

**THE SHANGHAI COOPERATION FRAMEWORK  
AS A SECURITY ACTOR**

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Word count:  
Text: 4,553  
Tables: 1,400  
Notes: 1.011

Prepared for presentation at the European Union Studies Association, biennial  
convention, Los Angeles, April 23-25, 2009

### *Questions:*

To what extent does the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) provide security? Is there a common understanding of security between two nuclear members (China and Russia), four Soviet-breakaway countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tadjikistan, and Uzbekistan), and four observers (India, Iran, Mongolia, and Pakistan; the United States half-heartedly sought such a role in 2005)? With anti-terrorism as one of its goals, why has the SCO not fully joined forces with a similar U.S. campaign, and how has it blended with other security apparatuses seeking similar goals?

### *An Evolving Puzzle:*

Built out of border security arrangements between China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tadjikistan, known as the Shanghai Five (S5), in 1997,<sup>1</sup> SCO enhanced economic interests more than security over the next ten-odd years, only to find deteriorating Afghani conditions rack up security concerns again. One of its original apprehensions--the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO's) eastward expansion--found Russia steering SCO;<sup>2</sup> and though NATO's May 2009 military exercises in Georgia seem to be rattling Russia as much as Russia's South Ossetian and Abkhazian mid-2008 military excursions unsettled the west, the widespread attention shift to economic interests also shows initiatives increasingly emanating from China.<sup>3</sup> Surprisingly, these security-economic and China-Russia trade-offs have not worsened China-Russia relations, underscoring one of the core SCO characteristics: growing collective needs amid stubborn self-help pursuits. In sum, just as NATO's eastward expansion arguably forged this Central Asian collectivity in the late 1990s, at least four exogenous forces currently feed its survival and viability.

First, the much-awaited opening of Central Asia invited a global energy scramble, with the European Union, United States, and India as major stake-holders,

creating in the process (a) an arena of potential power rivalry, and (b) opportunities for smaller SCO members to defect from collective commitments.

Second, growing pressures for revitalizing the U.S.-Japan security alliance slowly shifted the S5 military fulcrum from East Europe to the Far East, and thereby (a) elevated China's military concern, and (b) widened more formally China's security compass to include Southeast Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East.<sup>4</sup>

Third, a vector of transnational threats, such as ethnic rivalries, Islamic fundamentalism, and terrorism identifies and elaborates a collective SCO ambit, providing heavyweight rivals (China and Russia) a common agenda, which lightweight members (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) have warmly embraced. Domestic fears steady the regional ship, in turn giving authoritarian governments a staying power and self-serving legitimacy amid democratic experiments elsewhere.

Finally, as the Afghanistan ghost stalks the United States, SCO countries find the NATO fear shifting to the south--complicating inherently distraught neighborly relations with Afghanistan. The ripple effects are too many, but they all begin with Afghanistan's neighbors, pinpointing a growing SCO concern.

Complicating the tapestry, by extending observer status to India, Iran, Mongolia, and Pakistan, SCO seems to be (a) utilizing other discords to strengthen reciprocally reinforcing authoritarian arrangements; (b) presenting itself as an alternate global leader to the United States capable of diffusing such intractable fissures as between India and Pakistan, *Shi'as* and *Sunnis*, Muslims and the rest of the world, as well as energy suppliers and consumers; and (c) projecting an incremental concentric-circle influence pattern reflecting more Chinese than Russian interests while defending core Russian interests in East Europe. SCO goes farther in challenging how the numerous contentious global issues can be resolved and U.S. hegemony can be checked than any other

grouping--reviving the defunct Cold War U.S.-Soviet rivalry and spirit by other means and with other players--yet still failing to satisfy the requirements of, or sufficiently fit into, any of the established blocs we know: regional economic integration like the European Union; security community like NATO; transnational organization, like the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE); and an international intergovernmental organization, like the United Nations, at the regional level.

### *S5, SCO, & the Shanghai Spirit: A Thickening Plot?*

When the S5 became SCO on June 15, 2001, Uzbekistan also joined as a member. As Table 1 shows, each of the five meetings culminating in SCO not only utilized institution-building as a form of conflict resolution, but also demonstrated an increasing Chinese flavor in what can be presumptuously called the Chinese phase of SCO.<sup>5</sup> Both had enormous long-term consequences: (a) institution-building emphasized *soft* security issues, such as separatism and terrorism, rather than *hard*, for example, by formally becoming an anti-NATO vehicle; (b) a formal anti-terror stance evolved much before 9/11--in fact, became the first such collective effort--suggesting how SCO could not only serve as an informal "NATO of the east," but also harbor overlaps and identities with both NATO and the United States; (c) the original anti-U.S. or anti-NATO tone was downgraded, at least for the time being, not just by the tilt towards China, but also in winning the support of other Central Asian Republics (CARs)--an effort significant to the survival of SCO; and (d) the opening up of non-security trajectories, evident in the elevation of soft security issues, China's energy needs, and China's access to global markets to spearhead its economic transformation. On this last point, for example, of the 10 documents signed in the Shanghai summit of June 2006, only four were on security, including anti-terrorism.

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Table 1 about here

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Beginning with the adoption of the Agreement on Confidence-building in the Military Field in the Border Area in 1996 (first meeting), the 1997 Moscow summit limited troop deployment (second), identified new threats (third), agreed to build an anti-terrorist center in Bishkek (fourth), admitted Uzbekistan as part of formalizing the S5, while China's Jiang Zemin, on his first foreign visit as leader, proposed converting the S5 into a regular multilateral institution of cooperation (fifth), marking the transition to SCO. Very much like Robert Gilpin argued when proposing hegemonic stability theory during the mid-1970s,<sup>6</sup> political/military order served as the *necessary* condition of the Shanghai framework in the 1990s, paving the way for the *sufficient* conditions of economic and technical resources to take over--an architecture cast not in stone, but with a remarkable two-way flexibility depending on which issue (military or economic) or partner (China or Russia especially) was the concurrent headline news.

