

CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

**An Empirical Application of Regional Security Complex Theory: The
Securitization Discourse in China's Relations with Central Asia and Russia**

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ABSTRACT

Security in Central Asia has traditionally been studied through a realist prism, emphasizing military concerns and the pre-eminent influence of great powers in shaping local security concerns. Russia has been considered the central actor in a security sphere encompassing Central Asia in view of military and historical legacies. China, on the other hand, has been deemed to dominate security patterns in the East Asian region, where its vital national interests are located. Scant attention has however been paid to the securitization of threats by local state-actors through discourse, and how this has generated security interdependence between China, the Central Asian states and Russia. This thesis empirically applies the “Regional Security Complex Theory” framework by Buzan & Waever (2003) to explore securitizing discourse and the evolution of structural factors in China-Russia and China-Central Asia relations in 1991-2008. The main contention is that the nature of security for these states is fundamentally non-military and trans-national in nature, rendering their geographic adjacency a major factor in promoting interdependence. Furthermore, China has become the focal point from which security issues originate for its neighboring states, both in terms of structural factors and state-actor discourse.

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Introduction

The geographic area of Central Asia is particularly of interest when studying issues of regional security as it has been for centuries the nexus of political, economic and societal interaction in the Eurasian continent. With its incorporation in the USSR from 1924 to 1991, the region became an integral part of the political actor involved in post-1945 bi-polar confrontation. The end of the cold war brought with it a return of regional security dynamics previously subsumed by the global nature of US-Soviet rivalry.¹ Central Asia again became an area of contention mainly between Russia, China the USA, while at the same time gathering the interests of regional powers such as Iran, Turkey and India.² The post-1991 central Asian region has been traditionally placed within Russia's sphere of influence because of its significant economic integration and membership in Russia-centered alliances and organizations.³ China, on the other hand, has been deemed to be primarily interested in the Asian-Pacific region as the main area where its national security concerns are located.⁴

The links between the increasingly dynamic Chinese economy, the newly-independent central Asian states, and a resurgent Russia have possibly put into doubt the linearity of these contentions. China, on the back of its burgeoning economic growth and internal security priorities, has increasingly engaged Kazakhstan as a partner in addressing these security issues. Tajikistan and Kazakhstan have become partners in limiting the region's Islamic and separatist

¹ Barry Buzan & Ole Waever, *Regions and Powers: the structure of international security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

² Shahram Akbarzadeh, *Uzbekistan and the United States* (New York: Zed Books, 2005).

³ Buzan & Waever, 397-435; Roy Allison, "Regionalism, regional structures and security management in Central Asia", *International Affairs*, 80/3 (2004): 466.

⁴ Lai To Lee, 'China, the USA and the South China Sea Conflicts', *Security Dialogue* 34/1 (2003): 25-39.

political forces, threats of national importance for China.⁵ The Russian Far East, remote from the economic, demographic and geographic core of the Russia, has increasingly been the object of attention on the part of a Russian government fearing Chinese demographic and economic expansion.⁶ Central Asia has primarily been considered a region where great power competition (foremost between the USA, China and Russia) plays a major part in shaping security as opposed to issues present in the region itself⁷. Furthermore, the majority of research has been dominated by the realist paradigm which presupposes the objective measurement of security issues based on material structures.⁸ The social construction of security issues by state-actors through discourse and inter-subjective understandings, known as “securitization”, has instead been scantily researched.⁹ This thesis seeks therefore to address the following questions:

- What issues of a regional and trans-national nature are being securitized in the region?
- What are the effects on central Asia of securitized issues in Chinese domestic and foreign policy?
- How are securitized issues in the region shaping China into the primary origin of security interaction for central Asia and Russia?

⁵ Russell Ong, “China’s security interests in Central Asia”, *Central Asian Survey* 24, 4 (2005): 425-439.

⁶ Judith Thornton & Charles Ziegler, *Russia’s Far East: a region at risk* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002).

⁷ See John Heathershaw, “Worlds apart: the making and remaking of geopolitical space in the US-Strategic Partnership”, *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 26/1 (2007): 123-140. Richard Weitz, “Averting a new great game in central Asia”, *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 29/3 (2006): 157-167. Martha Brill-Olcott, “The Great Powers in Central Asia”, *Current History*, October 2005. Leszek Buszinsky, “Russia’s New Role in Central Asia”, *Asian Survey* 45, 4 (2005): 546-565.

⁸ Gregory Gleason, Asel Kermibekova & Svetlana Kozhirova, “Realism and the small state: evidence from Kyrgyzstan”, *International Politics*, 45 (2008): 40–51.

⁹ Buzan & Waever

The primary theoretical framework utilized will be that of Regional Security Complex Theory, which emphasizes on the inter-subjective construction of security issues by state actors while emphasizing on geographic proximity as the foremost generator of security concerns.¹⁰ The constructivist ontology adopted by the thesis makes use of securitization theory to define what the states deem as security threats. Securitization instances between the states involved will be found by analyzing the discourse of relevant government actors and representatives, in addition to official government documents, which present a securitizing logic emphasizing the transnational nature of these threats.

The choice of the cases is foremost dictated by the element of geographic proximity and shared borders, the primary factors generating security concerns according to Regional Security Complex Theory.¹¹ Russia will be assessed as it constitutes China's longest border with any other state, in addition to being a major energy producing state and recipient for Chinese migration. China also borders with three central Asian states, two of which, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan, will be studied in the thesis. Security issues in Kyrgyzstan will not be assessed due to time constraints and the substantial overlap of these issues with those of Tajikistan. The period of study selected, from 1991 to 2008, commences with the independence of the central Asian states and continues up to the present day. In view of the significant structural changes of China and Russia during this time, it is deemed sufficiently long for regional security and interdependence patterns to have emerged.

¹⁰ Buzan & Waever, 45-46.

¹¹ Ibid.

The primary contention of the thesis is that the studied states have securitized threats which are trans-national in nature, share a common geographic space and that originate from each other's territories. China-Russia and China-Central Asia interactions will be shown to be primarily defined by the non-traditional security threats of Islamic radicalism, demographic imbalances, narcotics trafficking and increasing economic-energy interdependence. The combination of these securitization processes contributes to the establishment of a larger China-Russia-Central Asia regional security complex. In addition, these emerging patterns have increasingly turned China into the primary securitizing actor and generator of regional security interdependence as opposed to Russia.

Thesis Outline

The thesis is divided in five chapters. In the first chapter the concept of security will be defined according to the realist paradigm, thereafter describing its lack of emphasis on regional factors and exclusive focus on military issues. The more recent developments regarding non-traditional security sectors as defined by Buzan et al.¹² are then explicated and argued to more appropriate for empirical application. The geographic emphasis of RSCT and its constructivist understanding of security will be contended to fill the theoretical gaps of realism when analysing the central Asian area. "Regional Security Complex Theory" is thereafter described, defining the theorised regional security complex (RSC) of the "post-Soviet" region, including Russia and the central Asian states, and the "East Asian" RSC, placing China with eastern Asia. The RSCT framework

¹² Barry Buzan, Ole Waever & Jaap De Wilde, *Security: a new framework of analysis* (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998).

is argued to be specifically appropriate for this task as it mediates between realist and constructivist elements. Structural factors will be enumerated for each state in question, in addition to their evolution in 1991-2008 to highlight the emergence of new relations and interdependencies. Subsequently the process of securitization, through which existing or perceived threats are made into security issues by securitizing actors, will be defined, in addition to depicting its use in highlighting security patterns within the RSCT. Emphasis will be put on the characteristics of the “Copenhagen school” securitization theory, its genesis and empirical uses. In the last part of the chapter the applicability of the “Copenhagen school” to non-democratic contexts, such as those of Russia, central Asia and China, will be debated. It will be contended that, with a series of appropriate theoretical adjustments discussed in existing securitization literature, processes of securitization can be identified in non-democratic political environments through the aforementioned framework.

In the third chapter the securitization processes and structural factors relevant to every bi-lateral relation will be discussed. The first section will discuss the securitization discourse enacted by China in the energy supply, drug trafficking and internal political stability sectors in addition to the relevant structural factors. Patterns of a trans-national and cross-border nature will be especially highlighted. Emphasis will be placed on the Xinjiang region as the regional securitization nexus of China-Kazakh relations in the three aforementioned sectors. Securitization processes over drug issues and cross-border terrorism in China-Tajikistan relations will then be presented with the relevant structural cross-border factors affecting both states. Subsequently the evolution of Russia’s demographic situation, economic development of the Far East and increasing energy trade with China will be discussed as a major source of security

interaction. The demographic and economic development of China will be discussed as a source of increased interdependence. The securitization discourse of the Russian state with regards to the economic-energy sector and demographic issues will be shown to have a regional emphasis involving China.

In the fourth chapter, the findings of the research will be discussed. Emphasis will be placed on the nature of and extent of securitization for every identified issue and the regional nature of security interdependence which points to the presence of a new and larger than previously thought regional security complex. China will be contended to be the major originator of security interaction for central Asia, as opposed to Russia, while the identified securitization instances will be shown to comprise non-traditional sectors.

In the final chapter, the contributions of the thesis will be enumerated in addition to its empirical and theoretical limitations. Emerging discourses for possible future securitization patterns will be highlighted. Conclusively, other regional cases where the framework may be applied will be suggested for furthering the research agenda on non-traditional security in central and eastern Asia.

CHAPTER 1 - The issue of “Security” and its ontological underpinnings: realist and constructivist perspectives

In this chapter the concept of security and its definitions will be discussed according to realist and constructivist approaches. The nature and limits of realist studies of security will be discussed highlighting the exclusive focus on military security and the lack of emphasis on regional factors. The “security sectors” framework developed by Buzan et al. (1998) will be described to show the expansion of the concept of security. A constructivist approach will then be argued to fill the theoretical gaps of the realist conception of security. Furthermore, Regional Security Complex Theory will be detailed and argued to fill realism’s lack of emphasis on the geographic dynamics of security issues. Securitization theory, which highlights the construction of regional security within the RSCT framework, will conclusively be described and argued to be applicable to the cases under study.

1.1 - Realism & Security

The concept of security is one which is noted for its multiplicity, its increasing broadness and embrace of larger issues traditionally not contemplated by realist-positivist IR ontology.¹³

According to Smith security is a “contested concept” in that its definition is “theory dependent,

¹³ Steve Smith , “The Contested Concept of Security”, in *Critical Security Studies and World Politics*, ed. Ken Booth (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005), 59.

and all definitions reflect normative commitments”.¹⁴ The study of security *per se* is at times labeled as a sub-field of International Relations, one where the boundary is becoming less defined due to the ongoing amalgamation of internal and external threats fostered by globalization. Above all security has to be defined in terms of what object is to be secured (the “referent object”), by whom or for what purposes.¹⁵ Various authors agree that fundamentally security is concerned with survival; nevertheless disagreements arise as to whether threats are internal or external, to what segment of polity (the state, society, the individual, the environment etc.) and whether they can reliably be identified or are socially constructed¹⁶. The primary step in conceptualizing security is therefore defining its ontological underpinnings. Traditional security studies are founded primarily upon the tenets of political realist philosophy. The realist approach is considered the most widely utilized in the IR field and the one with the oldest historical genesis. The main contentions of realist ontology are¹⁷:

- That states are the primary actors in international politics
- That states are unitary, rational actors whose main objective is power maximization
- The essentially anarchical nature of the international system, whereby there is no ultimate power or authority over states. The latter therefore fend for themselves to ensure their territorial and political security against other states. State behavior and security interaction is therefore determined by the nature of the structure.

¹⁴ Ibid, 28.

¹⁵ Alan Collins, *Contemporary Security Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 2-3.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid, 16-22.

- The structure of the system is determined by the distribution of capabilities among dominant states, namely the resources (physical, economic, military) which each can dispose of. States compete to alter the distribution of capabilities in their favor

Realism has traditionally emphasized on military issues as the foremost elements of security. Walt holistically defines realist security studies as concerned with “the threat, use, and control of military force. It explores the conditions that make the use of force more likely, the ways that the use of force affects individuals, states, and societies, and the specific policies that states adopt in order to prepare for, prevent, or engage in war”.¹⁸ Underlying realism is the objectivist assumption that threats are identifiable in accordance to state interests.

