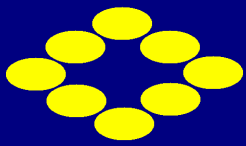


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CHINA RISING IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

(Gracia Abad, coord.)

Section I: General Articles

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| <i>Robert Sutter</i> | China, the United States and a "Power Shift" in Asia |
| <i>Wolfgang Deckers</i> | Europe, US, China: The Past, the Present, the Future; Who Will Benefit from the Triangular Relationship |
| <i>Gracia Abad</i> | The Beijing Consensus in the Shadow of the Global Financial Crisis |

Section II: Specific Articles

- | | |
|--|--|
| <i>Stephen Blank</i> | Russia's Failure in Asia |
| <i>David García</i> | El despliegue estratégico de EEUU, La República Popular China y la seguridad en Asia 2001-2010 |
| <i>Wang Yiwei</i> | Clash of Identities: Why China and the EU are Inharmonious in Global Governance |
| <i>Renato Balderrama and Selene Martínez</i> | China, América Latina y el Caribe: el doble filo de una relación positiva |
| <i>Jörn Dosch</i> | The Fallacy of Multilateralism Rhetoric in China-Southeast Asia Relations – A Neo-realist Perspective on Regional Order-Building |
| <i>Nicolás de Pedro</i> | El ascenso de China en Asia Central: ¿un nuevo hegemon regional en gestación? |
| <i>Alberto Priego</i> | Las relaciones sino-pakistaníes: ¿Hacia un nuevo paradigma? |
| <i>Arvind Kumar</i> | Future of India – China Relations: Challenges and prospects |
| <i>Irina Pop</i> | China's Energy Strategy in Central Asia: Interactions with Russia, India and Japan |

TERRORISMO / TERRORISM

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| <i>Ahmed Niyaz</i> | Terrorism and Extremism: A threat to Maldives Tourism Industry |
|--------------------|--|

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**CONTENTS / ÍNDICE**

Antonio Marquina Editor's Note / *Nota editorial* 7

CHINA RISING IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT / EL ASCENSO DE CHINA EN EL CONTEXTO MUNDIAL

(Gracia Abad, coord.)

Section I: General Articles

<i>Robert Sutter</i>	China, the United States and a "Power Shift" in Asia	9
<i>Wolfgang Deckers</i>	Europe, US, China: The Past, the Present, the Future; Who Will Benefit from the Triangular Relationship	25
<i>Gracia Abad</i>	The Beijing Consensus in the Shadow of the Global Financial Crisis	45

Section II: Specific Articles

<i>Stephen Blank</i>	Russia's Failure in Asia	61
<i>David García</i>	El despliegue estratégico de EEUU, La República Popular China y la seguridad en Asia 2001-2010	83
<i>Wang Yiwei</i>	Clash of Identities: Why China and the EU are Inharmonious in Global Governance	101
<i>Renato Balderrama</i> <i>Selene Martínez</i>	China, América Latina y el Caribe: el doble filo de una relación positiva	113
<i>Jörn Dosch</i>	The Fallacy of Multilateralism Rhetoric in China-Southeast Asia Relations – A Neo-realist Perspective on Regional Order-Building	135
<i>Nicolás de Pedro</i>	El ascenso de China en Asia Central: ¿un nuevo hegemon regional en gestación?	153
<i>Alberto Priego</i>	Las relaciones sino-pakistaníes: ¿Hacia un nuevo paradigma?	175
<i>Arvind Kumar</i>	Future of India – China Relations: Challenges and prospects	187



<i>Irina Pop</i>	China's Energy Strategy in Central Asia: Interactions with Russia, India and Japan	197
------------------	--	-----

TERRORISM / TERRORISMO

<i>Ahmed Niyaz</i>	Terrorism and Extremism: A threat to Maldives Tourism Industry	221
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LATEST NEWS / NOVEDADES

233

Sobre UNISCI / About UNISCI

241

Instrucciones para los autores

245

Instructions to authors

249

**EDITOR'S NOTE / NOTA EDITORIAL**

Antonio Marquina¹
UNISCI's Director

This issue of the journal focuses solely on China and its foreign relations. Professor Gracia Abad has coordinated a collection of studies dealing with this attractive and predominant topic that has caused significant change within the international community.

The journal opens with a study by Professor Robert Sutter. He describes why the United States will maintain its international stature and leadership due to the lack of Chinese capacities and China's unwillingness to challenge US predominance. On the other hand, Professor Wolfgang Deckers believes that the United States, China and the European Union (EU) will dominate international affairs for years to come. Decker points out that with the hybridization of EU-China relations, China will not become a sole hegemonic power, but instead a primary player within a system of regional blocs, sharing power with the US and the EU. According to Professor Deckers, China will join the US and the EU as a "shaper" of the world order, challenging Western influence in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and the former Soviet Union with a different model of globalisation. At the same time, Professor Gracia Abad complements this perspective by explaining the so-called Beijing Consensus. In recent years, Chinese development has been based on policies and measures different than those of the global financial institutions and relies on principles far different than those of the Washington Consensus. She believes that if China emerges from the global economic crisis unscathed, the Beijing Consensus will appear as an alternative to the current system based on capitalism and globalization.

Afterwards the journal shifts the focus on China's relations with Russia, the United States and the European Union. Professor Stephen Blank describes the difficulties that Russia faces regarding its Asian-Siberian territories, as well as Russia's troubled relations with its neighbours in Northeast Asia, which could cause possible repercussion in its relations with China. Professor David Garcia describes the United States' strategic stance with China and its impact throughout Asia. Garcia argues that the US views the PRC as a possible threat and, in turn, is attempting to strengthen possible key Asian allies in hope to prevent Chinese hegemony in the region. Professor Yiwei Wang follows this up by explaining that current US-China relations are not good, while China and the UE share a compatible relationship which could possibly result in the construction of a multi-polar international system based on effective multilateralism. Furthermore, China and the US have overlapping geopolitical interests, unlike China and the EU. According to Wang, "Relations between China and the US could not be worse, while China-EU relations could not be better."

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Professors Joern Dosch, Nicolás de Pedro, Alberto Priego and Arvind Kumar describe China's relations with its surrounding neighbors in Northeast and Central Asia, as well as its relations with Pakistan and India. The complexity of these relations reveal the numerous problems and issues that China must face within the Asian continent as it attempts to increase its freedom of maneuver and strengthen the economic interdependence throughout the region.

Going beyond China's periphery, Renato Balderrama and Selene Martínez discuss China's relations with Hispanic America. China has become one of the primary economic partners for several countries in the region in recent years, much like it has also increased its influence in Africa. The authors describe the medium-term implications that Chinese policies will have on Hispanic America as the PRC follows a political line that attempts to secure raw materials and natural resources.

This issue of the journal closes with two articles sent to us for publication. In the first article, Professor Irina Pop describes China's strategic energy policy in Central Asia, complementing Nicolás de Pedro's description of China's Central Asian policies. The second article by Ahmed Niyaz describes the impact that terrorism has on the Maldives Islands' tourism sector (the country's main economic sector).

Finally, I would like to personally thank Professor Gracia Abad and all of the professors that have generously contributed to this edition, as well as the UNISCI collaborators that helped in its preparation and revision.



CHINA, THE UNITED STATES AND A “POWER SHIFT” IN ASIA

Robert Sutter¹

Georgetown University

Abstract:

Recent signs of assertiveness by the Chinese administration in relations with the United States have been seen as reflecting a broader shift of power in Asian and world affairs where China is superseding the United States. Closer examination of the Chinese posture toward the United States and power dynamics in Asia shows that China has not the will nor the ability to challenge US leadership in Asia.

Keywords: U.S.-Chinese relations, Asian power dynamics and power shift.

Resumen:

Signos recientes denotando asertividad por parte del gobierno de China en sus relaciones con los EEUU han sido considerados como reflejo de un cambio general de poder en el plano tanto asiático como mundial, donde China intentaría sustituir a los EEUU. Un examen más detallado de la postura china frente a los EEUU y las dinámicas de poder en Asia muestra sin embargo que China no tiene ni la voluntad ni la capacidad de desafiar a los EEUU en Asia.

Palabras clave: Relaciones EEUU-China, dinámicas de poder en Asia y cambio de poder.

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Las opiniones expresadas en estos artículos son propias de sus autores, y no reflejan necesariamente la opinión de UNISCI. The views expressed in these articles are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNISCI.

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1. Introduction

The post Cold War order in Asia has been characterized by US leadership and the rise of Asian powers, notably China, to new prominence. In recent years, a common line of analysis has focused on the shortcomings and weaknesses of the United States and the strengths of rising China to forecast a “power shift” from American to Chinese leadership in Asia, the area of the world where China has traditionally exerted its greatest influence. Chinese behavior in the past two years has witnessed greater Chinese assertiveness against the United States regarding bilateral and international issues, suggesting to some that the time has come when China will break away from the patterns of the recent past and pursue a leadership role in Asian and world affairs, leaving behind the United States.

This article assesses the evidence of recent Chinese assertiveness against the United States and other trends in contemporary Asia to forecast continued US leadership and continued Chinese accommodation to and inability and reluctance to replace American leadership in Asia.

2. A Time of “Testing” in Sino-American Relations

2009 showed the strengths and the weaknesses of contemporary American engagement with China. President Barack Obama entered office to face a host of major international and domestic problems. China policy was not one of them. The president’s campaign was unusual as China policy was absent as a significant issue of debate. Expert opinion urged the incoming US government to pursue the positive equilibrium seen in closer US-China engagement developed during the latter years of the George W. Bush administration.²

Prominent Americans saw cooperation between China and the United States as the most important relationship in 21st century international politics. They argued for a “G-2” condominium between Washington and Beijing in order to direct major international issues including the global economic recession, climate change, conflicts in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and nuclear weapons development in North Korea and Iran.³

The Obama government was more realistic about what could be expected in cooperation with China. It sought China’s assistance, as well as the assistance of other important powers, in dealing with complicated international issues. It tried to reassure Chinese leaders that the US government would not seriously challenge China in dealing with sensitive issues regarding trade protectionism, human rights, meeting with Tibet’s Dalai Lama, and arms sales to Taiwan. It followed the pattern developed during the Bush administration of dealing with the many differences in US-China relations through various bilateral dialogues. There are over sixty such dialogues, including an annual meeting led by

² Jacques deLisle: “China Policy Under Obama”, Foreign Policy Research Institute, *E-Notes* (15 February, 2009); Shambaugh, David: “Early Prospects of the Obama Administration’s Strategic Agenda with China,” Foreign Policy Research Institute, *E-Notes* (April 2009); Medeiros, Evan: “Is Beijing Ready for Global Leadership,” *Current History*, vol 108, no.719 (September 2009), pp. 250-254; Goldstein, Avery: “Prolonging East Asia’s Surprising Peace—Can It Be Managed”, Foreign Policy Research Institute, *E-Notes* (14 August, 2009).