Unlike NATO, SCO looked outside the security box almost from the start--a factor of considerable theoretical importance since it prevents labeling SCO as a purely security organization, in fact, raises the more pertinent theoretical consideration of explaining transitions, transformation, or functional diversification of security organizations. Small wonder, then, that Rizwan Zeb of Pakistan's Institute of Regional Studies, in advocating his country's full SCO membership, still sees SCO as an "enigma":<sup>7</sup> "a security organization, a regional forum, an anti-terrorism coalition, and as a Russian and Chinese led alliance created to counter U.S. hegemony." Alyson J.K. Bailes also uses the term "multilateral" in referring to SCO, distinguishing between "bad" and "good" multilateralism.<sup>8</sup> Pierre Morel, the European Union's (EU's) Special Representative to Central Asia, compares SCO to the Organisation for Security and

Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), actually branding it a Russian OSCE,<sup>9</sup> while Marcel de Haas, in acknowledging several similarities, makes more mileage of the differences between OSCE and SCO.<sup>10</sup> Be these interpretations as they may, perhaps the most inappropriate metaphor is SCO as “The NATO of the East,” which Marcel de Haas references (rather than proposes).<sup>11</sup>

The title of the document creating SCO--Shanghai Convention on Fighting Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism--specifically targeted “three evil forces.” Even as these identified a collective agenda (depicting the post-Westphalia model accentuating *solidarity*), behind it lay some grave country-specific concerns (the Westphalia counterpart emphasizing *sovereign* rights). For China, many of these involved Muslim separatists in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR); and although demands for Muslim separatism in this province preceded the emergence of S5, as Jing-dong Yuan observes, “what is different since the early 1990s is the adoption of violent means to achieving that goal.”<sup>12</sup> He lists seven “terrorist” organizations and nine “terrorist” activities, almost all within China, but one attacking Chinese interests abroad (China’s Istanbul embassy bombing in March 1998), indicating the transnational potential of the threat. Since 300,000 of the diasporic Uighurs lived in Kazakhstan and another 50,000 in Kyrgyzstan, transnationalizing China’s key ethnic concern blended well with authoritarian structures in China, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan (as well as Russia, Tadjikstan, and Uzbekistan, one might add). A collective authoritarian bond disguised the underlying tension with inherently state-centric interests: China’s needs to defuse Muslim unrest and explore economic opportunities across Central Asia, even use Central Asia as a stepping stone to Middle East oil, outlets, and markets; having once served as Soviet provinces, CARs still rally behind nationalistic sentiments to ward off Russian influence; while U.S. interests in Central Asia range from acquiring oil

concessions to building economic infrastructures, establishing military outposts, and eventually promoting democracy.

Each U.S. interest threatens either China or Russia, underscoring how SCO can also be stretched to explain balance-of-power dynamics. In spite of Russia's warm relations with NATO in the early Putin era,<sup>13</sup> the increasingly more robust Russia under Putin now seeks a geostrategic reconsideration under Dmitri Medvedev. Yet, even in the twilight years of S5, Russia was able to streamline more policy preferences with China than with the United States. "Strategic partnerships," as Anatoly Klimenko posits, "seem to be vital to both Russia and China."<sup>14</sup> Simply keeping the United States at bay imposed an exogenous premise of China-Russia solidarity (placing mutual rivalries on the back-burner), and eventually of SCO's. Yet, it could not but promote free-ridership (latching on to the U.S. anti-terrorism crusade as and when needed, to promote self-interests rather than U.S. interests; or seeking Chinese/Russian *quid pro quo* concessions in order not to defect to the United States). In the final analysis, it opened a remarkable geostrategic window to the world through collective action between countries either subjugated by, or not speaking with, each other until very recently. Further, SCO may arguably be the most coherent post-Cold War security prism other than NATO: It identifies the United States, European Union, and India as possible threats more precisely than any regional trading bloc argumentation has thus far; and even more, unlike the pure balancing behavior between great powers in the past, SCO also promotes overlapping relations with competitors--in a way promising to cancel competitive thrusts should cooperation persist, but also demonstrating the capacity to push competitiveness to rivalry should confrontation take over. The emergence of veto-driven integration leaves food for thought.

Though both China and Russia found themselves in a partnership thwarting perceptual U.S. encroachments, one key problem they faced stemmed from the greater fascination other S5 members had for the United States than for China and Russia. It was not just the economic assistance being available in larger volumes, but also the option the U.S. presence gave the CARs--they need not obey one or the other (China or Russia) any more, and can play them off if the CARs so wished, even adopt a pro-U.S. posture without being penalized. Yet, these options also have limits, for example, when the U.S. promotes democracy or human rights, or pursues a terrorism-related lead to some undesirable quarter, affronted CARs find authoritarian China and Russia to be better soul-mates.<sup>15</sup> As Table 2 highlights, S5 were willing to swallow many quibbles to make SCO happen, suggesting in the process China relies more on *persuasion* than *coercion* and Russia more *coercion* than *persuasion*.