A variety of criticisms have been raised at the realist conception of security. Those especially relevant to the study of security are its narrow focus on military issues and its conception of world politics as a global system structure comprised of interacting units (states), which disregards sub-systems operating at a regional level.¹⁹ The realist paradigm World politics are thus “de-territorialized” in that the global level defines all security interactions.²⁰ Central Asia is itself still seen as a geographic and political area where global security concerns and the intervention of great powers to a great extent have subsumed regional dynamics.²¹ Particularly with the start of US military operations in Afghanistan in 2001, the region became seen as the setting of a new “great game” between great powers.²² The USA, utilizing airbases in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, introduced a military presence to stabilize the region and as a logistics base to pursue its “war on terror” and establish a foothold in Russia and China’s back yard.²³ In response, China has aimed to prevent the establishment of a permanent American military presence in the region, which would constitute a major national security concern for Beijing in

¹⁸ Stephen Walt, “The renaissance of security studies”, *International Studies Quarterly*, 35/2 (1991): 212

¹⁹ Buzan & Waeber, 28.

²⁰ Ibid, 29.

²¹ Allison, 464-466.

²² Niklas Swanstrom, “China and Central Asia: a new Great Game or traditional vassal relations?”, *Journal of Contemporary China*, 14/45 (November 2005): 582-583.

²³ Ibid.

the long run.²⁴ The Central Asian states on their part have after 1991 tried balance the great powers in order to avoid hegemony by any one, deciding alignments based on which great power would be most appropriate to providing economic security for the domestic elites while ensuring the political security of the regime.²⁵ The analysis of securitization discourse in this thesis will however show how major national security concerns of the countries studied remain of a trans-national nature which affects all involved, and highlights the pre-eminence of regional over de-territorialized issues.

For what concerns the scope of the security concept, the latter has gradually moved away from a state-centric view primarily concerned with survival against military threats, to a broader one encompassing the environment, migration, public health, economic interdependence and other non-traditional issues.²⁶ McSweeney contends that the broadening of the security concept has been promoted by the growing post-1945 inter-linkages between economic affairs, military affairs in addition to growing awareness of human issues in international politics.²⁷ The end of the cold war has contributed to rendering less credible the pre-eminent focus on the military sector of security. Buzan et al. (1998) assert that security issues can be separated into “sectors”, namely political, military, environmental, societal and economic. Different security sectors are “views of the international system that highlight one particular aspect of the relationship and interaction among all other constituent units.”²⁸ Sectors are interdependent “areas of

²⁴ Bobo Lo, “Ten things everyone should know about the Sino-Russian relationship”, Center for European Reform, Policy Brief (December 2008): 5-6.

²⁵ Eric A. Miller, *To Balance or not to Balance: Alignment theory and the CIS* (Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2006), 5-25.

²⁶ Buzan, Waever & De Wilde, 1-20.

²⁷ Bill McSweeney, *Security, Identity and Interests: A Sociology of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 45-54.

²⁸ Barry Buzan, Charles Jones & Richard Little, *The Logic of Anarchy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 31.

vulnerability” whereby the security of each cannot be achieved independently but rather becomes a *sine qua non* for the other.²⁹ Each sector possesses different and distinct threats and referents.

The military sector is, as previously stated, concerned with the use of organized violence and offensive force. Societal security is concerned with the preservation of a state’s identity, ethnic identities, religious identities, national culture and traditions.³⁰ Economic security in most instances will not occur for its own purposes, but rather be a consequence securitization of other sectors whose security depends upon economic stability.³¹ The political sector describes instead threats to the state’s sovereignty, existing political structure, political ideology and organization.³² Political threats “may be as much feared as military ones...this is particularly so if the target is a weak state.”³³ The fifth sector, and one which more often does not have the state as a referent, is the environment. This concerns issues such as resource depletion, climate change, sustainable resource management and the like.³⁴ In this thesis the primary securitizations analyzed will be in the societal, political and economic sectors. Military security, as it is considered a traditional sector as opposed to non-traditional sectors subject of the thesis, will not therefore be assessed. Environmental security has been contended to be an important trans-national issue between Central Asian states.³⁵ As the thesis is concerned with security in Central Asia-China and Russia-China relations, the sector will not be assessed. As non-traditional security concerns often transcend political and geographic borders, it is necessary to assess how

²⁹ McSweeney, 61.

³⁰ Buzan, Waever & De Wilde, 119-120.

³¹ Ibid, 99.

³² Ibid, 142.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid, 71-77.

³⁵ See International Crisis Group, *Central Asia: Water & Conflict*, Asia Report 34 (May 2002). Also Stuart Horsman, “Environmental Security in Central Asia”, *RIIA Briefing Paper* (January 2001) and Sara L. O’Hara, “Lessons from the past water management in Central Asia”, *Water Policy*, 2/4 (2000): 365-384.

accounting for regional factors can be useful in their assessment. Having discussed the shortcomings of realism in defining and empirically assessing security, it is therefore necessary to explain how these can be addressed by a constructivist approach.

1.2 - Constructivism & Security

According to Wendt, “the fundamental principle of constructivist social theory is that people act towards objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that the objects have for them.”³⁶ Constructivism views “reality” as a social construction derived from the interaction of material constraints with the meanings, opinions and interpretations of the world of actors.³⁷ Therefore “anarchy is what states make of it”, a meaningless concept without an underpinning set of inter-subjective norms shared by actors.³⁸ Furthermore, “power and interest have the effects they do in virtue of the ideas that make them up...power and interest explanations presuppose ideas.”³⁹ Onuf adds by saying that “our interests are recognizable to us as the reasons we give for our conduct.”⁴⁰ Constructivism has sought to fill the theoretical and empirical gaps left open by realism’s conceptions of security. As security issues “cannot be reduced to the existence of objective possibilities of harm”, it is necessary to look at the role of ideas, ideology, norms or common understandings to ascertain where security issues exist.⁴¹ A constructivist reading adds to realism the “consideration of effects ideational rather than material structures,

³⁶ Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics”, *International Organization*, 46/2 (1992): 396.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 135.

⁴⁰ Nicholas Onuf, *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* (Charleston: University of South Carolina Press, 1989), 277.

⁴¹ Michael C. Williams, “Words, Images, Enemies: Securitization and International Politics”, *International Studies Quarterly*, 47/4 (2003): 514.

specifically the effects of identity on actor interests.”⁴² This deals with assessing the rhetorical nature of threat discourse to see where security is being constructed.⁴³ In the thesis this will involve ascertaining the inter-subjective understanding of what security consists of by the states themselves, through the analysis of the rhetoric and discourse of their official representatives. The utilization of constructivism with emphasis on territoriality as a primary security issue will be detailed through Regional Security Complex Theory and how it can be applied to Central Asia.

1.3 - Regional Security Complex Theory

RSCT “suggests an analytical scheme for structuring analysis of how security concerns tie together in a regional formation” where geographical adjacency is the factor of paramount importance.⁴⁴ A regional security complex (RSC) can be defined as “as a set of units whose major processes of securitization, de-securitization or both are so interlinked that their security problems cannot reasonably be analyzed or resolved apart from one another.”⁴⁵ The basic concept underpinning RSCs is that “most political and military threats travel more easily over short distances than over long ones, insecurity is often associated with proximity.”⁴⁶ The formation of an RSC is mandated by the interaction of anarchy with geographical factors. While

⁴² Charles Hemmer & Peter Katzenstein, “Why is there no NATO in Asia? Collective Identity, Regionalism and the Origins of Multilateralism”, *International Organization*, 56/3 (2002): 577.

⁴³ Johan Eriksson, “Observers or Advocates? On the political role of security analysts”, *Cooperation and Conflict*, 34/3 (1999): 311-330.

⁴⁴ Ole Waever, “Aberystwyth, Paris, Copenhagen – New Schools in Security Theory and their origins between core and periphery” (Paper presented at the annual meeting of the *International Studies Association*, Montreal, March 17-20, 2004).

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Buzan & Waever, 11.

global security issues may at times dominate regional concerns, the latter will nevertheless always be present to a greater or lesser extent.⁴⁷

The main structural features of a RSC are the differentiation of units, the number of units, the patterns of *amity* and *enmity* (which occupy a spectrum) and the distribution of power.⁴⁸ RSCs can be “standard “ or “centered”, in the former case involving at least two powers with a primarily military security agenda, in the second involving a major or great power with a number of significantly less powerful states.⁴⁹ While in the case of standard RSCs anarchy dominates, in centered ones the main power dominates security interaction.⁵⁰ Complexes are furthermore defined by the “interpretation of who is actually interconnected in terms of security interaction.”⁵¹ Often the primary factor in complex definition is “a high level of threat/fear which is mutually felt among two or more states.”⁵² States however may have various shared and convergent interests as interdependency need not be *a priori* conflictual.⁵³ These patterns will be durable because of their structural, historical and geographic nature.⁵⁴ Structures are nevertheless flexible in temporal and at times geographical terms. Major shifts in any of the structural components would normally require a redefinition of the complex.⁵⁵

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 13.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 55.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 58.

⁵¹ Buzan, Waever & De Wilde, 34.

⁵² Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post –Cold War Era* (Saddle River NJ: Prentice Hall, 1991).

⁵³ Ibid, 218.

⁵⁴ Buzan & Waever, 45.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

1.4 - Regional Security Complex Theory and paradigmatic issues

Traditional security studies are characterized by the monism of the constructivism-realism dichotomy. RSCT however mediates “the gap between neorealism and constructivism by allowing both structure and securitization to determine the content of regional security.”⁵⁶ According to Kahrs it “does not contradict the salience of realism, but offers a more nuanced approach that also accommodates constructivist concerns.”⁵⁷ The utilization the two paradigms empirically is thus more adequate in providing explanations of political events, which would be limited if constrained by the structural determinism of realism or constructivism’s dominant emphasis on agency.⁵⁸ The framework however remains “within the general constraints of neo-realism” as the state remains the primary object of security.⁵⁹

1.5 - Regional Security Complex Theory, China and Eurasia

Assessing the emergence of a novel RSC necessitates the understanding of how China, Russian and Central Asia have been originally categorized by the framework. The former Soviet Union is contended to be “the most complex case for regional analysis”.⁶⁰ Russia is the great power upon which the “post-Soviet” RSC, which includes all the ex-soviet republics, is centered upon.⁶¹ The centeredness is founded upon Russia’s priority of pursuing its national interests primarily in the

⁵⁶ Rajesh M. Basrur, “Decentralizing Theory: Regional International Politics”, *International Studies*, 42/4 (2006): 420.

⁵⁷ Tula Kahrs, “Regional Security Complex Theory and Chinese Policy towards north Korea”, *East Asia*, 21/4 (2004): 65.

⁵⁸ Basrur, 422.

⁵⁹ McSweeney, 54-55.

⁶⁰ Buzan, Waever & De Wilde, 136.

⁶¹ Buzan & Waever, 398.

“near abroad”, namely the CIS space.⁶² The Central Asian states are part of the RSC as a “weak sub-complex whose internal dynamics are still forming and in which the involvement of Russia is strong”.⁶³ The latter have very much looked to Moscow as a partner in assuaging their political-economic instability while trying to assert their national sovereignty and interests. The avoidance of domestic instability, neutralization of Islamic radicalism and regime survival has dominated the foreign policy agenda since 1991. Russia-Central Asia security interaction has been institutionalized within the frameworks of the Collective Security Organization (2002) and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (2001), the latter also counting China as a member.⁶⁴

Notwithstanding this multi-lateral involvement, China is deemed to be a pole of the “East Asian” RSC, which is bi-polar due to Japan’s status as a great power.⁶⁵ Securitization in Chinese foreign policy discourse has traditionally concerned the issue of Taiwan and the historical enmity and rivalry with Tokyo.⁶⁶ The post-cold war merger of the North-east Asian and South-east Asian sub-complexes into a single East Asian RSC has occurred primarily to the waning of Russian and Japanese influences and decreasing involvement of the USA.⁶⁷ Defense and military issues remain the primary security concerns in China’s relation with its Asian neighbors.⁶⁸ Moreover, China being a great power, a greater level of security “spillover” is expected into neighboring regions and RSCs.⁶⁹ These inter-regional dynamics may therefore merge RSCs into larger regional security “super-complex” containing a larger number of greater powers, in the specific

⁶² Ibid, 404-406.

⁶³ Ibid, 423.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 411-412.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 164.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 148-153.

⁶⁷ Ibid, 166-170.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 168.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 59.

case China, Japan (East Asian RSC) and Russia (post-soviet RSC).⁷⁰ As the thesis aims to show how this RSC has emerged, the methodological and empirical application of RSCT must be explained.