³ Prominent Americans identified with this view include Zbigniew Brzezinski, Robert Zoellick, and C. Fred Bergsten. For critical response see, Economy, Elizabeth and Segal, Adam: “The G-2 Mirage,” *Foreign Affairs* vol. 88, no. 3 (May-June 2009) 56-72.



the US Secretaries of State and Treasury, where American and Chinese leaders endeavor to manage their differences and broaden cooperation, out of the limelight of media scrutiny. As a result, the carefully managed public discourse between the US and Chinese governments tends to emphasize the positives in the relationship. Differences are dealt with in private meetings.⁴

Nevertheless, many significant differences became vividly clear as the year wore on, underlining the limits of positive US-Chinese engagement. Chinese officials criticized the Obama government's strategy in Southwest Asia and eschewed significant involvement against the Taliban. Chinese leaders complained frequently about US stewardship in the global economy and made repeated references to diversifying from the US market, investment in US government securities, and use of the US dollar. American complaints about restricted access to the Chinese market amid the massive trade deficit with China saw some moves to restrict Chinese imports and other actions which China greeted with trade retaliation and loud charges of protectionism.⁵

Chinese and American officials endeavored to develop common ground on climate change, but progress was limited and public acrimony between the US and Chinese delegations highlighted the December international meeting in Copenhagen. President Obama undertook extraordinary last minute efforts to get China, India, Brazil and South Africa to join in support of the limited accord that was agreed to.⁶

Sino-American cooperation was better in dealing with North Korea's second nuclear weapons test and other provocations, but the powers remained at odds regarding the utility of using international pressure to compel North Korean cooperation. Beijing was even more reluctant to apply pressure against Iran's nuclear development.⁷

Military relations remained tense. Chinese government ships confronted and harassed US Navy surveillance ships patrolling in international waters that China claimed as a special zone in the South China Sea. China blocked military exchanges for months because of a US arms transfer to Taiwan late in the Bush administration. Renewed military exchanges in 2009 featured strong Chinese warnings against US arms sales to Taiwan.⁸

Against this background, expectations for US-China relations were guarded. Deep mutual suspicion reportedly characterized official US-China interchange. Non-government demonstrations of antipathy showed, especially on the American side. The US media was very critical of President Obama's "weak" stance on various human rights, trade and other issues sensitive to Americans during his November trip to China. Majorities of Americans

⁴ Lieberthal, Kenneth: "The China-US Relationship Goes Global" *Current History*, vol 108, no. 719 (September 2009), pp. 243-246; "China-US dialogue successful—vice premier", *China Daily*, 29 July, 2009, p. 1; Clinton, Hillary and Geithner, Timothy: "A New Strategic and Economic Dialogue with China", *Wall Street Journal*, 27 July, 2009, at <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204886304574308753825396372.html>.

⁵ Glaser, Bonnie: "Obama-Hu Summit: Success or Disappointment?", *Comparative Connections*, vol 11, no 4 (January 2010), pp. 25-35.

⁶ Babington, Charles and Loven, Jennifer: "Obama raced clock, chaos, comedy for climate deal", *www.statesman.com*, 19 December, 2009, at <http://www.statesman.com/news/world/obama-raced-clock-chaos-for-climate-deal-134835.html?printArticle=y>.

⁷ Landler, Mark: "Clinton warns China on Iran Sanctions", *New York Times*, 29 January, 2010, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/30/world/asia/30diplo.html>.

⁸ Buckley, Chris: "China PLA officers urge economic punch against US", *Reuters*, 09 February, 2010, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE6183KG20100209>.



were unimpressed by the purported benefits of engagement as they continued to disapprove of the Chinese government and increasingly saw China as a threat to the United States.⁹

Despite their salience, disputes and differences in US-China relations in 2009 did not appear sufficient to substantially upset enduring patterns of pragmatic decision making among the Chinese and American leaders focused on continued engagement with one another. The Obama administration remained preoccupied with a wide range of important domestic and foreign policy questions. In this context, a significant dispute with China appeared among the last things the preoccupied US government would want; on the contrary, the incentive to continue at least a semblance of cooperation and to avoid conflict with China seemed strong.

The Chinese administration of President Hu Jintao set a central foreign and domestic policy goal for the next decade focused on China fostering a continuation of the prevailing international situation seen generally advantageous for China in order to allow for expeditious modernization in China. Exploiting this period of perceived “strategic opportunity” in international affairs seemed to require keeping US-China relations moving in positive directions.¹⁰

The Hu Jintao administration worked hard in fostering business-like and constructive relations with the George W. Bush administration. In 2009, the Chinese administration insured that its initiatives and probes did not seriously disrupt the advantages for China in sustaining generally positive relations with the United States. Thus, Chinese probes against US military surveillance in the South China Sea subsided. Despite public complaints and threats, Chinese investment in US securities continued and Chinese reliance on the US dollar remained. While Chinese officials planned for an eventual reliance on the Chinese consumer to drive economic growth, Chinese entrepreneurs seemed determined to sustain and expand their shares of the reviving US market. China also acceded to varying degrees US arguments on North Korea, Iran, and climate change. It resumed active military contacts cut off because of US arms sales to Taiwan in 2008.¹¹

Unfortunately for those seeking to strengthen the image of positive cooperation and engagement between the two world powers, 2010 got off to an acrimonious start. February was a particularly bad month. Chinese officials and authoritative commentary took the unusual step of escalating criticism and threats against reports of planned US arms sales to Taiwan. The Chinese administration well knew that the sales were expected and had probably been delayed in order to avoid controversy prior to President Obama’s visit to China in November 2009. Nonetheless, official Chinese media was full of warnings in early 2010 against the sales. When the US package of \$6.4 billion of weapons systems was announced in early February, the Chinese reaction was publicly strong. Concrete retaliation included halting some defense talks, while threatened retaliation was directed against US firms selling military equipment to Taiwan and included warnings that China would be less cooperative with US officials in dealing with such salient international problems as Iran’s suspected nuclear weapons program.¹²

⁹ Glaser, *op. cit.*

¹⁰ Lampton, David Michael (2008): *The Three Faces of Chinese Power: Might, Money, and Minds*, Berkeley CA, University of California Press, pp. 32-36.

¹¹ See quarterly reviews of US-China relations in *Comparative Connections*, at www.csis.org/pacfor.

¹² Romberg, Alan: “Beijing’s Hard Line against US Arms Sales to Taiwan”, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), *PACNET Newsletter* #4 03 February, 2010, at <http://csis.org/files/publication/pac1004.pdf>.



The Obama government made no secret of the fact that in deference to China and concern over the president's trip to Beijing in November, the US government had postponed the US president's meeting with the Dalai Lama rather than meet with the Tibetan leader during his visit to Washington in October 2009. Thus, when news of the rescheduled Obama-Dalai Lama meeting surfaced in February 2010, Chinese officials and media once again appeared to be trying to intimidate the Americans by warning against the meeting and its consequences for US-China relations.¹³

Coming after the sometimes acrimonious Sino-American interaction at the international climate change meeting in Copenhagen and following limited US success in eliciting greater Chinese support for key US international objectives regarding climate change, Iran's nuclear program, and international currency and trade issues, the tougher public posture of China prompted a range of speculation by media observers and international affairs specialists in the United States, China, other parts of Asia and the West. While there were often widely varying views and perspectives, the debate focused on two general groups.¹⁴

2.1. Group One: The more prominent group warned of a potential or actual turning point in China-US relations.¹⁵ The specialists and media commentators in this group tended to see rising China as having reached a point of greater power and influence in world affairs, and this rise was now prompting China to press the United States for concessions on key issues of longstanding dispute like Taiwan and Tibet. China's greater "confidence" and "assertiveness" also were prompting Beijing to take tough stances in disputes with the United States on currency and trade issues, human rights practices, and cyber attacks, and to do less in support of US-backed international efforts regarding Iran, North Korea, and climate change. Some saw China taking the lead and setting the agenda in US-China relations, with the United States placed in a weaker and reactive position.¹⁶ It was common among these commentators for the Americans and others in Asia and the West among them to argue for a tougher US stance against China, a so-called American "push-back" against perceived Chinese assertiveness.¹⁷ However, some specialists in this group judged that the Obama government, with its many preoccupations, was not up to the task of managing the newly assertive China; they saw as a shift in international power in Asian and world affairs away from US leadership and toward China developing greater momentum.¹⁸

¹³ Buckley, Chris and Eckert, Paul: "China warns against Obama-Dalai Lama meeting", *Reuters*, 03 February, 2010, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE6120RR20100203>.

¹⁴ Sutter, Robert: "Positive Equilibrium in U.S.-China Relations: Durable or Not?", University of Maryland, School of Law, *Series in Contemporary Asian Studies*, no. 4 (2009), pp.5-9.

¹⁵ Shambaugh, David: "The Chinese tiger shows its claws", *Financial Times*, 17 February, 2010 at www.ft.com; Zakaria, Fareed: "US-China growing pains," *The Washington Post*, 08 February, 2010, p. A15; Samuelson, Robert: "The danger behind China's 'me first' worldview", *The Washington Post*, 15 February, 2010, p. A17.

¹⁶ Hoagland, James : "As Obama bets on Asia, regional players hedge", *Washington Post*, 11 February, 2010, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/11/AR2010021103270.html> .

¹⁷ Marr, Kendra: "White House takes tougher tone with China", *Politico*, 16 February, 2010, at <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0210/32930.html>.

¹⁸ Jacques, Martin: "Crouching dragon, weakened eagle", *International Herald Tribune*, 16 February, 2010, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/17/opinion/17iht-edjacques.html>.



The specific points made by these commentators and specialists included the following:

- China emerged from the global economic crisis of 2008-2009 stronger than other major powers, including the United States, which remained stuck in a slow recovery with large unemployment. Commentators in China and abroad commonly saw economics as the prime cause for the power shift away from US leadership and toward China that they perceived was well underway in Asian and world affairs. Indeed, it was judged by some that the international economic system was undergoing a significant change, away from Western-led norms and institutions and toward international regimes where rising China would play an ever greater role seen at odds with the liberal Western order fostered by the United States.
- In his visit to China in November 2009 and other US-China interchange, President Obama and his administration signaled a strong need for US cooperation with China on a wide variety of international as well as bilateral issues. The US policy agenda was seen to underline the necessity of the US government working closely with China. Under these circumstances, Chinese leaders were portrayed by Chinese and foreign experts to have discerned that America needed China more than China needed the United States. In the past, such calculations were seen behind upsurges in Chinese pressure on the US government regarding Taiwan and other issues. In the current case, President Obama was viewed as “weak” and needing to accommodate China, which could afford to make stronger demands and to do less to accommodate its American partner.
- One line of analysis in this group said that the incentive for senior Chinese leaders to adopt tougher and less cooperative policies toward the United States had less to do with their confidence in international affairs and more to do with their concerns about managing domestic Chinese pressures. Chinese elites and popular opinion reportedly were influenced by international and Chinese commentary highlighting China’s rise from the economic crisis while the United States lagged behind. These segments of Chinese opinion joined with those officials in China representing military, domestic economic and other stakeholders in China’s ever growing international profile who were not associated with the more experienced and generally diplomatic approach of the professional Chinese foreign policy establishment. The domestic, military and other officials joined with popular and elite opinion in pushing for greater attention to Chinese interests and greater resistance to US requests or pressures. In order to preserve domestic stability and the continued smooth rule of the communist party in China, President Hu Jintao and other leaders were seen to have little choice but to accommodate domestic forces pushing for a harder position against America.¹⁹

2.2. Group One: The second group of Chinese international observers was much less prominent than those of Group One during the early weeks of 2010. The specialists and commentators of the second group duly acknowledged China’s more publicly assertive stance on Taiwan and Tibet; limited Chinese cooperation with the United States on issues ranging from currency and trade issues to climate change and Iran’s nuclear program also was noted. These observers often anticipated a difficult year ahead for Sino-American relations, especially as the Obama government was pressed by domestic economic and political forces

¹⁹ Wong, Edward: “Rift grows as US and China seek differing goals”, *New York Times*, 20 February, 2010, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/20/world/asia/20china.html>.



in the United States to adopt a firmer stance against China on sensitive issues like human rights, trade disputes, and Iran.