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Table 2 about here  
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Central to the S5 and SCO is the *Shanghai spirit*,<sup>16</sup> and the key to understanding the concept is to distinguish its denotations from connotations. The term literally refers to “mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for multi-civilizations and pursuit of common development.”<sup>17</sup> What makes it significant is how it anchors authoritarianism upon a term hijacked from democracy: mutuality. In an age of democratization, authoritarianism is allowed to not only thrive by virtue of a mutuality clause, but also become institutionalized in the process. Not just that, the clause, as part and parcel of a regional framework, also insulated authoritarian rulers from their democratic counterparts, acquiring a much-yearned legitimacy. Regional integration explicitly or implicitly builds upon a democratic foundation: neofunctionalism makes

pluralism a requirement;<sup>18</sup> and security community tenets emphasize values subscribing more to a democratic family portrait than any counterpart.<sup>19</sup>

SCO shows how these assumptions and foundations can be relaxed. It deepened integration without any reference to democracy, thus opening a new theoretical dimension (authoritarianism as an integrative vehicle--a brand new research agenda), and raised a different research question: Must democracy be a *sine qua non* of regionalism, whether economic or security? Analysts of Freedom House reports argue 56% of the world's "not free" population lives in SCO countries, which they describe as an "Alliance of Autocrats" or "Community of Non-Democracies." Indeed, they challenge "terrorism, separatism and extremism" as "three evils", since these "are not distinct terms", but "instead defined by individual SCO member states, according to the respective challenges before them."<sup>20</sup>

Connotations, in turn, connect present interests with the past and future, and utilize an implicit strategic context. Meant to reflect a partnership rather than an alliance, the Shanghai spirit reflects, in Chung's view, the "'spiritualization' of China's 'new security concept'," though he concedes it may be "a refurbishment" of Zhou Enlai's "Five principles" articulated at the 1955 Non-Aligned Bandung conference in Indonesia.<sup>21</sup> Lu Zhongguo sees it stressing the Five Cs of China's foreign policy orientation, evident in its security policy approach: confidence, communication, co-operation, co-existence, and common interests. China's SCO influence stops short of usurpation largely due to exogenous threats revalidating Russia's presence, position, and power potential.<sup>22</sup>

Even though SCO emerged independent of 9/11, its evolution would be most influenced by 9/11: opportunities would be opened, but challenges would also be reaffirmed. Perhaps the most significant opportunity was to wed, where possible, the

SCO's "three evil forces" with their global counterparts, for example, placing Chechnyans and Uighurs, for example, in the same category as *al-Qaeda*, and equating their search for separatism as a victory for terrorists. Sliding up and down this slippery rope, SCO has been partially successful in taking authoritarian behavior off the hit-list of the growing democracy-promoting media in the west. Yet, resurging U.S. quest for military bases across Central Asia and NATO military exercises on the western SCO frontier kept Chinese and Russian U.S. fears alive and sharp. The net effects were to make SCO more collectively coherent though not necessarily effective, as Table 3 profiles: SCO does come across as more than a sum of its parts, while still facing an identity crisis.

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Table 3 about here

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Weaker SCO members, on the other hand, stick with their U.S. relations, thus opening, not balancing, free-riding opportunities: When push turns to shove, they remain steadfast SCO members; but until then leveraging their positions proves more fruitful. Kyrgyzstan concluded a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the U.S. on February 15, 2002, and on March 12, Uzbekistan concluded a joint declaration with the U.S.--both sweetened with massive military and economic U.S. aid. In addition, the United States provided Tadjikstan \$40m for the construction of Afghani-frontier posts, trained Tadjik border guards, supplied Kyrgyzstan and Tadjikstan with drug control hardware, and found its corporations competing favorably with Chinese and Russian counterparts in Kazakhstan.<sup>23</sup> Yet, in February 2009, Kyrgyzstan submitted a 6-month notice to close the Manas U.S. base, just when the United States needed alternate supply routes to the increasingly precarious Khyber Pass for its Afghani operations. This step

followed a Russian decision to provide Kyrgyzstan with U.S. \$2b in aid, creating a competitive developmental assistance exercise. On the other, both China and Russia could identify and sympathize with U.S. anti-terrorist measures in Afghanistan. For example, Russia and Tadjikistan permitted the United States a non-military supply-line to Afghanistan, in the process pressuring Russia-China relations.<sup>24</sup>

In spite of these, or galvanized by them, SCO also swung into action almost immediately. Eschewing state-centric preferences, military delegations were exchanged, for the first time China held joint military exercises in a foreign country (with Kyrgyzstan in October 2002), and all SCO members except Uzbekistan staged a 6-day joint anti-terrorism exercise in August 2003,<sup>25</sup> making SCO a “quasi-military bloc.”<sup>26</sup> China and Russia conducted joint military exercises, “Operation Peace Mission” in Shandong Province, near Vladivostok, in 2005, to which were invited not only all other members but also India, Iran, and Pakistan--SCO observers from that year.<sup>27</sup> Capping these, the August 2007 joint SCO military exercises actually coincided with the summit, the first watched by all leaders, suggesting SCO was returning to its military rationale. Yet, Russia’s 2008 incursions into Georgia and the subsequent recognition of Abkhazi and South Ossetian independence dampened collective efforts, breeding apprehension among the Central Asian republics: They did not endorse Russian actions in the 2008 Dushanbe summit, and even though the Dushanbe Declaration called for “dialogue”, it also reiterated support for “unity and territorial integrity” of states. Above all, SCO was left to ponder how to escape an outright violation of one of its tenets: separatism.

This *soft* power concern was magnified by developments in Afghanistan--a country these countries believe they know better as a neighbor than NATO or the United States do from their distant outposts. The special conference on Afghanistan, agreed upon at Dushanbe, was held in Moscow during March 2009, and interestingly,

even as they played their collective card to the fullest with this, the SCO leaders still sought to align cooperation and resources with the United Nations, United States, European Union, the OSCE, NATO, and the Organization of Islamic Countries--exposing solidarity tendencies beyond SCO confines.<sup>28</sup> In this sense, the Afghanistan predicament combines a number of SCO sentiments into one expanding collective agenda: anti-United States, anti-NATO expansion, anti-terrorism, anti-extremism, anti-separatism, resource control, and development.