1.6 - The empirical application of RSCT

RSCs emerge where actors (primarily states) have inter-subjectively constructed issues in a geographic area as security threats.⁷¹ Securitization within an RSC may be asymmetrical, as a security threat may not be subject to counter-securitization by another actor or viewed as a threat in the first place.⁷² A social constructivist approach to understanding the process by which issues become securitized can reveal where such complexes have emerged.⁷³ The study of discourse and political constellations further therefore permits the analysis of the securitization processes that are occurring.⁷⁴ The framework can be considered to significantly include realist conceptions of how security interaction occurs among states. For this reason the relevant structural factors (evolution of economic interdependence, trade, demographic changes and the like) will be included to highlight the emerging “structure” of security relations, which will add to the “agency” factors identified through discourse analysis. As patterns of security construction are the primary elements defining an RSC, it is necessary to detail more precisely what the securitization of threats signifies and how it occurs.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Buzan, Waever & De Wilde, 19.

⁷² Ibid, 72.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 25.

1.7 - The characteristics of “Securitization” and its empirical application

When defining how and when something becomes a security issue, a divergence of views between realist and constructivist approaches emerges. While the first takes it as a given empirical fact, the second considers it the result of a politically motivated social construction, whereby a security threat becomes such if it is labeled accordingly.⁷⁵ The latter is referred to as the “Copenhagen school” approach, originating in the early 90s with research undertaken by academics Ole Wæver and Barry Buzan at the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute.

The fundamental mechanism of securitization is the *speech act*, meaning that “by labeling something a security issue it becomes one”.⁷⁶ A *securitizing actor* by stating that a particular *referent object* is threatened in its existence claims a right to extraordinary measures to ensure the referent objects survival.⁷⁷ The issue is then moved out of the sphere of normal politics into the realm of emergency politics, where it can be dealt with swiftly and without the normal rules and regulations of policy making.⁷⁸ Securitizing actors, those who perform the “speech act” are generally political leaders, lobbies, pressure groups and governments.⁷⁹ Ascertaining who the securitizing actor is necessitates the understanding of whether the action is logical from an organizational point of view, namely if the actor is reputed to be responsible for securitizing.⁸⁰ *Referent objects* are considered to be those which are “existentially threatened and that have a

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Wæver (2004), 13.

⁷⁷ Buzan & Wæver, 71.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Buzan, Wæver & De Wilde, 40.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 41.

legitimate claim to survival.”⁸¹ The traditional referent object is the state; nevertheless a very large range of entities (the nation, mankind, the environment etc.) may also be constructed as such. To be considered as successful a securitization move necessitates the acceptance of an *audience*, namely a social group that believes in the urgency and credibility of the identified threat.⁸² Once this acceptance has occurred, the relevant state-actors will implement *extraordinary measures* to counter the threat. Securitization “has to be understood as essentially an inter-subjective process”.⁸³ It is furthermore “a political choice to securitize or accept securitization”.⁸⁴ Although it may occur on a case-by-case basis, it can be institutionalized in cases of persistent or recurrent threats.⁸⁵

The ontological and methodological tenets of the “Copenhagen school” approach have been criticized in various forms. Buzan et al. contend that the identification of relevant securitizing actors is often difficult to ascertain.⁸⁶ Because of its genesis in democratic and politically pluralistic discourse the approach has been labeled “Eurocentric” and “culturally specific”, in addition to containing a variety of possible shortcomings when channeled towards empirical study.⁸⁷ First of all, the tenuous dichotomy between what constitutes “normal” politics and what instead enters the realm of “extraordinary” politics, which is where acts of securitization occur.⁸⁸

Successful securitizations instances occur by “breaking free” from democratic procedure in

⁸¹ Ibid, 36.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid, 30.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 29.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 27.

⁸⁶ Ibid, 40.

⁸⁷ Smith, 59.

⁸⁸ Sarah Leonard, “The securitization of asylum and migration in the European Union” (Paper presented at the SGIR Sixth Pan-European Conference, Turin, September 2007), 12.

response to perceived threats.⁸⁹ In the case of non-democratic environments, such as those present in Eurasia, the dichotomy is therefore more nebulous.⁹⁰

The focus on “societal security”, based on a European model of borderless states within the EU, is less applicable to the strongly securitized borders of the Central Asian region.⁹¹ Emphasizing “existential threats” is a legacy of the traditional military focus of realism, but one that can hinder the broadening of the security research agenda.⁹² Security threats may in fact not necessarily be existential in nature, but rather occupy a spectrum of importance where non-existential risks may also be securitized.⁹³ Moreover, Van Munster contends that “central focus of security is no longer focused on existential threats alone, but also on potential threats or risks”.⁹⁴ The nature of an “existential threat” also varies according to the sector in question.⁹⁵ Audiences, which by believing the “speech act” ensure a successful securitization, are furthermore put in question when dealing with non-democratic regimes. The parameters of measuring acceptance of a securitization attempt by an audience also remain undefined.⁹⁶ Stritzel further contends that it is unclear when audiences are relevant, what audiences are relevant and

⁸⁹ Rens Van Munster, “Logics of Security: the Copenhagen School, risk management and the war on terror”, *Politica Science Publications*, Syddansk Universitet (October 2005): 3.

⁹⁰ Claire Wilkinson, “The Copenhagen School on Tour in Kyrgyzstan: Is Securitization Theory Useable Outside Europe?”, *Security Dialogue*, 38/1 (2007): 5-25.

⁹¹ Ralph Emmers, “The securitization of transnational crime in ASEAN”, IDSS Singapore, Working Paper 39 (November 2002): 5.

⁹² Julia M. Trombetta, “The Securitization of the Environment and the Transformation of Security”, Delft University of Technology, Unpublished Draft (2006): 7.

⁹³ *Ibid*, 13.

⁹⁴ Van Munster, 6.

⁹⁵ Buzan, Waever & De Wilde, 27.

⁹⁶ Mark B. Salter, “Securitization and Desecuritization: a dramaturgical analysis of the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority”, *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 11 (2008): 324.

above all how to gauge whether an audience has been effectively persuaded by the securitizing actor.⁹⁷

Although the appropriateness of the “Copenhagen” school in studying security in non-democratic regimes is questioned, the fundamental tenets of threat identification and response remain applicable and exist notwithstanding the political contexts in which they occur. According to Waever “something is a security problem when the elites declare it so”.⁹⁸ For securitization to occur a threat must be established “with a saliency sufficient to have substantial political effects”, meaning that specific action is taken by the state to address the assessed risks.⁹⁹ According to McDonald “dynamics such as facilitating conditions and the audience are so under-theorized as to ultimately remain outside the framework itself”.¹⁰⁰ While audiences are in the original framework considered to be the population at large, they can also be constituted by elites and other actors, a specification contingent on the nature of the political system.¹⁰¹ In “non-democratic states the audience could be the power elite”.¹⁰² In these contexts “political elites can abuse extreme forms of politicization to achieve specific political objectives...while the wider population may reject the speech act and the emergency measures to be illegitimate, the securitization act is nevertheless successful having convinced a more restrictive audience on the

⁹⁷ Holger Stritzel, “Towards a Theory of Securitization: Copenhagen and Beyond”, *European Journal of International Relations*, 13/3 (2007): 363.

⁹⁸ Ole Waever, “Securitization and Desecuritization”, in *On Security*, ed. Ronnie D. Lipschutz (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 54.

⁹⁹ Ole Waever, “Securitization: Taking stock of a research program in Security Studies”, Unpublished Draft (February 2003): 11.

¹⁰⁰ Matt McDonald, “Securitization and the Construction of Security”, *European Journal of International Relations* 14/4 (2008): 564.

¹⁰¹ Waever (2003), 12.

¹⁰² Juha A. Vuori, “Illocutionary Logic and Strands of Securitization: Applying the Theory of Securitization to the study of Non-democratic political orders”, *European Journal of International Relations* 14/1 (2008): 72.

existential nature of the threat”.¹⁰³ It is impossible to specifically pinpoint the real actor behind securitization processes in authoritarian systems”.¹⁰⁴ However it is possible to analyze how “securitization works by analyzing official programs, laws and statements”.¹⁰⁵

For the purposes of this thesis successful securitization moves will be deemed to be the presence of “speech acts” by government actors in concomitance with the establishment of institutions, legislative mechanisms and organizations by the respective states to address the identified security threats. In the absence of speech acts, relevant government documents/declarations which present a securitizing logic will be considered to be of analogous effect. The measures taken to counter these threats will also be listed where present. In addition, the structural factor changes in the countries studied in 1991-2008 (e.g. trade pattern evolution, demographic changes) will be given to understand how regional security and interdependence patterns are establishing the configuration of the emerging RSC.

¹⁰³ Ralph Emmers, “Securitization”, in *Contemporary Security Studies*, ed. Alan Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 11.

¹⁰⁴ David Mutimer, “Critical Security Studies: a Schismatic History”, in *Contemporary Security Studies*, ed. Alan Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 72.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 71.

CHAPTER 2 – Securitization instances & structural factors in regional relations

This chapter will study instances of securitizing discourse in the context of domestic politics and bi-lateral relations of China, Kazakhstan, Russia and Tajikistan. The relevant structural factors underlying security will be discussed for each instance in addition to their evolution. China's economic transition in 1991-2008 and its rising interdependence with Kazakhstan and Russia will be detailed, in addition to the securitization of energy supply issues in China's political discourse. Russia's correspondent securitization of the energy-economic sector with respect to China and the latter's growing economic magnitude will be explained. Thereafter the tripartite securitization of the terrorism issue in China, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan will be described, showing the trans-national nature of the threat and the convergent objectives of the states involved. Emphasis will be put on the region of Xinjiang as the regional security nexus for both China and Kazakhstan and common area of security interest. The convergent securitization discourse on narcotics trafficking in China-Tajikistan relations will be then similarly shown to emphasize the trans-national nature of the threat. Conclusively the securitization of demographic and immigration issues by Russia will highlight the geographic emphasis on the Russian Far East and on China's adjacency as a generator of these security concerns.

2.1 - China's energy security and its regional implications

This section firstly looks at the significance and trends of China's energy consumption and the consequences of its increasing import dependence on oil. Thereafter by examining the Chinese official discourse this chapter will highlight how the issue of energy supplies has been securitized and how it has been institutionalized, both within purely domestic institutions as through the multi-later Shanghai Cooperation Organization framework. The regional implications for Central Asia of this securitization will be discussed in the following section, with emphasis on Kazakhstan as the leading energy-producing state of the area.

2.2 - The structural factors in Chinese energy consumption & security

The securitization of energy supplies is not a novel issue in Chinese domestic and foreign policy. The pivotal point of its historical genesis can be found as early as the 1960s. China embarked on development of its oil industry in concomitance with the growing political rift with the USSR in the early 60s known as the "Sino-soviet" split. The development of the Daqing oilfield in the north-eastern region, together with the stagnation of the state-controlled economy, enabled China to remain energy self-sufficient throughout the following three decades. Beginning in 1978, the economic reforms enacted under Deng Xiaoping were followed by sustained and significant economic and industrial growth. This resulted in a significantly greater demand for oil, which has risen from 3.7% annually in 1986-1990 to 7.6% annually in 1990-2000.¹⁰⁶ This continued to accelerate exceeding 10% annually by 2003.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Jianxin Zhang, "Oil Security reshapes China's foreign policy", Center on China's transnational relations, Working Paper 9, HKUST (2006): 4.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid

After more than two decades of self-sufficiency, China became a net oil importer in 1993.¹⁰⁸ By late 2008, fully half of China's 7.6 million-barrel daily oil consumption was provided for by foreign imports, primarily from the Middle East.¹⁰⁹ In 1993 only 5.8% of China's oil had been met by imports.¹¹⁰ Contemporaneously, China's domestic oil production has stagnated, growing by only 30% between 1994 and 2006.¹¹¹ China's oil production, mostly because of depleted fields and geological lack of oil, is expected to fluctuate around a plateau of 3.7 mb/day in 2006-2010 and thereafter rise up to maximum of 4 mb/day by 2020.¹¹² Overall consumption is expected to increase to from 7.6 mb/day in 2008 to 13.5 mb/day by 2030, signifying an export dependency of 60% by 2020 and 76.9% by 2030.¹¹³

The Chinese leadership has sought to promote economic growth in order to legitimize its political rule. Social stability in China is tied to employment and economic growth, both of which "are increasingly dependent on a regular and affordable supply of fuel". Furthermore, according to Boekestein & Henderson, "energy shortage is possibly a bottleneck in economic development and in the long term, if this is not resolved, China's economic future will be very unstable".¹¹⁴ The stresses caused by inexorable rise of the Chinese economy have already manifested themselves. In 2005, 24 out of 31 of China's provinces suffered from repeated

¹⁰⁸ Erica Strecker-Downs, *China's Quest for Energy Security*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2000), 11.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid

¹¹⁰ Pak K. Lee, "China's quest for oil security: oil (wars) in pipeline", *The Pacific Review*, 18/2 (June 2005): 267.