However, these specialists and commentators tended to see more continuity than change in Sino-American relations.²⁰ They disagreed with idea that China had now reached a point where it was prepared to confront America on key issues and or where it was prepared to risk substantial deterioration in Sino-American relations. Some of these observers tended to see the Chinese pressure on Taiwan and Tibet as “probes” or “tests” of US resolve, not unlike the probes China appeared to carry out in the South China Sea in 2009 and in threatening that year to move away substantially from the US dollar and to move away from focus on the US market for Chinese exports. As noted earlier, China was viewed to have pulled back from those 2009 initiatives once it was clear that their consequences would be adverse to broad Chinese interests.²¹

Among specific reasons for judging continuation of Chinese efforts to avoid substantial conflict and sustain positive engagement in the United States were:

- China’s dependence on the US economy and its reliance on the international order led by the United States remained enormous. The ability of an aroused United States to complicate and undermine Chinese interests in sustaining the “strategic opportunity” of an advantageous international environment in the first two decades of the twenty first century also remained enormous.
- China was compelled in the previous decade to reverse its strong opposition to US hegemonism in the interests of a policy to reassure the United States and its associates that China’s rise would be peaceful. It did so in major part to avoid US balancing that would impede China’s growth and so complicate China’s rise that it might lead to the end of the CCP regime.²² Reversing such a policy approach would be a very difficult undertaking for a Hu Jintao administration entering its last years with a focus on smooth succession from one leadership generation to the next. Thus, the incentive for the Hu Jintao administration to sustain generally positive Sino-US relations was reinforced by the pending generational leadership succession due to take place at the 18th Chinese Communist Party Congress in 2012. Preparations for this decennial event involve widespread behind-the-scenes bargaining over policy, power, and appointment issues that are best carried out in an atmosphere where Chinese leaders are not diverted by serious controversy among the many issues they face at home and abroad, notably Sino-American relations.
- If China were to choose to confront the United States, it would presumably be inclined to follow the past pattern China used in dealing with international initiatives against potential or real adversaries. That pattern involves “united front” tactics whereby China is sensitive to and endeavors to build closer ties with other powers as it prepares to confront the adversary,

²⁰ Pei, Minxin: “The Tension is overstated”, *International Herald Tribune*, 16 February, 2010, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/17/opinion/17iht-edpei.html>; Economy, Elizabeth: “The US and China Have at it Again; but it’s much ado about nothing”, Council for Foreign Relations (CFR), *Blog Asia Unbound*, 02 February, 2010, at <http://blogs.cfr.org/asia/2010/02/02/the-u-s-and-china-have-at-it-again/> ; Richter, Paul: “US, China make effort to get along”, *Los Angeles Times* 15 February, 2010, at <http://articles.latimes.com/2010/feb/15/world/la-fg-us-china15-2010feb15> .

²¹ These points and those in the bullets paragraphs below benefited from off-the-record consultations and meetings the author had with two dozen American specialists and five Chinese officials in Washington DC during February 2010.

²² Lampton, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-34; Sutter, Robert (2010): *Chinese Foreign Relations: Power and Policy Since the Cold War* Lanham, MD, Rowman and Littlefield, p. 10.



the “main” target. However, prevailing conditions in Chinese foreign relations did not show particularly good Chinese relations with many important world power centers as China faced the United States in 2010. China’s relations with India, Japan, Western Europe, South Korea, Australia, and arguably Russia were very mixed and often troubled. With the exception of Japan, they were more troubled and less cooperative than they were earlier in the decade.

It is likely that only time will tell whether Group One or Group Two has the correct assessment of contemporary Sino-American relations. Support for the thinking of those in Group Two was seen in episodes later in 2010 which witnessed the United States respond to newly prominent Chinese assertions of rights sensitive to American interests notably in the Yellow Sea and the South China Sea. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made firm statements of American interests and determinations at odds with China’s position at the ASEAN Regional Forum annual meeting in July that garnered significant international support. The United States deployed a US aircraft carrier to the coast of Vietnam for exercises with the country with the most active disputes over China’s claims to the South China. After an initial flurry of critical commentary regarding the US actions, top level Chinese officials went out of their way to underline their interest in sustained cooperative relations with the United States.²³

Against this background, this writer tends to support the view seen in Group Two. The reasons stem partly from a book length assessment he has completed on the past and present status of Sino-American relations.²⁴ The events chronicled there show a Sino-American relationship with many problems as well as strengths. They demonstrate that the positive equilibrium prevailing in recent interaction between the US and Chinese governments is likely to endure the current episodes of friction.

3. The United States, Rising China, and the Asian Order

Heading the list of reasons for forecasting continued Chinese cooperation with the United States despite salient differences is the reality of power in Asia. Though there is much discussion in China and abroad about China superseding the United States as Asia’s leader, a close analysis of recent trends shows that the Chinese leadership has neither the ability nor the intention to undertake the leadership role carried out by the United States in the region. China’s rise in Asia remains encumbered by domestic, regional and international limitations, while the United States shows continued resolve and resilience in regional leadership.²⁵

3.1. China’s Current Influence in Asia

By 2009, twenty years after the Tiananmen Incident and the end of the cold war, several features of the Asian order reflected major advances in Chinese influence and prominence, though limitations and setbacks affecting Chinese influence and interests also were evident. The United States, Asian powers, and a number of smaller regional government generally

²³ “China-Southeast Asia Relations,” *Comparative Connections* October 2010 www.csis.org/pacfor

²⁴ Sutter, Robert (2010): *US- Chinese Relations: Perilous Past, Pragmatic Present*, Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

²⁵ Versions of this analysis have appeared in several of the author’s writings, including Sutter, Robert (2009): *The United States in Asia*, Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, and in *Europa World Plus*, at <http://www.europaworld.com>.



sought to cooperate with China on the one hand, while they prepared for contingencies in case the recent Chinese moderation in Asia shifted to a more aggressive or disruptive course. These governments remained determined to preserve their interests and independence of action in the face of changing Asian power dynamics characterized by China's increasing influence, thereby preserving an Asian order where China remained far from dominant.²⁶

An implication of this situation for China's future role in world affairs seemed to be that China would remain preoccupied dealing with complicated power dynamics in Asia along with many difficult Chinese domestic issues. Those domestic issues included securing smooth leadership succession and Communist Party unity; battling pervasive corruption in order to foster good governance for Chinese constituents; sustaining strong economic growth in order to insure employment and material benefits for the vast majority of Chinese people; boosting administrative support for those left behind by China's economic modernization so that the gap between the rich and poor in China will stop widening and narrow somewhat; ending grossly wasteful use of China's limited resources and those imported from abroad; and finding efficient and economical means to gradually reduce the widespread environmental damage caused by Chinese economic development. The policy priorities and preoccupations of Chinese leaders were many and complicated. China's rise in Asia represented a major accomplishment for China's leadership, but it also added issues and complications.²⁷

One can come to a balanced assessment of China's influence in Asia by first examining salient strengths and weaknesses in China's position in Asia, and then examining the strengths and weaknesses of the United States and other states whose influence in Asian affairs affects China's position.²⁸

Chief among China's strengths is its central role as a leading trading partner for almost all Asian countries and a recipient of investment from many of its Asian neighbors. China was a ready market for Asian producers of energy and raw materials. It was difficult for many Asian manufacturers of consumer products and industrial goods to compete in international and domestic markets with low cost and good quality Chinese manufactured goods. The Asian manufacturers often invested in China in order to integrate their enterprises with China by joining the wave of foreign companies that made China each year the largest or one of the largest recipients of foreign direct investment in the world.

The resulting webs of trading relationships involved "processing trade," which accounted for half of China's overall trade each year. The process in this trade involved the following: Led by foreign invested enterprises in China, who accounted for half of China's foreign trade, consumer and industrial goods were produced in China with components imported from foreign enterprises abroad, often in other parts of Asia. The developing product and its components would cross the Chinese border, sometimes several times, before the final product was completed. China often was the final point of assembly and the value added in

²⁶ Medeiros, Evan (ed.) (2008): *Pacific Currents: The Responses of US Allies and Security Partners in East Asia to China's Rise*, Santa Monica, CA, RAND Corporation.

²⁷ Chinese policy priorities are reviewed in Sutter, "Chinese Foreign Relations...", *op. cit.*, pp. 19-52.

²⁸ Among recent assessments of the contemporary strengths and weaknesses of China, the United States, and other Asian governments in Asian affairs see: Lum, Thomas (coord.) (2008): *Comparing Global Influence: China and the US Diplomacy, Foreign Aid, Trade, and Investment in the Developing World* Washington, D.C.: The Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress; Shambaugh, David and Yahuda, Michael (eds.) (2008): *International Relations of Asia*, Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield; Tellis, Ashley; Kuo, Mercy and Marble, Andrew (2008): *Strategic Asia 2008-2009*, Seattle, National Bureau of Asian Research; Sutter, "Chinese Foreign Relations...", *op. cit.*; and Sutter, "The United States in Asia...", *op. cit.*



China was relatively small in relation to the total value of the product. The final product frequently would be exported to advanced Asian economies or even more frequently to China's largest export markets, the United States and the European Union. In sum, this process meant that China's importance as a recipient of Asian investment, a leading trading partner, and an overall engine of economic growth rose dramatically in Asia.

The Southeast Asian countries bordering China became heavily influenced by China's economic growth. Often with the support of international financial institutions, China built along what had been underdeveloped land borders with Southeast Asian states networks of roads, railways, riverways, hydroelectric dams and electric power transmission grids, and pipelines that linked China ever more closely with these nations. The high mountains dividing China from South Asia made such linkages more difficult to build, but the development pattern was followed to some degree in Chinese economic relations with Central Asian states. China also developed a remarkably close economic integration with Taiwan; the Taiwan's economy became increasingly dependent on interchange with China.

Adroit Chinese diplomacy followed the lines of China's evolving "good neighbor" policy toward Asian countries. Chinese relations with most near-by Asian countries improved markedly. High-level Chinese leaders were very active and attentive in frequent bilateral and multilateral meetings with Asian counterparts. Their "win-win" diplomacy held that China and Asian partners should seek mutual benefit by focusing on developing areas of common ground while putting aside differences. China made few demands on Asian countries. The exceptions involved requiring support for China's stance on Taiwan, Tibet, and such nationalistic issues. China's approach was greeted positively by Asian neighbors, many of whom remembered and sought to avoid repetition of the assertive and disruptive Chinese policies of the past.

China's diplomacy emphasized willingness to trade with and to provide some aid, investment, and military support to countries with "no strings attached." This approach was well received by Asian governments in Myanmar (Burma), Cambodia and elsewhere.

