may have a small amount of merit. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates that in 2004 the Kyrgyz GDP equaled 25.564 billion som (the national currency). By the end of 2005, the year of the revolution, there was a decline of 0.160 percent in this GDP figure, which is an approximate loss of 40,902,400 million som or just over half a million U.S. dollars based on current exchange rates. In principle, one may see how violent social upheaval could hinder economic growth by disrupting production, productivity, and employment. However, in the case of Kyrgyzstan, the effect, if any, appears small. This small result, however, may be due to the short period of tumult surrounding the initial transition of power, which only lasted for about 20 days.

The dual need for security in China and across Central Asia helps explain the early development of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the SCO and the "Peace Missions" designed to counter terrorism in the region. Deng Zhimei, an expert at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences stresses this relationship by arguing that:

China should maximize economic benefits to Central Asian countries on the Silk Road Economic Belt to help curb regional extremist activities [in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region] . . . . Moreover, joint military exercises and other military cooperation between China and Russia within the Shanghai Cooperation

132 Interview with Subject D. For the need to protect energy infrastructure, see also, Pan, "China's Strategy as Chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization." The SCO's economic-security nexus helps explain why a Mongolian diplomat saw the SCO as both an economic and anti-terror organization. See, Interview with Subject H.


135 For descriptions of the RATS and Peace Missions as anti-terror initiatives, see, Interview with Subject G; and Interview with Subject C.
Organization framework have also played an important role in supporting and safeguarding the security and stability of Central Asia.\textsuperscript{136} Zhimei's comments further indicate China's belief in the close relationship between economic development, trade, and Jihadi terrorism. The Silk Road Economic Belt and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization are two important parts of a strategy to increase the level of prosperity in the region and to simultaneously increase China's national security.

**Contradictory Data**

Interviews in Shanghai and Beijing did not reveal much contradictory information regarding the role of Wahhabism or terrorism in the Chinese decision to cooperate with Russia in the SCO. One researcher raised the possibility that Central Asia suffered more from ethnic tension than religious strife.\textsuperscript{137} According to the U.S. Congressional Research Service, this ethnic conflict is the result of the region's "convoluted borders" that "fail to accurately reflect ethnic distributions and are hard to police."\textsuperscript{138} In Tajikistan, for example, ethnic Uzbeks comprise one-quarter of the population and one-seventh of the population in Kyrgyzstan. Yet many ethnic Tajiks live in Uzbekistan and Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{139} Moreover, "deep-seated tensions between ethnic Kyrgyz and ethnic Uzbeks" caused violent clashes in Kyrgyzstan in 2010 that resulted in over 2,000 injuries and 400,000 refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP).\textsuperscript{140} Subject K maintained that these ethnic challenges are generally due to the difficulties of administering states in a region where there are ecological problems and scarce water resources.\textsuperscript{141} In addition, several

\textsuperscript{136} Deng, "Central Asia on Alert."
\textsuperscript{137} Interview with Subject K.
\textsuperscript{139} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{140} Ibid., 15-16.
\textsuperscript{141} Interview with Subject K.
researchers were unsure about the role of Middle Eastern countries in the region or generally downplayed the significance of Saudi financial support.\textsuperscript{142}

\textbf{China’s View of the Geopolitical Hypothesis for Russia}

\textbf{Confirmatory Data}

A number of Chinese analysts in Beijing and Shanghai thought that the main motivation for Russia's participation in the SCO was to balance Western pressure from the EU and NATO. A scholar at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences believes that Russian leaders are mainly concerned about geopolitical factors, namely, preserving Russia's influence in the former Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{143} From the perspective of a researcher at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, this priority stems from the expansionist pattern of Russian history and an ongoing reluctance to yield territory. This reluctance is partially indicated by the maintenance of seventeen Russian military bases in Central Asia and its plans to increase military forces in Kyrgyzstan.\textsuperscript{144} According to subject A, Moscow specifically worries about Central Asia and tries to manage not just Western pressures, but the activity of any foreign government in the region, such as India and Iran.\textsuperscript{145} Yet, according to several other experts, Russia is still primarily focused on stemming American and European powers from encroaching on the region.\textsuperscript{146}

In the estimation of subject D, an analyst at the China Institute for International Studies the United States is still an overriding concern for the Russian government. In

\textsuperscript{142} Interview with Subject F; and Interview with Subject N.
\textsuperscript{143} Interview with Subject A, interview by Michael Zboray, Beijing, China, March 10, 2015.
\textsuperscript{145} Interview with Subject A.
\textsuperscript{146} Interview with Subject M. See also, interview with Subject D. See also, Interview with Subject N. The EU has plans to attract countries of the former Soviet Union which would push Russia's border closer to NATO. See for example, Interview with Subject K.
subject D's words, "For Russia, the biggest enemy is the USA and NATO." As the basis for this claim, he cited Putin's speech last year at the Valdai Discussion Club that mentioned the rebirth of Russia as a great power. Although Putin denied that Russia should become a superpower like the former Soviet Union, he implied that Russia's place was to prevent American and Western leaders from "pretending they rule the world." The researcher also referenced Russia's most recent military doctrine that named the United States and NATO as a "foreign military danger." In the judgment of subject D, Russian elites specifically fear Western support for internal revolutions either within their own country or a neighboring one.

In terms of the Q-data, almost all the respondents in Graph 1 ranked statements 10 and 11 positively, while only one person assigned a negative four to a statement associated with the geopolitical hypothesis.

147 Interview with Subject D.
150 Interview with Subject D.
The most frequent value was positive four followed by an equal number of one and three values. None of the experts assigned a zero to any of the realist statements indicating a high level of certainty for each person’s response. As Graph1 illustrates, these findings suggest a high level of support for the geopolitical hypothesis in general. Researchers most positively viewed statement 10 regarding a multipolar world among the realist statements. With the exception of one instance of positive one, statement 10 received values of either three or four from respondents. Statement 11 regarding countering American influences received the only negative value of minus four. It also received less positive scores of one and two in comparison to the scores for the statement on establishing a multipolar world. As a result, the researchers thought that cooperation in the SCO was less about counterbalancing the United States, and more about Russia's own desire for greater status in the world.

**Contradictory Data**

There was no contradictory qualitative data and only a slight amount of contradictory quantitative data. The lack of contradictory data bolsters the geopolitical
argument and suggests that the research subjects think that the geopolitical hypothesis is well-suited for explaining Russian behavior in the SCO.

**China’s View of the Economic Hypothesis for Russia**

**Confirmatory Data**

Few analysts in Shanghai and Beijing saw much economic logic for Moscow's cooperation with China in the SCO. However, one researcher at the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies was not able to exclude the possibility that the SCO helps Russia with finance and trade.\(^{151}\) Russia would also like as much help as possible in rebuilding infrastructure in Russia and across the region according to subject G at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences.\(^{152}\) Aside from its natural resources, Russia also has a large profit-seeking arms industry that targets the Chinese market.\(^{153}\)

The Q-results for the economic hypothesis were partially supportive with experts assigning a slightly greater number of positive values than negative ones. There was a total of sixteen positive values for statements 1 through 7 compared to thirteen negative values. As Graph 2 indicates, respondents most frequently assigned the value of positive two to the liberal statements.

\(^{151}\) Interview with Subject M.
\(^{152}\) Interview with Subject G.
The next most frequently assigned positive value was one, while the least used positive value by experts was four. The high response rate for scores of one and two and the almost 50 percent lower total of scores of three and four indicates a moderate amount of support for the economic hypothesis. Among the seven statements, respondents viewed statement 4 on foreign direct investment most positively among the seven statements followed by statement 6 on economic interlocking and statement 7 regarding the use of natural gas. Based on these results, Chinese experts think that foreign investment is a greater motivation than trade and energy sales.

**Contradictory Data**

Yet, in the assessment of Chinese subject L, Russians are still wary of Chinese involvement in Central Asia and implied that they view trade deals with China as an extension of China's political influence. Consequently, Russia has been reluctant in the last two years to increase its involvement in the SCO "because they have other ideas [like] a customs union . . . and the customs union will be totally transformed into

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154 Interview with Subject L.
Eurasian economic integration." In February 2014, for example, Russia and Kazakhstan agreed on a gas deal within the framework of the "Eurasian Union," President Putin's preferred organization for reintegrating the former Soviet Union.

Russia also refines crude oil from Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan in its network of 625 oil refineries located near the Ural Mountains. In light of Chinese investment in regional oil refineries, subject G appeared to suggest that China is now challenging this economic partnership between Russia and Central Asia through its investments in the energy sector.

There were also partially contradictory Q-results. As mentioned in the previous section, experts assigned a total of thirteen negative values to the seven liberal statements. According to Graph 3, respondents used the highest negative values for the liberal statement almost twice as frequently as the highest positive values.

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155 Interview with Subject G.

156 For the statement that the Eurasian Union is Putin's preferred organizations, see subject F. For the gas deal between Russia and Kazakhstan, see, interview with Subject L. However, possibly due to the fact that the interviewee spoke in Russian, it is slightly unclear to which deal subject L is referring. Since the "Eurasian Union" was officially founded nearly one year later on January 1, 2015 as the "Eurasian Economic Union," there are two possible deals given the subject L's translation. The "Eurasian Union" can refer to other related entities, such as the Customs Union that officially started in 2010 with Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan, or the Eurasian Economic Commission that is the executive body of the Customs Union. Subject L was likely discussing negotiations that were eventually revealed by the press in August 2014 regarding the preliminary approval of a gas pipeline connecting Russia's natural gas supplies to China's domestic market via Kazakhstan. Although less likely, there was also a Rosneft-sponsored oil transportation agreement that was finalized between Russia and Kazakhstan at a meeting of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council (the governing body of the Customs Union) signed on December 24, 2013. See, Arthur Guschin, "China, Russia, and the Tussle for Influence in Kazakhstan," The Diplomat, March 23, 2015, accessed September 16, 2015, http://thediplomat.com/2015/03/china-russia-and-the-tussle-for-influence-in-kazakhstan/; and "Supreme Eurasian Economic Council Summit Kicks Off in Moscow," The Voice of Russia, December 19, 2011, accessed September 16, 2015, http://sputniknews.com/voiceofrussia/2011/12/19/62489399/; and "Supreme Eurasian Economic Council," UNTERM, accessed September 16, 2015, http://unterm.un.org/dgaacs/unterm.nsf/8fa942046ff7601c85256983007ca4d8/0de5e7ae5b4e7e4285257b96004a98d8.

Experts used scores of minus three and minus four scores a total of nine times as compared to a total of five times for scores of positive three and positive four. This result indicates that there were stronger negative opinions regarding the liberal hypothesis than positive ones. Specifically, respondents saw statement 3 regarding selling oil and natural gas most negatively and statement 2 on international trade as the next most negative liberal statement for Russian cooperation with China in the SCO. Based on these results, the sale of hydrocarbon resources does not appear to be the central reason for Russia’s cooperation with China in the SCO.

**China’s View of the Internal Security Hypothesis for Russia**

**Confirmatory Data**

Many of the Chinese analysts did not speak about Russian priorities in isolation from China’s interests in the SCO. However, it was clear that some experts believe that the SCO would be able to help Russia monitor terrorism in Central Asia and any Islamic
extremism supported by Saudi Arabia. Chechnya and Dagestan, for example, are still restive regions where terrorism is a significant concern for Russia.

Given the relatively high number of times respondents selected values of one or two, the Q results reveal that the Chinese respondents saw the internal security hypothesis as moderately important in comparison to the geopolitical and economic hypotheses. Based on Graph 4, the experts generally saw terrorism as a significant reason for Russia’s cooperation with China in the SCO.

Graph 4: Internal Security Hypothesis

They assigned positive values thirty-two times to statements referring to the hypothesis in comparison to only three negative values. There were also eight times as many highly positive values of three or four than highly negative values. This preponderance of positive scores suggests that the respondents were supportive of the internal security hypothesis. The most frequent positive values were one and two which were used a total of twenty-four times. In comparison to the support for the geopolitical hypothesis,

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158 Interview with Subject E.
159 Interview with Subject C; and Interview with Subject D. Subject D does not specifically cite Chechnya and Dagestan, but references Russia's southern regions.
however, this result indicates that there is less support for an explanation based on terrorism among some interviewees. In terms of the eight statements referring to internal security, statement 25 on combating Jihadism received the only value of positive four, while statement 27 on monitoring Middle-Eastern nongovernmental organizations received the only score of minus four. This outcome further suggests that Jihadi terrorism is a factor in terms of Russia's internal security, but researchers were less certain about its precise origins.

**Contradictory Data**

Aside from three negative Q-values, the interviews did not yield contradictory information about Wahhabism and Russian cooperation with China in the SCO. The absence of significant qualitative and quantitative contradictory evidence suggests that the internal security hypothesis is well suited for explaining Russian behavior in the SCO. At a minimum, the hypothesis cannot be excluded as an explanation for Russia's participation in the SCO.

**Perceptions of Shared Geopolitical Interests**

**Confirmatory Data**

In several interviews, respondents specifically identified Russia and China as having similar motives; whereas in previous instances, analysts often isolated these interests in order to draw clear distinctions between Russian priorities and Chinese priorities. In response to a question about whether the SCO is a counterweight to the United States, for example, a member of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences
described how Moscow and Beijing share the same desire to create a new multipolar world with less American intervention.\textsuperscript{160} He claimed:

\begin{quote}
After the fall of the Soviet Union, only one nation was considered to be the most powerful and that is America. Now it appears that the global system changing. Why is it changing? . . . First of all, this means that after the Cold War there was a unipolar system . . . America does whatever it wants and even sometimes uses military force, which brings out discontent and concern . . . . Now people are beginning to think that a multipolar system would be better.\textsuperscript{161}
\end{quote}

Although as a caveat, he added that this ambition for Russian and China to play a larger role in international affairs did not necessarily mean Russian or Chinese policy in the SCO was anti-American.

However, these comments were clearly made in the context of diminishing America's global ability to intervene in other countries including those of Central Asia. Moreover, in response to a question about what role the SCO may play in realizing Russian and Chinese strategic interests, one expert commented, "By being in Central Asia, the USA is keeping an eye on Russia and China. The regional influence of the USA surrounds China and Russia, [and] for this reason the USA must leave Central Asia."\textsuperscript{162}

In his analysis, the United States tries to contain China and Russia by its presence in the region to which the SCO is a response.

\textbf{Contradictory Data}

In contrast to subject K's position, academic and policy-oriented experts in Shanghai and Beijing suggested that the SCO is in no way a "military alliance."\textsuperscript{163} Although one researcher claimed such an arrangement would be the greatest threat to the United States, he added that "no one wants to turn the SCO into a military alliance.

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{160} Interview with Subject F.
\textsuperscript{161} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{162} Interview with Subject K.
\textsuperscript{163} Interview with Subject D; and interview with Subject N.
\end{footnotesize}
alliance."\textsuperscript{164} Based on this judgment, both China and Russia reportedly have no desire to create such a relationship. One potential reason is that the SCO would become an impractical arrangement in which neither side could fully cooperate. Even at the height of Sino-Soviet cooperation during the 1950s, during which time the chances of Russian-Chinese cooperation were greatest, China did not accept the Soviet Union's leadership role in its bilateral relationship.\textsuperscript{165} China did not agree with the Soviet Union on "how to achieve . . . the shining future . . . and Marxism, and how to deal with evil, capitalism, aggression, and imperialism."\textsuperscript{166} Adding to the infeasibility of this idea, a scholar at Tongji University commented on the wishes of other SCO members who would need to ascent to a counterbalancing coalition. He said that the "Central Asian countries do not want to become [a part of] a major alliance with China or Russia. They would like to make a balance between Russia and China."\textsuperscript{167} In his opinion, the SCO has too many members with separate political agendas for counterbalancing to be the SCO's raison d'être.

**Perceptions of Shared Economic Interests**

Only two researchers commented on whether there was either confirmatory or contradictory data on shared economic interests. Consequently, there is little evidence beyond the construction of infrastructure for economic development that Russia and China similarly prioritize the same economic interests within the framework of the SCO.\textsuperscript{168} According to one interview, there is no significant mechanism or model for

\textsuperscript{164} Interview with Subject D.  
\textsuperscript{165} Interview with Subject N.  
\textsuperscript{167} Interview with Subject N.  
\textsuperscript{168} Interview with Subject L.
mutual exchange—even in the most seemingly likely geographic zones for economic cooperation, such as in China's northeastern provinces that directly border Russia. As a research assistant speaking for her Chinese colleague observed, attempts at liberalizing trade "did not come to anything except the emergence of Russian-speaking Chinese cities."\(^{169}\) The absence of substantive data indicating a shared economic interest suggests that the economic hypothesis does not explain the primary purpose of the SCO. It is unlikely that Russia and China agreed to form the organization from purely profit-driven or developmental motivations.

**Perceptions of Shared Internal Security Interests**

**Confirmatory Data**

Based on the views expressed in three interviews at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, the China Institute for International Studies, and the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies, the SCO is a manifestation of Russian and Chinese interests in Central Asia, among which the Chinese see the fight against the SCO's three evils of terrorism, extremism, and separatism as the primary shared objective for Russia and China.\(^ {170}\) As one researcher at the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies explained, "the SCO is very spatial but lacks particular content without the security issue."\(^ {171}\) In other words, despite its large geographic size and broad agenda, which includes a university, free trade, an energy club, and youth groups, the cornerstone of the SCO has been the mutual interest in the stability in Central Asia. This region needs to be a secure

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\(^{169}\) Interview with Subject P.