¹¹¹ Platts Energy, "China's oil production and consumption",

<http://www.platts.com/Coal/Resources/News%20Features/ctl/chart6.xml>

¹¹² *China Economic Review*, "Oil Shortage predicted by 2020", 26/07/2006,

http://www.chinaeconomicreview.com/industry-focus/latest-news/article/2004-07-26/Oil_shortage_predicted_by_2020.html

¹¹³ Zhang, 5.

¹¹⁴ Brent Boekestein & Jeffrey Henderson, "Thirsty Dragon, Hungry Eagle", *IPEG Papers in Global Political Economy*, N. 21 (November 2005): 6.

blackouts triggered by excess energy demand coming from industrial concerns.¹¹⁵ The political consequence of being unable to deliver on economic promises would in the long term be extremely negative for the incumbent communist leadership, possibly leading to its outright downfall.¹¹⁶

The PRC government has therefore engaged a plethora of African and Latin American states in order to render more diversified, and therefore more secure, its energy supplies. The securing of oil resources in Angola, Oman, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Venezuela and other oil-rich states is deemed to have been the primary driver of Chinese foreign policy with respect to these countries since the early 1990s.¹¹⁷ Despite these significant diversification efforts, dependence on Middle Eastern supplies is expected to rise from 45% of total oil imports in 2006 to over 70% by 2015.¹¹⁸

China has furthermore been concerned by the fact that its oil is mostly imported by sea, a strategically dangerous aspect in view of the control over primary shipping lanes exerted by American naval forces.¹¹⁹ This concern is exacerbated by the fact that 80% of oil shipped to China is carried by foreign-owned vessels.¹²⁰ Various state apparatuses in China have advocated the necessity of an expanded domestic fleet to set a legal basis for the military protection of such

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 20.

¹¹⁶ Suisheng Zhao, *A Nation-state by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism*, (Palo Alto CA: Stanford University Press, 2004).

¹¹⁷ Zhang, 9.

¹¹⁸ Ji Hye Shin & John J. Tkacik, "China and the middle east: a new patron of regional instability", The Heritage Foundation, <http://www.heritage.org/research/asiaandthepacific/bg1974.cfm>

¹¹⁹ Strecker-Downs, 46-47.

¹²⁰ Andrew Erickson & Gabe Collins, "Beijing's Energy Security Strategy: The significance of a Chinese state-owned fleet", *Orbis* (Fall 2007): 666.

vessels by the Chinese navy.¹²¹ Lastly, the American military intervention in Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 became a clear signal to the Chinese leadership that the Middle East would increasingly remain under America's strategic control.¹²² In turn this security concern has accelerated the Chinese economic penetration of the Central Asian energy resources in order to have not only more reliable supplies in terms of transit, but also the presence of governments willing to accommodate Chinese interests.¹²³

2.3 - Energy security in Chinese policy discourse

China's changing energy demands structure, supply structure and reliability of supplies have been increasingly a subject of securitization on the part of the Chinese government. Tiang Fenshan, the Chinese Minister for State and Land Resources, stated in 2002 that incrementing dependence on imported oil would "damage the country's capacity to ensure its oil resources as well as economic and political security".¹²⁴ The same year "President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao decided that securing reliable supplies of petroleum and other scarce resources was not only crucial to sustained economic development, but also integral to China's national security"¹²⁵. At a 2003 SCO meeting, State Development Planning Commission Minister Zeng Peiyan told members "that China hoped to cooperate with Russia and Central Asia to immunize

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Charles Ziegler, "The Energy Factor in China's Foreign Policy", *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, 11/1 (Spring 2006): 11-19.

¹²⁴ Boekestein & Henderson, 29.

¹²⁵ *Japan Focus*, "China's global search for energy security", http://www.japanfocus.org/_Suisheng_Zhao-China_s_Global_Search_for_Energy_Security_cooperation_and_competition_in_the_Asia_Pacific/

itself against a potential blockade of energy supplies from the Middle East”.¹²⁶ At the July 2006 outreach session of the G8 summit President Hu stated that to ensure “energy security it is important to strengthen dialogue and cooperation between energy exporters and consumers and among major energy consumers”.¹²⁷

Kazakhstan, in addition to Russia, constitutes the foreign oil region geographically closest to China, and the only one that can be tapped by land pipelines. In China’s “National Energy Security Report” of 2006 it was stated that “China is a neighboring country of this region [Central Asia]. We must join the regional geo-economic and geo-political activities for our circumjacent security and oil supply security”.¹²⁸ China has furthermore created state-sponsored decision-making structures to specifically address the energy security challenge. The State Energy Leading Group, headed by premier Wen Jiabao, was established in 2005 to researches issues of external energy supply and energy security.¹²⁹ The group involves 13 top ministries of the PRC including national defense, commerce, and foreign affairs.¹³⁰ The objective of the group is to “research into major important issues involving the development blueprint, energy exploitation and conservation, security and emergency systems as well as international co-operation within the energy sector”.¹³¹

¹²⁶ *Asia Times Online*, “Oil Rich US ally Kazakhstan looks to China”, , 27/02/2004, http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Central_Asia/FB27Ag01.html

¹²⁷ Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, “President Hu urges effort to ensure global energy security”, 19/07/2006, <http://www.focac.org/eng/zt/t263817.htm>

¹²⁸ Xuetang Guo, “The Energy Security in Central Asia: the Geopolitical implications to China’s energy strategy”, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, 4/4 (2006): 132.

¹²⁹ Xuecheng Liu, “China’s Energy Security and its Grand Strategy”, *Policy Analysis Brief*, The Stanley Foundation (September 2006): 4.

¹³⁰ Embassy of the PRC in the RSA, “Premier Wen leads new energy group”, 27/05/2005, <http://www.chinese-embassy.org.za/eng/zt/energy/t248054.htm>

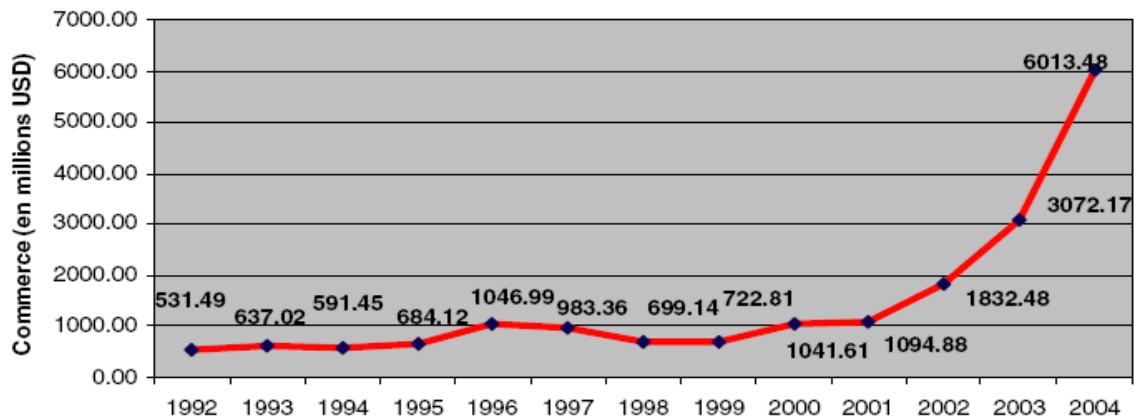
¹³¹ Ibid.

2.4 - Structural economic-energy factors – China’s changing economic relations with Kazakhstan & Russia

This section will first deal with the evolution of economic and energy links in China-Kazakhstan relations in the 1991-2008 period. The change in these underlying factors occurring in this period will highlight the growing interdependence within this bi-lateral relation and the relatively declining importance of Russia. This change will underline the fact that Kazakhstan’s economic sector security is increasingly linked to the dynamics of a China-centered complex. Thereafter, the evolution of Russian-Chinese economic relations will be traced. Emphasis will be put on increasing interdependence and the securitization of the economic-energy issue in Russia’s official discourse vis-à-vis China.

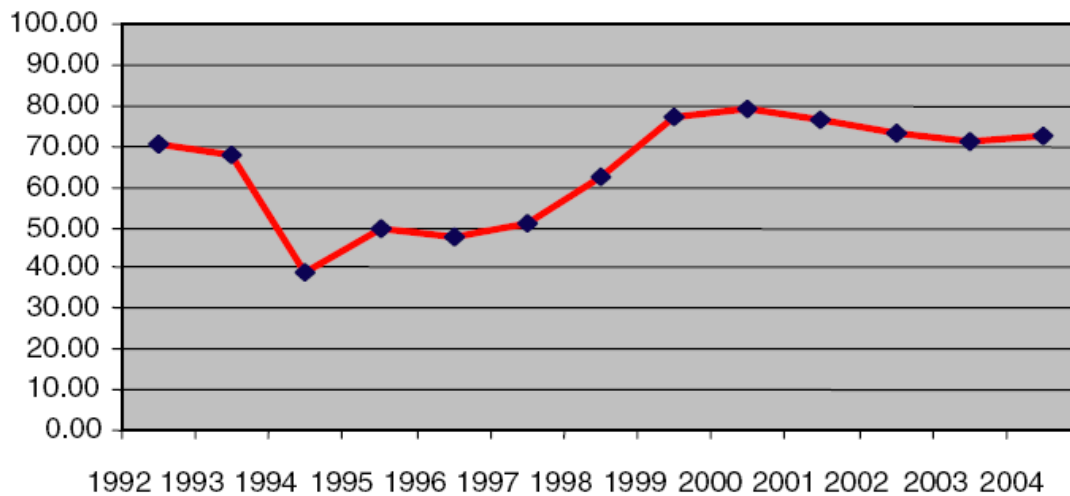
2.4.1 - Changes in Structural factors in Kazakh-Chinese economic relations 1991-2008

The economic integration China and Kazakhstan has substantially grown in significance in the past two decades, and more significantly after 2001. Between 2000 and 2004 Chinese trade with Central Asia multiplied almost six-fold to over \$6 Billion USD:



China-Central Asia trade 1992-2004 (MLN of USD)¹³²

China's trade with Kazakhstan represented more than 70% of this figure in 2004¹³³:



Share (%) of China-Kazakhstan trade of total China-Central Asia trade 1992-2004¹³⁴

¹³² Gael Raballand & Agnes Andresy, "Why should trade between Central Asia and China continue to expand?", *Asia Europe Journal*, 5 (2007): 239.

¹³³ *People's Daily Online*, "NW China Region sees growing trade with Kazakhstan", http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200601/14/eng20060114_235392.html

¹³⁴ Raballand & Andresy, 242.