That solidarity stream also includes the independent emergence of a nuclear-free zone across Central Asia and SCO's identity as an international actor. When Uzbeki President Islam Karimov's 1993 proposal for a nuclear-free zone in Central Asia became reality from March 2009, the biggest beneficiary was SCO, not necessarily the five weaker Central Asian countries.<sup>29</sup> It strengthened other SCO attempts to become an international player, for example, by seeking U.N. observer status in 2004 and signing a MOU with the Association of Southeast Nations (ASEAN) in April 2005.<sup>30</sup> It also keeps a wary eye over NATO expansion to the south (through Afghanistan) or India's warmer relations with the United States under George W. Bush's "Great Central Asia" strategy.<sup>31</sup> Whether the latter continues under Barack Obama remains to be seen, but his very friendly relations with Medvedev at the April 2009 G20 summit in London, overtures to Iran, and collegial exchanges with China indicate a different Central Asia approach being experimented with, one that could live with the hitherto unthinkable idea: the Russian bear hugging the Chinese dragon.<sup>32</sup>

#### ***SCO in Theoretical Perspectives:***

How do we interpret all the above information theoretically? Here the theoretical context is security governance, which, as outlined elsewhere, has its own framework.

Accordingly, five sub-sections follow: spelling out the rationale, principles, policy challenges and goals, institutional evolution, as well as performance and assessment.

***Rationale:***

SCO emerged as a security actor alongside its member states for at least six reasons. First, it permitted Russia, China, and the Central Asian Republics adjoining them to collectively leverage their security against the more dominant United States, in particular NATO as it expanded eastward. Second, it safeguarded border claims between members in a historically uneasy neighborhood, providing greater reassurance in collective action than in individual. Third, it provided the most efficient instrument to tackle transnational problems, like drug trafficking, *jihadi* movements, and terrorism. Fourth, by identifying separatism as a threat in the largely multinational member states, SCO elevated reciprocity, mutuality, and consensus as sources of security. Fifth, given the economic unevenness between the members, SCO encourages trade-offs to reduce disparities whereby political concessions from weaker members would fetch economic assistance from the stronger members. Finally, in an age of globalization and competitiveness, SCO allowed member states to enhance their stature collectively at the international level, in the process supplying an alternate forum to resolving problems between neighbors or elsewhere.

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Table 4 about here  
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***Principles:***

Behind the rationale for collective action lies a mixture of two core principles: sovereignty and solidarity. In turn, these reaffirm the coexistence of two disparate forces: the prototypical Westphalian state and the post-Westphalian model. Sovereignty

can not so easily be compromised, and security considerations still wield the trump card even as economic pursuits dominate everyday transactions. John H. Herz's "hard shell", or state territory, remains as valid and robust as ever before, for at least three reasons: First, China's historically undisturbed borders breed more of a "us versus them" than indifference to the state, as across West Europe. Second, Russia paid a huge territorial cost when the Soviet Union dissolved, becoming more defiant over what is left: The same surge boosting post-Westphalian across West Europe actually strengthened Westphalian pillars in Russia. Third, the CARs fell somewhere in between: relishing statehood from having gotten it in the first place; and looking beyond for both opportunities (for example, receive U.S. developmental assistance without Chinese or Russian intervention) and assurance (sort of loosely bandwagoning against China or Russia or both), extracting concessions and deflecting self-defense security costs.

Other non-Westphalian principles also entered the picture: regionalism (the bandwagoning just alluded to and free-riding on China/Russia); selective solidarity (in part driven by cost-benefit analysis: bandwagoning when rewards outstrip punishment; in part driven by potential sanctions from China or Russia: renege on air-base leases for the United States when that clearly upset China/Russia); mutual responsibility (sort of tip-toes the previous two principles, but also over the underlying SCO themes: fight terrorism, separatism, and extremism, in turn reaffirming democracy need not be a necessary condition for security governance, in fact hypothesizing authoritarian states can perhaps create more effective rather than efficient security arrangements); preventive engagement (certainly in preventing terrorism, separatism, and extremism); effective multilateralism (S5 would not have expanded into the SCO, and the SCO would not have invited observers without the spread effects of collection action); and

conditionality/subsidiarity (keeping U.S. bases on a leash as an example of the former, and Chinese economic assistance at local level, to reflect the latter).

Behind these lies a core solidarity-enhancing (as opposed to sovereignty-promoting) principle: consensus. It is this which dilutes the sharp edge of bilateral disagreements or incompatible preferences. It promotes issues of common concerns (which a post-Westphalian model pushes farther and deeper than its Westphalian counterpart, for example, the 2009 Moscow conference on Afghanistan) over self-help (where the Westphalian model dominates, as for example, implications of Russia's 2008 Georgian excursions for other SCO members).

***Policy Challenges & Goals:***

Both policy challenges and goals show the wide SCO spectrum we have come to expect, evident in how they fit all types of governance: assurance, prevention, protection, and compellance. From the most coercive task (compellance) of developing capabilities to the least coercive task (assurance) of infrastructure building, it is possible to fit in any goal at any level. Military goals (like fight the three evil forces) cluster around compellance, non-military (energy supply) around assurance. Similarly, the more military the goals, the more we expect the Westphalian model to dominate (state level emphasizing sovereignty); and the more non-military the goals, the likelihood of non-Westphalian tendencies increases (at regional or inter-regional level).