\(^{170}\) Interview with Subject D; and Interview with Subject H. For commentary on the SCO as a conduit for Russian and Chinese interests in Central Asia, see, Interview with Subject L.

\(^{171}\) Interview with Subject M.
area for both Russia and China because it acts as a conduit for terrorism and radical
Islamist ideology that could spread to surrounding countries.\textsuperscript{172}

This was the common perception between Russian and Chinese leaders during the
1990's which focused discussion on "issues of separation" after the fall of the Soviet
Union according to subject F.\textsuperscript{173} Specifically, Boris Yeltzin, Jiang Zemin, and the leaders
of Kazakhstan and Tajikistan had compatible concerns over border security and wanted a
mechanism to address what became known as the "three evils."\textsuperscript{174} As described in chapter
three, the evolution of this approach started in 1996 with the Shanghai Five, the first
formal mechanism for a common defense against "terrorism, extremism, and
separatism."\textsuperscript{175} By 2001, the Shanghai Five had become the Shanghai Cooperation
Organization, an institution intended to address not only border security, but also the
"strengthening of [regional] relationships" through education, culture, and economic
development.\textsuperscript{176}

According to subject C, the American invasion of Afghanistan after the events of
September 11\textsuperscript{th} intensified international terrorism as an issue, and strengthened the need
for exchanging information about this threat through the SCO.\textsuperscript{177} In her judgment, the
series of military exercises under the banner, Peace Missions helped increase trust
between Russian and Chinese forces and enabled both countries to preserve stability in
the region through anti-terrorism maneuvers.\textsuperscript{178} These land battle drills were intended to

\textsuperscript{172} Interview with Subject L; and For how separatism and terrorism are transnational, see, Interview with
Subject F.
\textsuperscript{173} Interview with Subject F.
\textsuperscript{174} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{175} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{176} Interview with Subject E.
\textsuperscript{177} Interview with Subject C. For the tightening of relations between Russia and China through military
exercises and law enforcement, see, Interview with Subject E.
\textsuperscript{178} Interview with Subject C.
showcase the combined forces of SCO members in order to intimidate terrorists many of whom were trained in the Middle East or elsewhere southern Pakistan.\textsuperscript{179} As American troops withdraw from Afghanistan, two other analysts in Shanghai agree that since no other countries in Central Asia can provide security, there still needs to be a very close cooperative effort on behalf of Russia and China.\textsuperscript{180} In one analyst's words, "Russia and China play an important role. Neither Kazakhstan nor Uzbekistan is able to ensure security in the region."\textsuperscript{181}

**Contradictory Data**

The interviews did not yield any contradictory information in terms of shared interests regarding terrorism. It is the only explanation that is not associated with any contradictory information in terms of a shared perspective on cooperation. The lack of contradictory data suggests that the internal security hypothesis is the most suitable explanation for Russia's and China's participation in the SCO. In the cases of the previous two hypotheses, Russia and China had misaligned priorities that prevent geopolitical and economic interests from dominating the SCO's agenda.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has presented data on the Chinese perspective on the Shanghai Cooperation Organization from two points of view. The first viewpoint examines how the Chinese interpret their own priorities and the second describes China's understanding of Russia's motives in the SCO. Each point of view tests the degree to which geopolitical, economic, and internal security interests exist as the SCO's main agenda item. This final

\textsuperscript{179} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{180} Interview with Subject K; and Interview with Subject F.
\textsuperscript{181} Interview with Subject K.
section summarizes and analyzes this information in order to explain which argument best applies.

In two interviews, the results indicated that China specifically shared counterbalancing intentions with Russia on a global level. Subject K also indicated that Russia and China believed that the United States had a reciprocal agenda. In his opinion, by inserting itself into Central Asia, the United States could more efficiently monitor and ultimately limit the influence of Russia and China. According to Subject K's analysis, China views the United States as an aggressive force in the world that acts against Chinese interests. From this perspective, for example, the United States favors the territorial claims of Vietnam and the Philippines in disputes with China. It also destabilizes entire regions with interventionist policies. Consequently, China prefers that Central Asia be free of American influence.

Yet there was also a clearly dissenting view. In the judgment of subjects K, H, L, and I, the SCO is not inherently any kind of counterbalancing coalition. China's greater interest is in cooperating with the United States. China still needs time to develop economically and confrontation with America would only hinder China's path toward prosperity. Subject I suggested that raising living standards has taken precedent over geopolitical disagreements. Moreover, the rejection by the SCO of America's application for observer status in 2005 was not the result of an anti-American bias in the organization. Instead, China and other SCO members probably did not believe that as a country in North America, the United States had the proper credentials to apply for membership in a strictly Eurasian institution.
With regard to economics, China does have an interest within the SCO in free trade and the construction of regional infrastructure. The interviewees agreed that from China's perspective, economics has partially formed the basis of cooperation in the SCO. However, researchers did not focus on China's need to increase oil and natural gas purchases from Russia. Instead, they discussed China's desire to augment trade and infrastructure development. The Chinese prioritize these objectives in the SCO in order to develop Central Asia and ultimately Xinjiang by investing in roads and railways. By reducing regional tariffs and improving transportation corridors, Chinese businesses can theoretically increase sales and profits. From the perspective of subjects L and I, for example, the development of western China through the interlocking of the Chinese economy with Central Asian economic growth is a chief priority. Researchers, however, categorized these pursuits as secondary compared to China's security challenges in terms of the SCO's three evils.

The majority of the interview data focused on Islamic terrorists in Xinjiang who reportedly use Central Asia as a safe haven to escape Chinese authority. Scholars in Shanghai seemed to have spoken very candidly when describing Wahhabism and the introduction of Middle-Eastern influences as the source of instability in northwest China. In addition, the SCO is equipped to confront this danger through the RATS, the Peace Missions, and potential coordination with the Silk Road Economic Belt. The interviews suggest that the Chinese counterterrorism strategy in the SCO is based on reducing active threats through military and intelligence activities and on the economic development in the region.
In comparison to the views presented in chapter four, the basis for the geopolitical argument for Russia using the SCO as mechanism for counterbalancing is persuasive. Subject G, for example, believes that Russia has traditionally seen itself as an expansionist power and, in this context, still operates a considerable network of military bases in Central Asia. As a result, Russia would prefer to avoid the United States actively conducting foreign policy in neighboring states. Similar to how subject MM in Moscow described the motives of the United States, subject D in Beijing believes that Russia and NATO still have a highly adversarial relationship. The Q data used for interviewees also reveals that there was a strong preference for the geopolitical hypothesis with only a minority of respondents opposing the argument. In terms of qualitative data, there was no contradictory perspective, which enhances the geopolitical position for Russian motivations in the SCO.

The economic hypothesis for explaining Russian motivations in the SCO has very limited qualitative support among Chinese scholars. Subjects M and G offered only vague confirmatory data indicating Russia's possible interest in rebuilding infrastructure, increasing arms sales, and the possibility that the SCO could generally help augment international trade. The quantitative results were more supportive, but showed an almost even split between those who thought the economic hypothesis was relevant and those who were skeptical.

The Chinese appear to believe that the Russians are wary of Chinese investment and financial activity in Central Asia. According to subject L, Russia has been more interested in economic cooperation through organizations that notably exclude China than with multilateral negotiations that directly involve Chinese interests. Moreover, based on
subject G's interview, despite high profile gas contracts between leaders in Moscow and Beijing, China could potentially challenge Russia's dominant control of regional oil refining through financially supporting independent refineries.

Due to the statements by subjects E, C, and D, there is a general basis in favor of the internal security hypothesis to explain Russia's motivation for its membership in the SCO. In their opinion, the SCO plausibly addresses Islamic extremism supported by Saudi Arabia due to Russia’s concern about terrorism in Central Asia and the Northern Caucasus. There was also no contradictory qualitative data to invalidate Russia's internal security priority in the SCO. In terms of quantitative data, the Q results revealed more support with the majority of Q-values ranging between one and four, indicating that internal security factors are relatively significant. Although the Q data from Shanghai and Beijing was limited, the results from China favored the internal security hypothesis more than the results from interviewees in Moscow. In general, the Chinese appeared to be more open about addressing the threat posed by Wahhabism than their Russian counterparts. This could be because for either political or nationalistic reasons, the Russians might have downplayed their own domestic problems when speaking with a foreign researcher.

Regarding the possibility that Russia and China could lead a counterbalancing coalition against the United States, such a scenario is unlikely according to subject N. Subject N thought that given a long history of mutual distrust between Russia and China, they could not effectively coordinate a counterbalancing organization. Moreover, in his opinion, Central Asian leaders are not interested in participating in a potential
geopolitical conflict with the United States. Instead, they are more interested in finding their own balance between Moscow and Beijing.

Subject F at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences suggested that counterterrorism has been a common priority for Russia since the leaders of the Shanghai Five first began meeting to discuss border issues. With the devastating effects of September 11, 2001 clarifying the Taliban's support of Al-Qaeda, Afghanistan was also perceived as a major security threat by Russia and China. The SCO was the ideal organization to begin formulating and implementing coordinated anti-terrorism initiatives, such as SCO Peace Missions and the founding of the RATS in Tashkent. It is also the only explanation against which no interview subject offered contradictory information in terms of how Russia and China prioritized a common objective. The paucity of this type of information bolsters the internal security explanation by better accounting for overlapping agendas in the SCO than the alternative arguments.

In support of this shared interest, interviewees provided considerable information on how China perceives Wahhabism as an internal security threat. According to scholars in Shanghai, the Chinese government believes there is a direct link between the introduction of Wahhabism in Xinjiang and Uyghur unrest. There is also a reported link between terrorist groups in Central Asia and external support for Uyghurs in western China. Subjects I, A, D, and H, for example, all suggest that Jihadism from Central Asia supports separatism in Xinjiang and provides a safe haven for militants. Based on their information, it appears that Wahhabi-inspired terrorists have primarily motivated China to coordinate counterterrorism plans with Russia and the states in Central Asia in order to contain extremist organizations. Based on the data in Chapter 4, both countries appear to
believe that economic deprivation is a factor in terrorism and that they consequently need to coordinate their resources to securely develop Central Asia. Russia's military presence combined with China's capacity to invest makes the SCO the ideal organization for a two-fold strategy.\textsuperscript{182}

In summary, there are three main points. First, the Chinese believe that Russia and China mainly share a counterterrorism position in the SCO. Even when discussing economic ambitions, researchers in Shanghai and Beijing often talked about the development of Xinjiang and Central Asia within a security context. They believe that an increase in regional prosperity will ultimately lead to a regional reduction in terrorism. Second, the Chinese also prioritize the general development of China and raising living standards for its population. Third, the SCO subsequently cannot purely be a geopolitical instrument for limiting American involvement in Central Asia.

Given the amount of data in the previous two chapters on Jihadism terrorism that supports the internal security hypothesis, the final chapter is a secondary test for the basis of Wahhabism’s influence as a source of instability in Russia. It is already clear that analysts strongly believe two points: there is a decisively anti-American sentiment in Russian society and Russia is searching for new energy markets. However, it is less clear how far Wahhabism has threatened Russia beyond the impoverished Northern Caucasus. The next chapter studies Wahhabism in Tatarstan from the perspective of experts in Kazan. As a wealthy region of Russia where moderate Muslims and non-Muslims have peacefully lived together, Tatarstan is the least likely place for Wahhabism to exist. The

\textsuperscript{182} For a comment on this approach between Russia and China more broadly, see, Farchy, "China's Great Game."
case study in chapter six therefore suggests that Wahhabism is potentially a risk for all areas of Russia.
Chapter 6: Wahhabism's Threat to Russia

Introduction

Unlike the previous chapters, Chapter 6 does not directly examine the Shanghai Cooperation Organization from the perspectives of the geopolitical, economic, and internal security hypotheses. Instead, it assesses the threat of Wahhabism to Russia in terms of its spread into Russia's moderate and secularized Islamic community in the Republic of Tatarstan. It attempts to answer the question: "Does the threat exist for the systemic spread of Wahhabism across Russia's Muslim areas?" By answering this question, Chapter 6 more deeply explores the potency of Wahhabism as a possible internal security driver in Russia. It also serves as an important secondary test of the basis for the internal security argument given an abundance of confirmatory information regarding the role of terrorism in the SCO from Chapters 4 and 5.

If, in fact, Russia is so committed to combating militant Islam, then Russia should be facing a significant dilemma concerning the radicalization of its Islamic population. In order to test for this possibility, this chapter examines Tatarstan for two reasons. First, Tatarstan is an economically prosperous region with a large Islamic population. Given the generally hypothesized relationship between economic well-being and terrorism discussed further in the next section, Tatarstan is a place where extremist tendencies should be the lowest. Second, Tatarstan is also an exemplar for the peaceful coexistence between Islam and secular Russian society in which radical tendencies should be precluded. Based on these two dimensions, Tatarstan serves as a crucial case study from which the chapter makes a broader claim about the threat of radicalism in Russia. If
Wahhabism can infiltrate a Muslim population under ideal social and economic conditions, then it can spread into any region where Muslims live.

As the barometer for the region, I chose the republic's capital of Kazan because it is home to many scholarly experts on Islamic practices and on social influences in Tatarstan. Kazan also serves as an economic and social hub for 30 percent of the region's population. Consequently, I conducted interviews with faculty at Kazan Federal University, Kazan State Technological University, the Russian Islamic University, the Tatarstan Academy of Sciences, the Russian Academy of Justice, the Center of Islamic Culture, and the Council of Ulema of the Russian Association of Islamic Agreement. In terms of individuals, I interviewed two local imams, for example, who have studied radical Islam in Tatarstan as well as academics who study the sociological and economic roles of Islam in the former Soviet Union. During all of my interviews in Kazan, I asked questions that investigated how Tatarstan is a model for peaceful relations between non-Muslim Russians and Russian Muslims and what conditions facilitate this model. I also inquired about how they define Wahhabism and the extent to which it differs from local variants of Islam. In addition, I asked if recent acts of violence, such as the high profile attack on two Muslim clerics in 2012 were related to the regional spread of Wahhabism.

Chapter 6 consists of six main sections. The first section provides greater detail about the postulated relationship between economic well-being and terrorism as well as the demographic and economic characteristics of Tatarstan. The second section focuses the on the social dimensions of Tatarstan and how the region functions as a model for

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moderate Islam in Russia. Based on this background information, the third section explains how the region functions as a crucial case study and why an examination of the Northern Caucasus would not provide generalizable information to answer the chapter's question. The fourth section juxtaposes the Russian understanding of Wahhabism from the perspective of the Ministry of Internal Affairs with the viewpoint of scholars and religious clerics in Tatarstan. Using further information from my Kazan-based interviews, the fifth section offers regional examples of Wahhabism and cites Hizb ut-Tahrir (HuT) as an organization that is believed to advocate Wahhabi ideology. The sixth and final section summarizes and compares the findings from Kazan with my previous findings from Moscow, Shanghai, and Beijing.

Economic Foundation for Co-Existence in Tatarstan and the Theoretical Background

Relationship between Economic Well-Being and Terrorism

Among the theoretical determinants of terrorism, some scholars and policymakers suggest that there is a relationship between economic deprivation and political conflict. President George W. Bush, for example, gave a speech in Monterey, Mexico that highlighted this relationship by saying, "We fight against poverty because hope is an answer to terror."² This belief is also present in President Barack Obama's National Security Strategy which maintains that "through risk-based approaches, we have countered terrorism and transnational organized crime in ways that enhance commerce, travel, and tourism."³ Marie Harf, who served as Deputy Spokesperson for the US State

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Department, also suggested that the Obama administration's counterterrorism policy has been partially based on improving poor economic conditions that are "the root causes that lead people to join these groups." 

Other world leaders and state officials, such as President Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey and Tahsin Shardum, the Chief of Jordanian Army Intelligence also believe in the proposition that poverty breeds terrorism. Shardum stated that "economic development may solve almost all of our problems [in the Middle East]. . . . The moment a person is in a good economic position, has a job, and can support his family, all other problems vanish." Even Hamas leader, Mahmoud al-Zahar said, "It is enough to see the poverty-stricken outskirts of Algiers or the refugee camps in Gaza to understand the factors that nurture the strength of the Islamic Resistance Movement." President Vladimir Putin also believes that poor economic conditions have helped breed extremist activity. In an interview with the German newspaper, Bild shortly after the events of September 11th, he stated that "there are economic difficulties in the countries where Islam is the official religion. It is very convenient to transform socio-economic and political problems into problems of religious character; some countries find it very convenient." In an interview a day later, he suggested that "a set of political, educational, and economic measures to deprive extremist organizations of their base of support" could counteract.

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4 Marie Harf, "State Dept's Harf: "We Can Not Kill Our Way Out Of This War," Must Address Root Causes Like Joblessness," Real Clear Politics, Posted on February 17, 2015, accessed March 5, 2015, http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2015/02/17/state_dept_spokesperson_we_can_not_kill_our_way_out_of_this_war_must_address_root_causes_like_joblessness.html. Marie Harf was quoted on Hardball with Chris Matthews.