The regional relevance of Kazakhstan in economic terms is significant, as in 2006 close to 70% of Kazakh trade with China occurred with the bordering Xinjiang region.¹³⁵ Only in the 2004-2005 period trade between Kazakhstan and the XUAR increased from \$3.3 BLN to over \$5 BLN¹³⁶. These significant levels of growth have brought to the decreasing importance of trade with Russia. Overall Kazakhstan-China trade ballooned to \$13.8 billion in 2007¹³⁷ from a value of \$370 million in 1992.¹³⁸ By 2007 China was Kazakhstan's 3rd import partner (after Russia and the EU) with a 22.1% share. China edged out Russia to become the 2nd import partner with a 15.3% share (vis-à-vis Russia's 11.7%). Overall China constitutes 18.7% of Kazakhstan's bi-lateral trade, behind Russia's 23.1%.¹³⁹

Chinese involvement with Kazakhstan's energy sector has been in parallel growing in significance. In 1997 China and Kazakhstan signed a bi-lateral agreement discussing different options for cooperating in the oil & gas sector, in addition to the construction of a pipeline linking oil-rich western Kazakhstan with China's Xinjiang region.¹⁴⁰ Also in 1997, state-owned China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) acquired a 60.3% stake in state owned Aktobemunaygaz oil company for \$320 million. The CNPC also "promised to invest \$4 billion within 20 years to develop Kazakhstan's Kenkiak and Zhanazhol oil fields and to build a pipeline

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, "Kazakhstan and China enter a stage of joint large-scaled non-extraction projects", <http://en.government.kz/site/news/042008/06>

¹³⁸ Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, "China, Kazakhstan build on a solid foundation", 15/10/2007, <http://kazakhembus.com/index.php?mact=News,cntnt01,detail,0&cntnt01articleid=71&cntnt01returnid=90>

¹³⁹ European Commission, "Kazakhstan Trade Statistics", 15/09/2008, http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc_113406.pdf

¹⁴⁰ Elizabeth Van Wie Davis, "Uyghur Muslim Ethnic Separatism in Xinjiang, China", *Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies* (January 2008): 9.

from West Kazakhstan to Xinjian Uyghur Autonomous region”.¹⁴¹ The first phase of the trans-national pipeline, linking the Kazakh cities of Atasu and Alashankou, was completed in December 2005.¹⁴² The third phase which finally reaches Urumqi will be complete by October 2009.¹⁴³ In August 2003 the CNPC acquired 35 percent of the North Buzachi oilfield from Saudi oil company Nimir Petroleum, while in December China's Sinopec bought 50 percent of three large blocs near the Tengiz field.¹⁴⁴ Sinopec in 2004 further acquired the shares in the “Adai” JV with Russian company Rosneft, to develop fields in north-western Kazakhstan.¹⁴⁵ In August 2005 the CNPC acquired PetroKazakhstan, a private oil company holding 3.3% of the world’s proven oil reserves.¹⁴⁶ The acquisition gave the Chinese government ownership of 12% of Kazakhstan’s total oil reserves.¹⁴⁷

2.4.2 - Structural economic-energy factors – China and Russia

This section will deal with the evolution of economic and energy links in China-Russia relations in the 1991-2008 period. The change in these underlying factors occurring in this period will highlight the growing interdependence within these bi-lateral relations. Securitization of economic security in the discourse of Russia will be exposed, taking into account the implications for China.

¹⁴¹ Asia Media, “A thorny road to Sino-Kazakh Partnership”, 08/07/2004, <http://www.asiamedia.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=12689>

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ *Asia Times Online*, “Oil Rich US ally Kazakhstan looks to China”, 27/02/2004, http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Central_Asia/FB27Ag01.html

¹⁴⁵ Usen A. Suleimenov, “Energy Cooperation between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the People’s Republic of China”(Presentation by Usen A. Suleimenov, Consul General of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2007).

¹⁴⁶ *The Telegraph*, “China buys 12pc of Kazakhstan oil output”, 22/08/2005,

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/2921010/China-buys-12pc-of-Kazakhstan-oil-output.html>

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

2.4.3 - Changes in Structural factors in Chinese-Russian economic relations 1991-2008

China in 2008 became Russia's third largest trade partner, importing primarily energy and timber goods, while Russia is China's eighth trading partner, importing mainly finished products.¹⁴⁸ Border trade in the Far East region represents 20% of the total.¹⁴⁹ China-Russia bi-lateral trade grew by 500% from 1992 to 2006 reaching a value of \$33.6 billion.¹⁵⁰ China ranks as Russia's 2nd largest trade partner after the EU, while the latter is China's 8th. The majority of China's USD \$3 Billion FDI stock is in the energy and natural resources sectors. In 2006 Chinese firms held USD \$7 billion of outsourcing contracts in Russia, utilising Chinese labour in the labour shortage regions of the Far East.¹⁵¹ Chinese economic ventures have similarly burgeoned. By the end of 2007 more than 1,000 Chinese-capital firms were operating in Russia.¹⁵² Of these only 10% were operating in European Russia, while 80% were investing in the Siberia and Far East regions.

The evolution of energy trade has been even more significant than that of bi-lateral trade. As recently as 1995 China was not importing oil from Russia.¹⁵³ In 2000 China was importing 26,000 barrels/day, an amount that grew almost tenfold to 250,000 barrels/day in 2005.¹⁵⁴ Chinese investments in the energy sectors have been in parallel forthcoming. In July 2006 the

¹⁴⁸ Libor Kroska & Yevgenia Korniyenko, "China's investments in Russia: where do they go and how important are they?", *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, 6/1 (2008): 40.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, 41.

¹⁵⁰ Embassy of the PRC to the Republic of Croatia, "Wu Yi attends the roundtable meeting on China-Russia trade and investment cooperation", 11/06/2007, <http://hr.china-embassy.org/eng/zxxx/t329829.htm>

¹⁵¹ Kroska & Korniyenko, 42.

¹⁵² Ibid, 43.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

CNPC acquired a USD \$500 million participation in Rosneft (Russia's 2nd largest oil company) while Sinopec purchased a 96.9% stake in Udmurtneft for USD \$3.5 billion from TNK-BP.¹⁵⁵

2.4.4 - Securitization of the Economic-Energy sector in Russian discourse

During the Putin administration Russia has undergone a period of substantial economic and political re-centralization after the relative characterizing the Yeltsin era. The state takeover of the private Yukos oil company in 2004 and its subsequent dismemberment have been deemed as attempts to reign in economic players unwilling to of the political leadership.¹⁵⁶ Russia's economic management approach has been characterized by an increasing resource nationalism and use of hydrocarbon resources as political means to obtain concessions from client states.¹⁵⁷ The necessity of having to control such resources to allow their use for foreign policy has resulted in the government seeking to maintain a power of veto over free market interests in the sector.¹⁵⁸

Several securitizing moves have been made in regards to Russia's economic and energy sectors in addition to the establishment of special legislative measures, in both cases with relevance for China. In December 2002 the acquisition of Slavneft by CNPC was blocked on initiative of the Russian Duma and the pressure exerted on the government. As the auction was for a 74.95%

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, 44.

¹⁵⁶ Alan Riley, "The coming of the Russian gas deficit: consequences and solutions", *CEPS Policy Brief*, 116 (October 2006): 1.

¹⁵⁷ Mark Leonard & Nicu Popescu, "A Power Audit of EU-Russia Relations", *ECFR Paper Policy* (November 2007): 14-21.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

majority share, a winning Chinese bid would have given CNPC control of the company.¹⁵⁹ Despite a winning bid of \$3 BLN from the latter, the Slavneft stake was eventually sold for \$ 1.85 BLN to the Russian Sibneft oil company.¹⁶⁰

With a vote of 255-63 the deputies of the Russian Duma (parliament) passed a resolution “urging the government to keep the oil company in Russian hands.”¹⁶¹ The Duma deputies maintained that allowing the purchase of Slavneft by CNPC would “harm Russia’s economic interests.”¹⁶² Deputy Boris Nemtsov, of the Union of Right Forces, argued that “selling such a vitally important national asset to China would be a political mistake.”¹⁶³ The securitization of foreign investments in the Russian Federation thereafter assumed an institutionalized character. In the April 2005 annual address to the Russian Federal Assembly, President Putin noted that:

“It is time we clearly determined the economic sectors where the interests of bolstering Russia’s independence and security call for predominant control by national, including state, capital...some infrastructure facilities, enterprises that fulfill state defense orders, mineral deposits of strategic importance for the future of the country and future generations.”¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁹ Nicklas Norling, “Russia’s energy leverage over China and the Sinopec-Rosneft Deal”, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, 4/4 (2006): 37.

¹⁶⁰ Erica Strecker-Downs, “Fundamentals of the Oil and Gas Industry”, *Brookings Institution* (2008): 30.

¹⁶¹ *Saint Petersburg Times*, “Duma urges ban on foreign Slavneft bids”, 17/12/2002, http://www.sptimes.ru/index.php?action_id=2&story_id=8827

¹⁶² Rouben Azizian, “The optimists have the lead, for now: Russia’s China debate”, *Asian Pacific Center for Security Studies*, Special Assessment (December 2003): 7.

¹⁶³ *Ibid*, 8.

¹⁶⁴ President of Russia, “Annual address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation”, 25/04/05, http://kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2005/04/25/2031_type70029type82912_87086.shtml

The draft law “On Procedures for making foreign investment in Russian Commercial Entities of Strategic Importance for the National Security of the Russian Federation” passed its third and final reading in the state Duma on April 2nd, 2008.¹⁶⁵ On May 5th, 2008 President Putin signed the law into force.¹⁶⁶ The law” introduced limits, in addition to necessity of government approval, for investments from foreign companies in “strategic sectors” such as mining, the aircraft industry, nuclear power and the media among the 42 identified.¹⁶⁷ One of the most significant aspects of this law concerns the natural resources and extractive sector. Foreign company ownership in Russian entities producing oil, gas, metals etc. is limited to 10%.¹⁶⁸ Of greater relevance when considering the importance of NOCs for Chinese energy investment overseas, ownership by foreign entities which are partially owned by foreign governments is limited to 5%.¹⁶⁹

2.5 - Regional security concerns and the issue of terrorism-separatism

This section will initially delineate the major internal security concerns affecting China, and their relevance for the security of neighboring Kazakhstan. The emphasis will be on the Xinjiang region as the geographic nexus of the two countries and the area where the security threats of terrorism-separatism are located. The securitizing discourse of the Chinese and Kazakh leaderships related to these threats will be presented, highlighting their regional interdependence

¹⁶⁵ *PBN Company*, “Foreign Investment in Russian Strategic Industry: Duma approves bill”, April 2008, https://www.usrbc.org/pics/File/Member%20Contributions/PolicyMatters_April2008.pdf

¹⁶⁶ *Reuters*, “Russia’s Putin signs Foreign Investment Law”, 05/05/08, <http://www.reuters.com/article/reutersEdge/idUSL0514680420080505>

¹⁶⁷ Kroska & Korniyenko, 42.

¹⁶⁸ *PBN Company*.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

and convergent objectives. Thereafter the issue of Islamic radicalism in Tajikistan and the securitization of the terrorism threat in official discourse will be presented. This will be, as in the case of Kazakhstan, linked to the importance of adjacency to China and the converging securitization objectives of the two states.

2.5.1 - Xinjiang and the structural factors in China and Kazakhstan's internal security

China has faced a continued threat to its territorial integrity in the form of the Islamic-inspired separatist movements operating in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). The region occupies the easternmost part of the country and the entirety of its border with Central Asia. Approximately 45% of its 20 million inhabitants are ethnically Uyghur, a Turkic-muslim minority which outnumbers the titular Chinese Han which constitute 41% of the population. Xinjiang was incorporated within the PRC in 1949, after which substantial attempts to eradicate the region's distinct identity and implement "sinification".¹⁷⁰ Beijing opted for a policy of assimilation by inducing massive immigration, increasing the Han share of the total population of Xinjiang by 2,500 % between 1940 and 1982.¹⁷¹

Following the collapse of the USSR, China feared that Xinjiang's independence ambitions could be awakened by the presence of the new bordering Central Asian republics.¹⁷² The increasing cross-border mobility of the Uyghur population, fostered by increasing economic ties with

¹⁷⁰ Michael Clarke, "China's integration of Xinjiang with Central Asia: securing a silk road to Great Power status?", *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, 6/2 (2008): 90-91.

¹⁷¹ D. C. Gladney, "The Chinese Program of Development and Control 1978-2001", in *Xinjiang – China's Muslim borderland*, ed. Frederick Starr (Armonk NY: Sharpe, 2004), 112.

¹⁷² *Ibid*, 101.

Central Asia, has contributed to an increased awareness of their distinct ethnic identity vis-à-vis that of the Han.¹⁷³ More importantly for China's security, this has expanded contacts with the large and often politicized Uyghur Diaspora numbering at between 0.5 and 1 million.¹⁷⁴

The post-1991 period was characterized by significant anti-Chinese activity involving separatist groups. In 1990, an armed uprising near Kashgar (XUAR) was suppressed by the People Liberation's Army resulting in 22 deaths.¹⁷⁵ The East Turkestan Independence Movement (ETIM), seeking an autonomous Uyghur state, through the 90s and 2000s has engaged in terrorist activities including bombings and attacks on Chinese security forces.¹⁷⁶ The Chinese State Council stated in 2002 that between 1991 and 2001 separatist-terrorist groups carried out over 200 attacks in Xinjiang, claiming the lives of 162 people.¹⁷⁷

The Kazakh government also has been engaged in neutralizing potential threats to the political survival of the ruling elites, above all Islamic radicalism.¹⁷⁸ The regional nexus has manifested itself as ETIM cells have been reported to be stationed in eastern Kazakhstan.¹⁷⁹ Separatist forces have repeatedly utilized Kazakhstan as a base to regularly penetrate into Xinjiang's territory.¹⁸⁰ China has furthermore concerned itself with the suspected trans-border training received by the

¹⁷³ Ibid, 114.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, 379.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, 391.