Another feature of Chinese diplomacy was emphasis on Chinese language, culture, and personal exchanges. This included Chinese support for Confucius Institutes and other organizations promoting the teaching of Chinese language and Chinese culture, and facilitating ever larger numbers of Chinese tourist groups traveling to neighboring countries. Breakthroughs in negotiations with Taiwan in 2008 and 2009 saw the influx of six hundred thousand Chinese tourists to Taiwan in one year

Chinese efforts to reassure neighboring countries that rising China would not threaten them saw public statements of Chinese officials and those of most Asian states play down the significance of China's impressive military build up. Nonetheless, it was obvious to all concerned that China was building the strongest military forces in Asia and developing a growing capability to impede access to key areas along China's periphery (notably Taiwan) to American military forces should they attempt to intervene.

Significant limitations and shortcomings seen in China's relations in Asia started with China's relationship with Japan, Asia's richest country and the key ally of the United States. The record in recent years showed that China usually was unsuccessful in winning greater support, despite many positive economic and other connections linking China and Japan. During the tenure of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi (2001-2006), China engaged in an effort to isolate Japan and diminish its prominence in Asian and world affairs. China did so



partly in reaction to Koizumi's insistence on visiting the controversial Yasukuni war memorial in Tokyo that China finds grossly objectionable on account of the memorial's honoring convicted Japanese war criminals among those who served the Japanese state. Relations also worsened because of disputes over territorial and resources claims in the East China Sea, intrusions of Chinese naval vessels into Japanese claimed areas around the Japanese islands, and competition for influence in Southeast Asia and in the United Nations. Mass demonstration in China in 2005 destroyed Japanese property; they continued for several days before Chinese authorities stopped them.

In general, the Chinese effort to isolate Japan and punish Koizumi did not work. Koizumi remained popular at home and Asian governments were loath to choose between China and Japan. When Koizumi finally left office, China quickly shifted policy to improve relations with new Japanese leaders less inclined to visit the Yasukuni shrine. Relations improved somewhat though the differences over historical issues, territorial and resource claims, military issues, and diplomatic competition remained unresolved. Japanese views of China remained negative.

Asia's other large powers, India and Russia showed ambivalence about relations with China. India's interest in accommodation with China was very mixed. The border issue between the two countries ran hot and cold, as did their competition for influence among the countries surrounding India and in Southeast and Central Asia. The limited progress in Sino-Indian relations became overshadowed by a remarkable upswing in India's strategic cooperation with the United States. Meanwhile, Russian and Chinese interest in close alignment waxed and waned and appeared to remain secondary to their respective relationships with the West. Key differences were on display when President Vladimir Putin in 2001 abruptly reversed policy strongly supported by China against the US development of a ballistic missile defense system, and again in 2008 when Russia sought in vain Chinese support for the Russian military attacks on Georgia.

Until recently, China had a very negative record in relations with Taiwan. The Taiwan government continued to move toward greater separation from China despite Taiwan's extensive economic connections with China. That pattern changed with the coming to power of a new Taiwan government in 2008 bent on reassuring Beijing. China's economic, diplomatic, and military influence over Taiwan grew. However, the political opposition in Taiwan remained strongly against recent trends, resorting to periodic mass demonstrations targeting policies and practices encouraging closer China-Taiwan integration.

Strong Chinese nationalism and territorial claims complicated Chinese efforts to improve relations with Asian neighbors. South Korean opinion of China declined sharply from a high point in 2004 because of nationalist disputes over whether an historic kingdom controlling much of Korea and northeast China was Chinese or Korean. Against this background, China saw its substantial gains in influence in South Korea in the middle of the decade diminish in the face of increased South Korean wariness over Chinese intentions on a range of sensitive issues. They included South Korean suspicions over growing Chinese trade with and investment in North Korea which surpassed those of South Korea and seemed designed to sustain a viable North Korea state friendly to China—an objective at odds with South Korea's goal to reunify North and South Korea, with South Korea being dominant.



Chinese nationalism and territorial claims underlined a tough Chinese posture regarding differences with Japan. Chinese diplomacy endeavored to play down Chinese territorial disputes in Southeast Asia and with India, but clear differences remained unresolved and became more prominent in recent years. On balance, the continued disputes served as a substantial drag on Chinese effort to improve relations with these countries.

China's remarkable military modernization and its sometimes secretive and authoritarian political system raised suspicions and wariness on the part of a number of China's neighbors. They sought more transparency regarding Chinese military intentions. They were not reassured by China's refusal for many years to join at a senior level with the United States and other Asian defense leaders at an annual conclave known as the Shangri-La Forum meeting in Singapore.

China's past record of aggression and assertiveness toward many Asian countries remained hard to live down. It also meant that China had few positive connections on which to build friendly ties with its neighbors. As a result, and also reflecting the state-led pattern of much of Chinese foreign relations, Chinese interchange with Asian neighbors depended heavily on the direction and leadership of the Chinese government. Non-government channels of communication and influence were very limited.

An exception was the so-called Overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asian countries. These people provided important investment and technical assistance to China's development and represented political forces supportive of their home country's good relations with China. At the same time, however, the dominant ethnic, cultural and religious groups in Southeast Asia often had a long history of wariness of China and sometimes promoted violent actions and other discrimination against the perceived rising economic and political power and influence of ethnic Chinese.

Limitations and weaknesses also showed in the areas of greatest Chinese strength in Asia—economic relations and diplomacy. Double counting associated with processing trade exaggerated Chinese trade figures. Double counting was estimated to represent thirty percent of China's reported trade with Southeast Asia. As noted above, half of Chinese trade was conducted by foreign invested enterprises in China; the resulting processing trade saw China often add only a small amount to the product; and the finished product often depended on sales to the United States or the European Union. Taken together, these facts seemed to undercut China's stature in Asia as a powerful trading country.

The large amount of Asian and international investment that went to China did not go to other Asian countries, hurting their economic development. China invested little in Asia apart from Hong Kong, a reputed tax haven and source of "round-trip" monies leaving China and then returning to China as foreign investment.

Chinese aid figures are not clearly presented by the Chinese administration. What is known shows that China's aid to Asia was very small, especially in comparison to other donors, with the exception of Chinese aid to North Korea and Myanmar. China also received large amounts of foreign aid including loans valued at \$1.5 billion annually from the World Bank and \$1.3 billion from the Asian Development Bank. Presumably, these monies might have been provided to other developing countries in Asia and elsewhere had they not gone to China. China's large foreign exchange reserves served many purposes for the Chinese administration that was trying to maintain stability amid massive internal needs. They did not translate to big Chinese grants of assistance abroad. China's attraction to Asian producers of



raw materials was not shared by Asian manufacturers. These entrepreneurs tended to relocate and invest in China and they appeared to do well; but their workers could not relocate to China and appeared to suffer.

By definition, China's "win-win" diplomacy meant that China would not do things that it ordinarily would not do. The sometimes dizzying array of meetings, agreements, and pronouncements in the active Chinese diplomacy in Asia did not hide the fact that China remained reluctant to undertake significant costs, risks, or commitments in dealing with difficult regional issues.

North Korea is a special case in Asian and world affairs. It reflected an unusual mix of Chinese strengths and weaknesses in Asia. On the one hand, China provided considerable food aid, oil and other material support. China was North Korea's largest trading partner and foreign investor. China often shielded Pyongyang from US-led efforts at the United Nations to sanction or otherwise punish North Korea over its nuclear weapons development, ballistic missile development, and proliferation activities. The United States and other participants in the Six Party talks came to rely on China to use its standing as the foreign power with the most influence in North Korea to get Pyongyang to engage in negotiations over its weapons development and proliferation activities. On the other hand, North Korea repeatedly rejected Chinese advice and warnings. North Korean officials repeatedly told American and other officials of their disdain for China. Nonetheless, Chinese leaders were loath to cut off their aid or otherwise increase pressure on North Korea to conform to international norms for fear of a backlash from the Pyongyang regime that would undermine Chinese interest in preserving stability on the Korean peninsula and in northeastern Asia. The net effect of these contradictions was that while China's influence in North Korea was greater than other major powers, it was encumbered and limited.

3.2. The Role of the United States and Asian Governments

China's rise in Asia has remained influenced by an Asian environment heavily determined by the power, policies and practices of the United States and governments of Asia. Assessment of American strengths and weaknesses showed that the United States would remain the leading power in the Asian region for the foreseeable future. Meanwhile, Asian powers and other governments concerned with preserving independence in the face of China's rise often worked closely with the United States in developing contingency plans to offset adverse implications of Chinese policies and behavior.

Media and specialist commentary as well as popular and elite sentiment in Asia tended to emphasize the shortcomings of US policy and leadership in Asia throughout much of the 21st century. Heading the list were widespread complaints with the Bush administration's hard line policy for many years toward North Korea, its military invasion and occupation of Iraq, and assertive and seemingly unilateral US approaches on wide ranging issues including terrorism, climate change, the United Nations, and Asian regional organizations. The United States appeared alienated and isolated, and increasingly bogged down with the consequences of its invasion of Iraq and perceived excessive emphasis on the so-called war against terrorism.²⁹

This emphasis on the negative in viewing the United States in Asia overshadowed but failed to hide four sets of US strengths in the region far exceeding those of China and other

²⁹ Kurlantzick, Joshua (2007): *Charm Offensive*, New Haven, Yale University Press; Abramowitz, Morton and Bosworth, Stephen (2006): *Chasing the Sun: Rethinking East Asian Policy*, New York, Century Foundation.



nations. Those strengths endured and grew in the recent period, providing a solid foundation for US leadership in 21st century Asia.³⁰

3.2.1. Security: In most of Asia, governments are strong, viable and make the decisions that determine direction in foreign affairs. Popular, elite, media and other opinion may influence government officials in policy toward the United States and other countries, but in the end the officials make decisions on the basis of their own calculus. In general, the officials see their governments' legitimacy and success resting on nation building and economic development, which require a stable and secure international environment. Unfortunately, Asia is not particularly stable and most governments privately are wary of and tend not to trust each other. As a result, they look to the United States to provide the security they need to pursue goals of development and nation building in an appropriate environment. They recognize that the US security role is very expensive and involves great risk, including large scale casualties if necessary, for the sake of preserving Asian security. They also recognize that neither rising China nor any other Asian power or coalition of powers is able or willing to undertake even a fraction of these risks, costs and responsibilities.