7 Fendel, "Saudi Prince: Terrorism Not Caused by Poverty."

"fundamentalist organizations." In response to a question concerning the military conflict in the Northern Caucasus, Putin said that Russia is not only pursuing military means for solving terrorism, but is also focused on:

improving the social-economic standard of living for the population of the North Caucasus and Chechnya, in particular. This is [also] associated with cultural work, it is associated with religious-ideological work, because we must offer the bulk of the population something other than the man-hating ideas being put forward by religious fanatics.10

These statements reflect the logic of economic deprivation theory which suggests that "deprivation leads to frustration, which in turn produces aggression when pent-up hostility against perceived aggressors is released." Based on this idea, materially deprived people, unsatisfied with their relative conditions are therefore more likely than others to feel anger that may lead to violent action including terrorism. Contemporary scholars, like Jessica Stern have also indicated a relationship between poverty and terrorism. In an article in *Foreign Affairs*, Stern suggests that given a 40 percent poverty rate, the *mujahideen* fighters in Pakistan are able to recruit individuals based on offering small, but relatively attractive salaries.12 Empirical studies on terrorism have also found a connection to economic prosperity. A study by Andreas Freytag, Jens Krueger, Daniel Meierrieks, and Friedrich Schneider, for example, found that good socio-economic

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conditions indicated by high levels of consumption, trade openness, and investment are "almost always negatively correlated with terrorist activities in statistically robust ways." In addition, studies by S. Brock Blomberg, Gregory Hess, and Akila Weerapana also suggest that economic development reduces the potential for terrorism. Following similar reasoning, Brian Burgoon found empirical support for the argument that social welfare programs may reduce the incidents of transnational terrorism as well as instances of terrorism perpetrated by the country's own citizens. According to the study, social welfare policies have the potential to reduce economic inequality and thereby raise one group's living standards. By harmonizing living standards, governments can reduce social discontent, political instability and violence. Social welfare policies may also specifically reduce "religious-political extremism" by directly reducing the need for individuals to seek out social services from religious organizations. It may also indirectly


reduce the number of impoverished people who commonly seek deeper religious beliefs.\(^{17}\)

**Economic and Demographic Characteristics of Tatarstan**

According to an academic at Kazan Federal University, "a Tatar is a peaceful person. In the past, Tatars were tradesmen who traded and conducted business. They were always able to find a common language for selling their goods."\(^{18}\) The comments suggest that the Republic of Tatarstan has long been an economically prosperous area, where terrorism is unlikely to take root. The statement is also supported by empirical data. In its Human Development Report 2006/2007, the United Nations assigned the fourth highest Human Development Index ranking (0.812) to Tatarstan out of seventy-nine Russian regions.\(^{19}\) Based on information originally from Rosstat and the IMF, Graph 1 in Appendix G illustrates how Tatarstan is one of Russia's most prosperous areas with its per capita gross regional product (GRP) ranking in Russia's top five regions. In 2012, for example, Tatarstan's per capita GRP of approximately $12,000 was almost as high as the per capita GDP of Poland of about $13,000.\(^{20}\) The success of Tatarstan's economy is

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\(^{18}\) Interview with Subject L12, interview by Michael Zboray, Kazan, Russia, June 4, 2014.


mostly based on its large industrial sector that accounts for 44.1 percent of its regional output, most of which involves oil, gas, chemicals, and major machinery, such as aircraft engines, helicopters, and pumping equipment for oil and gas. Analysis by Deutsche Bank also places Tatarstan among the top nine locations in Russia that account for 45 percent of Russia's GDP and ranked it as one of the best places for investment of all the country's regions.

In the demographic realm, Kazan is one of only eleven Russian cities with over one million inhabitants and serves as a hub for the region's nearly 3.8 million people. The region possesses a significant portion of Russia's total Muslim population and is the only area with a majority of Muslims in terms of Russia's top five highest-producing regions. Tatarstan's population is 53.2 percent Tatar and 39.7 percent ethnic Russian with the remainder divided among minority groups. According to the Pew Research Center, Tatarstan has about 2.2 million Muslims who represent the majority of Tatarstan's population. This figure is also 13.5 percent of Russia's total Muslim population, which Pew estimates to be 16.4 million. In comparison, the three major parts of Russia's

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Northern Caucasus—Dagestan, Chechnya, and Ingushetia—contain 16.3 percent, 7.4 percent, and 3.0 percent, respectively of Russia's Muslims. In terms of the share of the Muslim population within each region, Dagestan, Chechnya, and Ingushetia are respectively about 92 percent, 95 percent, and 97 percent Muslim. In comparison to Tatarstan's per capita GRP of approximately $12,000, these three regions had a respective per capita GRP of about $4,100, $2,500, and $2,900 in 2012. Given these statistics, Tatarstan contains a sizable Muslim population that is also relatively wealthy by Russian standards.

Social Foundation for Co-Existence: Ethnicity and Religion

Interethnic Dimension

During the course of my interviews in Kazan, respondents generally described a peaceful and amicable atmosphere in Tatarstan. According to researchers, Tatar Muslims and ethnically Russian Orthodox are generally well integrated into a single society. A faculty member at Kazan Federal University thinks that Russians who have lived in Tatarstan with a predominately Muslim population have a "high level of tolerance" and a

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28 For demographic information, see "Chislennost' i Razmeshchenie Naseleniia," Federal'naia Sluzhba Gosudarstvennoi Statistiki and for GRP data, see "Natsional'nye Scheta," Federal'naia sluzhba Gosudarstvennoi Statistiki.
29 Interview with Subject J10, interview by Michael Zboray, Kazan, Russia, June 11, 2014. She thought these groups have a good relationship, but, in the distant past, they have struggled, for example, with forced evangelization. For the blending of Tatar and Russian identities, see, Interview with Subject A1, interview by Michael Zboray, Kazan, Russia, June 12, 2014.
"good mentality" toward Muslims. A study by Dr. Alexander Salagaev, a senior Kazan-based Russian sociologist, professor, and expert for the UN on social problems among youth suggests that there is a scientifically testable level of interethnic tolerance between ethnic Russians and Tatars. Using multi-stage and quota sampling, Salagaev uses the well-known Bogardus scale that measures social distance between societal groups in Tatarstan. The multi-stage sampling allowed the 2,500-person study to examine clusters of ethnic groups across age, gender, and education level. The quota selection ensured that in terms of age, the sample of respondents was proportional to the regional population. The scale is divided into seven levels with the first level (1) indicating the closest distance, or in the case of the study, "kinship" (тесное родство). The second level (2) indicates "friendship" (дружба). The highest level (7) indicates the farthest social distance, which is defined as the rejection of the other ethnicity into one's own country (неприятие вплоть до отказа в приезда в страну). The research found that the aggregated score for Tatars and Russians is approximately 1.7, which suggests that they consider each other to be between "kinship" and "friendship."

Adding to the ethnic accord, many Christians and Muslims in Tatarstan have intermarried which has resulted in many Tatars having Russian surnames and some Christians having Tatar surnames. According to one expert, "around 30 percent of marriages are between Russians and Tatars." He added that "for a Tatar today, the Russian is not only a neighbor, a friend, a colleague at work, but also may be your

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30 Interview with Subject F6, interview by Michael Zboray, Kazan, Russia, June 10, 2014.
33 Ibid.
34 Interview with Subject I9, interview by Michael Zboray, Kazan, Russia, June 11, 2014.
relative.\(^{35}\) In *The Geography of Ethnic Violence* published by Princeton University Press, Monica Duffy Toft cites similar figures and writes that 20-38 percent of Tatars have had mixed marriages with Russians.\(^{36}\) It should be noted, however, that the rate of intermarriage may be only a tentative indicator of ethnic accord. In Sarajevo, for example, the intermarriage rate among the population in 1991 was 34.1 percent, yet much fighting still occurred in the area during the war in Bosnia.\(^{37}\)

A historian from the Academy of Sciences of Tatarstan suggested that the reason for peaceful coexistence between the two groups is their tolerance of one another. He said that "we don't see a need to normalize life. There is no serious conflict . . . there is no problem for Tatars and Russians living together . . . there are no extremes."\(^{38}\) An imam described this relationship as *dobrososedstvo* or neighborliness, which originated from the need for ethnic groups to live side by side.\(^{39}\) Another Islamic official similarly said that Russians and Tatars do not have very conflicting opinions of each other because they have had a history of living with other ethnic groups.\(^{40}\)

As an official demonstration of this tolerance, the Tatar government allowed the construction of Kul Sharif, a major mosque that has become one of the symbols of Kazan.

\(^{35}\) Interview with Subject D4, interview by Michael Zboray, Kazan, Russia, June 10, 2014.


\(^{38}\) Interview with Subject A1.

\(^{39}\) Interview with Subject C3, interview by Michael Zboray, Kazan, Russia, June 12, 2014.

\(^{40}\) Interview with Subject E5, interview by Michael Zboray, Kazan, Russia, June 5, 2014.
near the city's center of government. The main webpage of the mosque emphasizes this message by stating:

In accordance with the World Heritage List of UNESCO, it was considered appropriate to build a memorial mosque on the principle of balance of cultures and faiths. The construction of a mosque in the Kazan Kremlin has played an important role in the consolidation of the two major nations living in Tatarstan and in the performance of the principle of balance of cultures and faiths in the Kremlin.

Kazan and, more broadly, Tatarstan represent the coalescence of Russian and Islamic societies unlike anywhere else in Russia. The Northern Caucasus, for example, is where these societies have not lived peacefully in ethnic or in religious terms. A senior scholar at the Russian Islamic University explained that in the Caucasus, "there is a lot of economic backwardness, unemployment, social pressures, infighting between clans, and unmanageable corruption. On the other hand, Tatarstan is more civilized. There are no social or economic reasons for youth to become radicalized . . . . There is also no inter-confessional pressure because the Russians and the Tatars never created these problems in Tatarstan."

However, there are still some fringe groups that disturb ethnic relations. Members of the "Tatar Public Center" held a protest in Kazan in 2010 against what the group perceived as an attempt by a Russian anthropologist to divide the Tatar ethnicity into subcomponents in his research. By subdividing the Tatar ethnicity, the group thought that

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41 Interview with Subject L12, interview by Michael Zboray, Kazan, Russia, June 4, 2014.
43 Interview with Subject E5. For a similar perspective, see, Interview with Subject F6.
the research was an attempt to diminish the idea of a single Tatar identity. In a separate instance, a court in Kazan found the coordinator of the Russian Alliance, a reported nationalist group, guilty of posting an insulting video of Tatars online. As part of the accusation, investigators in Tatarstan alleged that he placed a picture of pieces of pork and fecal matter on top of a Koran on his website. However, he was found not guilty of "insulting Muslims," yet sentenced to forty-eight days of community service for insulting an ethnicity.

**Model for Moderate Islam**

In addition to Tatarstan's prosperity and ethnic harmony, the social concord in the republic also has a strongly religious dimension that makes it an unlikely place for virulent Wahhabism to flourish. According to a faculty member at Kazan Federal University, "The islamophobia that exists in Russia is very dangerous. The Russian leadership understands this and that is why Russia is trying to find a correct and good [expression of] Islam, which would be pro-Russian." He continued to explain that if the Russian government permits the development of anti-Islamic feelings, these sentiments could encourage Muslim regions with enough self-sufficient resources to attempt to secede from the Federation. In 2013, President Putin alluded to his government's effort to include Russia's Muslim minority and other segments of society by saying that "people must develop a civic identity on the basis of shared values, a patriotic consciousness,

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46 Interview with Subject K11, interview by Michael Zboray, Kazan, Russia, June 6, 2014.
47 Ibid.
civic responsibility and solidarity, respect for the law and a sense of responsibility for their homeland’s fate, without losing touch with their ethnic or religious roots.”

As part of its effort to create "religious multiculturalism," Russia has focused on the general concept of "Russian Islam" that would ideally "patronize, protect, and promote some Islamic actors and forms of Islamic practice while simultaneously delegitimizing others." This policy has been built on a multi-dimensional approach. The first two parts of this policy funnel state finances to reconstruct mosques, provide funds for religious education, and train "home-grown" imams. The second two parts are built around formal state support for Muslim institutions and the promotion of inclusive feelings of national belonging. This approach, for example, has occurred through the introduction of organizations, such as spiritual boards that administratively organize Islamic clergy across the Federation. These boards act as "interlocutors" or de facto embassies between the Russian government and "ordinary Muslims." The Russian government also increased its funding for Islamic education in 2008 from 400 to 800 million rubles through similar structures, such as the Board of the Foundation for the Support of Islamic Culture, Science and Education.

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51 Ibid.
53 Ibid.
In the words of an academic at Kazan Federal University, it is important that traditional Islam (locally practiced Islam) be "loyal to Russia" and "would relate well to the Russian government."\(^{54}\) The "construction of an official Islamic sphere" in Russia has significantly focused on Tatarstan and is based on the creation of a moderate form of Islam also known as "Euro Islam." This approach is supposed to incorporate the different ways in which Islam is practiced in Russia through promoting Jadidism, a modernist interpretation of Islam that took root in Russia during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.\(^{55}\) This movement occurred in Kazan in the Tatar population and promoted the integration of scientific thought in the education of Muslims.\(^{56}\) The fundamental importance of Jadidism is its attempt to combine theological and secular approaches to Islam, which deemphasizes the idea that all aspects of life should be defined only by religious practice.\(^{57}\) According to one of Tatarstan's most prominent Islamic clerics, Valiulla Yakupov, the Russian Islamic University in Kazan is an example of how the Tatarstan government and, in particular, the former President of Tatarstan, Mintimer Shaimiev have tried to incorporate this idea into a formal educational institution.\(^{58}\) The university, headed by the secular scholar Rafik Mukhametshin "was

\(^{54}\) Interview with Subject K11.


envisaged as the major training centre for home-grown Islamic clergy of 'traditional' Hanafi orientation.”

The Hanafi school of Islam under which the Islamic faith is practiced in the region is therefore important. The Hanafi interpretation of Islam allows for the concepts of *ijthad* and *adat* that encourage individuals to make their own judgment on progressive societal questions and permit local customs in Tatar rituals. According to a local scholar, these customs include, for example, commemorating the dead and the blessing of graves. These customs are not unique to Tatars, however. Ira Lapidus, Professor Emeritus of History at the University of California, Berkeley writes that many Muslims honor the dead through the veneration of holy men or saints. In fact, “to this day throughout the Muslim world, the most common form of worship is the visitation of the graves of saints.”

Within this context, Rafael Khakmov, an advisor to Mintimer Shaimiev said in June 2001 that the government in Kazan should promote the principles of Russian or Euro Islam. Kazan should be the administrative epicenter of this movement that seeks to spread "tolerance and modernity" in the Islamic faith. This would be in contrast to the current system through which the Russian state monitors and engages Muslim activity. Specifically, there are three primary organizations that administratively organize Russia's

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61 Interview with Subject L12.
63 Graney, "Russian Islam," 98-101. For a statement that a modernized form of Islam should include tolerance, see, Interview with Subject H8, interview by Michael Zboray, Kazan, June 9, 2014.
Islamic clergy: the Council of Muftis of Russia, the Central Muslim Spiritual Board, and the Coordinating Centre of Spiritual Boards of Muslims of the Northern Caucasus.  

This model of Islam is highly significant in the struggle against radical Islam in Russia because it is "an explicit repudiation of the more traditionalist, legalistic forms of Islam that are found in much of the Middle East, such as Wahhabism, and is consciously designed to align both Tatarstan and Russia with the more modernist versions of the faith." By promoting an inclusive exemplar of Islam that respects secularism and local Islamic practices, Russia hopes to educate Muslims with a multifaceted understanding of their faith that coexists with the state and contemporary society. However, as one specialist on this subject writes, "if this task is not fulfilled, then the ground will have been laid for Wahhabism in Tatarstan."  

**Methodological Significance of the Economic and Social Conditions in Tatarstan**

Based on these conditions, the case of Tatarstan is a "least-likely" crucial case study that is able to measure the potential extent of Wahhabism in Russia. In his typology of case studies, Harry Eckstein describes the crucial case as a method for testing theories by drawing a comparison to the physical sciences. He writes, "one can use a well-constructed experiment, conducted to simulate as closely as possible the specified conditions under which a law must hold, and compare its result with that predicted by the law." Eckstein is describing a situation where the researcher can draw an inference as to whether a proposition is true based on how the empirical results of a study compare with theoretical expectations. He also suggests that a "well-chosen" case study, conducted

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64 Braginskaia, "State Approaches to Muslim Integration," in *Russia and Islam*, 56.  
outside of a laboratory setting, can serve as such an experiment if the conditions of the study closely match the ideal circumstances for the theory or proposition.\textsuperscript{68} In other words, "the crucial case is a most difficult test for an argument and hence provides what is, arguably, the strongest sort of evidence possible in a non-experimental, single-case setting."\textsuperscript{69} In other words, the key property of the crucial case is its ability to provide evidence of a claim on the broadest possible level. According to Jack Levy, this crucial characteristic "is based on the 'Sinatra inference'—if I can make it there I can make it anywhere."\textsuperscript{70} The inference indicates that the key strength of the crucial case lies in its ability to demonstrate the extraordinary lack of fit between what should occur and what has occurred.\textsuperscript{71}

In the instance of Tatarstan, the most important element is therefore the empirical development of Wahhabism in a sizable Islamic population under economic and social conditions that should theoretically preclude its practice. Specifically, as discussed earlier, Tatarstan is a peaceful, prosperous, and socially well-integrated part of Russia. If Wahhabism is present in such a region, then Wahhabism would likely be present throughout Russia's less affluent and harmonious Islamic areas.