¹⁷⁸ Guancheng Xing, "China's Foreign Policy Toward Kazakhstan", in *Thinking Strategically: the major powers, Kazakhstan and the central Asian nexus*, ed. Robert Legvold (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), 116.

¹⁷⁹ *Center for Defense Information*, "East Turkestan Islamic Movement", 09/12/2002, <http://www.cdi.org/terrorism/etim.cfm>

¹⁸⁰ Xing, 108-116.

ETIM and other groups (Wolves of Lop Nor, Uyghur Liberation Organization) from within Kazakhstan's estimated 200,000 Uyghur minorities.¹⁸¹ The PRC government has claimed that a train bombing in February 1996 in Xinjiang was coordinated by the Kazakhstan-based pro-independence United Revolutionary Front.¹⁸²

The Chinese government has taken measures to reign in the perceived separatist threat and to promote the development and integration of Xinjiang within the PRC. In 1997 China introduced the "Strike Hard, Maximum Pressure" campaign which restricted religious expression in Xinjiang and resulted in a significant number of suspected Xinjiang separatists being arrested.¹⁸³ In 1999 China launched a campaign to "Develop the Great Northwest" with the aim of bringing the region more tightly under the government's control.¹⁸⁴ Kazakhstan's government concomitantly "closely monitors Uyghur nationalist in its country to ensure that it does not become involved in a militant armed conflict with China".¹⁸⁵ In 1999 two suspected Uyghur terrorists were extradited from Kazakhstan to China despite heavy opposition on the part of the United States and the EU.¹⁸⁶ Kyrgyzstan has similarly acquiesced to Chinese requests for extradition of Uyghur terrorists with limited judicial evidence.¹⁸⁷ The involvement of Central Asian leaders' in the SCO and in support of China suggests they are playing their Uyghur card in exchange for increased security".¹⁸⁸ In view of the instability of Afghanistan and Tajikistan,

¹⁸¹ *Asia Media*, "A thorny road to Sino-Kazakh Partnership", 08/07/2004, <http://www.asiamedia.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=12689>

¹⁸² Gladney, 380.

¹⁸³ *Ibid*, 381.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 101.

¹⁸⁵ Sean R. Roberts, "A Land of Borderlands: Implications of Xinjiang's Trans-Border Interactions", in *Xinjiang – China's Muslim borderland*, ed. Frederick Starr (Armonk NY: Sharpe, 2004), 233.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 234.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid*.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid*.

Xing argues that “if unrest spills over into Kazakhstan or Kyrgyzstan, China would be directly affected”.¹⁸⁹

2.5.2 - The securitization of terrorism in Kazakhstan – China relations

The discourse of the Chinese and Kazakh governments has unequivocally framed terrorism as a security threat. As early as 1993 President Nazarbaev contended that “if China stands against separatist movements, we in Kazakhstan will also stand against these same separatist movements”.¹⁹⁰ In a December 2002 meeting with President Nazarbaev Vice-President Hu Jintao “pointed out that terrorism, separatism and extremism pose a severe threat to the lives of the local people as well as to the regional security and stability at large”. He went on to add that “the agreement on joining hands to combat the threat signed by China and Kazakhstan is beneficial to safeguarding the peace and stability of the two countries and the region as a whole”.¹⁹¹ President Jiang Zemin expressed “gratitude for Kazakhstan's understanding and support in the fight against "East Turkistan" terrorist forces and that the two countries would “sign a bilateral agreement on fighting against terrorism, extremism and separatism, which is a major measure on jointly maintaining regional security and stability”.¹⁹² In a May 2008 address Chinese President Hu stated that “developing the strategic partnership between the two countries conforms to the

¹⁸⁹ Xing, p.109,

¹⁹⁰ Roberts, p.233.

¹⁹¹ Embassy of the PRC in Papua New Guinea, “Hu Jintao Met With Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev”, 25/12/2002, <http://pg.china-embassy.org/eng/xwdt/t48279.htm>

¹⁹² Ibid, “Chinese President Held Talks with Kazakh President Nazarbayev”, 23/12/2002.

fundamental interests of both nations, and is also important to safeguarding peace and security of the region”.¹⁹³

For what concerns Kazakhstan, at the June 2006 SCO summit President Nazarbaev stated that “Kazakhstan and China have identical stances and share interests on fighting the three forces of terrorism, separatism and extremism, we will step up our cooperation with China”.¹⁹⁴ He further remarked that the first pillar of the SCO “is security, including the combating of terrorism and the drug business”.¹⁹⁵ In November 2006 the East Turkestan Liberation Organization was added to the Kazakhstan’s government list of banned terrorist organizations.¹⁹⁶ Nazarbaev in a 2007 meeting in Astana reiterated “that his country attaches importance to carrying out security cooperation with China...Kazakhstan will not permit any organization or individual to take any activity on its soil that can cause harm to China”.¹⁹⁷ Various Kazakh diplomats have emphasized that Uyghur terrorists “will never find shelter in Kazakhstan”.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹³ Embassy of the PRC in Australia, “Chinese President congratulates Medvedev on election as President”, 08/05/2008, <http://au.china-embassy.org/eng/xw/t432469.htm>

¹⁹⁴ Official site of the SCO Summit, “Chinese president foresees better strategic partnership with Kazakhstan”, 14/06/2006, http://english.scosummit2006.org/en_zxbb/2006-06/14/content_675.htm

¹⁹⁵ Press Conference of President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin and President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev, 10/06/2002, http://www.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/sco_20020610_3.html

¹⁹⁶ *Radio Free Europe*, “Uyghur Group added to Kazakh terror list”, 17/11/2006, <http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1072808.html>

¹⁹⁷ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC, “President Hu Jintao Holds Talks with His Kazakh Counterpart Nazarbayev”, 18/08/2007 <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjb/zzjg/dozys/gjlb/3180/3182/t353591.htm>

¹⁹⁸ *Asia Media*, “A thorny road to Sino-Kazakh Partnership”, 08/07/2004, <http://www.asiamedia.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=12689>

2.5.3 - The securitization of terrorism in Tajikistan-China relations

Tajikistan and China have both labeled terrorism as a threat of common interest throughout the evolution of their bi-lateral relations. In July 2000, during a visit by Chinese Premier Zhang to Tajikistan, a joint statement was issued declaring that “the Two Parties (China and Tajikistan) maintain that national separatism, international terrorism and religious extremism pose a serious threat to regional security and stability”.¹⁹⁹ The securitization of the terrorist threat has been institutionalized within the SCO framework.

In September 2006, China and Tajikistan held their first ever joint anti-terror military exercises code-named "Coordination-2006" in Kulyab, Tajikistan. And in August last year, they also joined the anti-terrorism military exercise code-named "Peace Mission-2007" jointly held by the six SCO member states.²⁰⁰ Hu expressed his appreciation of Tajikistan for the latter's support to China on the issues of Taiwan and the fight against the "East Turkistan" terrorist force.²⁰¹ In January 2007 the two countries signed the treaty of “Good Neighborly Friendship and Cooperation”. The terms of the treaty specify that “neither side can allow activities or join alliances which undermine the other nation's security or territorial integrity”.²⁰² In addition the both parties will “cooperate to prevent any threat to each other's security stemming from international and regional crises. The two sides agreed to adopt measures to crack down on the

¹⁹⁹ “Joint Statement of the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Tajikistan on the Development of Their Good-Neighborly and Friendly Relations and Cooperation Oriented Towards the 21st Century”, July 2000
http://www.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/china/china_tajik_20000704.html

²⁰⁰ *People's Daily Online*, “China, Tajikistan enjoy friendly cooperation, seeking common prosperity”, 26/08/2008,
<http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90776/90883/6486854.html>

²⁰¹ Official Website of the SCO Summit, “Chinese, Tajik Presidents vow to form closer ties”, 14/06/2006,
http://english.scosummit2006.org/en_zxbb/2006-06/14/content_669.htm

²⁰² *China Daily*, “Treaty sees greater security cooperation”, 16/01/2007, http://www.chinadaily.net/cndy/2007-01/16/content_784107.htm

"three evil forces" of terrorism, separatism and extremism, as well as illegal immigration and cross-border crimes such as drug trafficking and gun running".²⁰³ In a joint statement issued during a visit by Premier Hu to Dushanbe in August 2008 the two parties "viewed the fight against "East Turkistan" terrorist forces as an important part of the global efforts against terrorism. The two sides will honor their commitments in the Cooperation Agreement on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Tajikistan and the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism, continue to work closely with each other in the security field".²⁰⁴ Moreover, Tajikistan would "take effective measures to jointly fight all forms of terrorism, including the "East Turkistan" terrorist forces in the interest of peace and stability in both countries and in the region at large".²⁰⁵ On March 26th 2009, President Rakhmon signed the "Law on the Freedom of Conscience" which bans religious education for children under the age of 7, and any religious instruction in private homes.²⁰⁶ It furthermore "imposes preventive censorship on religious literature and restrictions on religious services, which must be held in places approved by the state".²⁰⁷

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC, "Joint Statement Between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Tajikistan on Further Developing Good-neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation", 27/08/08, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t511334.htm>

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ *Asia News*, "Tajik President Rakhmonov signs law suffocating religious freedom", 26/03/2009, <http://www.asianews.it/index.php?l=en&art=14835&geo=3&size=A>

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

2.6 - Regional security concerns and the issue of drug trafficking & consumption

This section describes the significance and evolution of the drug trafficking and consumption problem affecting China and the Central Asian states, with emphasis on Tajikistan. The incremented drug trade will show to have increasingly regionalized the problem and linked China's internal drug problems with those of neighboring Tajikistan. Thereafter, the securitizing discourse of the Tajik and Chinese leaderships will be presented to highlight the convergent denomination of drugs as a security threat of both domestic and regional nature.

2.6.1 - Structural factors in China - Central Asia drug consumption & trafficking

From the early 1990s onwards China has experienced a massive increase in drug use and trafficking. The number of registered users grew from 70,000 in 1990 to 1.16 million in 2005, although estimates place the actual number closer to 3.5 million.²⁰⁸ Malinowska-Sempruch & Bartlett put the figure higher at approximately 5 million.²⁰⁹ An estimated 20% of drugs reaching China originate from Central Asia.²¹⁰ Tajikistan is the logistics nexus of the Central Asian drug trade. Notwithstanding its small population and area, 90% of all regional drug seizures occur in the country.²¹¹ An estimated 80% of all narcotics produced in Afghanistan transit through

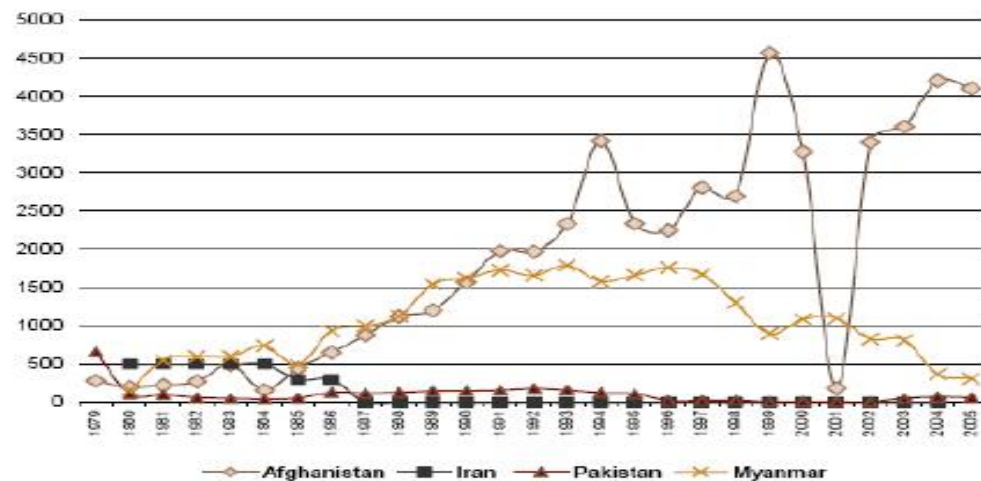
²⁰⁸ Sheena G. Sullivan & Zunyou Wu, "Rapid scale of harm reduction in China", *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 18 (2007): 120.

²⁰⁹ Kasia Malinowska-Sempruch & Nick Bartlett, "Who needs protecting? Rethinking HIV, Drugs and Security in the China Context", *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, 4/1 (2006): 26.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Ibid.