3.2.2. Economic: The nation-building priority of most Asian governments depends importantly on export oriented growth. Chinese officials recognize this, and officials in other Asian countries recognize the rising importance of China in their trade; but they all also recognize that half of China's trade is done by foreign invested enterprises in China, and half of the trade is processing trade—both features that make Chinese and Asian trade heavily dependent on exports to developed countries, notably the United States. In recent years, the United States has run a massive and growing trade deficit with China, and a total trade deficit with Asia valued at over \$350 billion at a time of an overall US trade deficit of over \$700 billion. Asian government officials recognize that China, which runs a large overall trade surplus, and other trading partners of Asia are unwilling and unable to bear even a fraction of the cost of such large trade deficits, that nonetheless are very important for Asia governments. Obviously, the 2008-2009 global economic crisis has had an enormous impact of trade and investment. Some Asian officials are talking about relying more on domestic consumption but tangible progress seems slow as they appear to be focusing on an eventual revival of world trade that would restore previous levels of export oriented growth involving continued heavy reliance on the US market. How cooperative China actually will be in working with the United States to deal with the crisis remains an open question, though the evidence on balance appears to show great care on the part of the Chinese administration to avoid pushing controversial policies that would further undermine international confidence in the existing economic system and thwart meaningful efforts at economic recovery.³¹

3.2.3. Government Engagement and Asian Contengy Planning: The Obama administration inherited a US position in Asia buttressed by generally effective Bush administration interaction with Asia's powers. It is very rare for the United States to enjoy good relations with Japan and China at the same time, but the Bush administration carefully managed relations with both powers effectively. It is unprecedented for the United States to be the leading foreign power in South Asia and to sustain good relations with both India and Pakistan, but that has been the case since relatively early in the Bush administration. And it is unprecedented for the United States to have good relations with Beijing and Taipei at the

³⁰ The US strengths noted here are reviewed in detail in Sutter, "The United States in Asia...", *op. cit.*

³¹ Zakaria, Fareed: "We Should Join Hands: Chinese Premier Interviewed", *Newsweek*, 06 October, 2008. <http://www.newsweek.com/2008/09/28/we-should-join-hands.html>; Jinhe, Liu: "Little Hope of soon replacing greenback", *China Business Weekly*, 29 June-05 July, 2009, p.2.



same time, but that situation emerged during the Bush years and strengthened with the election of President Ma Ying-jeou in March 2008.

The US Pacific Command and other US military commands and organizations have been at the edge of wide ranging and growing US efforts to build and strengthen webs of military relationships throughout the region. In an overall Asian environment where the United States remains on good terms with major powers and most other governments, building military ties through education programs, on site training, exercises and other means enhances US influence in generally quiet but effective ways. Part of the reason for the success of these efforts has to do with active contingency planning by many Asian governments. As power relations change in the region, notably on account of China's rise, Asian governments generally seek to work positively and pragmatically with rising China on the one hand; but on the other hand they seek the reassurance of close security, intelligence, and other ties with the United States in case rising China shifts from its current generally benign approach to one of greater assertiveness or dominance.³²

3.2.4. Non-Government Engagement and Immigration: For much of its history, the United States exerted influence in Asia much more through business, religious, educational and other interchange than through channels dependent on government leadership and support. Active American non-government interaction with Asia continues today, putting the United States in a unique position where the American non-government sector has such a strong and usually positive impact on the influence the United States exerts in the region. Meanwhile, over 40 years of generally color-blind US immigration policy since the ending of discriminatory US restrictions on Asian immigration in 1965 has resulted in the influx of millions of Asian migrants who call America home and who interact with their countries of origin in ways that under gird and reflect well on the US position in Asia. No other country, with the exception of Canada, has such an active and powerfully positive channel of influence in Asia.

4. Conclusion

In sum, the above assessment examining salient strengths and limitations of China's rising influence in Asia, significant strengths and limitations of the United States, and the contingency planning of Asian governments show continued Chinese advance in importance and influence. But the United States remains the region's leading power and other governments are wary of implications of China's rise as they seek mutual benefit in greater economic and other interaction with China. Asia is the international area where China has always exerted greatest influence, but that does not mean that China will come to dominate the region. Prevailing conditions make it hard to foresee how China could emerge in a dominant position in Asia. As a result, the reported likelihood of confrontation or conflict that is supposed to emerge in Sino-American relations as China rises to challenge the leading position of the United States in Asian and world affairs is reduced. Indeed, it appears most likely that Chinese policy makers and strategists will continue careful and incremental efforts and adjustments in order to overcome existing and unforeseen obstacles as they seek to improve Chinese influence, interests, and status. This difficult and protracted task adds to China's long array of domestic challenges and other preoccupations. It argues for continued

³² Medeiros, *op. cit.*



reserve in Chinese foreign policies and practices as Chinese leaders take account of the sustained but substantial limits of Chinese international power and influence.



EUROPE, US, CHINA THE PAST, THE PRESENT, THE FUTURE WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM THE TRIANGULAR RELATIONSHIP

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Abstract:

This paper will argue that the qualitatively new relationship between the EU, China and the USA can be captured through the use of the concept of hybridization, based on a coming together of different units and in the process the creation of a new reality, a hybrid reality. It will be claimed as a result of my study that China will want to use the biggest market in the world, the EU market, to avoid dependence on the US market for its exports and economic well-being and will claim that the relationship with the EU also fits exactly with its attempt to simultaneously accept and to change international relations – the relationship with the EU is about managing the world of a declining US rather than creating a new world order. In turn, the EU wants more room to manoeuvre for its foreign policy independence and so it can work well with China's criteria for a relationship of 'mutual trust', 'equality' and 'coordination'. In essence, rather than having 'hard power' worth talking about, both have 'soft power'. On the other side of the coin, the US wants to control and incorporate the EU and contain China. In addition, both the EU and China are respectively weak and the US, despite some problems is (still) strong, but both really have the same question: how enduring is the American hegemony? In conclusion, the paper will be the affirmation that the EU-China-US relations are now in flux in a way they have not been since 1949, leading to tectonic shifts. Both the EU and China will benefit from this relationship and the hybridity of their relations will lead to a new quality in their relationship with an important US always looming in the background.

Keywords: Hybridation, trilateral relationship, soft power and American hegemony.

Este artículo afirma que la cualitativamente nueva relación entre la UE, China y los EEUU puede entenderse a través del concepto de hibridación, basado en la sinergia de unidades diferentes y en proceso de creación de una nueva realidad, una realidad híbrida. Como resultado de mi estudio, se defiende que China querrá utilizar el mayor mercado del mundo, la UE, para evitar una excesiva dependencia del mercado de los EEUU para sus exportaciones y su bienestar económico y se afirma igualmente que la relación con la UE encaja perfectamente con su intento simultáneo de aceptar y cambiar las relaciones internacionales; las relaciones con la UE consisten en gran parte en gestionar el declive de los EEUU más que crear un nuevo orden mundial. A su vez, la UE quiere un mayor margen de maniobra para lograr una política exterior independiente, lo cual le sitúa en una posición óptima para entenderse con China en torno a los conceptos de "confianza mutua", "igualdad" y "coordinación". Se trata más que del uso de "hard power", del uso de "soft power". En el reverso de la moneda, los EEUU quieren incorporar a la UE en un intento de contener a China. Al mismo tiempo, tanto la UE como China son débiles frente a los EEUU, que a pesar de sus problemas actuales, es (todavía) un actor poderoso. Sin embargo, ambos países comparten la misma pregunta: cuánto durará la hegemonía de los EEUU? Como conclusión, este artículo afirma que las relaciones UE-China-EEUU están en un proceso de cambio de una forma inaudita desde 1949. Tanto la UE como China se podrán beneficiar en esta situación del carácter híbrido de sus relaciones que llevarán a un cambio cualitativo en sus relaciones, siempre con los EEUU presentes en un segundo plano.

Palabras clave: Hibridación, relación trilateral, "soft power" y hegemonía americana.

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1. Introduction: China is Special

In June 2008 Lin Yifu, a Beijing professor, became the chief economist, ‘the number 2 job’ at the World Bank. In addition, China is the largest holder of US Treasury Bills² and Martin Jacques believes that China is a superpower in the making as the citadels of the global economy are yielding to its battering ram³. In Jacques’ view, this heralds the, although not immediate, ‘End of the West’⁴.

China: Indicators	Year	Data
Population, total (thousands)	2008	1327,7
GDP (Euros)	2008	2.992,7
Real Growth IN GDP (%)	2008	9,0
Unemployment	2008	4%
Life expectancy at birth, total (years)	2008	73
Mortality rate, infant (per 1,000 live births)	2008	20
Literacy rate (total population	2008	90.90%
Exports to GDP ratio %	2008	32,7
Imports to GDP ratio%	2008	25,0
Debt Service Ratio %	2008	15%

Table 1. Data retrieved from CIA Fact Book, World Bank, Eurostat

Other details also confirm China’s ‘special’ status. China’s fast-growing economy is transfixing the West, each year it turns out twice as many engineers as the US⁵, has the world’s biggest shopping mall, is the largest consumer of food, energy and industrial commodities⁶ and is an economic powerhouse⁷.

² China’s holdings of US Treasury Bills as of November 17, 2009 amounts to 798.9 Billions of Dollars, accessible at: <http://www.treas.gov/tic/mfh.txt>.

³ Jacques, Martin: “The End of the West”, *The Guardian*, 04 December 2003, at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2003/dec/04/eu.china>.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Bracey, Gerald W.: “Heard the One About the 600,000 Chinese Engineers?”, *The Washington Post*, 21 May 2006, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/05/19/AR2006051901760.html>.

⁶ Brown, Lester R.: “China Replacing the United States as World’s Leading Consumer “, *Easth Policy Institute*, 16 February 2005, at http://www.earth-policy.org/index.php?plan_b_updates/2004/update45.

⁷ See also Ma, Zhengang: “China-EU Relations in a Changing New World”, Public Lecture, London School of Economics (15 October 2009), at www.2.lse.ac.uk/publicEvents/events/2009_09-12/20091015tl700vOT.aspx, p. 2.



In addition, it has the world's largest foreign exchange reserves in the world, is the world's second largest importer of oil and is about to become the world's biggest exporter of goods⁸.

Country	GDP (\$bn)	Av. An. Growth in real GDP
PRC	2.234	9%
United Kingdom	2.199	2.7%
Germany	2.795	1.4%
Japan	4.534	1.3%
United States	12.417	3.4%
India	806	6.3%

Table 2. China's Unprecedented Growth (2008), Pocket World In Figures, London, The Economist

In stark contrast to this however, 30 million of its people live in absolute poverty⁹, another 60 million make less than 0.28 US cents a day and income for rural workers - where 800 million of China's 1.3 billion people live - is 1/3 of those in urban areas. In addition, China has to create 25 million new jobs a year to keep unemployment under control and the government in Beijing has to cope with around 150 million migrant workers coming mainly from the countryside. The one child policy will put additional pressure on the increase in number of senior citizens (projected to be in 2050 in the area of 400 million) and fundamentally although China is rich in aggregate terms, it is poor in per capita terms¹⁰. Essentially, China is a fragile superpower¹¹ with internal tensions and contradictions.

However despite this it is still a formidable competitor for Western style liberal democratic capitalism. The speed and scale of Chinese economic growth and the impact on the global economy and international relations is undoubted.

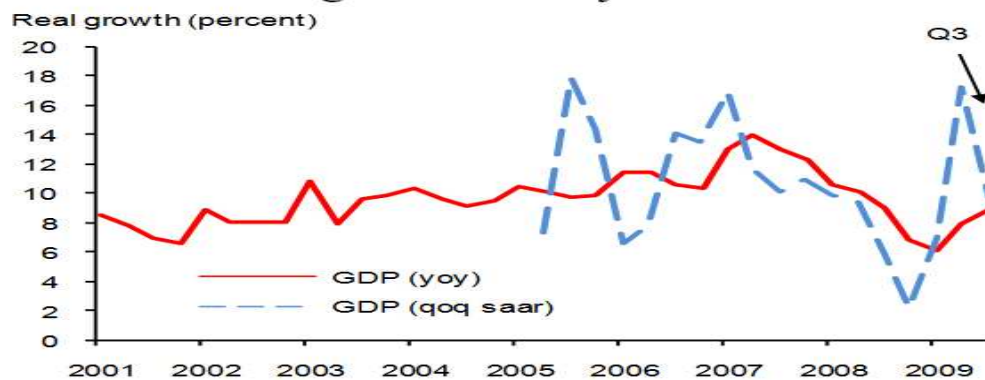
⁸ "China Overtakes Japan as World's Second-largest Oil Importer", *China Briefing*, 26 June 2008, at <http://www.china-briefing.com/news/2008/06/26/china-overtakes-japan-as-worlds-second-largest-oil-importer.html>.