There is also another type of crucial case study termed the "most-likely" case. Alternatively, the most-likely case "is based on the inverse Sinatra inference—if I cannot make it there, I cannot make it anywhere."\textsuperscript{72} The most-likely case study is not applicable in the context of the dissertation because it would attempt to prove a scenario that is

\textsuperscript{68}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{71} For a similarly phrased idea in comparison to Einstein's test of relativity, see, Gerring, "Is There a (Viable) Crucial-Case Method?," 235, http://people.bu.edu/jgerring/documents/CrucialCaseCPS.pdf.
\textsuperscript{72} Levy, "Case Studies: Types, Designs, and Logics," 12.
already well substantiated. Following the logic of the inverse Sinatra reference, the most-likely study would try to demonstrate the non-existence of Wahhabism in the most likely area in which it should occur. The best-known area for terrorism in Russia is the Northern Caucasus, which has experienced civil unrest and violence since the Russian Empire's expansion into the region during the late eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{73} Even today, according to the Center for Strategic and International Studies, "the Northern Caucasus remains the most dangerous flashpoint of instability in the Russian Federation."\textsuperscript{74} The area is also mired in "extreme poverty, high unemployment, and corrupt governance," which has coincided with the persistent influence of radical Islam and ethno-nationalism.\textsuperscript{75} As a result, the Russian government under President Yeltsin and President Putin declared war against rebel forces in the Northern Caucasus in 1994 and 1999.\textsuperscript{76}

In addition to these conflicts, there have also been multiple acts of smaller scale terrorism in the region. In 2004, gunmen led by Chechen rebels seized a school in Beslan, North Ossetia killing 330 people, which became known in Russia as one of the country's worst terrorist attacks.\textsuperscript{77} By 2007, terrorist leader, Doku Umarov, "a seasoned veteran of both the first and second Chechen wars" formed the "Caucasus Emirate," an organization

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid.
dedicated to forming an Islamic emirate based on Sharia law within the Russian Federation.  

Despite this ongoing conflict with radical Islam, terrorism in Russia's restive south-western republics indicates little about the potentiality of terrorism spreading across the country. Since there have been centuries of dissension between indigenous Muslims of the Northern Caucasus and ethnic Russians, one cannot automatically extrapolate about Wahhabism's spread into other parts of Russia. The social tension in the Northern Caucasus provides fertile ground for terrorists to exploit local grievances against the Russian government and to recruit followers. The introduction of Wahhabism into an Islamic, poor and socially divided area, such as Chechnya, may only therefore suggest a limited susceptibility in Russia, rather than reflect a systemic phenomenon. In order to substantiate a greater claim about Wahhabism's pervasiveness, this chapter needs to examine the most unlikely area of Russia for terrorism, Tatarstan.

**Perception of Wahhabism**

**The Russian Perspective**

As mentioned in Chapter 2 of the dissertation, in an official 2009 publication entitled "Islam in the Ideology and Practice of Terrorism," the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs that is responsible for domestic security cites four states in the Persian Gulf as members of an "Arab ethnic alliance [that] seeks to lead the Islamization of the world. It consists of the richest countries of the Islamic world: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates." The author continues by writing that within this alliance, "the idea of creating a global 'Great Islamic caliphate' is especially present in

Saudi Arabia." As a result, Wahhabism is viewed negatively by Russian authorities because of its association with violence against non-radicals in the name of "Jihad against the idolaters and Muslims, who have strayed from the principles of early Islam."80

This perspective also includes four manifestations of Wahhabism: those who self-identify as Salafi, or followers of "pure" Islam, members of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hizb ut-Tahrir, and followers of Tablighi Jamaat (TJ).81 These groups all demonstrate intolerance toward people of other faiths by advocating Sharia law for all citizens. Some Russians also believe that these groups also display a tendency to use violence against those who do not share their precise understanding of Islam.82 This perspective has a basis given the documented activities of these groups on an international level. On January 19, 2008, Spanish authorities arrested fourteen men with alleged ties to TJ for planning to bomb targets around Barcelona. According to Spanish Interior Minister Alfredo Perez Rubalcaba, these people belonged to a "well-organized group that had gone a step beyond radicalization."83 TJ has also been involved in other terrorist plots, such as the August 2006 plot to attack airliners traveling from London to the United States and the 2005 London Underground bombings.84 In terms of the Muslim Brotherhood, it is less clear that this organization actively uses violence to achieve its

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80 Ibid., 4. For the apprehension of Russian authorities, see, Interview with Subject VV.
82 M.V. Remizova, "Karta Etnoreligioznykh Ygroz," 5-6; For Wahhabism's inclination toward forceful conversion, see, Interview with Subject I9.
84 Ibid.
agenda. The Brotherhood officially renounced violent practices in the 1970s, but its commitment to this pledge is dubious.\footnote{For a statement about the renunciation of violence, see, "Backgrounder: Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified, January 15, 2014, accessed December, 15, 2015, \url{http://www.cfr.org/egypt/egypt-muslim-brotherhood/p23991}.} According to Dr. Omar Ashour, a senior lecturer in Security Studies at the University of Exeter and a Non-Resident Fellow at the Brookings Doha Center, the "prospects of sustaining non-violence" could become "gloomier" due to disaffected members and dissatisfaction with the organization's leadership.\footnote{Omar Ashour, "Will Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood Return to Political Violence?," BBC, July 30, 2014, accessed December 15, 2015, \url{http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-28524510}.} There has also been a history of participation in armed conflict; for example, in 1994, the Brotherhood fought on the side of the Saleh government in Yemen during the country's civil war. Between 1976 and 1982, the organization and its affiliates also received "some training and financing from the Saudi regime and Anwar al-Sadat in Egypt" to fight against the government of Hafez al-Assad in Syria.\footnote{Ibid.}

The Russian perception of Wahhabism is "more political than theological . . . it is the political side of the issue that is especially important, both in terms of the motivation of adherents, and from the point of view of the danger it poses to the state."\footnote{M.V. Remizova, "Karta Etnoreligioznynkh Ygroz," 5-6. For a comparative statement on Wahhabism and violence, see also, Interview with Subject I9.} Radical groups following this ideology seek to "aggressively" separate themselves from the Russian state by creating entities based on an understanding of Sharia.\footnote{H. V. Sintsov, "Osnovnye Ideologicheskie Ustanovki Religioznno-Ekstremistskikh Organizatsii, Deistvuushchikh v Severo-Kavkazskom Regione. Formirovanie Informatsionnogo Kontenta v Tseliakh Deradikalizatsii Molodezhi," (presentation at the Rossiskii Gosudarstvennyi Universitet Nefti i Gaza imeni I.M. Gubkina, Nizhni Novgorod, June 27, 2013), 5, \url{http://nac.gov.ru/files/sbor3_nizhniy.pdf}. According to Sintsov, groups like the Caucasus Emirates and HuT seek to foster ethnic division between ethnic Russians and Russia's native peoples. They try to convince, for example, Muslim Tatars in Tatarstan that the Tatar population should be separate from Russians and that Tatarstan should be a distinct political entity from the Russian Federation.}
the objective of establishing Sharia in Russia and waging global jihad. In 2010, the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation designated this group a terrorist organization, which was followed by a declaration from the United States stating that the leader of the group, Doku Umarov was a "Specially Designated Global Terrorist under Executive Order 13224." In 2001, the UN 1267 al-Qaeda and Taliban Sanctions Committee also categorized Umarov as a terrorist.

Comparison to the Perception of Wahhabism in Tatarstan

Based on firsthand accounts from my interviews, Wahhabism is void of all local religious practices and originates from the societies of "Saudi Arabia, Egypt, or Tunisia." Based on the experience of local religious leaders and a senior academic on Islamic affairs, it also shares two main characteristics: the search for religious purity and the will to dominate over different religious practices. These two characteristics are also conform with the analysis by Shaykh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani, Chairman of the Islamic Supreme Council of America that indicates Wahhabism concentrates on "reviving the true tenets of Islam" and on rejecting differing religious interpretations of Islam.

According to another academic subject at Kazan Federal University, Wahhabism is seen as a political form of Islam that was originally developed by Abdu-Wahhab in

91 Ibid.
92 Interview with Subject J10.
93 For the will to dominate one’s neighbor, see, Interview with Subject C. For Wahhabism not recognizing other faiths, see also, Interview with Subject D4. Subject G7 spoke of HuT and Wahhabism in terms of a potentiality toward violence. Subject E5 speaks of Wahhabism as a return to the ways of the prophet. He describes it as a primitive Islam.
Saudi Arabia during the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{95} By introducing Arab and Turkic customs into local practices, according to subject VV, it has at least partially influenced a religious revival in Russia's Islamic community and, most notably, among Tatars and Bashkirs after the collapse of the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{96} According to a well-respected academic on Islamic affairs in Kazan, followers of Wahhabism are focused on oil and hydrocarbon based industries. They believe that God has given them these lucrative resources, which help attract the economically deprived. He also suggested that Tatar Wahhabis see Saudi Arabia as an ideal model for an autocratic state that has no constitution or possibility of popular rule.\textsuperscript{97} The academic continued by explaining that these individuals see the "official school [of Islam] in Saudi Arabia and Qatar," as the cornerstone of their identity.\textsuperscript{98}

**Examples of Wahhabism in Tatarstan**

According to one expert on Islam in Tatarstan, there is an ongoing process of radicalization within the region's Islamic community; however, there is also an ongoing

\textsuperscript{95} Interview with Subject VV, interview by Michael Zboray, Kazan, Russia, June 10, 2014. Journalists sometimes refer to Wahhabism in an overly broad manner which dilutes the term. See, for example, Interview with Subject F6, interview by Michael Zboray, Kazan, Russia, June 10, 2014; Interview with Subject E5, interview by Michael Zboray, Kazan, Russia, June 5, 2014.

\textsuperscript{96} Interview with Subject VV. In the interview, the subject did not explicitly cite Wahhabism. However, he specifically referenced Arab and Turkish customs in the context of a larger discussion on Wahhabism.

\textsuperscript{97} Interview with Subject G7, interview by Michael Zboray, Kazan, Russia, June 16, 2014; For comparison, Ahmed Rashid, a Pakistani author and journalist who has written five books on Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia, similarly writes that militant Islamists believe in "a single charismatic leader, an Amir, rather than a more democratically constituted organization to lead it. The obsession of radical Islam is not the creation of institutions, but the character and purity of its leader, his virtues and qualifications and whether his personality can emulate the personality of the Prophet Mohammad." See, Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press and I.B. Tauris, 2001), 86. For ISIS as Wahhabi, see, Interview with Subject A1.

\textsuperscript{98} Interview with Subject G7. For a comparison to a more independent description of Hanbali Islam which is practiced in Gulf countries, see, *Oxford Islamic Studies Online*, "Hanbali School of Law," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito, accessed August 2, 2015, http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e799. This description states that this tradition of Islam is the most conservative Sunni form of the faith that "advocates a literal interpretation of textual sources. . . . [but] is the most liberal in most commercial matters."
debate about its extent.99 There are no official statistics available on the exact number of radicalized individuals for the different regions of Russia, yet "the number usually quoted for Tatarstan is 3,000."100 An academic at Kazan Federal University estimates that "there is only 4 percent of practicing Muslims in Tatarstan. . . . only 3-5 percent of them are radical (referring to the portion of practicing Muslims)."101 Out of a total Muslim population of nearly 2.2 million, a conservative estimate of the number of Islamists in the region ranges from 2,600 to 4,400. Another interviewed researcher cited the common figure of 3,000 for the total number of followers of Wahhabism in Tatarstan.102 A scholar at the Russian Islamic University believes this number is even lower.103

Given a population of more than three million people, these figures suggest that roughly only 0.1% of Tatarstan's population share radical sympathies. However, the absolute number is potentially high relative to the destructive ability of some individual terrorists. The Paris attacks on November 13, 2015 demonstrated that only eleven attackers were able to kill 129 people and seriously injure 368 people.104 If there are only 2,600 Islamists and only 10% are prepared for violent action, then 260 people could cause significant damage and loss of life in the region.

Dr. Aidar Khabutdinov, an associate of the Kazan Institute of Legal Problems at the Ministry for the Interior of the Russian Federation does not comment on the exact

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99 Interview with Subject E5.
101 Interview with Subject J10.
102 Interview with Subject D4.
103 Interview with Subject E5.
number of Wahhabis, but maintains Wahhabism is clearly present among Russian youth. He writes:

There are quite a few young Moslems in Tatarstan who believe that the Wahhabites are the fighters for the purity of Islam of the epoch of the 'righteous caliphs' (dar as-sadat). . . . At present Wahhabism in Tatarstan manifested in the desires and actions of young Islamic radicals is a banner of the struggle against Russia and Russians and the Western way of life. . . . The present economic crisis and the war in Chechnya have been its effective catalysts.105

A historian at the Tatarstan Academy of Sciences stated that in certain districts in Tatarstan, such as Chistopol, Novosheshminsk, and Nizhnekamsk Wahhabism has exerted a strong influence.106 In one case, the government closed a madrassa in Nizhnekamsk for teaching a curriculum from Saudi Arabia and subsequently tried to place this and other schools under the authority of the DUM, the government-sanctioned spiritual authority of Tatarstan.107 In Nizhnekamsk, there was a rocket attack on a major Russian oil refining facility in November 2013 in which the perpetrators used Qassam missiles associated with attacks by Hamas.108 By December 1, 2013, a man calling himself the "Emir of Tatarstan" or "Emir Abdullah" claimed responsibility for the attack and said that attacks on Russian territory would continue.109 According to the public

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106 Interview with Subject B2, interview by Michael Zboray, Kazan, Russia, June 16, 2014. According to Subject E5, there are also other examples outside of Tatarstan. There are villages in Mordovia completely populated by Wahhabis. Bashkortostan is another area where Wahhabism is present. Interview with Subject E5. For a public reference to these areas as places of radicalism, see, Gleb Postnov, "Muftiati bez Chainoi Diplomatii," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, January 29, 2015, accessed October 28, 2015, http://www.ng.ru/columnist/2015-01-29/5_tatarstan.html.
107 Interview with Subject A1. For an attempt to place these schools under the DUM of Tatarstan, see, Interview with Subject C3. Subject C3 also thought that there was Wahhabism in Naberezhnye Chelny, the second largest city in Tatarstan.
prosecutor of Tatarstan, Ildus Nafikova, this event was an attack on the "inter-religious" and "inter-ethnic" peace in the region alluding to the motivations of radical extremists.110

Prior to these events, the beginning of Saudi involvement in Russia originated during the 1990's as Russia's Islamic community was revitalizing itself after more than seventy years of communism. During this period, Saudi Arabia was renewing its diplomatic relationship with Russia and the Russian government was taking advantage of the Kingdom's financial investments.111 The Saudi government, for example, structured a $2 billion loan to the Soviet Union during the U.S.S.R.'s final years between 1990 and 1991 to help stabilize the failing economy.112 Russia welcomed this type of Saudi investment, which was accompanied by the "rebirth of Islamic spirituality and traditions" in Russia and the former republics of the Soviet Union. Russian Muslims saw the Saudis as the messengers of "pure Islam" from where the prophet "Mohammad himself lived."113 The Saudi's helped create a "resurgence of Islamic spiritual life" by constructing mosques and funding Islamic "cultural organizations, pilgrimages to holy sites, and publication of magazines, and literature."114 By 1996, shortly after the first Saudi embassy opened in Moscow, Islamic clergy in Tatarstan began exploring the possible existence of elements

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111 Subject L12 "The Model of Existence of Islam in Contemporary Russia" (roundtable discussion, Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia, June 4, 2014).
114 Interview with Subject L12.
of extremism within the type of Islam exported from Saudi Arabia. Three years later, in 1999, "the issue of Wahhabists and extremists became a matter of discussion" within Tatarstan along with the possibility that Wahhabism was influencing terrorism.\(^{115}\)

At the beginning of the 2000s, according to a local researcher, there were unspecified social currents in the republic that wanted to turn away from a secular model of governance and toward a model more influenced by Wahhabism and Saudi Arabia.\(^{116}\) However, much of the discussion regarding Wahhabism centered on religious education, students studying abroad, cultural organizations, and any part of life in which Arabs were involved. As one Kazan-based academic explained, the issue of Wahhabism revolved around anyone from Saudi Arabia, such as "imam assistants, teachers in madrassas, and workers in charitable organization."\(^{117}\) In other words, anyone that could transmit or support the ideology of Wahhabism in the Tatar community was potentially a Wahhabist. Due to the initial lack of an Islamic educational structure in post-communist Tatarstan, the Saudis also organized religious schooling for Tatar children in Middle Eastern countries. However, in his estimation, only 300 to 1,000 students were educated abroad.\(^{118}\) In the context of adult religious education, these institutions included the King Abdul-Aziz University, Jeddah University, and the University of Medina.\(^{119}\)

\(^{115}\) Ibid. The link with terrorism was also a discussion in Russia more broadly. There was a reported link between Saudi elites and al Qaeda in which Saudi Arabia would fund radical missionary work in exchange for al Qaeda's assurance that they would refrain from attacks in the Kingdom until 1998. See, Lawrence Uzzell, "Saudi Arabia and Russia: A Budding Rapprochement?," The Jamestown Foundation, accessed October 28, 2015, http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=1815&no_cache=1#.VjKDe_mrTIV.