Tajikistan.²¹² The primary reason for this condition is the porous 1,206 km border with Afghanistan, the world's largest producer of opiates with an 87% global share.²¹³ Afghanistan's growing opium production has gradually displaced Myanmar, and its falling production, as primary supplier to China:



Estimated Annual Opium Production (tons) 1970-2005²¹⁴

Consequently this trend has made the transit route thorough the Yunnan-Myanmar region increasingly less important than Xinjiang. Townsend notes how the differential between heroin prices in Xinjiang and Tajikistan (up to five times higher in the former), their geographical proximity, in addition to Xinjiang's rapidly growing addict population are the main drivers of the burgeoning trans-border narcotics trade.²¹⁵ Tajikistan itself suffers from the highest levels of

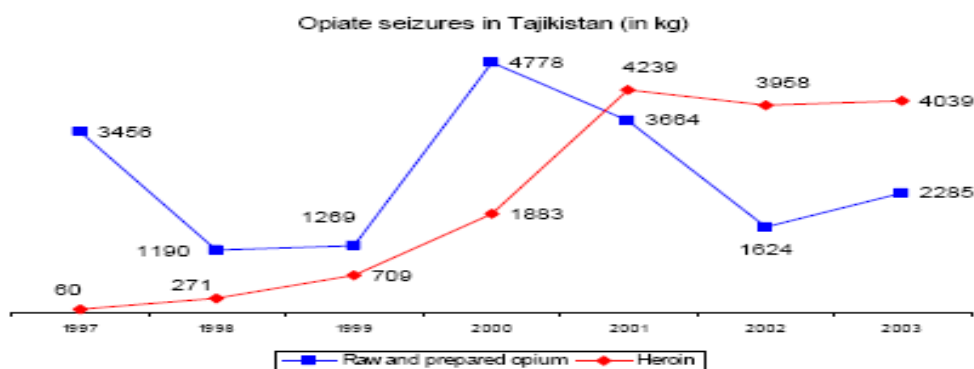
²¹² Peter Chalk, "Non-military security in the wider Middle East", *Conflict & Terrorism*, 26/3 (2006): 199.

²¹³ Johan Engvall, "The state under siege: The drug trade and organized crime in Tajikistan", *Europe-Asia Studies*, 58/6 (2006): 828.

²¹⁴ Niklas Swanstrom & Yin He, "China's War on Narcotics: Two Perspectives", *CACI Silk Road Paper* (2006): 17.

²¹⁵ John Townsend, "The logistics of Opiate Trafficking in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan", *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, 4/1 (2006): 88.

opiate addiction in the world, increasing seven-fold only between 1995 and 2001.²¹⁶ Seizures of opium by Tajik security forces have in parallel significantly increased since the late 90s:



Opiate Seizures in Tajikistan 1997-2003²¹⁷

To a lesser extent, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have also experienced incremented narcotics trafficking as transit states. Kyrgyzstan reported a 1,600 % rise in drug seizures only between 1999 and 2000, heroin seizures alone growing 800 %.²¹⁸ Mohapatra notes that Kazakhstan “is also used as a trafficking route by Chinese drug traffickers” operating in Xinjiang.²¹⁹

2.6.2 - The securitization of drug issues in China - Tajikistan relations

China has enacted various securitizing moves with respect to narcotics consumption and proliferation. The “strike Hard, Maximum Pressure” anti-criminal campaign began in 1997 by

²¹⁶ Engvall, 841.

²¹⁷ CACI Johns Hopkins - Silk Studies Programme, “Country Factsheets, – Tajikistan 2004”, http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/inside/research/narcotics_crime/FactSheet/2004/Tajikistan.pdf

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Nalin Kumar Mohapatra, “Political and Security Challenges in Central Asia: The drug trafficking dimension”, *International Studies*, 44/2 (2007): 161.

the PRC government involved the coercive detoxification of apprehended heroin users.²²⁰ In February 2002 China launched its first nationwide anti-drug campaign which lasted until July, targeting civilian venues of entertainment where consumption was deemed to occur.²²¹ The same year a PRC white paper on Narcotics Control stated that “launching an anti-drug struggle to eliminate the drug scourge is the historical responsibility of the Chinese government”.²²² In another PRC white paper on Narcotics Control in 2004 it was stated that “drugs harm people's health, give rise to corruption and crimes, disrupt sustainable development and endanger national security”.²²³ In February 2004 the Minister of Public Security, Zhou Yongkang, asserted that China was to wage a “war against drugs”.²²⁴ The following March the Chinese People's Consultative Conference stated that “China should enact a law so as to beef up anti-drug drives as soon as possible”.²²⁵ In April 2005 the China National Narcotics Control Commission “launched the nationwide “People's War on Drugs” (*Jindu Renmin Zhanzheng*) in accordance with the important instructions of President Hu Jintao and other State Leaders”.²²⁶

The Tajik leadership has, like China, framed narcotics trafficking as a threat, highlighting its adverse effects on both domestic and regional security. President Rakhmonov, in a speech to the 10th UN Congress on the Prevention of Crime in April 2000, noted that “international drug

²²⁰ Jay Dautcher, “Public Health and Social Pathologies in Xinjiang”, in *Xinjiang – China's Muslim borderland*, ed. Frederick Starr (Armonk NY: Sharpe, 2004), 293.

²²¹ STRATFOR, “China: Drug Campaign targets deeper issues”, 07/02/2002, https://www.stratfor.org/products/premium/read_article.php?id=203088&selected=Country%20Profiles&showCountry=1&countryId=84&showMore=1

²²² Erik Asplund, “A two level approach to securitization: an analysis of drug trafficking in Russia and China” (Master's Thesis, Uppsala University, June 2004), 35.

²²³ Embassy of the PRC in the KSA, PRC White Paper, “Narcotics Control in China”, 27/08/2004, <http://sa.china-embassy.org/eng/zt/zfbps/t154437.htm#2>

²²⁴ Asplund, 35.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Office of China National Narcotics Commission, “China's drug control efforts”, 25/06/2008, <http://www.china.org.cn/e-news/news080625-2.htm>

traffickers use our territory as a transit route for trafficking drugs...this threatens not only security and stability but to a certain extent becomes a serious obstacle on the way of developing Tajikistan's statehood".²²⁷ Moreover "the problem of illegal drug trafficking...has been more frequently affecting interests of all states".²²⁸ In a 2006 meeting with the Chinese President, Rakhmonov noted that in the "SCO has been continuously developed and it has become an important mechanism for safeguarding security, stability and development of this region based on the "Shanghai Spirit". Tajikistan would like to strengthen cooperation with China in combating the "three forces" and drug control".²²⁹ The Chinese party remarked that Tajikistan being the "initiator of SCO narcotics control cooperation...China would like to support and assist Tajikistan in this task to ensure practical achievements".²³⁰ In a joint statement issued during a visit by Premier Hu to Dushanbe in August 2008 the two leaders "held that drug crime is a serious threat to the social stability and national security of all countries in the region. The two sides will strengthen coordination and cooperation and take effective measures to combat narcotics production and trafficking and other forms of drug crime".²³¹

2.7 - Security in Russia-China relations – Securitization of demographic issues

This section will discuss security issues of a non-traditional nature in Chinese-Russian relations and their importance to regional security. The structural factors of the post-1991 de-population of

²²⁷ The 10th United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders – Statement by President of the Republic of Tajikistan,

<http://www.uncjin.org/Documents/10thcongress/10cStatements/tajikistan14.pdf>

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC, "Hu Jintao meets with Tajik President Rakhmonov", 14/06/2002, <http://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/wjb/zzjg/dozys/gjlb/3235/3237/t258608.htm>

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC, "Joint Statement Between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Tajikistan on Further Developing Good-neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation", 27/08/08, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t511334.htm>

the Russian Far East region and Chinese immigration will be initially discussed. Thereafter the securitization of the demographic-immigration issue in Russian official discourse will be presented, highlighting the geographic relevance of adjacency to China.

2.7.1 - Structural demographic-immigration conditions & the Russian Far East

Russia, after experiencing economic collapse in the Yeltsin years, beginning in 1999 embarked on a period of steady and significant economic growth on the back of rising energy production and prices. Nevertheless, a wide range of regions within the federation have been marginalized and have not shared this burgeoning wealth. In addition, demographic trends have remained extremely unfavorable as the overall population of the Federation shrunk from 148.7 million in 1992 to 141 million by 2008.²³² The Russian Far East (RFE) region, which borders the PRC for a length of almost 4,300 km, has been affected by both economic underdevelopment and demographic retrenchment.²³³ The “Far Eastern Federal District” occupies 36% of Russian territory but possesses only 5% of Russia’s population.²³⁴ GDP per capita in remained below the national average while demographic trends have furthermore been persistently negative. Since 1991 approximately 10% of the latter’s has been lost due to emigration, low birth rates, high death rates and plunging life expectancy.²³⁵ The Chinese border provinces bordering the RFE, Heilongjiang, Liaoning, Jilin and Inner Mongolia, possess a combined population of over 130

²³² Svetlana Ancker, “Demographic Impact of HIV/AIDS in Russia: Projections, Analysis and Policy Implications”, *China and Eurasia forum Quarterly*, 6/4 (2008): 52.

²³³ The “Far East Federal District” comprises the federal subjects of Amur Oblast, Jewish Autonomous Oblast, Kamchatka Krai, Khabarovsk Krai, Magadan Oblast, Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, Sakha Republic, Sakhalin Oblast and Primorsky Krai.

²³⁴ Bakhtiyar Mirkasymov, “Russia’s Foreign Policy and Security Concerns in the Light of Security in Northeast Asia”, Russian Institute for Strategic Studies (2006): 6.

²³⁵ Ibid.

million, with a population density thirty times that of the RFE.²³⁶ The population of the bordering Chinese region has incremented by 13% in 1989-2000.²³⁷ The consequence is that increasing numbers of Chinese have emigrated to the RFE to seek economic and employment opportunities.²³⁸ Chinese immigrants in the RFE in 2004 estimated to number between a few tens of thousands up to 2 million, although the most likely figure is closer to the first estimate.²³⁹

In addition to legal migration flows, the Russian Far East has been affected by substantial illegal immigration. In 1998 border guards intercepted 25,000 Chinese immigrants trying to cross illegally into the RFE.²⁴⁰ In 2001 more than 15,000 Chinese visitors to Khabarovsk Krai “were reported to ‘have disappeared’ during their stay.”²⁴¹ Visa-free Chinese visitors have in large numbers failed to exit the country after the expiry of the 30-day legal stay period.²⁴² The Russian government, despite a lack of substantiating evidence, has repeatedly accused the Chinese government of deliberately encouraging migration to the Russian Far East to alleviate internal overpopulation and employment problems.²⁴³ In bi-lateral relations Russia has also put the immigration issue at the forefront. A Sino-Russian Joint Declaration in 2002 included an article of intent emphasizing the necessity of cooperation in countering illegal immigration.²⁴⁴ China

²³⁶ Rajan Menon, “The Sick Man of Asia: Russia’s endangered Far East”, 01/11/2003,

http://www.newamerica.net/publications/articles/2003/the_sick_man_of_asia_russias_endangered_far_east

²³⁷ STRATFOR, “Russian Far East Turning Chinese?”, 07/07/2000,

http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/russian_far_east_turning_chinese

²³⁸ Mark Burles, *Chinese Policy Toward Russia and the Central Asian Republics* (Santa Monica CA: RAND, 1999), 45-47.

²³⁹ Joseph Dresen, “Russia in Asia – Asia in Russia”, *Kennan Institute*, Occasional Paper #292 (2004): 39.

²⁴⁰ Xiaoquan Ni, “China’s Threat Perception and Policies”, in *Russia’s Far East: a region at risk*, ed. Judith Thornton & Charles Ziegler (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002), 381.

²⁴¹ Shoichi Itoh, “Can Russia become a regional power in North-East Asia? Implications from contemporary energy relations with China and Japan” (Paper presented at ERINA, Japan, May 2006), 10.

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ Ni, 379.