***Institutional Evolution:***

Table 5 places some of the many institutional innovations into their respective governance box. From prior discussions, four examples illustrate how SCO institutional innovations address various levels of security governance. The Dushanbe Declaration to have a conference on Afghanistan exposes a conflict resolution goal through persuasion, thus satisfying an assurance-based task. In the same way, the increasing discussions to

regulate energy resources under collective control also involves persuasion, but seeks institution-building, in the process qualifying as a prevention-based task. RATS became the first SCO institution-building effort relying upon coercive methods, and in fact, depicting the very rationale behind SCO. Finally, the joint military exercises, begun first by China and Russia in July 2005, but now encompassing all of SCO, is poised to become the first compellance-based task, of conflict resolution through coercion.

Two other examples simultaneously show how institutional innovations can impact more than one type of governance at any given time. The 1996 border confidence-building agreement involved institution-building efforts through both persuasion and coercion. Similarly, the Shanghai spirit, which institutionalizes such sentiments as mutuality and consensus, addresses both types of persuasive outcomes: conflict resolution and institution-building.

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Table 5 about here  
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***Performance & Assessment:***

How, then, can we evaluate SCO performances? Measured along four dimensions in Table 6, we see SCO undertaking both short-term and long-term initiatives, at times dependent on constituent parts, at other times independent of them; as well as shuffling between autonomous and multilateral activities while registering low, medium, or high in its policy effectiveness.

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Table 6 about here  
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Being pitched so widely, SCO could not but hit all the analytical boxes: Since it partly fits a security community, regional trading bloc, inter-governmental organization, and some of the other integrative types, it has a little to offer to each. Whether it shows asymmetry (between China/Russia and the rest) or symmetry (consensus among members), registers dissatisfaction (Russia's excursions in Georgia) or satisfaction (adopting a stand against 3 evil forces), promotes self-help (weaker members seeking U.S. economic assistance) or collective action (creating an energy club), or acts singularly (in seeking U.N. observer status) or multilaterally (dissolving Afghanistan's problems), SCO draws attention as an organization capable of supplying the demands of governance. As this brief survey shows, it is capable of supplying these at various levels of effectiveness depending on how many members become directly involved and how the costs and benefits will eventually be distributed with any given issue.

#### ***Conclusions:***

A cursory appraisal shows SCO to be a paper tiger, but baring more teeth today than in its S5 form during the 1990s. Five specific conclusions may be derived from this general observation: (a) though SCO has not specifically played the role of a security provider outside the domestic domain, this remains its underlying rationale insofar as it is the critical reason why China, in particular, but also Russia, seek such a collective arrangement; (b) as a hierarchical and asymmetrical entity, it has depended upon bilateral supplements more than regional, almost always involving China and dealing largely with economic issues; (c) diversifying into non-military areas, SCO hopes to deliver its security goals utilizing economic means or through institution-building more than conflict resolution within SCO, but also preparing itself to supply conflict resolution demands outside SCO; (d) it has increasingly paid more attention to observer members than actual members, suggesting it seeks a broader pan-Asia role than simply

Central Asian; and (e) with the kind of arrangements SCO has built, it satisfies the multilateral regime definition more than a security regime.

In turn, these outline the governance tracks of future (a) great power and nuclear rivalry, with the United States, Russia, China, and India placed under the same microscope more coherently for the first time; (b) energy politics and demand-supply pathways, with the Straits of Hormuz finding other strategic locations to share the limelight; (c) interpretations of Islamic extremism, with geo-political considerations demanding more attention than the concurrent anti-west or anti-modernization trajectories; and (d) democracy after its fourth wave, and particularly if and how it shifts from its extant zero-sum relationship with authoritarianism towards accommodation.

**TABLE 1: S.C.O. STEPPING STONES**

<i>Stages:</i>	<i>Highlights:</i>
<i>Pre-1996 scenario:</i>	*Boundary disputes became dominant after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991
<i>First meeting: Shanghai summit, April 26, 1996:</i>	*Five Power Agreement: China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tadjikistan agree to put border disputes behind them to tackle other issues: S5 emerges, seeks a confidence-building mechanism in military sector, and decides to notify members of any military exercises planned in the 100-km zone adjoining China's border
<i>Second meeting: Moscow summit, April 1997</i>	*Limits deployment of troops to 130,400 within China's 100-km border zone
<i>Third meeting: Almaty, Kazakhstan, July 1998:</i>	*Agreement to combat transnational threats, such as ethnic separatism, religious fundamentalism, international terrorism, arms smuggling, drug trafficking, and other cross-border crimes *Adopts China's "3 evils" of separatism, fundamentalism, and terrorism (all with transnational bearings)
<i>Fourth meeting: Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, August 1999:</i>	*Kyrgyzstan proposes to coordinate member-specific anti-terrorism measures, headquartered at first in Bishkek (shifted to Tashkent later) *Institute regular meetings among and between governmental officials and agencies
<i>Fifth meeting: Dushanbe, Tadjikistan, December 2000:</i>	*Uzbekistan granted observer status *China's Jiang Zemin proposed converting Shanghai Five into a regular multilateral institution of cooperation *Discussed a Council of National Coordinators
<i>Shanghai, June 15<sup>th</sup> 2001:</i>	*S5 becomes SCO--one consequence of Zemin's proposal *Adoption of Shanghai Convention on Fighting Terrorism, Separatism, and Extremism (China's "3 evils" institutionalized regionally); and adopting the "Pact to Battle Three Forces" made this the first international organizational attempt to confront counter-terrorism. *Uzbekistan made member

Source: Chien-peng Chung, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: China's changing influence in Central Asia," *The China Quarterly*, no. 180 (December 2004):990-91; and Ren Dongfeng, "The Central Asia policies of China, Russia and the USA, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization process: a view from China," no information except that written during a Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) stay during October 2003.