\(^{116}\) Interview with Subject D4.

\(^{117}\) Subject L12, "The Model of Existence of Islam." As an example, there was a terrorist attack on a gas pipeline on the border of Tatarstan in 1999. The FSB arrested a group of "alumni" and students from the Yoldyz Madrassa in the city of Naberezhnye Chelny in Tatarstan. See, Sergey Markedonov, The Rise of Radical and Nonofficial Islamic Groups in Russia's Volga Region (Washington DC: CSIS, January 2013), 11.

\(^{118}\) Subject L12. The Saudi government even recently donated $320,000 to projects involving Islamic education in Tatarstan. The money was arranged through a contract between the Saudi Embassy and The
In terms of formal training for religious personnel, Saudi Arabia was a significant source of instruction for muftis, Islamic scholars who interpret religious laws. A journalist who reports on Russian security issues said:

There was a problem with religious education. [People] could not reach the top level of religious education in Russia and many of them went to Saudi Arabia, where of course they got a Wahabbist-kind of education, of extreme Islam, and returned with this education. . . . Some mosques in very peaceful regions, such as the Volga Region, Tatarstan, Ulyanovsk . . . became [sites] of extremist activity.120

His comments bear merit based on Galina Yemelianova's research on Islamic activity in the Volga-Ural region. According to her, by the late 1990s, many of the 15 madrasas located in Tatarstan employed foreign lectures rather than native teachers.121 She also notes that Saudi Arabia was the primary source of foreign religious education in the Volga-Ural region at that time with funding coming from Islamic charities including Al Igatha and Ibrahim bin al-Ibrahim of Saudi Arabia.122 Moreover, the Saudi charity Taiba was very active in establishing an "education assistance agreement" with the madrassa, Yolduz in the town of Naberezhnie Chelny.123 In 1999, this school became a noted center for propagating Wahhabism when several of its students were implicated in destroying gas pipelines on the border between Tatarstan and Kirov. One of the students involved in

Footnotes:
120 Ibid.
121 Yemelianova, "Divergent Trends of Islamic Radicalization in Muslim Russia," in Russia and Islam, 124.
122 Ibid.
the plot revealed that he was recruited by "Arabs" teaching in the madrasa. Subsequently, the Russian Council of Muftis closed Yolduz during the following year.124

An official at the Russian Islamic University similarly noted that Tatarstan still has a challenge with reintegrating Islamic preachers, trained abroad, into the local Muslim community. He explained that because of their overly rigid theological perspective, these muftis have difficulty accepting how Islam is practiced in the region.

He added:

The problem with studying abroad is that their [beliefs] as Muslims were formed there. They do not have an ounce of knowledge of our theological system. They were formed there one-hundred percent. Naturally, they return convinced that they are the bearers of true Islamic values. . . . As a head Mufti noted, all problems can be resolved over a cup of tea, of course. As you know, what is being promoted here now is 'everything is on the table' (version of Islam). But how do we do handle all those different ideological orientations?125

His assessment demonstrates that Tatarstan is grappling with incorporating all interpretations of Islam including a puritanical understanding that does not coexist with moderate interpretations of the Koran. These "true bearers of Islam" have great difficulty reconciling traditional Tatar practices with teachings from places like Saudi Arabia.

In addition to Tatarstan's struggle with religious officials, the region has also witnessed violent acts of terrorism associated with Wahhabism and Hizb ut-Tahrir.126 On
July 19, 2012, Valiulla Yakupov, deputy mufti and head of education at the Spiritual Board of Muslims of Tatarstan was killed in Kazan. Yakupov was also one of the most outspoken advocates for moderate Islam in the region. He believed that local Islamic practices should take precedent over Wahhabist interpretations of Islam. A second, related attack occurred at the same time when a car bomb nearly killed his associate, Ildus Faisov, another prominent mufti and outspoken critic of Wahhabism. Some religious leaders and Islamic experts have interpreted the death of one of Kazan's best-known Islamic clerics as a sign of deeper troubles within Russia's Islamic community. Aleksei Malashenko, a well-renowned expert on Islam in Russia, for example, addressed the significance of the attack by stressing its uncharacteristic nature in a region that promotes moderate Islam and suggested that this event is an instance of radicalism in Tatarstan. As an indication of the event's national significance, Vladimir Putin sent a message to Muslim leaders in Tatarstan saying: 'These events remind us once again that the situation in our country is far from ideal . . . . What has happened is a serious signal.' After Putin's comments there was an "indiscriminate crackdown" on the local Muslim community indicating that the Kremlin viewed radicalism within the Islamic

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130 For references to Wahhabism in connection to the attack, see, Interview with Subject D4; Interview with Subject B2; Interview with Subject E5; Interview with Subject C3.


132 Ibid.
community as the primary cause of the attacks and interpreted this radicalism as a threat to Russia as a whole.\textsuperscript{133}

Shortly after the tragedy, Malashenko conjectured about the objectives of the likely attackers. He wrote:

First, they want to prove their superiority to traditional Islam, which is less insistent on the need to observe Sharia rules, and to the clerics, who are too loyal to the authorities and have taken an overtly conformist stance. Second, they are striving for affiliation with the global radical Islamic movement and already feel that they are part of it. Third, they are seeking an opportunity to adhere to the Islamic way of life, to live by Sharia laws, and if this is not possible, to secede from Russia and establish their own Islamic state.\textsuperscript{134}

Malashenko makes several very important points in his description: first, there are those in Tatarstan and Russia, who strive to be part of a terrorist network beyond Russia that is based on Islamic ideology; second, if they cannot achieve their ends through normal political avenues, then they will claim independence from Russia as happened to a horrifying extent in Chechnya; and third, the traditional Islamic authorities have lost the native-Muslim community's confidence. Moreover, given the experience of separatists in the Northern Caucasus, any serious claims of independence in Tatarstan would inevitably involve armed conflict with federal authorities.

In further comments, Malashenko described the basis for radical Islam's spread in Tatarstan in terms of the growing number of Chechen and Northern Caucasian immigrants who build new ethnic communities in the Volga region, where Tatarstan is situated.\textsuperscript{135} As a sign of the increasing number of people from outside regions, local Tatar

\textsuperscript{133} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid.
imams anecdotally report that, "more than half of the people present at their regular Friday prayers are from the North Caucasus." \(^\text{136}\)

In addition to the Northern Caucasus, Wahhabism enters Tatarstan from other areas, such as Central Asia. Malashenko writes:

Members of a radical organization called Hizb al-Tahrir al-Islami (Islamic Liberation Party) come to the region from Central Asia, particularly Uzbekistan, and set up international cells with the participation of local Muslims. The supporters of Hizb al-Tahrir have confined their activity to propaganda and the distribution of religious literature, but their influence is slowly but surely growing stronger. The participation of these supporters in the demonstrations against the muftiate of Tatarstan attests to this. The Hizb al-Tahrir emblem was seen on the windshields of many of the vehicles in which the opponents of Mufti Ildus Fayzov arrived at Kul Sharif, the main mosque in Kazan. \(^\text{137}\)

Central Asia clearly plays a role in the proliferation of radical Islam in Russia's most religiously tolerant region. Firm figures on the proliferation of radicalism do not exist, but as an indicator of the problem's magnitude, the Minister of the Interior of Tatarstan, Artiom Khokhorin stated in December 2012 that "for thirteen years already an undeclared war has been going on in the Republic." \(^\text{138}\) Specifically, HuT, an organization that is also active in Central Asia acts as a source of Wahhabism that calls for fundamental change in Russian society. According to one senior scholar on Islam in Tatarstan who closely associates HuT with Wahhabism, HuT presents Tatarstan with a challenge because "they want to build a totally different world. They want to build a world based on the rules of the seventh century . . . . Peacefully, they cannot reach their aim . . . . They cannot form a

\(^{136}\) Ibid.


majority. . . . Sooner or later Islamic groups will use weapons because they have no other opportunity."\textsuperscript{139} HuT wants to overcome nation-states in order to establish an Islamic Caliphate, which based on the judgment of subject G7, would most likely require a force of arms.\textsuperscript{140} Given this context, the Russian Supreme Court banned this group as a terrorist organization in 2003 in conjunction with a finding by the European Court of Human Rights that stated:

Hizb ut-Tahrir literature advocated and glorified warfare in the form of jihad, a term which was mainly used in its meaning of "holy war," to establish the domination of Islam. Some of the documents in question also stated that it was permissible to kill any citizen of enemy states, among which [was] named Russia.\textsuperscript{141}

In addition to the continued activity of HuT in Tatarstan and the ongoing process to promote locally based perspectives on Islam, a local imam in Kazan believes that "in reality the problem of [extreme ideology] does exists."\textsuperscript{142} He added that "there are few experts, especially in Tatarstan, who understand the gravity of the issues . . . . Even teachers at the Russian Islamic University do not have a sufficient understanding of the problem."\textsuperscript{143} He implied that those in educational institutions in Tatarstan and in Russia are generally avoiding studying the problem of Wahhabism.

**Findings**

When discussing Wahhabism, the Russian government places an emphasis on the Gulf countries of the Middle East, such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE, and Kuwait.

\textsuperscript{140} For HuT's desire for a caliphate, see, Markedonov, *The Rise of Radical and Nonofficial Islamic Groups*, 22.
\textsuperscript{142} Interview with Subject C3.
\textsuperscript{143} Ibid.
Russia believes that these countries seek to Islamize the world through Sharia and through establishing a global caliphate. Russian researchers including those in Kazan see Wahhabism as an ideological phenomenon that extends beyond this core group of Middle Eastern countries into organizations outside of the Persian Gulf region that also promote the idea of the Caliphate and the abolishing secular society. HuT, a group founded in Central Asia has been the predominant organization most associated with this perspective in Tatarstan. However, from both a Russian and a Tatar perspective, Saudi Arabia has been the central source of a religious and political ideology that has influenced the Islamic revival in Russia.

This conceptualization of Wahhabism within the context of a Middle Eastern core, and with connections to other regions of the world is comparable to how one might analyze a corporate franchise. McDonalds, headquartered in Oak Brook, Illinois, for example, indirectly manages franchisees across the globe. These locations have the ability to offer different menu items corresponding to local tastes and have local managers who handle daily decision-making. Yet there are always items that make each distributor an unmistakable part of the larger franchise, such as the Big Mac. If speaking of Wahhabism in this context, Sharia and the pursuit of the Caliphate are the clearest common denominators that connect radical extremist groups to a larger Jihadi enterprise with its focal point in Saudi Arabia.

As a barometer of Wahhabism in Russia, Tatarstan is useful in principle because it is one of Russia's most prosperous areas where Muslims and non-Muslims coexist. In this sense, Tatarstan presents the greatest challenge for Wahhabi-inspired terrorists because there is little social discord to exploit. In the assessment of one Russian expert on
Islam, "if Russia only made contact with Wahhabism and Salafism in the Northern Caucasus, then this radicalism would not exist at the center of Russia and in the Volga-Ural region. But it does exist here now." In addition to smaller scale instances of Islamic extremism, such as the closure of the madrassa, Yolduz, the most high profile indicator of this statement is the attack on Ildus Faisov and his colleague Valiulla Yakupov. Within months after the attack, the Minister of the Interior of Tatarstan, Artiom Khokhorin said that the region was fighting an "undeclared war" on such radicalism.

Despite the non-existence of formal statistics from the expert community on Islam in Russia, the qualitative information presented in this chapter suggests that Wahhabism is a nominal concern in the region. Consequently, the ongoing attempt to create a moderate model of Islam also partially reveals Russia's desire to manage foreign influences with its own secular and multi-confessional society. Although acts of violent terrorism in Tatarstan are very limited, this chapter's information suggests that Wahhabism may still be a potential threat to other Muslim areas in Russia. However, the difficulty of ascertaining the precise number of Islamists in the region underscores the need for further field research on the manifestations of Wahhabism with regional government authorities and, if possible, with federal law enforcement agencies, such as the Federal Security Service. The lack of an abundant number of attacks also emphasizes the extent to which Tatarstan serves as a "hard" secondary test of the dissertation's internal security argument. The degree of radicalism in Tatarstan is clearly lower in comparison to the degree of radicalism in the Northern Caucuses. This has likely been due to Tatarstan's better economic and social characteristics that have created a

144 Interview with Subject II.
comparatively more affluent and more ethnically harmonious environment. The relative absence of tension between Muslim Tatars and ethnic Russians has created the societal conditions under which violent extremism has had difficulty thriving.

In terms of comparable findings from Chapter 4, it is clear that Russia believes in an ongoing threat from Middle Eastern funded terrorism. Russia's security services have been concerned with the activities of Saudi Arabia and Qatar in Russia. Subject CC, for example, stated that Arab benefactors were able to financially support the conflict in the Northern Caucasus through so-called charitable organizations. Al-Haramain, an organization that funded Chechen separatism was according to the FSB one such Saudi based charity that also financially supported Al-Qaeda's terrorism. Based on the FSB's list of terrorist organizations, Al-Haramain has been officially designated as an international sponsor of terror since March 4, 2003 along with other well-known organizations, such as the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. Moreover, given a relatively high level of regional poverty and a potentially unstable future due to color revolutions and corrupt governance, groups like HuT are eager to affect social change through Islamic principles.

Chapter 5 similarly presented information suggesting that changes in Uyghur society have occurred because of cultural influences from the Middle East. Researchers in Shanghai specifically identified the introduction of Wahhabism into northwestern China as the impetus for Muslim unrest and the reason for the SCO's focus on the three

evils of separatism, extremism, and terrorism. Similar to the information presented in this chapter, the findings from China also include Chinese claims that Central Asian students went to Saudi Arabia for religious education. Researchers also claimed that these programs were halted when Tajikistan mandated that all of its students return from Saudi Arabia. The Chinese also believe that Saudi Arabia helps fund groups like the IMU and HuT, which they also claim as having terror links in Xinjiang. According to the Chinese, Turkey, in addition to Saudi Arabia, may now also play a role in supporting HuT activities.
Chapter 7: Main Findings and Future Research

Introduction

The dissertation has addressed the question: "Under what conditions does Russia cooperate with China in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization given decades of political tension between Moscow and Beijing?" This has been an important question to answer since cooperation between these two great powers has been atypical of their broader relationship. Throughout the Cold War period, for example, Soviet-Chinese relations were complex and even today Russians still fear China's influence in terms of labor, migration, and economic domination in the Russian Far East. Moreover, China has ensconced itself in Central Asia through the development of regional trade and its access to hydrocarbon resources. One would expect Russia to be protective of its interests in this long-held geostrategic region and to diminish the influence of other major powers. Yet Russia has chosen to cooperate with China in the SCO, an organization that consists of four Central Asian states.

In terms of this chapter's structure, the first section recapitulates the theoretical and policy significance of the main question and the importance of the three hypotheses. The second section offers a brief review of the prior chapters and their purpose in the dissertation. The third section discusses the theoretical findings of the research. The fourth section reviews the policy findings from the field interviews conducted in Moscow, Kazan, Shanghai, and Beijing. It begins with the results from Russia and summarizes how the internal security hypothesis best explains Russia's motive in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. It also reviews the results from China and closely juxtaposes the Russian and Chinese perspectives by highlighting their similarities and
differences vis-à-vis the geopolitical, economic, and internal security arguments. The fifth and sixth sections examine the theoretical and policy implications of the findings. The seventh section outlines the possible further research on the SCO and related subjects.

**Significance of the Research**

I analyzed the Shanghai Cooperation Organization because it is the world's largest regional organization that comprises members and affiliates from approximately half of the world’s population. It has a membership that includes eighteen countries, notably India and Pakistan. However, given its headquarters in Beijing and its initial origins in Russia’s historic sphere of influence, Central Asia, the fulcrum of the organization is the relationship between Russia and China. It is also the only regional organization that includes Russia, China, and former parts of the Soviet Union. This configuration raises the question among American scholars and policy analysts as to whether the SCO is a new forum for rapprochement between two great powers that seek to challenge American leadership.

As a result, the SCO questions whether other states are counterbalancing the United States and tests the universal validity of balance of power theory. In other words, if Russia is trying to counterbalance the United States with the cooperation of China, it highlights a potential counterbalancing reaction in accordance with a crucial realist prediction. The prediction states that "a new balance of power should emerge in the

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contemporary international system" due to the concentration of American power.\textsuperscript{2}

Another related area of significance includes ideas of "embedded bilateralism."\textsuperscript{3} There is considerable literature, for example, surrounding the pivotal role of Germany and France in generating stronger multilateral cooperation in the European Union, which could parallel position of Russia and China in the SCO.\textsuperscript{4} The foundation of early European regional integration hinged on the mutual need of Germany and France for coal and steel. Similarly, Russia’s large natural gas reserves and increasing need to find new regional trade opportunities coincides with China’s demand for energy and its large industrial market. This idea forms the basis for further exploring how bilateral leadership may influence regional politics.