²⁴⁴ Itoh, 11.

has officially on its part focused on the potential of the RFE as a source of raw materials and investment recipient, China being the primary export destination for goods produced in the RFE.²⁴⁵

2.7.2 - The securitization of demographic threats in Russia-China Relations

The Russian leadership has repeatedly termed the demographic issues facing the country Russia as a national security threat, and at times specifically in reference to the situation in the RFE. This securitization has occurred at times in concomitance with that of Chinese migration to the same region. As early as 1995 Yegor Gaidar, ex-Prime Minister of Russia, “contended that China, with population density and total population greatly surpassing Russia’s, constituted a threat”.²⁴⁶ Furthermore, that Russia “should form a military alliance with the West and move its nuclear weapons to the Russian Far East”.²⁴⁷ In his first state of the union address as Russian President, Vladimir Putin, concerning Russia’s unfavorable demographic situation, stated that “if this trend continues, the survival of the nation will be under threat”.²⁴⁸ During a visit in 2000 to the city of Blagoveshchensk, located across the Amur river from the Chinese city of Heihe, he reiterated that without “a real effort in the near future to develop the Russian Far East, a few decades from now its Russian population will mostly be speaking Japanese, Chinese and Korean”.²⁴⁹ In 2003 Andrei Chernenko, head of the Russian Federal Migration Service,

²⁴⁵ Elizabeth Wishnick & Tamara Troyakova, “Challenges for the Russian Far East in the Asia-Pacific region”, Occasional Paper N. 1, Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University (December 2003): 8.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ *The Economist*, “The incredible shrinking people”, 27/11/2008, http://www.economist.com/surveys/displaystory.cfm?story_id=12627956

²⁴⁹ *American Renaissance*, “Chinese reap opportunity, rancour in Russia’s Far East”, 27/09/2006, http://www.amren.com/mtnews/archives/2006/09/chinese_reap_op.php

emphasized that the growth of Chinese communities in the Far East was politically “a ticking time bomb”.²⁵⁰

In December 2005, Russia's interior minister, Rashid Nurgaliev, stated that illegal immigration is creating a threat to national security in the Russian Far East.²⁵¹ In the 2006 state of the union address Putin again reiterated that "the most acute problem in modern-day Russia is demography".²⁵² Russia's ambassador to NATO Dmitry Rogozin also in 2006 termed Chinese immigration in the region “an invasion”.²⁵³ In 2006 Putin “urged the creation of a special commission headed by Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov to jumpstart development in the Russian Far East”.²⁵⁴ In June of the same year the President established the “Fellow Countrymen” program to start in 2007, aiming to attract Russians from ex-soviet republics with the promise of citizenship and benefits on the condition that they “settle in remote and sparsely populated areas like the Far East”.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁰ Azizian (2003), 5.

²⁵¹ PINR, “Russia-China Security Cooperation”, 27/11/2006,

http://www.pinr.com/report.php?ac=view_report&report_id=588&language_id=1

²⁵² *The Independent*, “Putin offers cash for kids to avert population crisis”, 11/05/2006,

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/putin-offers-cash-for-kids-to-avert-population-crisis-477711.html>

²⁵³ *American Renaissance*, “Chinese reap opportunity, rancour in Russia's Far East”, 27/09/2006,

http://www.amren.com/mtnews/archives/2006/09/chinese_reap_op.php

²⁵⁴ *Vladivostok News*, “Russia's Far East population continues to dwindle”, 15/03/2007,

http://vn.vladnews.ru/issue560/Special_reports/Russias_Far_East_population_continues_to_dwindle

²⁵⁵ *Center for Defense Initiative*, “Boosting Population a Vague Science”, 11/07/2008,

<http://www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/2008-130-5.cfm>

CHAPTER 3 – Findings and Data Analysis

From the discussed cases it is apparent that securitization patterns and relations within the Russia-Central Asia-China triad occur in various sectors, are securitized to different extents and through different means. It is therefore necessary to typify the nature of constructed security and the objective factors of interdependence. The securitized issues are thus to be subdivided according to the states involved and according to the relevant sector as per the Buzan et al. (1998) framework. The main findings of the thesis are that the securitization of various sectors, in addition to changes in some structural factors, have increasingly made China the most important nexus of regional security for both Russia and the bordering Central Asian states. Furthermore, that securitization and emerging patterns of amity-enmity are inherently intertwined to changes in structure affecting regional security which increasingly originate from China. The securitization patterns found in each bi-lateral relation will be therefore explained, followed by a discussion on what regional security complex has emerged in consequence.

China - Kazakhstan

The interests of China and Kazakhstan in internal regime stability have led to a convergence in securitizing the threat of Islamic radicalism, thereby exemplifying securitization in the political sector. In this regard the emphasis on the Xinjiang region has exemplified a common security interest which directly affects a geographical area relevant to both states. The discourse within

the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has exemplified the institutionalization of convergent threat perceptions and security interests of the states involved.

In terms of economic security, the securitization processes are similarly present although asymmetrical in nature. China has securitized its energy supply concerns overall, in an effort to maintain its economic resilience and the political legitimacy of the ruling elite. Furthermore, economic ties have expanded so significantly in 1991-2008 to the point that economic dependence on Russia does not characterize the Kazakh economy today. This indisputable structural change makes Kazakhstan increasingly part of a China-centered rather than Russia-centered RSC for what concerns the economic sector. Overall, China recognizes Kazakhstan's importance as a growing producer of hydrocarbons whose geographic location is proximate and secure, and who can furthermore play a part in maintaining peace and stability in delicate Xinjiang.

China - Russia

In China's interaction with Russia the demographic question has been incrementally securitized by the Russian leadership. Although a problem which affects Russia on a national scale, the special conditions of the Russian Far East and its adjacency to China have made it a security issue of primarily regional relevance. The discourse has highlighted the problem both in terms of threat to Russian identity and to the country's political system, hence pertinent to both the

political and societal sectors. The cooperation of China in addressing this issue at an inter-state and diplomatic level has however not been accompanied by a concomitant securitizing discourse.

In terms of the economic sector, Russia-China ties have expanded exponentially from the 1991 levels. China sees Russia, like Kazakhstan, as a partner in fulfilling its economic security as an energy provider whose geographic position is especially important. The burgeoning magnitude of Chinese investments has resulted in the discussed example of securitization of Chinese investments in strategic Russian assets, which Russia considers as vital to its national security. The asymmetry of securitization in both sectors would indicate an overall perception of China as a threat on the part of Russia.

China - Tajikistan

China and Tajikistan have both acknowledged narcotics trafficking and terrorism as common security threats. The weakness of the Tajik state has made China the most relevant and reliable partner in addressing the country's problems. China sees Tajikistan as the conduit through which narcotics increasingly transit, and another space where terrorist-separatist forces may operate to the detriment of China's security. The discourse illustrated in this bi-lateral relation is a further instance of converging security threat constructions of these two issues.

The securitization processes taken together seem to indicate that the boundaries dividing the East Asian and post-Soviet RSCs are not as defined as originally postulated. The security interaction between China and Kazakhstan shows that China's security discourse is increasingly concerned with the security and development of Kazakhstan. Russia, willing or not, has recognized that its regional demographic-economic problems, coupled with Chinese dynamism, make its security interdependent with the latter's. Tajikistan, the weakest state of the study, necessitates China as a security guarantor because of limited capabilities and geographic isolation.

China is the key element in bringing Russia and Central Asia into its existent RSC in a dual manner. Firstly, because it needs the common understanding of its Central Asian neighbors to fulfill its security objectives, and vice-versa. Secondly, from the perspective of Russia, China remains the source from which its economic and demographic security threats emanate. Russia's geography is the main reason for this security concerns to exist, the consequences of being an oil-dependent economy in the vicinity of a great power with growing energy needs. The RSCT framework theorized the belonging of Central Asia to a Russia-centered RSC, where Russia is the fundamental security nexus. China's concerns look eastwards to the China Sea, Japan, the Koreas and the Pacific are main areas of security interest for the country, its northern and western flanks a politically and geographically peripheral concern. Taking these hypotheses as a given fact, the application of RSCT nevertheless empirically demonstrates an abundance of multi-sector security interaction between China and the Central Asian states and between China and Russia. Patterns of amity have emerged between China and the Central Asian states for what concerns their common securitized sectors. The lack of convergent securitization in Russia-China relations, although not explicitly constituting enmity, nevertheless shows how issues in a

common geographic space need to be inter-subjectively constructed in order to be considered security threats. The urgency and sense of threat exemplified in Russian discourse is not present in China, therefore the objective factors of cross-border migration and energy sector investment are not seen as such by the latter. The differing constructions of security indicate the nature of relations between states in a region, who would be otherwise not recognizable through an exclusively realist prism.

CHAPTER 4 - Conclusion

The findings of the thesis illustrate multiple securitization patterns of a geographically concentrated and trans-national nature. China manifests itself as the nexus of these non-traditional security interactions through its links to both Russia and the Central Asian states which it borders. The temporal evolution of the underlying structural links, in addition to the identified securitizing discourse, show how the role of China as the focus of security interaction for the region has increased in significance during the 1991 to 2008 period under study. The application of the RSCT and securitization theory offers two major contributions to understanding these regional security issues in central and eastern Asia. First, that traditional realist security concerns would not be capable of assessing the region's principal security interactions which comprise non-traditional sectors are the main nexus. An exclusively realist approach to research would therefore be inadequate to show what issues are on the security and political agenda of the respective states. The study of discourse, through a constructivist perspective, is therefore able to ascertain whether structural factors are indeed security, filling the objectivist shortcomings of the realist paradigm. An exclusively constructivist approach would therefore also fail to fully capture the change of structure which constitutes the interdependence between states in a regional security complex. From this point of view, neo-realist elements in the RSCT framework are filling the void of an exclusively agency-focused approach. Second, that the regional nature of the threats securitized strongly supports the claim that geographic proximity is a major factor in promoting security interaction. All the threats securitized threats emanate from the near vicinity of the states involved, and the individual

security of each state cannot be separated from that of the neighboring one. As discussed at the beginning of the thesis, the applicability of Copenhagen School securitization theory to non-democratic contexts have been put in question. Nevertheless the elements of securitization discourse and measures which have been empirically applied contribute to understanding how security is constructed by the states involved. This thesis hence contributes not only to understanding how RSCs emerge and evolve through time, but allows RSCT to exit the realm of theorization and enter that of empirical utility.

The thesis has, mainly for time and space constraints, limited the scope of study to specific cases of securitization in specific states. Other security issues, in addition to an enlargement of the number of cases-states whose discourse is analyzed, could contribute to strengthening the response to the original research agenda. At the moment the securitization of other possible sectors in the region has yet to emerge. Further research into the economic ties of Russia and China, especially in regards to arms trade and energy trade between the two, could possibly offer more evidence of securitized aspects of this relationship. Issues of migration security, in this essay looked at from the Russia-China perspective, have been considered important in Kazakhstan-China relations.²⁵⁶ This thesis has singularly emphasized on the immediate adjacency of states as promoter of security interdependence, therefore not discussing the Central Asian states of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan for their lack of a border with China. However, taking into account the involvement of China in the energy sector of Turkmenistan, the latter's relative geographical relevance and its significant natural gas reserves, securitizing discourse

²⁵⁶ Rouben Azizian, "Islamic Radicalism in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan", *CSRC discussion paper*, 05/56 (September 2005): 5-6.

could also eventually emerge in this bi-lateral relation.²⁵⁷ China's engagement with Uzbekistan as a source of oil supply and as the most important state in fighting Islamic radicalism in Central Asia could similarly highlight emerging security interdependence. Recent events may point to future trends in regional securitization. The 2007 Kazakh military doctrine document labeled terrorism as the primary threat to the state.²⁵⁸ Nevertheless in September 2008 Kazakhstan conducted the largest ever joint military exercises with Russia, "rehearsing how to repel an attack on Kazakhstan by an *adjacent state*" (cursive added).²⁵⁹ The "Centre 2008" exercises "unfolded around an attempt by an aggressor state to seize control of Kazakhstan energy assets".²⁶⁰ Despite a current lack of securitizing discourse vis-à-vis China, this could be precursor to a future securitization of regional military relations.

In conclusion, the growing economic and political weight of China is bound to increase interdependence with its neighbors, and may lead to a greater awakening to economic and military security issues of importance to Astana, Dushanbe and Moscow. Other securitized threats in the region, especially related to long-term demographic trends and internal instability, are likely to continue to remain securitized at least in the medium term. The future securitization of other sectors by the respective leaderships may reveal new patterns of amity-enmity and further clarify the presence of a security complex which is still in its infancy.

²⁵⁷ Sebastien Peyrouse, "Economic Aspects of Chinese-Central Asia rapprochement", *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Silk Road Paper* (September 2007): 66.

²⁵⁸ Roger N. McDermott, "Kazakhstan's Defence Policy: an assessment of the trends", *Strategic Studies Institute* (February 2009): 43.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 43.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 44.

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