**TABLE 2: INTRA-S5 QUIBBLES**

<b>Member countries:</b>	<b>Problems faced:</b>
China:	*Separatism (fears of East Turkestan, for example)
Kazakhstan:	*Radio Free Asia (U.S.-sponsored Uighur service) broadcasts from here; East Turkestan Youth (Xinjiang's Hamas) operating along borders *Fears from the Russian ethnic component of the domestic population, living in the north, and closer to Russia *Favorable border deals with China
Kyrghistan:	*Uighurs protest against China outside the Bishkek embassy (1998); Chinese officials killed by Uighurs; U.S. airbase in Manas *Fear of a north-south divide along ethnic lines *Community-building process (not alliance) by China
Russia:	*Muslim separatists *CIS members preferring a window to the west than to Russia *Protecting Russian enclaves in various CARs
Tadjikstan:	*Border disputes with China; home of East Turkestan Youth (Xinjiang's Hamas) operating along borders; Radio Free Asia (U.S.-sponsored Uighur service) broadcasts from here *Border deal with China: Tadjikstan got 27,000 sq. kms., disputed territory (out of 28,000) *Fears about the Uzbeki ethnic component of the domestic population *Community-building process undertaken
(Uzbekistan: as honorary member):	*Fears of separation in Karakalpak and Tadjik areas from ethnic minorities

**TABLE 3: A S.C.O. PORTRAIT**

<b>Meetings:</b>	<b>Highlights:</b>
<i><u>First:</u> Shanghai, June 14-15, 2001:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Memorandum of Understanding on regional economic cooperation</li> <li>*Three evil forces made centerpiece</li> <li>*Shanghai spirit: a partnership, not an alliance, with 5 Cs: confidence, communication, cooperation, coexistence, and common interest</li> </ul>
<i><u>Second:</u> St. Petersburg, June 7, 2002 (preceded by a May 2002 stock-taking meet)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Agreement to develop a charter (defining structure, purposes, and functions), and a permanent secretariat in Beijing:</li> <li>*The May 2002 meeting agreed to locate an anti-terrorism center in Bishkek, avoid “double standards” in interpreting terrorism, and comply with the U.N. Charter</li> <li>*New Charter secretly adopted in May</li> </ul>
<i><u>Third:</u> Moscow, May 28, 2003 or September 2003:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*China’s ambassador to Russia (Zhang Deguang) made first SCO Secretary General</li> <li>*Multilateral Trade and Development Program adopted (MTDP)</li> <li>*Agree to build SCO flag and emblem</li> <li>*SCO secretariat to be established by January 1, 2004</li> <li>*Proposed charter was adopted</li> <li>*August 2003: first joint military exercise held</li> <li>*Two institutions created:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Anti-terrorism Set-up and Personnel Arrangement;</li> <li>and (b) Memorandum for Technical Launching of SCO Permanent body</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<i><u>Fourth:</u> Tashkent, June 17, 2004</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Secretariat established</li> <li>*Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) established</li> <li>*127 projects in MTDP plan adopted (19 on energy, 20 on transport, others in education, science, and technology)</li> <li>*Mongolia given observer status</li> <li>*Agreement on Combating Trafficking of Illegal Narcotics and Psychotropic Substance</li> <li>*Council of Permanent Representatives established to supervise RATS</li> <li>*China gives US\$900 as grant to Central Asian countries as export credits</li> </ul>
<i><u>Fifth:</u> Astana, Kazakhstan, July 15, 2005  Moscow summit, Fall 2005</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Observer status given to India, Iran, and Pakistan</li> <li>*Call to U.S. to vacate Central Asian bases: Uzbekistan gave U.S. 180-days to leave Karshi-Khanabad air base because U.S. was alleged caught engaging in covert operations to overthrow the incumbent ruler</li> <li>*SCO Inter-Bank Cooperation institutionalized (facilitate bank transactions), &amp; SCO Business Council (to promote dialogue between companies)</li> <li>*Revival of Silk Route economy linking Eurasia’s heartland with rimland: trade program operates on <i>ad hoc</i> basis</li> </ul>
<i><u>Sixth:</u> Shanghai, June 2006</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Shift towards trade evident: discussion of development rails and motorways communications, information systems, and implementation of SCO Business Council (US2b deals signed, mostly with observer states: Iran-India for oil development in Yadavaran; Iran-China for oil development and liquefied gas; and Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline was placed on “fast-track”; China dissatisfied with Russia’s energy concessions</li> <li>*Iran invited to join summit (repeated membership call by Iran), but given only 5 minutes to speak (under US pressure): first attendance for Ahmedinajad</li> </ul>
<i><u>Seventh:</u> Bishkek, August 2007</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*SCO military exercises involving China and Russia took place amid summit, the first time leaders witnessed such an event</li> <li>*Kyrgyzstan did not give ultimatum to the US to leave (as Russia had wanted)</li> </ul>
<i><u>Eighth:</u> Dushanbe,</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Moscow’s military action in Georgia and recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetian independence not endorsed: violates SCO’s “separatism” clause</li> <li>*Return of US forces to Uzbekistan from Karimov’s fear of Afghani instability spreading to Uzbekistan</li> </ul>

<p><i>August 2008</i></p>	<p>*China-Russia face Su27 aircraft crisis: reduced China's arms purchases from Russia, amid Russian accusation of China stealing technology          *Dushanbe Declaration: called for "dialogue" to resolve Georgian problems and support for "unity and territorial integrity" of states          *Summon a special conference on Afghanistan</p>
<p><i><u>Ninth:</u>          Moscow, 2009          (to be held)</i></p> <p><i>*Special Moscow conference,          March 2009</i></p>	<p>*Conference on Afghanistan, opened to not just SCO members, but to many international and regional organizations, as well other countries: coordination sought within SCO and between SCO and other agencies</p>

Sources: Chien-peng Chung, "China and the institutionalization of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization," *Problems of Post-Communism* 53, no. 5 (September-October 2006):3-14; and Nicklas Norling and Niklas Swanström, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, trade, and the roles of Iran, India and Pakistan," *Central Asian Survey* 26, no. 3 (September 2007):430-31, but see 429-444.