Given the hypothesized role of Wahhabism in Russian-Chinese cooperation, there is also the theoretical link between religion and terrorism.\textsuperscript{5} Religion can provide a


\textsuperscript{5} For the links between Terrorism and religion see: Magnus Ranstorp, "Terrorism in the Name of Religion," \textit{Journal of International Affairs} 50, no. 1 (1996): 41-62,
significant part of the motivation for terrorism, which has been a core focus of the SCO. Inspired by the idea of the Caliphate and the implementation of Sharia law, terrorists can perpetrate violence based on the pursuit of a radicalized interpretation of the Islamic faith. In addition, there may also be a relationship between these religious inspirations and economic drivers. The relevance of economic deprivation theory, for example, is high in this case because poverty is ubiquitous across Central Asia as well as in parts of Russia and China. According to this theoretical proposition, "whenever discontent turns to be widespread within societies, individuals and groups are more likely to turn to political violence and civil strife." This discontent is based on the perceived difference in material wealth that a collective of people expects versus the actual wealth the collective receives. This suggests that the greater the economic discrepancy, the greater the chance of violence and terrorism.


Built around the pillars of security, energy, and economy, the SCO also has considerable policy significance. The Russian perspective is particularly important because Russia has re-emerged as a major regional and even global actor given Moscow's annexation of Crimea and its military action in Syria. The United States needs to engage Russia across an entire spectrum of international issues, such as terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and violence in the Middle East. In the case of the SCO, the importance of Russia's activity in Central Asia and relationship with China revolves around geopolitics, economics, and terrorism.

The first alternative explanation therefore examined whether Russia has mainly had a geopolitical stake in the SCO intended to counter U.S. influence in the region. In 2005, for example, the SCO issued a declaration demanding a timetable for the removal of American forces from Afghanistan, which indicated the interest of the SCO in an issue related to U.S. national security. For the United States, the democratic, political, and economic development of Afghanistan remains a high priority, yet as an affiliate of the SCO, Afghanistan is in a more formal position to solicit aid from Russia and China. President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah have therefore encouraged Afghanistan's deeper participation in the organization.8 Toward this objective, “The Afghan authorities have recently applied to the president of the country chairing the SCO requesting for its full membership in the Organization,” according to Dmitry Mezentsev, General Secretary of the SCO.9 It has therefore been important to

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investigate whether the Russians primarily view the SCO as a counterbalancing instrument with which to contain American power.

The second alternative explanation explored whether Russia has also been interested in new regional economic opportunities with China, namely new oil and gas contracts. These interests most notably coincide with China’s demand for energy and its large industrial market, which suggests that access to oil and natural gas might have been important reasons for Russian participation. President Putin has even supported a burgeoning SCO Energy Club intended to coordinate the energy policy of all SCO members. Given that oil and gas revenues have accounted for nearly half of Russia’s federal budget in 2013, 2014, and 2015, this possibility suggested that the SCO was an instrument for maximizing critically needed profits and revenue.\(^{10}\) With the combination of Europe's desire to diversify its energy sources and ongoing political instability in Ukraine, Russia could have been using the SCO to find new economic opportunities in Asia.

The third alternative explanation investigated whether Russia safeguards its internal security from Wahhabi-inspired terrorism. Russia has historically suffered instability in its restive Northern Caucasus and has traditionally viewed Central Asia as a buffer against the infiltration of destabilizing threats. Given porous borders in Central Asia, terrorists can travel into Russia to radicalize a portion of the country's 15 to 20

million Muslims. Based on the SCO’s commitment to fighting Jihadi terrorism and separatist factions in member states, it is important to understand if Russia primarily uses this organization to confront radical groups that may also threaten America's national security, such as Hizb ut-Tahrir, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, the Islamic State, and the Taliban.

**Summary of Previous Chapters**

The first chapter explained the purpose of the dissertation including the puzzle of Russian-Chinese cooperation and stated the main question that this dissertation addresses. It briefly outlined the possible explanations for Russia's participation in the SCO and provided an outline of the dissertation. Chapter 2 described in detail the alternative explanations to this question through three hypotheses based on geopolitics, economics, and internal security. The purpose of the chapter was to explain the arguments leading to each hypothesis by providing a contextual basis for Russian cooperation. As part of this explanation, Chapter 2 described each argument's theoretical basis from which to draw theoretical findings. It also described the methodology with which the dissertation examines each hypothesis in order to show a process of systematic analysis. Chapter 3 analyzed the organization as a whole from the perspective of these three lenses and positioned the SCO within the Central Asian context of the guarded sovereignty model of regionalism. It also juxtaposed the SCO with other regional organizations in North America, Europe, and Asia via its members' advocacy of state sovereignty. The purpose of the chapter was to analyze the SCO as a whole as a way of providing the most relevant background information. Chapter 3 provided the larger focus from which the next two chapters more closely explored the SCO from Russian and Chinese perspectives. Based
on information collected during a series of interviews in Moscow, Chapter 4 examined
the Russian perception of the SCO and analyzed confirmatory and contradictory evidence
for each hypothesis. It concluded that the internal security hypothesis provided the best
explanation for Russian cooperation based on a preponderant amount of information. In
addition, it found that the SCO is a medium for managing competition between Russia
and China. Without the SCO as a forum for communication, there would be more conflict
between these countries. Chapter 5 provided a symmetrical analysis of the Chinese
perspective on Russian cooperation and investigated Chinese motives in the organization.
It also explored to what degree the Chinese believe Russia and China share similar
interests in the SCO. The chapter concluded that China largely shares Russia's emphasis
on countering Wahhabi-inspired terrorism through monitoring militant groups in Central
Asia. It is an important chapter in the dissertation because it helps match Russian
priorities with Chinese ones. By examining which areas are the most important to China,
it is possible to draw conclusions about the most significant aspect of cooperation with
Russia. Chapter 6 presented a crucial case study on the systemic threat of Wahhabism to
Russia by examining terrorism in Tatarstan, a relatively wealthy region noted for being a
model for moderate Islam. By investigating Wahhabism's presence in an ethnically and
religiously tranquil environment, the case study intended to provide a secondary test for
the internal security argument. The case study demonstrated that Wahhabism is
nominally present in Tatarstan. However, as a secondary finding, Chapter 6 suggested
that economic well-being and inter-religious accord provide conditions that inhibit
religious radicalism. It also discovered that Russians perceive radical extremist groups in
the area as part of a larger Jihadi enterprise with its focal point in Saudi Arabia.
Main Theoretical Findings

The results from Chapters 4 and 5 indicate several theoretical findings in three main areas: counterbalancing, Jihadism, and regionalism. First, according to several respondents, there is an undercurrent of great power ambition in the Russian position, which demonstrates realism's relevancy as a secondary factor. By engaging the United States in Central Asia through cooperation with China, Russia does limit the potential rise of preponderant American power in the region. By reducing the possibility of a strong U.S. leadership position, Russia increases the prospects of a multipolar international system and a world order less based on U.S hegemony. Yet, contrary to established realist thinking that prioritizes states, or "great powers" as the "main actors" in an ongoing game of "power politics," geopolitical maneuvering against the United States has not taken precedent over Russia's internal security threats from non-state actors.\(^{11}\)

Second, according to the literature on terrorism and Jihad, there is a variety of potential causes for violent Islamic extremism that include the politics of the Israeli-Arab conflict, the organized resistance against past Western colonialism, socio-economic issues such as alienation and poverty, as well as the pursuit of deeply held theological principles.\(^{12}\) For example, based on her research on political violence in Kashmir,

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\(^{12}\) For a seminal example of the alienation perspective in terms of a globalized commercial culture that trivializes religion, see, Benjamin Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld: Terrorism's Challenge to Democracy* (New York: Random House, 1995); For a reference to the conflict with Israel, see, Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trial...
Amritha Venkatraman suggests that insurgents in this country use religious tenets in the Quran to justify their actions. According to her analysis, this justification originates through the Islamic notion of Ijtihad, which permits personal interpretations of the Quran. This feature of Islam gives terrorist the freedom to interpret violent verses of the Quran literally in order to suit their own perception of Jihad. Fawaz Gerges also indicates that there is a religious basis in the ideology of Jihad, which, for example, inspired Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda's senior leaders, Abu Ubaidah al-Banshiri, Mohammed Atef, and Ayman al-Zawahiri. In order to commit their acts of terrorism, these men believed that they were destroying injustice from the earth. For them, Jihad was a struggle to spread the "sovereignty" of God over all people, who did not conform to their religious beliefs.

My findings similarly suggest that Wahhabi-inspired organizations, such as HuT and the IMU are mainly interested in religious objectives, such as the Caliphate and Sharia law in their pursuit of Jihad. Wahhabism is strongly associated with two elements: global Jihad and the Arab states in the Persian Gulf, namely Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Russians perceive this connection in much the same way we would theoretically describe a corporate franchise, a spatially decentralized, yet ideologically interconnected organization. Following this analogy, groups like HuT that operate in Tatarstan and

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Central Asia are part of a larger Jihadi enterprise with its headquarters in Saudi Arabia. The pursuit of religious fundamentalism in the form of Sharia and the establishment of the Caliphate are core objectives that link radical groups together and that form the intrinsic elements of Jihadi thinking. As mentioned in Chapter 6, one could draw a comparison to McDonalds. Headquartered in the United States, McDonalds indirectly manages its individual establishments across the globe. These locations offer different menu items corresponding to local tastes and have local managers who handle daily decision-making. Yet there are always items that make each distributor an unmistakably part of the larger franchise, such as the Big Mac.

Moreover, the information from Chapter 6 suggests fineings on the relationship between economic prosperity and violent Jihadi tendencies. The logic of economic deprivation theory suggests that "deprivation leads to frustration, which in turn produces aggression when pent-up hostility against perceived aggressors is released . . ."\(^\text{15}\) Based on this idea, materially deprived people, unsatisfied with their relative conditions are therefore more likely than others to feel anger that may lead to violent action including terrorism. Contemporary scholars, like Jessica Stern have also indicated a relationship between poverty and terrorism. In an article in *Foreign Affairs*, Stern suggests that given a 40 percent poverty rate, the "mujahideen" fighters in Pakistan are able to recruit individuals based on offering small, but relatively attractive salaries.\(^\text{16}\) Tatarstan presents


a good case for testing this theory because of its relatively high level of wealth in Russia and low level of terrorist incidents. The results suggest that satisfaction with one's living conditions is indeed a component in inhibiting violent Jihad.

On a broader level, the SCO also reveals that the guarded sovereignty model of regionalism gives the best description for the interaction between Russia, China, and the states of Central Asia. Each one of the SCO's current member states is protective of its national autonomy, which this model best defends. The activity of the SCO additionally reveals that "embedded bilateralism" is not just a European phenomenon found in the EU. Just as the relationship between Germany and France provided the basis for greater integration in Europe, the bilateral relationship between Russia and China has provided the basis for multilateralism in the SCO. However, in contrast to the EU, where coal and steel played the lead role in the integration process, terrorism and to a lesser extent infrastructure development have acted as the avenues for greater regionalism.

**Main Policy Findings**

**Results for Russia**

First, anti-Americanism may still be a strong determinant in Russian foreign policy. However, according to those interviewed, this determinant has not translated into a decisively anti-American vector for Russia in the SCO. Indeed, paradoxically, U.S. interests may inadvertently present more of a benefit to the Federation than a danger. America's fight against the Taliban and the Islamic State is a boon for Russia because

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they threaten the stability of the surrounding region. In the judgment of respondents, by inhibiting radical groups in Afghanistan, the United States makes Central Asia, a safer buffer zone for Russia. In the opinion of a senior researcher at the Russian Academy of Sciences, for example, the acute danger posed by regional security problems, such as radical Islam have been more important than the possibility of more remote threats from the United States.

Second, Russia’s rapprochement with China is not due primarily to the sales of natural gas and oil. In contrast to President Putin’s objective of an SCO Energy Club, Russia and China still largely negotiate contracts on a bilateral basis. The historic natural gas deal that was reached on May 21, 2014 between Moscow and Beijing is a representative example of this largely one-sided relationship. As one researcher at the Russian Institute of Strategic Studies explained, "Within the SCO, the one with the most money will determine the rules of the game.” Consequently, Russia interprets China's plans for trade liberalization as an indirect way of diffusing its influence in Central Asia.

Third, based on the information from my interviews in Moscow, Russian cooperation with China in the SCO is due primarily to the threat of terrorism. The internal security hypothesis best explains Russia's interest in terms of rhetoric and action. The founding of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure in 2004 and annual Peace Missions match what interviewees believed to be the most acute regional threats to Russia's security. From their perspective, these occurrences coincide with the rising activity of the Taliban in Afghanistan, which poses a serious danger to the stability of Central Asia. Due to Russia's ongoing conflict with Jihadism and its belief that Saudi Arabia and Qatar are
the primary sources of radical Wahhabism, it is important that Central Asia not become an area that could fuel separatist violence in Russia.

**Case Study Findings on Tatarstan**

My results also include the outcome of the crucial case study that I conducted in the city of Kazan. Based on field interviews with senior academics and Islamic clerics as well as publicly available Russian news reporting, the results of the case study confirmed several additional findings. First, violent examples of Wahhabism are minimally present in Tatarstan, which do not necessarily substantiate the claim that Wahhabism is a systemic threat to Russia's entire Muslim community. Second, the level of radicalism is much lower in Tatarstan in comparison to the Northern Caucasus due to the relative wealth of the region and the area's long history of social harmony between ethno-religious groups. In comparison to the ongoing fight with terrorist groups in the Northern Caucasus, such as the Caucasus Emirate, Tatarstan remains a relatively stable and predominantly peaceful region. However, there have been violent incidents, such as the rocket attacks in Nizhnekamsk that were allegedly organized by a man claiming to be the Emir of Tatarstan and the high profile attacks on two moderate Islamic clerics in Kazan. These attacks suggest that the Republic is a target for radical groups given its majority Muslim population.

Third, based on local interviews and Russian literature, Russians perceive Wahhabism as a phenomenon that extends beyond groups strictly associated with the Arabian Peninsula. In terms of an ideological franchise, Russian's think that Wahhabism promotes the theocratic idea of the Caliphate and the abolishment of secular society. HuT, a group founded in Central Asia has been the predominant organization most
associated with this perspective in Tatarstan. However, from both a Russian and Tatar perspective, Saudi Arabia has been the central source of a religious and political ideology that has influenced the Islamic revival in Russia. This conceptualization of Wahhabism focuses on the context of an Arab-Middle Eastern core with connections to other regions of the world.

**Results for China**

First, the information presented in the interviews suggests that the Chinese are also not primarily using the SCO to counter the United States. However, there was some indication from two interviewees from Shanghai University and the Shanghai Institute of International Studies that the SCO acts as a geopolitical hedge against America's policy of containment toward China. From their perspective, China is reacting to American policies that favor other countries in territorial disputes by limiting American activity in Central Asia. However, this was a vague assertion, while two other researchers, subjects L and P indicated that China would prefer cooperation with the United States. According to these researchers, cooperation is more in China's interest because conflict would hinder China's main priority, which is increasing domestic prosperity.

Second, China does have an abiding interest in promoting free trade and the construction of infrastructure through the SCO. Yet, no interviewee suggested that China has a strong need for the SCO to facilitate natural gas and oil deals with Russia, which remain bilateral agreements. According to those interviewed, the Chinese government, however, does need to keep Russia informed about its activities in Central Asia. As one interviewee reported, Central Asia is "Russia's woman" and China needs Russia's tacit approval for its projects. This comment suggested that Russia is very protective of this
area when dealing with foreign powers and that China is no exception. As one such project, the Chinese government believes that it can develop Xinjiang through a network of trade routes crossing through Central Asia. Beijing's Silk Road project is undoubtedly an integral part of this process, which ultimately intends to link Chinese, Middle Eastern, and European markets.

Third, in terms of the development of Xinjiang, prosperity is not an end in itself according to those interviewed. Instead, China wants to use economic development in the SCO to reduce the threat of terrorism in Western China and Central Asia based on the responses of three researchers in Shanghai and Beijing. The majority of the information from China therefore focused on Islamic terrorists who use Central Asia as a safe haven to mount attacks in China. Researchers at Shanghai University, for example, were clear in their belief that the introduction of Wahhabism into Uyghur society has facilitated a distinct change in Uyghur culture and has spurred acts of terrorism. Through a combination of methods including the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure, Peace Missions, and economic development, China hopes to thwart militant Islamic groups.

**Most Significant Area of Common Interest**

Russian and Chinese economic interests appear complementary given that Russia needs as many markets as possible in which to sell its energy in order to finance its federal budget. Moreover, given Europe's efforts to diversify its natural gas supply, Russia logically needs as many alternative buyers as possible. Likewise, China needs a diversity of supply in the event that the United States blockades energy imports from the Middle East. Yet these agreements have not taken place within a multilateral organization. In principle, China would like to increase trade with Russia, but according
to those interviewed, the Russians believe that all the advantages of trade will mainly accrue to China. The Chinese could flood the Russian and Central Asian markets with cheap goods thereby reducing the competitiveness of Russian goods. According to a researcher at the Higher School of Economics, for example, Central Asian migrants will either send or return home with money earned in Russia, which they will mainly spend on Chinese products. As an exception, however, Russia will favor Chinese funded infrastructure projects to the extent that the economic development of Central Asia helps deter the recruitment of militant Islamic fighters in the region.