⁹ Defined as not having enough money for food or clothing.

¹⁰ "Country Comparison :: GDP - per capita (PPP)", CIA, *The World Factbook*, at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html?countryName=China&countryCode=ch®ionCode=eas&rank=133#ch>.

¹¹ See Shirk, Susan (2007): *China: Fragile Superpower*, New York, Oxford University Press,

Figure 1. China's economy has continued to grow robustly



Source: CEIC, World Bank staff estimates.

It does not matter if you see China as a giant low-wage magnet sucking in jobs from abroad (in a similar way to Ross Perot and NAFTA or US jobs outsourced to Mexico) or if you perceive China as a powerful locomotive pulling other economies out of the morass of the present crisis: it should not be doubted that one of the most important events in the world now is the rise of China. In the context of the last 200 years China may be weak, but over the last 2000 years it had been the biggest economic power in the world as Prestowitz claims¹².

The next question then is whether this can continue into the future? And what does all this mean for us, be it in the EU, the US, but also in China? Should Euro-sceptics be concerned with sovereignty moving to Brussels or to Beijing?

It is perhaps important not to simplify or exaggerate things - the US might be in decline, but China is not ready at all to take its place. One should never forget that the US is still the only three dimensional (economic, military, political-cultural) power in the world.

Viewing this phenomenon in historical context, we can see a similar situation with the end of the (British) Gold Standard in 1931. In the inter-war period there was no hegemon, the new hegemony only came about with the Bretton Woods system in July 1944. Are we witnessing the same thing? Not quite as today's China is not the Germany of the inter-war period and China needs a foreign policy context of stability not chaos, conducive to economic growth, success and imported raw materials to overcome the numerous domestic challenges. The CCP's legitimacy rests on its record in making China richer and stronger, to make it into a 'da guo'. Without a strong economy, for example, China will not have a say on the international stage and so this means the need for a highly interventionist CCP economic policy (comparable to Newly Industrializing Countries (NICs))¹³.

For economic and foreign policy reasons and the CCP's legitimacy, China needs a multi-polar world. The role of the EU, in China's perception, is to counterbalance US hegemony. A la Palmerston (Britain has no permanent friends but only permanent interests), China has no permanent friends only permanent interests (national interest of course understood as government/CCP defined). These interests are economic growth for the

¹² Ott, Marvin: "The Great Reverse" Part 2, University of Yale, *Yale Global*, 06 September 2004, at <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu.display.article?id=4459>.

¹³ Wade, Robert, (1992): "Governing the Market", Princeton, Princeton University Press and also Breslin, Shawn (2009): *China and the Global Political Economy*, London, Macmillan, see p. 72.



legitimacy of the ruling party which means using the EU as a counterweight to the US¹⁴. This counterweight approach is also the goal of the EU. However, despite China having interests in developing particular relationships, the same can also be said for the US – it will need to consider the fact that it is dependent on China's culture of spending and debt accumulation.

This all leads to my point that hybridization- a coming together of different units and in this process the creation of a new (mixed) reality, a hybrid reality- helps us to understand relations between the EU-China-US for now and some time to come and although the future is impossible to predict and the final state produced by the hybridization process is unknown I can, and will, attempt to speculate.

2. EU Foreign Policy

Throughout the Cold War, Europe, as so many Euro-centrics thought anyway, was the centre of the world. This was exemplified by the fact that in Berlin, just a few meters apart, the US came face to face with the Soviet Union. However, this balance of power certainly changed in 1989.

It was at this time that the US had its unipolar moment and Europe was no longer important - the EU was not even a junior partner anymore! The relationship was now based on a Europe being supportive only. A shared history, shared values, shared Judeo-Christian culture, and a racial affinity lost their importance, something the decision to go to war in Iraq shows as firstly, it was done unilaterally by the US and secondly, France and Germany 'dared' to disagree.

Despite the fact that the EU is the world's largest trading bloc and it has a considerable presence in international affairs it has trouble translating its presence into 'actorness'. Although the EU would like to be considered an equal partner, on all levels with the US, this must be European wishful thinking as it is not powerful at all enough to dominate the US and influence its actions or foreign policy in any way.

However, a rivalry will not occur because of the importance of trade between the two and because of common values such as liberal democracy and human rights. Common interests between the two are stronger than their differences and although one should not forget that 27 different countries make up the EU, meaning that it is difficult to assess if there is a community of values, there is a community of states embracing Western values, and 'the West' also includes the US (after all 'together beats the hell out of separately').

As well as having common values, both are confronted with common issues and problems - terrorism; post-conflict Iraq; present Afghanistan; nuclear proliferation including in Iran and North Korea; Pakistan; China; India; Balkans; the Doha Round; Russia; climate change; international crime; development; peace and stability; international law on pre-emption; the Geneva Convention; the Palestine issue and UN reform. This exhaustive list highlights that isolationism is impossible in a 21st century world of intense economic and security interdependence.

Despite these similar interests and values, the Iraq war brought home to everybody the willingness of the US to be its own prosecutor, judge and jury, deciding on pre-emptive

¹⁴ Clegg, Jennifer (2009): *China's Global Strategy*, London, Pluto.



military action and casting aside international constraints. This lack of adherence to international law brought illegitimacy and exposed the weakness of unilateralism and the US' need for support. The EU in contrast wants multilateral cooperation as the central organising principle of international relations, and has taken on moral and ethical causes and positions on global issues, in ways disliked and even actively opposed by the US.

The Iraq war meant that EU foreign policy became far more relevant: might the EU need a common foreign and security policy so as to deal more effectively with the US? Is there a sense of rivalry developing between the EU and the US? (something the Transatlantic Declaration (1990) and Transatlantic Agenda (1995) were meant to take care of).

So then what has the EU to offer? Essentially, its strength is that it is not a state. The EU, despite 'Foreign Minister' Lady Ashton, does not have a single telephone number¹⁵ but instead networks of power that are united by common policies and goals. The EU's structure as a club has allowed it to preserve the very idea of the balance of power in Europe and as its strength grows, its neighbours want to join it rather than balance it!¹⁶ In addition, despite the fact that US intelligence predicts that the EU will become a 'hobbled giant' by 2025¹⁷, the EU, that is 'EU 27+' (Norway, Switzerland, Turkey) represent a third of the world's economy. The US has 27%, Japan 9%, and China 6% respectively.

The EU offers conclusion of trade agreements, of association agreements, it offers tariff reductions, quota increases, sanctions, aid and loans and it can also enforce the opposite of these economic instruments. In addition to this, the EU also holds soft power, economic clout and cultural appeal - civilian power is non-military, and it includes economic, diplomatic and cultural policy instruments¹⁸. This can be seen as a result of its history and the Cold War in which it devalued purely military power and instead became dedicated to universal values, co-operation and multilateralism and underlying this soft/civilian power, is the attempt by EU members to create more room for themselves to manoeuvre, to increase their impact in foreign policy areas and to reassert their independence. Hard power in such a context appears less necessary and might anyway belong to a different time of international relations¹⁹.

Because of this, the EU is strong in influencing third countries' policies by awarding economic and political support. However, something which is an advantage (lack of domineering power) is of course also a disadvantage: there is a lack of common strategy and lack of coherence - as a matter of fact, the EU might just be a civilian power by default!

Looking back to the 1990s,²⁰ there is an evolution of foreign affairs and security policy with a European Security Strategy in 2003, the Lisbon Treaty, a European Diplomatic Service, and new roles such as the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and

¹⁵ Kissinger's famous remark when he rhetorically asked where the power in the EU was.

¹⁶ Leonard, Mark (2005): *Why Europe will Run the 21st Century*, New York, PublicAffairs, especially Chapter 9: Brussels and Beijing Consensus, pp. 111-120.

¹⁷ Leigh, Phillip: "Europe a 'Hobbled Giant' by 2025, US Intelligence Report Predicts", *Euobserver*, 21 November 2008, at <http://euobserver.com/9/27158>.

¹⁸ Maull, Hanns: "Germany and Japan: the New Civilian Powers", *Foreign Affairs*, vol 69, no. 5 (1990), especially pp. 92-93.

¹⁹ See Cooper, Robert: "Europe: The Post-Modern State and World Order", *New Perspectives Quarterly*, vol. 14, n° 3 (Summer 1997).

²⁰ The Maastricht Treaty, Pillar II, 'Common Positions' and 'Joint Actions', existence of a Rapid Reaction Force - but no Qualified Majority Voting in and fragmentation of external relations, underperformance in the Balkans and Kosovo.



Security Policy who is also Vice President of the Commission. Earlier socialisation and ‘Brusselisation’ along with new permanent structured co-operation is a development towards an EU foreign policy - even if Qualified Majority Voting still applies. EU Foreign Policy is still inter-governmental rather than supranational because unanimity is still necessary, but there will now be coordinated policy at EU level and there will be a fine line between unanimity and consent. Enlargement is partly a foreign policy tool as is the EU’s Neighbourhood Policy - the European Security Strategy of 2003 for example, is a response to the US Security Strategy, in favour of ‘perceptive engagement’ and multilateralism and against ‘pre-emptive war’ and unilateralism.

Even though the EU is still in the shadow of the US, it wants to have easier access to profits which can be made in the rest of the world, which is too much in thrall to the US. It is believed that the ‘cake’ (of profits) needs to be divided up differently, post-Cold War, post-Iraq invasion and more access to strategic raw materials is needed²¹. Robert Kagan even goes so far as to suggest that we need to stop pretending that Europeans and Americans share common views of the world or even that they occupy the same world and what is needed is a realist world! The EU, according to Kagan, has moved beyond hard power and that the US is still in a Hobbesian world, and in essence ‘Europeans are from Venus and Americans from Mars’.

3. EU-China Relations

China’s EU policy paper from 2003²² starts with the sentence: ‘there is no fundamental conflict of interest between China and the EU and neither poses a threat to the other...’ In essence, common ground outweighs their disagreements.

The perception of China as an important foreign policy partner has emerged only recently in Europe. Prior to 1989, China was perceived as a second rate regional actor and only since the late 1990s has Europe’s interest in closer political cooperation grown²³. This interest can be seen as steaming from the following factors:

- China’s economic power has grown in recent years
- Europe is concerned about potential protectionism in China
- China has become important as a massive importer of raw materials and has become a competitor for the EU
- The EU is concerned that the CCP keeps a grip on domestic contradictions

²¹ See Kagan, Robert: “Power and Weakness”, *Policy Review*, no.113 (June-July 2002).

²² “China’s EU Policy Paper”, *Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs* (October 2003), at <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t27708.htm>.