**TABLE 4: S.C.O. RATIONALE, PRINCIPLES, GOALS**

	<i>Assurance:</i>	<i>Prevention:</i>	<i>Protection:</i>	<i>Compellance:</i>
<i>Rationale for collective action:</i>	economic development	*Contain separatism; extremism, terrorism	*Transnational threats: separatism; extremism, terrorism *Create global identity	*Autonomy from U.S./NATO *As alternate conflict resolution forum
<i>Technology of publicness:</i>	*Summation:	*Summation:	*Weak link:	*Strong pillar:
<i>Principles of Action:</i>	*Regionalism:	*Regionalism *Interdependence:	*Sovereignty: *Solidarity (reciprocity):	*Sovereignty: *Solidarity (reciprocity):
<i>Policy Challenges:</i>	*Intra-state conflict resolution: 3 evil forces	*State- and nation-building: country-specific development plans	*Collective institution-building: 3 evil forces	*Inter-state conflict resolution: 1997 border security arrangements
<i>Policy Goals:</i>	*Infrastructure-building: Development aid	*Regionalize solutions: establish energy club	*Specific policy convergences: 3 evil forces	*Develop capabilities: not fully developed

**TABLE 5: S.C.O. INSTITUTIONAL INNOVATIONS**

	<i>Assurance:</i>	<i>Prevention:</i>	<i>Protection:</i>	<i>Compellance:</i>
<i>Major institutional innovations:</i>				
Border confidence-building agreement (1996):		X	X	
Shanghai spirit (institutionalizing sentiments of mutuality and consensus)	X	X		
RATS (June 2004):			X	
Energy Club (June 2006)		X		
Dushanbe Declaration (August 2008)	X			
Joint military exercises (2007)				X

**TABLE 6: S.C.O. PERFORMANCES & ASSESSMENTS**

	<i>Assurance:</i>	<i>Prevention:</i>	<i>Protection:</i>	<i>Compellance:</i>
<i>Major policy initiatives:</i>	Dushanbe Declaration (August 2008)	Afghan Conference (May 2009)	RATS	Joint military exercises (2007)
<i>Degree of freedom from constituent parts:</i>				
<i>Degree of autonomous action and/or multilateral activities:</i>	More autonomous than multilateral	More multilateral than autonomous	More multilateral than autonomous	Both autonomous and multilateral
<i>Degree of policy effectiveness:</i>	Low or Nil		High	High

**TABLE 7: S.C.O. POLICY-MAKING IN THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

<i><b>Policies of Governance:</b></i>	<i><b>Goals/Aims/Rationale:</b></i> <i>Principles of action:</i>	<i><b>Institutional Provisions:</b></i> <i>* Instruments</i> <i>*Institutional innovation + networks:</i> <i>*Cooperation in a given area</i> <i>*Who coordinates, manages, and regulates?</i>	<i><b>Performances:</b></i>
<i>Prevention:</i>	*S5 capped 3-years of negotiations (Four Plus One) to dissolve border disputes	*S5 and 3 evil forces highlighting China's ascendancy	*Border disputes mediation *Budget+allocation aid+development
<i>Assurance:</i>		*SCO: institutional shift to economic targets *Secretariat, RATS	Civilian operations in post-conflict situations budgets
<i>Compellence:</i>	*Uzbekistan's ultimatum to USA to leave, then reinvitation to return		Military operations in post-conflicts operations; budgets
<i>Protection:</i>	*Russia's Georgia experiences aggravate conditions		Immigration and asylum flows; organized crime; terrorism; budgets

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*Notes:*

<sup>1</sup>Those arrangements evolved out of 3-years of negotiations, between 1991 and 1994, over the 4,600km of borders between Russia and China. Known as the Four Plus One (4+1) negotiations (Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tadjikstan, Plus China), it led to the April 25, 1996 Agreement on Confidence-building in the Military Field in the Border Area, signed in Shanghai, while S5 emerged from meetings revolving around two 4+1 committees: on confidence-building and arms-reduction; and joint boundary demarcation. It was followed by the April 1997 Agreement on Mutual Reduction of Armed Forces in the Border Areas, signed in Moscow. See Akhiro Iwashita, “The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Japan:moving together to reshape the Eurasian Community,” *Brookings*, paper, January 28, 2008.

<sup>2</sup>As Chien-peng Chung puts it, “the desire of Russia and the three Central Asian countries to forestall any attempt by an increasingly nationalistic and economically powerful China to take advantage of the collapse of the Soviet Union to press territorial claims in Central Asia and the Russian Far East dating back to the Czarist and Soviet eras.” See “The Shanghai Cooperation Organization:China’s changing influence in Central Asia,” *The China Quarterly*, no. 180 (December 2004):990, but see 989-1009.

<sup>3</sup>For example, China opposes, according to Chung, “any foreign (read:U.S.) involvement in resolving the Taiwan issue, or the US deployment of a Theatre Missile Defence (TMD) system in the western Pacific covering Taiwan. ” See Chung, *op. cit.*, 994.

<sup>4</sup>See Gudrun Wacker, “The Shanghai Cooperation Organization:regional security and economic advancement,” Working Paper, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V., vol. 8 (Beijing 2004):5pp.