There were conflicting positions regarding to what degree Russia and China share anti-U.S. geopolitical ambitions in the SCO. From one perspective, China and Russia both seek to contain American influence in the region and on a global level. There have been instances when Russia and China have acted against America's interest. For example, when the SCO demanded a schedule for America's withdrawal from bases in Central Asia and rejected America's application for observer status, Russia and China both seemed to be challenging American influence. The SCO charter also promotes the idea that a multipolar world is a safer configuration that one dominated by a single power. Yet these types of developments have not occurred on a consistent level in the organization and therefore do not represent the organization's raison d'etre. It is also unclear how Russia uses the fundamental design of the SCO to counterbalance the United States. The main bodies of the SCO include the Business Council, the Interbank Consortium, the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure, and the Secretariat. As Chapter 3 explained, the first two bodies are economic in nature and are in charge of managing and financing various development, humanitarian, and infrastructure projects. The Business
Council, founded in 2006, specifically oversees the creation of the SCO Energy Club. In addition, it monitors other SCO initiatives, such as prospective healthcare programs, educational training for staff, and the installation of telecommunications equipment. The Interbank Consortium, founded in 2005 is tasked with providing funding for these activities. The Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure helps members exchange information about terrorists groups, while the Secretariat performs managerial functions. In each of these cases, nothing would inherently subvert U.S. interests in the region.

Militant Islam is the only explanation that no Chinese analyst could contradict in terms of a danger that confronted both Russia and China. While Russia and China would prefer no American presence in the region, America's military capabilities in Afghanistan and in neighboring countries inadvertently benefit both countries. By placing pressure on Islamic militants, the United States helps prevent the possible spread of radicalism throughout the region. The SCO's cooperation with ISAF against drug trafficking and the Taliban demonstrates this mutual advantage. In 2009, the SCO offered its support for the Afghan national government through the "Statement by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on Combating Terrorism, Illicit Drug Trafficking, and Organized Crime." The statement fully encouraged the combined efforts of the Afghan government and the "international community" by ensuring the "social and economic development, building democratic institutions, strengthening [the] operational capability of the Afghan national army and police and enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement bodies."

With the emergence

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of the Islamic State in Afghanistan, the topic of Afghan security remains a "top priority" for the SCO.\textsuperscript{18}

Few Russian experts, moreover, were also able to challenge the counter-terrorism explanation. It is clear that the Russian and Chinese governments prioritize Central Asia as a region from where terrorism can enter their countries. In addition, the archival information in Chapter 3 reveals that militant Islam has long been a point of ongoing discussion between the Russian and Chinese governments. Since just before the start of the Shanghai Five during the mid-1990s, the Russian government has been long aware of the problem of militant Islam in Central Asia. The SCO Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure and military exercises are clearly intended to confront this threat on a multilateral level. Based on the information in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, both countries believe that economic deprivation is a major factor in terrorism, and consequently, they interpret a need to coordinate their resources to develop Central Asia's economy. Russia's military presence combined with China's capacity to invest makes the SCO the ideal organization for this two-fold strategy.

\textbf{Main Theoretical Implications}

The SCO is a strong test case for the soft balancing concept due to the expressed desire of Russia and China to limit American leadership. However, since soft balancing has not been Russia's main purpose in the SCO, there are several important implications. First, balance of power theory does depend on threat perception. According to Steven Walt, threat perception is a key factor in how states form alliances. He writes that ". . . states form alliances to protect themselves. Their conduct is determined by the threats they perceive, and the power of others is merely one element in their calculations (albeit

\textsuperscript{18} Albert, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization."
and important one)."\textsuperscript{19} This position contrasts with the long-held view that states simply ally with others against a stronger power with "superior resources."\textsuperscript{20} Under these conditions, weaker states form coalitions against the most capable state to ensure their own survival.\textsuperscript{21} However, according to Walt, states consider multiple factors in their calculation to counterbalance, such as aggregate power, geographic proximity, offensive power, and aggressive intentions of another state.\textsuperscript{22}

States like Russia and China therefore need to believe that another country is intent on endangering their national security in order to prioritize a counterbalancing reaction. As a result, states do not always counterbalance simply against a systemic concentration of power. If they did so, the SCO would demonstrate more signs of geopolitical maneuvering against the international system's hegemonic military power, the United States. This lack of threat perception is likely due to America's overriding intention to fight terrorism in Afghanistan, which complements Russian and Chinese interests.

Second, since there is some evidence suggesting that on a general level the SCO fits into Russia's desire's for a multipolar world, there may not in fact be a strong


\textsuperscript{21} Walt, \textit{The Origins of Alliances}, 18.

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 22-25.
distinction between soft and hard balancing. A hard balancing strategy typically “seeks to change the military balance in an actual or (more often) potential conflict by contributing military capabilities to the weaker side through measures such as a military buildup, war-fighting alliance, or transfer of military technology to an ally.”

These measures originate from classical notions of balance of power principles, such as one state preventing the domination of another through a countervailing coalition. Included in this understanding is Walt's contribution to counterbalancing theory that suggests alliances are designed in response to levels of threat. States counterbalance against threats because there are substantial costs in such actions, such as military spending, loss of autonomy, and possible punishment by one’s opponent in the event of defeat. As a result, it would not be worth the cost of counterbalancing a strong, but ultimately benign power.

Recent literature suggests that soft balancing might be occurring due to the perceived lack of this type of counterbalancing behavior against the United States.

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Considered a combination of Kenneth Waltz’s structural balance of power theory and Stephen Walt’s balance of threat theory, soft balancing seeks to explain the currently perceived lack of countervailing coalitions against the United States.\textsuperscript{27} Soft balancing is systemic in nature and is an outgrowth of defensive realism’s precept of “security seeking under anarchy,” which maintains that states will unite against threatening concentrations of power.\textsuperscript{28} In other words, soft balancing is a function of the distribution of power in the international system, with weaker powers cooperating against stronger powers. Unlike hard balancing, however, it does not necessarily seek to change the “current balance of power but seeks to obtain better outcomes within it.”\textsuperscript{29} It is a type of balancing, “short of formal alliances,” which can involve “limited arms buildup, ad hoc cooperative exercises, or collaboration in regional or international institutions.”\textsuperscript{30}

The theorized difference is therefore rooted mainly in the stipulation that hard balancing should include formal alliances or direct military support for an ally, such as arms transfers that seek to transform the balance of power in the system. In contrast, soft balancing could occur through international organizations and works on a smaller scale. It does not alter the balance of power in the international system. Yet the SCO demonstrates some characteristics of both hard and soft balancing. It is not a formal military coalition, nor does it significantly augment military strength, but in comparison to its anti-terror priorities, it still occupies a secondary place in Russia's strategy to reduce American hegemony. According to the SCO Charter, for example, the SCO seeks to

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\textsuperscript{27}Brooks, and Wohlforth, "Hard Times for Soft Balancing," 78. Stephen Walt, for example, hypothesizes that world powers react to the threat of danger posed by other states in terms of aggregate power, proximity, offensive capability, and offensive intentions. See, Walt, "Alliance Formation," 8-9.
\textsuperscript{29}Walt, "Alliances in a Unipolar World," 104.
\end{flushleft}
encourage multipolarity among nations in addition to other objectives, such as encouraging respect for sovereignty and a mutual spirit of regional cooperation. Hard and soft balancing may therefore be overlapping concepts, rather than distinct theoretical phenomena.

In terms of regionalism, there are also implications for describing how regionalism begins and how it evolves. The SCO's emphasis on the guarded sovereignty model reveals that at least some major powers are still completely unwilling to cede any control of their domestic decision-making process. In this case, consensus building guides multilateral decision-making within a given region. The emphasis on Russia and China within the SCO suggests that the principle of "embedded bilateralism" may be in fact a universal phenomenon since it applies to vastly different organizations, such as the EU and the SCO.

According to Ulrich Krotz and Joachim Schild, the development of Franco-German cooperation in the European Union is an empirical example of this type of theoretical relationship. Germany and France have demonstrated the importance of a small coalition of countries to influence a larger grouping of states through bilateral leadership that "capture[s] the intertwined nature of a robustly institutionalized and normatively grounded interstate relationship." Moreover, this relationship was based on two strategic assets, coal and steel. A key feature of Franco-German reconciliation was creating interdependence between these two vital sectors that were important materials

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for industrial economies. During the early regionalization process, "Coal was the primary energy source in Europe, accounting for almost 70 percent of fuel consumption. Steel was a fundamental material for industry and to manufacture it required large amounts of coal. Both materials were also needed to create weapons." In comparison, hydrocarbon resources may still become a similar driver of regional cooperation in the SCO despite slow initial progress. However, even if this area of cooperation is not ultimately successful, Russia and China have still been the main political actors in the SCO given their chief involvement in the SCO's predecessor, the Shanghai-Five.

Finally, in the realm of internal security, Jihadism is not just a phenomenon directed against the United States, Israel, and the West in light of Russia and China's own struggle with terrorism. The SCO's fight against Islamic extremism indicates that the theoretical determinants of Jihadism are not simply about the combination of economic decadence, social freedoms, and liberal values of Western countries. These determinants are pieces of a larger puzzle that includes a theological component. Jihad is indeed a struggle between radical believers, who believe in the mandatory implementation of "pure Islam," and those who adhere to secular values. A combination of approaches that include economic development and religious reform within the Islamic community may be the most effective strategy toward blunting Jihad.

**Main Policy Implications**

The most significant policy implication of Russia's counterterrorism approach in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization for the United States involves America's "War on Terror." With President Putin's recent intervention in Syria, a resurgent Taliban in

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Afghanistan, and the rapid rise of the Islamic State and its affiliates in Syria, Iraq, and Egypt, the United States needs international cooperation to efficiently combat global terrorism. However, cooperation between the United States and Russia in this area has been slow to develop.\textsuperscript{34}

The resulting lack of counter-terrorism cooperation between the United States and the SCO can have a serious impact on the potential for terrorism originating in Central Asia. Nuclear terrorism is a particularly significant danger in Central Asia according to a threat assessment conducted by Harvard University. The report states that:

Central Asia is also one of the centers of the international black market for uranium trading. There are two major terrorist organizations active in Central Asia that may develop interest in nuclear material: the Islamic Party of Turkestan (formerly the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan) and the Islamic Jihad - Jammat of Mujahideen.\textsuperscript{35}

The SCO is a suitable organization to manage such a danger since it has focused specifically on the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan through the Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS) in Tashkent. The activity of the RATS is therefore important not only to the region, but also to the United States. By tracking militant groups, the RATS can facilitate the distribution of locally sourced intelligence to U.S. security organizations and thereby assist the United States in terrorism prevention.


As an indication of the credible danger of nuclear terrorism, the FBI in conjunction with law enforcement in Moldova recently disrupted a criminal syndicate with "suspected Russian connections" that was planning "to sell radioactive material to Middle Eastern extremists." In February 2015, for example, a smuggler tried to sell a significant quantity of cesium, a potential ingredient in a dirty bomb to buyers from the Islamic State. In another case during 2011, a reported rogue officer associated with the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) was intent, but ultimately unsuccessful in selling black market Uranium to "Arabs." The FSB officer, known only as "the colonel" said, "I really want an Islamic buyer because they will bomb the Americans." His comment reveals that there are individuals within the SCO area who are actively trying to cause grave harm to the United States through terrorist channels.

This example highlights how important it is for the United States to work with a regional organization dedicated to anti-terrorism activities. Given the rise of the Islamic State, the United States has an even stronger incentive to cooperate with the SCO and its members to prevent similar attempted acts of terrorism from occurring in the future.

According to William Tobey, Senior Fellow at Harvard University's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs and Major General Pavel Zolotarev, Deputy Director of the Institute for U.S. and Canadian Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the United States and Russia could work with vulnerable countries to secure their nuclear

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37 Ibid.

material. Cooperation would generally entail improved security measures for fissile material, the promotion of best practices, the development of joint terrorism response teams, and the creation of coordinated investigations into stolen nuclear material. Cooperation between the United States, Russia, and third party countries would likely be most effective on a multilateral level because it would facilitate the harmonization of best practices with several states at once. The SCO presents the United States and Russia with a ready-made forum to accomplish such an approach.

The United States could also consider Russia and China as potential allies in the struggle to rebuild and to stabilize Afghanistan. As Chapters 4 and 5 indicate, the Russians and Chinese are very interested in building infrastructure across Central Asia that could also connect Afghanistan to regional trade and energy markets. The stability of Afghanistan is an important priority for Moscow and Beijing given the possible destabilizing effect of the Taliban on neighboring countries. Since both the Russians and the Chinese believe that economic development can help reduce the proliferation of terrorism, the United States could encourage joint investment projects through the SCO in order to modernize Afghanistan. As an observer member in the SCO, the Afghan government has already expressed interest in full membership, which may hold both advantages and disadvantages for the United States.

In terms of advantages, the United States would be able to share the financial burden of Afghan reconstruction with partners, which would allow more resources for security operations. It seems doubtful that the Russians or Chinese would use any significant number of military personnel in Afghanistan, which keeps the need for

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American troops high. However, given the SCO's annual Peace Missions, Russia and China could be willing to provide some measure of border security around Afghanistan. Afghanistan's border with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan would probably be the most practical areas from a political standpoint since these states are already full members in the SCO. The Russians and Chinese could also pressure Pakistan, a rising full member in the organization to place more resources along its own turbulent border with Afghanistan. Given the intransience of the Taliban and the new entry of Islamic State fighters, it will take a complete regional response to stabilize the country. The SCO is only organization that has enough key players for such a comprehensive approach.

With regard to disadvantages, Russia and China may gradually try to leverage America out of any serious presence in neighboring Central Asian countries. Perhaps in exchange for financial contributions, hydro-electricity projects, or diplomatic efforts to garner more Pakistani military support, Russia and China would try to negotiate concessions from the United States. They might want the U.S. government, for example, to stop democratization efforts in the region, such as election monitoring, or to reduce economic ties with other SCO countries.

Further Research

For future research, I will continue to pursue several subjects related to Russian cooperation with China in the SCO. The first area of study is the potential theoretical relationship between economic deprivation, social harmony, and incidents of terrorism. My field research in Kazan demonstrated that Tatarstan is an economically prosperous area in which there are few occurrences of violent extremism as compared to the poverty-stricken Northern Caucasus. However, it is still unclear to what extent ethno-religious
accord affects the efficacy of positive economic factors. Osama bin Laden, for example, was a wealthy individual who was responsible for the worst terrorist attack on U.S. territory. Bin Laden's financial wealth clearly did not stop him from coordinating the destruction of September 11th. Given this contradiction, it is important to understand why wealth inhibits Islamic radicalism in one instance, yet fails to prevent terrorism in another instance. Tatarstan may likely reveal how the interplay of social harmony and economic prosperity is a necessary combination for reducing religiously motivated violence.

Given Islamic, impoverished, and socially restless segments of the population in Russia, China, and Central Asia, this triangular relationship assumes extra salience. In the wake of the Taliban's sustained presence in Afghanistan and an uncertain U.S. military campaign, economic development may present at least a partial solution to a regional crisis. Yet economic development maybe insufficient to stem acts of terrorism without programs that also build social tolerance between ethno-religious groups.

A second area of research involves understanding the lack of significant American engagement in the SCO despite the anti-terror priorities of Russia and China. Given the United States' ongoing War on Terror, why is there a lack of cooperation between Russia and the United States in the SCO given similar anti-terror threats? The answer may lie in large part on how the United States and Russia conduct their counterterrorism policies. On a global level, America's interventionist policies and military invasions may have led Russia and China to question the efficacy of the United States' approach toward fighting terror. In Afghanistan, Libya, Iraq, and Syria, America tried to replace the previous governments with new political leadership. In each of these instances, the United States has viewed democracy as the preferable form of government
to authoritarian rule. Yet neither the Bush nor Obama administrations have succeeded in engineering stable and secure democracies as bulwarks against terrorism. As a Chinese researcher in Shanghai stated, America's interventionism has primarily led to an increase in instability and the emergence of terrorist organizations, such as the Islamic State that have rushed to fill the vacuum left by poorly functioning leadership in the aftermath of American military operations.

According to Stephen F. Cohen, Professor Emeritus of Russian Studies, History, and Politics at New York University and Princeton University, Russia believes that America's interventionist goal of promoting democracy has given the U.S. government free license to violate the sovereignty of other states beginning with the Clinton administration's bombing of Serbia during the Kosovo crisis. Russia also continues to believe that the United States has no international legal right to "violate the territorial sovereignty of another country" and that in each instance of such an action, the United States has weakened the target government to the point where the state has become a base for terrorism. Consequently, according to Cohen, the Russian political class including President Putin believes that no one can realistically predict what may fill the vacuum when you "destroy an established state."

Within this context, Central Asia is a key area for Russian national security and a region where Moscow must protect its interests. It is also an area vulnerable to the rise of militant Islam and the influx of fighters returning from the Syrian conflict if there is governmental turmoil. Russia's First Deputy Director of Federal Security, Sergei Smirnov

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41 Ibid. Cohen cites Iraq, Libya, and Syria as examples.
42 Ibid.
estimated that there are about 400 Russian nationals and roughly 3,000 people from Central Asia fighting for the Islamic State who could return to destabilize their home countries. It is therefore vital to understand whether Russia fears what it considers flawed American counterterrorism policy as a barrier to cooperation in the SCO. The clearest example of this divergence maybe the civil war in Syria. By supporting the so-called moderate rebels, the United States hopes to encourage a democratic Syrian government and to remove Bashar al-Assad, a supposed magnet for terrorist recruitment. In contrast, rather than seeking to primarily preserve its geopolitical influence in the Middle East, Russia maybe supporting Assad to avoid the creation of another failed or near-failed state. Given the uncertainties of supporting rebel forces, Russia may fear that a government without Assad could eventually operate as a base for ISIS, Al-Qaeda, or affiliated groups that threaten Russia and Central Asia.