²³ First phase of relations (1975-1988): limited strategic relations due to China’s domestic ‘two-line’ struggle and fading SU ‘hegemonism’.

Second phase (1989-1992): Tiananmen Massacre

Third phase (1992-1996): Single European Act, lure of the Chinese Market and Human Rights

Fourth phase (1996-2000): Strategic Partnership

Fifth phase (2001-2008): Constructive or Competitive Engagement, Multipolarity, Peaceful Rise/Peaceful Development

Sixth phase (2008-...): Partners and Rivals, China Fever.



- The EU is interested in multilateral arrangements for an increasingly ‘global risk world’²⁴
- Environmental issues can only be addressed with Chinese constructive engagement
- There is a need for the protection of property rights, prize dumping and compliance with environmental standards
- Deng’s 24 character policy of non-interference might signify a lack of shared global responsibility (see footnote 25)
- China’s monumental size gives its domestic policies global significance

EU-China Relations	
EU services exports to China 2008	€20.1 billion
EU services imports from China 2008	€14.4 billion
EU inward investment to China 2008	€4.5 billion
China inward investment to EU 2008	€0.1 billion
EU Aid to China	EU Aid programme has allocated over € 128 million Euros to aid China over a 4 year span until 2013

Table 3: http://ec.europa.eu/trade/creating-opportunities/bilateral-relations/countries/china/index_en.htm

²⁴ See Beck, Ulrich (2008): *World at Risk*, Cambridge, Polity Press.



EU27 trade in goods with China by product (Million Euro)

	Exports		Imports		Balance	
	Jan-Jun 2008	Jan-Jun 2009	Jan-Jun 2008	Jan-Jun 2009	Jan-Jun 2008	Jan-Jun 2009
Total	39 495	37 418	112 215	102 735	-72 720	-65 317
Primary goods:	3 724	3 368	3 690	2 887	34	481
<i>Food & drink</i>	598	658	1 721	1 675	-1 123	-1 016
<i>Raw materials</i>	3 009	2 602	1 532	1 011	1 476	1 591
<i>Energy</i>	118	108	437	202	-319	-94
Manufactured goods:	34 697	33 134	108 031	99 368	-73 334	-66 233
<i>Chemicals</i>	4 464	4 651	4 287	3 962	177	688
<i>Machinery & vehicles³</i>	22 923	21 678	52 759	47 502	-29 836	-25 823
<i>Other manuf'd goods³</i>	7 311	6 805	50 985	47 903	-43 674	-41 098
Other	1 073	915	493	480	579	435

Table 4:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=STAT/09/167&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>.



EU27 trade in goods with China (Million Euro)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
China									
Exports	25 863	30 665	35 099	41 473	48 371	51 825	63 794	71 928	78 430
Imports	74 632	82 000	90 148	106 220	128 590	160 327	194 932	232 620	247 916
Balance	-48 768	-51 335	-55 049	-64 747	-80 219	-108 502	-131 138	-160 692	-169 487
Total Extra-EU27									
Exports	849 739	884 707	891 898	869 236	952 723	1 052 719	1 160 100	1 241 498	1 306 549
Imports	992 698	979 145	936 972	935 245	1 026 709	1 179 569	1 352 787	1 434 009	1 565 034
Balance	-142 959	-94 438	-45 073	-66 010	-73 986	-126 849	-192 686	-192 512	-258 485
China / Total									
Exports	3.0%	3.5%	3.9%	4.8%	5.1%	4.9%	5.5%	5.8%	6.0%
Imports	7.5%	8.4%	9.6%	11.4%	12.5%	13.6%	14.4%	16.2%	15.8%

Table 5:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=STAT/09/167&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Thus the EU sees an increasingly important China not merely in East Asia but the world. It sees a China as having a high saving rate and export capacity plus as an exporter of capital and labour. Despite some minor disagreements such as China's co-operation with repressive regimes in Sudan and Zimbabwe for example, there is no burning conflict of interest between China and the EU: neither is a threat for the other.

There is a solid common social fabric which includes the key values of dignity of human life, of the rule of law - without of course forgetting the different interpretations, political or socio-economic, of human rights and in general differences over democratisation, pluralisation and multilateralism. Both support multilateral organisations, such as the UN and both want all countries, including the great powers, to abide by international law. Both are weary of the dominance of the US in global politics. Both care about sustainable development, the threat of terrorism and the spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs). Both are also basically secular, non-traditional and emphasize quality of life.

China wants the EU to be a counter-weight to the US and the EU-China Security Cooperation²⁵ shows both as partners comprehensively cooperating as a necessity in a context

²⁵ Stumbaum, Mary-Britt: "Opportunities and Limits of EU-China Security Cooperation", *International Spectator*, vol 41, no. 3 (September 2007).



where the US continues to attempt to create a world in its image, a world where it is predominant. Both also have other converging interests.²⁶

This also highlights the fact that the US and EU can be seen as taking different paths. The US appears to still think in the context of the Hobbesian world and the previously planned US missile defence system in Eastern Europe, differences over the Kyoto Protocol limiting global warming and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are rifts rooted in the EU's and US' rivalry to re-divide the world's strategic resources after the Cold War and shows that the EU does not need the US in the same way anymore and instead is attempting to align itself more closely with China.

Many believe EU-China relations and European-Chinese influence are only just beginning to take off. The EU is the leading supplier of technology to China and China's investment of 200 million Euros in the development of a competitor to the US Global Positioning System (GPS), the Galileo navigation satellite system, gives China access to advanced technology for its space programme development.²⁷ For the EU, as for China, it is the politics of economics which is crucial. However, it is unlikely that China will divide the Atlantic and up until now EU policy towards China has focused mainly on domestic issues: opening up China's economy, protecting intellectual property, and improving respect for human rights. In addition, many Chinese believe that the period of Europe's greatness has peaked as that period can be explained by expansionary conditions which no longer exist and that China is inevitably becoming a new world leader through a 'silent' transformation.²⁸

Despite the common interests and values highlighted so far, a one party state led by the CCP clashes with democracy. China has not agreed to any humanitarian intervention and China's understanding of human rights as socio-economic rights, rather than merely liberal civil liberties has led to clashes. This means that EU relations with China are not without problems.

In addition, the EU suffers from internal discord. Its unity vis-à-vis China is fragile. The EU is not united in its commercial dealings with China and each country in the EU, especially the big three (Germany, France, and the UK) are reluctant to work through the EU and they compete against each other for this new market.

It is also vital to state that China has seen the EU in the past through the prism of the US or the SU only. As a collective, the EU is not taken seriously by China, only individual countries are²⁹.

²⁶ For other points of an action agenda for China and the EU see "A Compact Between China and the EU", *Centre for European Reform, DGAP, Asia Center, The Foreign Policy Center*, at http://www.cer.org.uk/pdf/eu_china_compact_sept06_5.pdf.

²⁷ Casarini, Nicola: *The Evolution of the China Relationship: From Constructive Engagement to Strategic Partnership*, *European Union Institute for Security Studies*, no. 64 (October 2006), p. 22; see also Ma, *op.cit.*, p.11.

²⁸ See Deng's Foreign Policy Principles of Twenty-Four Characters, "observe calmly, secure our position, cope with affairs calmly, bide our time and conceal our capabilities, be good at maintaining a low profile, never claim leadership, make some contributions": "Speech at the Special Session of the U.N", *United Nations, General Assembly* (10 April 1974), at <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/deng-xiaoping/1974/04/10.htm>.

²⁹ See China's ranking of other countries according to technological power, individual power capital, capital power, information power, natural resources, military power, GDP, foreign policy power and governmental dynamism, see Shambaugh, David: "China Eyes Europe in the World", in Shambaugh, D.; Sandschneider, E. and Shou, H. (eds.) (2008): *China-Europe Relations*, London, Routledge, p. 130.



On top of this, China is shifting from victim of imperialist aggression to responsible great power in a multipolar world which is exactly what the EU wants. However, for Beijing, being a responsible global player means accepting the 'status-quo' - not invading other countries, not trying to overthrow regimes, and above all not interfering in the internal affairs of sovereign countries. European policy makers on the other hand, influenced by genocide in Rwanda, terrorist camps in Afghanistan, and nuclear proliferation in Iran feel a responsibility to intervene in countries that 'threaten' human rights and international security.

As indicated above there are European and Chinese differences and the EU foreign policy cannot in any way be called cohesive, effective or rapid. This means one must not exaggerate EU-China similarities. The EU and the US are competitive concerning China and thus they want to exploit and use China.

4. Chinese Foreign Policy

China's international vision for itself is as a country which is economically successful domestically and keeps 'chaos' away. This means taking a different approach to international involvement – essentially the idea is to be involved without losing control of the system at home. This model is in contrast to the Western model, or more precisely the neo-liberal Anglo-Saxon model, which China has actively sought not to copy. One might want to call its international economic model the 'Beijing Consensus',³⁰ and its domestic model 'authoritarian' or Confucian capitalism. This hybridization of the Chinese economic model means that the outcome of involvement in the domestic and world economy is unwittingly a new one, like grafting a new species onto another plant - the result of the new plant being qualitatively different, a third, hybrid species. In this context the concept 'Tianxia' ('all-under-heaven') is very important in understanding the Chinese model of world order.³¹ 'Tianxia' presents a new hegemony that reproduces China's hierarchical empire for the 21st century.

Even Beijing's proposal for a new international reserve currency reflects not only concerns about future US inflation eroding the value of its Dollar holdings, but indicates China's greater confidence in playing a global role. However, China's understanding of multipolarity should not be seen as power balancing in the classic sense, but as an 'essentially domestic discourse that is designed primarily to soothe nationalist pressures, rather than as a foreign policy prescription.'³² This is the idea that multipolarity can be understood in two different ways - one competitive, the other cooperative, one based on the assertion on national power and sovereignty, the other on multilateral rules and organisations.

This shows that rather than taking the concept of 'Tianxia' literally or in absolute terms, a more realistic view of the future is one that sees China having *joint* power and the ability to *co-influence* world affairs in the coming years. This is not to dismiss the concept - indeed as former Prime Minister Wilson in Britain said 'a week is a long time in politics', and therefore it is likely that the future world order will be a hybridized one and the concept of

³⁰ See Ramo, Joshua Cooper (2005): *The Beijing Consensus*, London, Foreign Policy Centre.

³¹ William A. Callahan: "Chinese Vision of World Order: Post-Hegemonic or a New Hegemony?", *International Studies Review*, vol. 10, no. 4, 2008, pp. 749-761, see especially page 750.

³² Hughes, Christopher R.: "Nationalism and Multilateralism in China's Foreign Policy: Implications for South East Asia", *The Pacific Review*, vol. 18, no. 1 (March 2005), pp. 119-135, here p.124.



'Tianxia' may play some role here, as much as an existing Westphalian system or as much as the increasing influence of the 'Brazils, Russias, and Indias' of the world.

In advocating a multipolar world, China is seeking direct relations with the EU which can offer a buffer between China and the US and in essence, is pursuing no more than the EU, simply an equal partnership with the US. As both China and the EU lack the military means to pursue their interests globally, they share the need for a rules-based negotiated world order.

Fundamentally then, the EU is wanted by China for what one can only assume are genuine anti-hegemonic reasons and the US is wanted as part of its attempt to become a superpower. The outcome of all these developments is a superpower China which is not a copy of the Anglo-Saxon model but which is a stakeholder in the global system on its own terms, and on terms which have to be taken seriously by others.