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<sup>5</sup>More on those (institutions and Chinese flavor) by Chung, “China and the institutionalization of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization,” *Problems of Post-Communism* 53, no. 5 (September-October 2006):8, but see 3-14.

<sup>6</sup>Robert Gilpin, *U.S. Power and the Multinational Organization: The Political Economy of Foreign Direct Investment* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1975), ch. 1.

<sup>7</sup>Rizwan Zeb, “Pakistan and the Shanghai Cooperation Framework,” *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly* 4, no. 4 (2006):51, but see 51-60.

<sup>8</sup>Alyson J. K. Bailes, “The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Europe,” *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly* 5, no. 3 (2007):14, but see 13-8.

<sup>9</sup>In European Policy Centre, “The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation: a new regional kid on the block?” *Event Report: Communication to Members, Policy Dialogue*, #S10/08, February 18, 2008, 3.

<sup>10</sup>Marcel de Haas, “The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the OSCE: two of a kind?” *Helsinki Monitor: Security and Human Rights* (2007), 249-56, esp. 252-6.

<sup>11</sup>de Haas, “The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation’s momentum towards a mature security alliance,” Paper, no information given except that it represents Chapter 14 of some document, and the author’s as being Senior Research Fellow at the Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael, in the Hague.

<sup>12</sup>For more, see Jing-dong Yuan, “China and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization: anti-terrorism and Beijing’s Central Asia policy,” Working Paper, Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, no date, but after 9/11.

<sup>13</sup>Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan belonged to the NATO-anchored Partnership for Peace from 1994, and also formed *Centrazblat* (Central Asian Battalion)

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under U.S. influence in 1995; from 1996, each one of them conducted joint military exercises with the U.S. See Chung, *op. cit.*, 998-99.

<sup>14</sup>Anatoly Klimenko, "Russia and China as strategic partners in Central Asia: a way to improve regional security," *Far Eastern Affairs* 33, no. 2 (2005):8, but see 1-20. A strategic partnership also evolved between China and Russia from April 1996 when Boris Yeltsin and Jiang Zemin created confidence-building measures to shift from the US to build a multilateral regime. See Lanteigne, *op. cit.*, 607.

<sup>15</sup>Far from being a stray argument, this authoritarian bond may even be seen as a step towards both Central Asian conflict resolution and eventual dissolution as trade opens new opportunities. For similar argumentation, see Nicklas Norling and Niklas Swanström, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, trade, and the roles of Iran, India and Pakistan," *Central Asian Survey* 26, no. 3 (September 2007):430-31, but see 429-444.

<sup>16</sup>Note how this is not *Moscow* spirit.

<sup>17</sup>From "Declaration on 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of SCO," June 15, 2006; from: [http://english-scosummit2006.org/en\\_zxbb/2006-06/15/content\\_755.htm](http://english-scosummit2006.org/en_zxbb/2006-06/15/content_755.htm)

<sup>18</sup>See Joseph S. Nye's characterization in "Comparing common markets: a revised neofunctionalist model," *Regional Integration: Theory and Research*, eds., Leon N. Lindberg and Stuart A. Scheingold (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), ch. 5.

<sup>19</sup>See conditions of pluralistic and amalgamated security communities in Karl W. Deutsch, et. al., *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957), ch. 2; and Joseph S. Nye, "Comparing common markets: a revised neofunctionalist model," *Regional Integration: Theory and Research*, eds., Leon N.

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Lindberg and Stuart A. Scheingold (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), ch. 5.

<sup>20</sup>See Damian Murphy, “The Shanghai Cooperation Organization:threatening human rights or providing regional cooperation and stability?” Paper, September 19, 2007. No other information, except that he held the Senior Program Manager in *Freedom House*.

<sup>21</sup>Cheng, op. cit., 992, but also see his corresponding fn.

<sup>22</sup>Western interpretations differ. Michael D. Swaine and Ashley J. Tellis of the RAND Corporation, spell out China’s grand strategy as consisting of (a) maintaining law and order, and prosperity; (b) preserve status quo against external threat; and (c) seek global influence, perhaps power. See “Interpreting China’s grand strategy:past, present, and future” (1996), from Yakob Berger, “China’s grand strategy in the eyes of American and Chinese scholars,” *Far Eastern Affairs* 34, no. 1 (2006):17-8, but see 14-32.

<sup>23</sup>Andrei Fediashin, “SCO through the eyes of America and Europe,” *Info SCO*, December 18, 2008, from: <http://infoshos.ru/en/?idn=3425>

<sup>24</sup>See “Kyrgyz closure of US base ‘final’,” *BBC News*, February 6, 2009, from: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7873866.stm>

<sup>25</sup>See, Yuan, op cit., 9-10.

<sup>26</sup>Cheng, op. cit (2006):10.

<sup>27</sup>Manteigne, op. cit., 611.

<sup>28</sup>Tatiana Sinitsyna, “SCO’s ‘headache’:how to help Afganistan,” *Info SCO*, March 30, 2009, from: <http://infoshos.ru/en/?idn=3948>

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<sup>29</sup>“First nuke free zone in Central Asia comes into force today,” *Times of India*, March 21, 2009, from: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/World/US/First-nuke-free-zone-in-Central-Asia-comes-i...>

<sup>30</sup>N.B. Ermekbayev, “The Association of South East Asian Nations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization: opportunities and perspectives of interaction,” *The Journal of Turkish Weekly*, April 6, 2009.

<sup>31</sup>M.K. Bhadrakumar, “India begins uphill journey with the SCO,” *Asia Times*, March 25, 2009, from: [http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South\\_Asia/KC25Df01.html](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/KC25Df01.html)

<sup>32</sup>Fediashin, “SCO through the eyes of America and Europe.”