Finally, I would like to conduct a case study concerning the possible threat of Wahhabism in China to complement the dissertation's study on Tatarstan. The case study will also help test the relevancy of economic deprivation theory and social harmony on inhibiting violent acts of terrorism by answering the question: "Why are some Islamic regions in Russia and China conflict-prone, whereas other Islamic regions are peaceful?"

With the assistance of additional Chinese researchers, I will conduct a four-fold case study that examines the reasons for peace and conflict in Chechnya, Tatarstan, Xinjiang, and the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region (NHAR). The study will focus on the social and economic conditions of the Chechens, Tatars, Uyghurs, and Hui in each of their respective regions. These areas are necessary because they juxtapose two peaceful regions and two conflict-prone regions across two countries with minority Muslim

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populations. The Hui, in particular, are an important element of the study for China because the Hui in the NHAR are an Islamic people that have socially integrated into Han society similar to how Tatars in Tatarstan have integrated into Russian society. In comparison to the Tatars, the Hui are Muslim descendants of Persian, Central Asian, and Arab traders, who often intermarried with the ethnic Chinese population. Like Kazan, Yinchuan is the capital of the ethnically based NHAR, and is potentially the most suitable Chinese city in which to begin conducting research. This region is comprised of 30 nationalities, which makes it more ethnically diverse than Tatarstan, but the region's population is still approximately one-third Hui.

This case study will also help further describe the franchise nature of the so-called Saudi "religious-industrial complex" that is already operating in Tatarstan. A closer look at how Wahhabism operates in China would shed more light on the role of the Persian Gulf countries in terrorism and the avenues through which radicals promote religious extremism as part of a global threat network. This research will also attempt to establish whether Chinese officials also believe in promoting a Chinese form of Islam in the same way the Russian government has tried to promote a Russian model of Islam.

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Beijing


Shanghai

Appendix A

Interview Questionnaire for Subjects in Moscow, Shanghai, and Beijing

Opening Questions

1. From your perspective, what are Russia’s goals in the SCO? Are these external or internal goals?
Как Вы думаете, какие задачи у России в Шанхайской Организации Сотрудничества? Эти задачи больше влияют на внешнюю или внутреннюю политику России?

2. Do these goals parallel the interests of China in anyway?
Эти задачи такие же как задачи Китая?

3. What do you think are the key areas of cooperation between Russia and China? What do you think explains a new willingness to cooperate on issues?
Как Вы думаете, какие ключевые сферы сотрудничества между Россией и Китаем? Каковы причины этого нового желания сотрудничать?

Questions for the Geopolitical Hypothesis

4. Russia has traditionally seen Central Asia as a priority area. To what extent is Russia concerned about rising Chinese influences in the region? In which ways?
Россия традиционно видит центральную Азию как сферу влияния. Насколько Россия обеспокоена ростом китайского влияния в регионе? В каких сферах это влияние наиболее ощутимо?

5. Is Russia more concerned with American or Chinese influences?
Что более беспокоит Россию? Американское или китайское влияние в регионе?

6. To what extent is Russia cooperation with China a response to America? What other factors bear on this decision to cooperate?
Насколько российское сотрудничество с Китаем может восприниматься как реакция на политику США в Центральной Азии? Какие другие факторы играют роль в сотрудничестве между Россией и Китаем?

7. To what extent do you believe that America’s invasion of Afghanistan served in facilitating the SCO’s greater cohesion?
Как Вы думаете насколько американское вторжение в Афганистан содействовало ещё большему сближению членов ШОС?
8. Did Russia envision the SCO as an instrument for more closely watching China in Central Asia?

Рассматривает ли Россия своё участие в ШОС как способ более пристального наблюдения за Китаем в Центральной Азии?

9. When the United States applied for observer status in the organization it was denied. Did Russia have objections to U.S. membership? What were these objections? Why did they object?

Когда США хотели получить статус наблюдателя в ШОС, организация не приняла заявление. Возражала ли Россия против членства США в ШОС? Если да, то каковы были её возражения? Почему она была против?

Questions for the Economic Hypothesis

10. To what extent was free trade or regulated trade in oil/gas a factor in Russia’s cooperation with China in the SCO?

Насколько торговля влияет на взаимодействие России с Китаем в ШОС? какая торговля: рыночная или регулируемая? (формирования благоприятного режима для торговли, как например, упрощение таможенных процедур)

11. How does Russia define its economic interest in the SCO besides oil and gas?

Как Россия определяет свои экономические интересы в ШОС помимо экспорта нефти и газа?

12. For example, the SCO Business Council is located in Moscow. What is Russia’s objective regarding this council? Does Russia have any advantages because of this?

Как Вы думаете, почему Деловой совет Шанхайской организации сотрудничества находится в Москве, а не в Пекине или Шанхайе? Есть ли у России преимущества в связи этим?

13. A decade ago, Russia was willing to sell oil and natural gas to Japan, as a priority, but now Russia is more intent on building pipelines to China. To what extent did the SCO play a role in this shift in priorities?

Десять лет назад Россия хотела продавать нефть и газ Японии, но сейчас приоритет сместился на строительство трубопровода с Китаем. До какой степени членство в ШОС повлияло на такое изменение приоритетов?

14. Do you believe that China is interested in coordinating infrastructure projects through the SCO?

Как Вы думаете, интересуется ли Китай разработкой проектов в области инфраструктуры в рамках ШОС?
15. Does Russia share similar goals and, if so, where is the most infrastructure needed?
Разделяет ли Россия этот интерес? Если да, то где более всего выражена потребность в новой инфраструктуре?

16. What kind of infrastructure is the most important for Russia?
Какая инфраструктура более всего нужна России?

17. Which companies or business leaders are involved in this council?
Какие фирмы (или лидеры фирм) принимают участие в совете?

**Questions for the Internal Security Hypothesis**

18. Which do you think Russia values more with China: cooperation over energy or military cooperation? Why?
Как Вы думаете, что важнее для России – военное сотрудничество с Китаем или взаимодействие в энергетической сфере с этой страной?

19. What does Russia consider its most serious threat to public security?
Что представляет по мнению России наибольшую угрозу безопасности страны?

20. Has Saudi Arabia or other Gulf states been a factor in terrorism in Russia?
Беспокоятся ли Россия о влиянии Саудовской Аравии на ситуацию с терроризмом в России?
   a.) After the Cold War, Muslim refugees from Uzbekistan and China returned to their homeland from Saudi Arabia according to the United Nations. Does the Russian government think that these people have helped spread Wahhabism? 
   После холодной войны, по данным Организации Объединенных Наций беженцы мусульмане из Узбекистана и Китая вернулись на родину из Саудовской Аравии. Считает ли Российское правительство, что эти люди способствовали распространению ваххабизма?
   
   b.) Is Russia concerned with NGOs financed by states in the Persian Gulf?
   Озабочена ли Россия тем, что некоторые неправительственные или общественные организации получают финансирование от государств в Персидском заливе?
   
   c.) Where is it possible to find data on Saudi funding of NGOs, madrassas, and terrorist groups?
   Где можно найти данные, касающиеся финансирования неправительственных организаций, медрехе и террористических групп?

21. If Russia’s threats are transnational, from where do they originate? How is this threat transmitted into Russia? Are parts of Central Asia and the Northern Caucuses linked to this threat transmission?
Если угрозы России транснациональные, то откуда они исходят? Как эти угрозы поступают в Россию? -- Каково влияние Северного Кавказа или Центральной Азии на распространение этих угроз?

22. What does Russia prioritize in terms of threats to its national security? For example, the SCO has talked about the problems of “extremism, terrorism, and separatism.” Please provide some concrete examples of these extremism, terrorism, and separatism for Russia.

Каковы приоритеты у России в рамках национальной безопасности? Например ШОС говорит о борьбе с экстремизмом, терроризмом, и сепаратизмом. Вы можете дать пожалуйста примеры этих терминов для России?

23. To what extent are these notions new? How did they change between the 1990’s and the first decade of this century?

Насколько проблемы экстремизма, терроризма, и сепаратизма изменились в России по сравнению с началом 1990х?

24. Do you think that cooperation with China in the SCO will address help these threats in Russia? If so, how?

Вы думаете, что сотрудничество с Китаем в ШОС ослабит эти угрозы в России? Раз так, как?

25. Did the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan by 1996 encourage closer cooperation with China on these threats?

Как Вы думаете, способствовал ли приход к власти талибов в Афганистане в 1996 году усилиению сотрудничества России и Китая в процессе противодействия этим угрозам?

26. To what extent have anti-terrorist activities been coordinated through the RATS? How has it occurred? Can you give specific examples? Does the RATS track where financing for these threats originates?

Насколько удалось России и Китаю скоординировать усилия по борьбе с терроризмом, сепаратизмом и экстремизмом в Региональной антитеррористической структуре? Возможно ли проследить откуда поступает финансирование на реализацию этих угроз?

27. How have Russia and China cooperated to address common threats?

В чём заключается сотрудничество в ШОС между Россией и Китаем по противодействию общим угрозам, таким как экстремизм, терроризм и сепаратизм?

28. Where is it possible to find data about the exchange of information between Russia and China in the RATS SCO?

Где можно найти данные об обмене информацией между Россией и Китаем в рамках РАТС ШОС?
29. During the last ten years, Russia has been conducting land battle exercises with China and states in Central Asia. How do these exercises address these internal threats?

В течение десяти лет Россия, Китай и некоторые другие государства Центральной Азии проводят совместные военные учения, известные как "Мирные миссии." Как Вы думаете, способствуют ли эти совместные усилия борьбе против ваххабитских групп?

Conclusion Questions

30. What can Russia accomplish with China in the SCO that it cannot accomplish alone or just bilaterally with China?

Что именно могут достичь Россия и Китай, как партнёры в Шос? И что было бы невозможно, если бы они не участвовали в этой организации и были бы ограничены двусторонними отношениями.

31. More broadly, what is Russia’s strategic interest in Central Asia and what role does the SCO play? Would you like to include anything else about which I did not ask?

Каковы в целом стратегические интересы и цели России в Центральной Азии? Как ШОС способствует их достижению? Хотите ли Вы что-нибудь добавить о чём-нибудь, что не прозвучало в нашем интервью?

Ancillary Questions

32. Can you explain how Russia interprets the terms development, security, and cooperation in terms of the “Shanghai Spirit”?

Вы можете объяснить как в России воспринимаются такие термины как развитие, сотрудничество, и безопасность в рамках ШОС?

33. In what ways has information sharing increased between Russia and China through the SCO?

Выбут Вы думаете, увеличится ли объем информации, которой обмениваются Россия и Китай? Если да, то каким образом?

34. In what ways does Russia and China share necessary information in the SCO?

Каким образом Россия и Китай обмениваются необходимой информацией в ШОС?
Appendix B

Q Statements

**Prompt:** Russia cooperates with China in the SCO in order to . . .
Россия сотрудничает с Китаем в рамках ШОС, чтобы . . .

**Statements for the Economic Hypothesis**

1. build new infrastructure
построить новую инфраструктуру

2. facilitate international trade.
развивать торговлю.

3. sell oil and/or natural gas
продавать нефть и газ.

4. increase foreign direct investment.
увеличивать прямые иностранные инвестиции

5. create interdependence between their economies
развивать более тесные экономические отношения и создать атмосферу взаимодействия между экономическими обеих стран.

6. avoid potential conflict through economic interlocking
избежать потенциального конфликта посредством экономического взаимодействия

7. promote the increased use of natural gas
способствовать расширению использования природного газа

**Statements for the Geopolitical Hypothesis**

8. to monitor Chinese activity in Central Asia.
следить за китайской деятельностью в Центральной Азии.

9. assure a balance of influence of both countries in Central Asia
сбалансировать влияние обоих стран в Центральной Азии

10. to promote a multipolar world.
поддерживать многополярность в сегодняшнем мироустройстве.

11. to help counter American influences
сдерживать всё возрастающее влияние США
12. to better coordinate military exercises
лучше скоординировать военные учения

Ancillary Statements

13. promote educational and cultural exchanges
способствовать образовательным и культурным обменам среди молодёжи

14. to prevent political instability in Central Asia
препятствовать политической нестабильности в Центральной Азии

15. ensure working diplomatic relations.
поддерживать рабочие дипломатические отношения

16. improve a sense of trust.
поддерживать доверительные отношения

17. create a new model of geopolitical integration
создать новую модель геополитической интеграции

18. prevent large-scale violence.
предотвратить возможность разгула насилия

19. coordinate political, economic, and cultural policies
скоординировать политические, экономические, и культурные процессы обеих стран

Internal Security Hypothesis

20. confront transnational threats from Islamist groups.
противостоять угрозам, исходящим от различных международных исламистских групп (организаций)

21. fight against Wahhabism
противостоять ваххабизму

22. stop Central Asian Islamist groups receiving support from countries in the Persian Gulf
противостоять некоторым исламистским организациям в Центральной Азии, которые получают финансовую поддержку из Персидского залива.

1 Statements 13 through 19 were intended for research on security communities, which was ultimately dropped. The idea of a security community between Russia and China was removed after the completion of the field research in Russia. They were not part of the hypothesis testing.
23. monitor organizations such as the “Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan,” Hizb at-Tahrir, and the “Islamic Revival Party of Tajikistan.”

24. limit the influence of the Taliban in the region.

25. combat Jihadism

26. help create and protect a domestic or Russian form of Islam

27. monitor non-governmental organizations that are affiliated or financed by states in the Persian Gulf
Appendix C

Questionnaire for Kazan Subjects

1. I understand that Tatarstan is a model for good relations between ethnic Russians and Muslims. Could you please describe this model? Why is this model necessary in Russia? Is there anything that would prevent this model's success? What explains the good relationship between Muslims and Russians in Tatarstan as compared to other regions of Russia like the Caucasus?

Я понимаю, что Татарстан является образцом хороших отношений между русскими и мусульманами. Могли бы Вы описать эту модель? Почему эта модель необходима России? Есть ли что-нибудь, что может помешать успешному развитию этой модели? Что может объяснить существование хороших отношений между мусульманами и русскими в Татарстане в сравнении с другими регионами России, например Кавказ?

2. Is there a Russian-Tatar identity? If yes, does the Russian-Tatar identity play any role in this model? How would you describe the Russian-Tatar identity?

Есть русско-татарские национальные особенности? Если да, играет ли русско-татарские национальные особенности какую-либо роль в этой модели? Как Вы бы описывали эти особенности?

3. How would a Russian model of Islam be different than other variants of Islam?

Каким образом русская модель ислама отличается от других вариантов ислама?

4. Is there a difference between Islam in Russia, Islam in Central Asia, and Islam from the Persian Gulf?

Есть ли разница между исламом в России, исламом в Центральной Азии и исламом Персидского залива?

5. The Russian press frequently uses the term "Wahhabism" in a broad manner. How do you define Wahhabism? Do you think that this term is appropriately used? Why? Do you see a difference between Wahhabism and Salafism?

Русская пресса часто использует термин "ваххабизм" в широком смысле. Как вы определяете ваххабизм? Думаете ли Вы, что этот термин правильно используется? Почему? По вашему мнению, есть разница между ваххабизмом и салафизмом?

6. On September 20th, 2013, a translation of the Koran by Elmir Kuliyev was banned in the city of Novorossiysk. What were the reasons in your judgment? Has anything else been banned?

20 сентября 2013 перевод Корана Эльмира Кулиева был запрещен в городе Новороссийск. Каковы были причины по Вашему мнению? Что-либо ещё было запрещено?

7. Is there any argument among different Islamic communities in Tatarstan considering the attack on Илдус Файзов (Ildus Faizov) and his associate Валиулла Якупов (Valiulla Yakupov) on July 19, 2012. How would you describe the differences, if any? Why are there tensions between groups, if any?
Есть ли аргументы среди различных исламских общин в Татарстане по поводу нападения на Илдуса Файзова (Ильдус Фаизов) и его соратника Валиуллы Якупова (Валиулла Якупов) 19 июля 2012 года. Как бы Вы описали различия, если они есть? Почему существует напряженность между группами, если ли она?
Appendix D: Economic Data on Central Asia

Graph 1

**Most Reliant Countries on Remittances in the World as Percentage of GDP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyz Republic</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonga</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graph 2

**Remittances as Share of GDP for Central**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyz Republic</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkmenistan</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Appendix E: Map of Central Asia

Map 1: Central Asia and the Caucasus

Map courtesy of the University of Texas Libraries and created by the Central Intelligence Agency, http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/caucasus_central_asia_pol_2009.jpg. Please note that George, Azerbaijan, and Armenia are part of the Southern Caucasus.
Appendix F:

Network Maps for the SCO's High Speed Telecommunication Infrastructure Project

Map 2

Map 3

Appendix G: Comparative Economic Data Including Tatarstan

Graph 1

Graph Heading: “From 1999-2009 the average per-capita GDP grew by 1.83 times while, simultaneously, the differentiation of regional GDPs more than doubled”

(The vertical axis shows GDP per capita in 2009 and the horizontal axis shows GDP per capita in 1998.) Tatarstan is located toward the center of the green ellipse under the name, "Татарстан."