From this we can see that China has key goals in the 21st century with regards to its foreign policy all to be understood from a perspective of primarily domestic developments³³. These can be summarised by the following objectives:

1. Continuation of rapid economic development which will solve other political problems, such as human rights and Taiwan.
2. Increase in soft and hard power (economy, military, high scientific level, attractiveness of history and culture, the arts, Chinese economic model).
3. Acceptance of legitimate international obligations (when it comes to reform elements of global governance, UN, IMF, WTO) and support for a multipolar international order, where medium sized countries have a more important role, where power moves from Western to non-Western countries and power moves from Washington to capital cities of other great powers.

This shows that there is nothing much progressive in China's relation with African states, such relationships are simply functional – in essence, raw materials for a fair price. At best, China offers an alternative to US unipolarity. Similarly, this arrangement also applies to the EU-China relationship. Essentially, all relationships must serve the above goals and exist only to satisfy specific interests.

We can see that the Chinese foreign policy model which values multipolarity and control of the domestic system is the outcome of globalisation, a phenomenon which although broadly speaking was seen very positively in China in the first half of the 1990s³⁴ was also assessed within the context of the Asian financial economic crisis as a 'double-edged sword'. The problems with globalisation were viewed as, amongst others, creating threats to the economy and to sovereignty. Advantages of economic globalisation would have meant acceptance of Western norms and values, which although it might undermine sovereignty and make the Chinese economy a victim of manipulation of international capital, it might also give access to raw materials internationally and increase international cooperation for the improvement of science, technology and information.

³³ Ma, *op.cit.* esp. pp 8, 9, 10.

³⁴ Knight, Nick: "Reflecting on the Paradox of Globalization: China's Search for Cultural Identity and Coherence", *China: An International Journal*, vol.4, no. 1 (March 2006), pp. 1-31.



Globalisation may also end up strengthening the already predominant capitalist countries with an increase of financial crises, North-South inequality and a possible increase in an easier manipulation of the economies of Less Developed Countries by international capital.³⁵ It is essential that China therefore decides to play an active role in solving some of the current global problems such as pollution, thinning of the ozone layer, global drug trafficking, smuggling, illegal migration and so forth in order to uphold its nationalist sentiment – this being the desire for foreign policy to be an instrument to safeguard the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity. There is truth in the view that a peaceful environment is needed to continue economic growth as this is also a precondition for social instability at home, in this sense foreign policy is regarded as an extension of and backing for domestic politics. Participation and cooperation in international organisations are meant to safeguard China's interest and are vital to China's long term foreign policy goals.

5. US-China Relations: Is Chinese Foreign Policy about Anything More than Relations with the US?

'What a hoot. The Chinese Communists invaded Washington on Monday (July 2009, W.D.) demanding not that we sacrifice our freedom but rather that we balance our budget!'³⁶

This is how much things have changed since the 1940s. The US paid a heavy price for continuingly supporting Chiang Kai-Shek's KMT and for taking its own fantasy of having 'lost China' seriously – as if it had ever owned it! Relations up until 1972 with Nixon's visit to China had been very limited and the 1999 bombings of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade by NATO forces and the 2001 US reconnaissance aircraft incident near Hainan, amongst other examples, show US-China relations to still be quite unique and tense. In the campaign in 2000 for the White House, Bush talked about China as a 'strategic competitor' rather than a 'strategic partner'. If it is true that Mao's policy of self-reliance is now seen as an aberration, one should not forget that Mao was driven into deeper isolation because of the US.

Today, the key point is, as Perkowski expresses³⁷, that anybody who misses out on the Chinese market is doomed to a second class future. China's main card today is the economic card - it is a rising economic power. However, how powerful it might come to be is as yet unsure as this economic position is of course connected to the security structure of Asia, to the global economic system, to the competition for scarce resources and to the global promotion of human rights.

It is true to say that the 20th century was the century of world wars, de-colonization and the Bretton Woods System, and it is also true to say that the US was a willing and able hegemon of this Bretton Woods System – the 21st century was the 'American Century'³⁸. However, the US is declining economically, militarily and politically. Who will take over? This is not quite clear. The EU and China are in the running, but China is not politically

³⁵ Zhang, Zangzang; Zhang, Xiaobo; Song, Qiang; Tang, Zhengyu; Qiao, Bian and Gu, Qingsheng (1996): *The China which Can Say No*, Beijing. The background to this nationalist book is that the US allegedly was going to stop China's rise to great power status.

³⁶ Scheer, Robert: "The Chinese Come Calling", *Truthdig*, 28 July 2009, at http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20090729_the_chinese_come_calling/.

³⁷ Perkowski, Jack (2008): *Managing the Dragon: How I'm Building a Billion Dollar Business in China*, New York, Crown Business.

³⁸ Henry Luce in 1941.



stable, strikes for example are increasing year by year³⁹ and China's relations in the region are also an issue. Many border conflicts were sorted out, but problems persist over Taiwan and Japan.

The future could therefore be an anarchic one or a multipolar one or one in which some alternative system to the US is created, a country which cannot quite do the job on its own anymore - something highlighted by the G20 meeting in London in Spring 2009, which was really a G2 meeting- of the US and China. Does this mean that while the EU may not need to fear Bush's unilateralism it may need to fear a duopoly of the US and China, after all Zbigniew Brzezinski, the former US Presidential Advisor, 'would like to see this cooperation between Washington and Beijing at the same level as the meeting of the eight most significant industrial nations ('G8') dubbing it 'G2' ('Group of Two')⁴⁰.

This is unlikely to happen. China accepts the supremacy of the US because good relations with Washington have strategic value for its general transformation process. Particularly important has been the ability of the US to absorb Chinese exports (which the US has only been able to do because of its ability to borrow ever increasing amounts of Dollars from the rest of the world, especially Asia, especially China)⁴¹.

Under Bush Senior, the 'American Grand Strategy for the Post-Cold War Order' (1992), defined the central US strategic goal as, "discouraging the advanced industrialized nations from even aspiring to a larger global or regional role"⁴². However, Brzezinski talks in his 'Grand Chess Board' study of a 'Geo-Strategic Triad' made up of the US, Europe and China⁴³ and Kissinger had argued that in order to maintain US authority, the other two powers must both be accommodated and at the same time kept under control. This 'comprehensive engagement' did not lead to any real results, thus the US' threats of sanctions.

Clinton's neo-liberal approach did not quite work either: the hope had been that by nurturing trade to strengthen the more moderate elements in the Chinese bureaucracy and by promoting internal social, political and economic changes, democratic reforms would occur and China would become more and more under the sway of international institutions and emerging forces in China would become more supportive of the international status-quo. This policy was called 'Strategic Partnership' and seen as a middle way between containment and reliance on purely developing trade relations and commercial ties. However, this approach was interrupted by the crisis over Taiwan (1996).

Following on from this Bush Junior and his neo-conservative allies used the term, 'Strategic Competitor' but the 'War on Terror' improved US-China relations as did the lobbying of the US business community.

³⁹ See Divjak, Carol: "Chinese Labour Reports Points to Rising Discontent", *World Socialist Web Site*, 14 August 2009, at <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2009/aug2009/chin-a14.shtml>.

⁴⁰ "Fear of Demotion", *German Foreign Policy*, 03 July 2010, at http://www.ocnus.net/artman2/publish/Analyses_12/Fear-of-Demotion.shtml. President Obama would also like to tie China into a network of rules and regulations.

⁴¹ See <http://www.ustr.gov/countries-regions/china>, (see also footnote 2)

⁴² See Gowan, Peter: "Contemporary Intra-Core Relations and World Systems Theory", *Journal of World-Systems Review*, vol. 10, no. 2 (Spring 2004), at <http://jwsr.ucr.edu/archive/vol10/number2/pdf/jwsr-v10n2gs-gowan.pdf>, pp. 471-500.

⁴³ Brzezinski, Zbigniew (1997): *The Grand Chessboard*, New York, Basic Book.



Realist John Mearsheimer fears that with “unbalanced multipolarity as this was the situation before World War I and today, China plays the part Germany did from 1871 onwards and the US plays the role of Britain”⁴⁴. This scenario is denied by Joseph Nye, who argues that whereas in 1900 Germany had surpassed Britain in industrial power, China lags far behind the US⁴⁵. Will Hutton once stated ‘Is the American century drawing to a close? Not a chance’⁴⁶ and argued that China does not possess the legacy of the Enlightenment and essentially, 2/3 of American imports come from affiliates of American companies which keep most of the value added in the US. Therefore, maybe one should take the term ‘Chimerica’⁴⁷ coined by Niall Ferguson more seriously.

Considering the peculiar economic, financial ties between the US and China, one will have to wait and see if the US will repeat the same pattern with China, as Britain had done originally in the 19th century with the US. Britain directed most of its foreign investment into the hugely profitable and developing American market in the 19th century and early 20th century only to see this emerging country usurp Britain’s role as the world’s dominant power in the 20th century. However, the threat of China to the US is essentially exaggerated⁴⁸ and the end of the Cold War and China’s usefulness to the US as a Cold War ally leading to an era characterized more by conflict between these two powers.

The US is seen by China as potentially the most able disruptor of China’s foreign environment, which China needs to be peaceful for the CCP to reap the benefits of an improving economy inside China, which then can also be used to safeguard its own and ‘national interest’. The US-China relations therefore have a somewhat paradoxical nature. Interconnection is deep, interest and concerns are shared (stability in Asia-Pacific, security of energy supplies and access to resources, weapons of mass destruction, nuclear proliferation) but mistrust continues to be high. “They (The United States, W.D.) failed or denied to see the world trends towards multi-polarity and the development of globalisation, and announced arrogantly that the US could ‘go it alone’”⁴⁹.

6. The EU-US-China Triangular Relationship

Prior to the 1990s, Europe’s relations with China and vice-versa were largely derivative of each side’s relationship with Washington and Moscow. Neither side viewed the development of a relationship with the other as a worthwhile pursuit in its own right: it was seen in the context of relations with the superpowers. Thus, the relationship never developed its own independent dynamic but was reactive to changes in US-Soviet relations.

However, soon after the EU began to fashion a China strategy in 1994, the relationship took off and President Hu announced that 2004 was to become ‘the year of Europe’. In the absence of a ‘Taiwan factor’ and without military interest in Asia, the EU and China might be able to fashion a ‘Strategic Partnership’. Similarities were found - China and the EU share a

⁴⁴ Mearsheimer, John (2001): *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York, W. W. Norton, p. 6.

⁴⁵ Joseph Nye Jr.(2002): *The Paradox of American Power. Why the World’s Only Superpower Can’t Go At It Alone*, New York, Oxford University Press, pp. 18-19.

⁴⁶ See also Fareed Zakaria (2008): *The Rise of the Rest, the Post American Age*, New York, W. W. Norton.

⁴⁷ Meaning the unique interconnectedness between US and China.

⁴⁸ See Qin, Hui: “Dividing the Big Family Assets”, *New Left Review*, vol. 20 (March-April 2003), at <http://newleftreview.org/?page=article&view=2441>.

⁴⁹ Ma, *op. cit.*, p. 3.



convergence of views about the US, both seek ways to constrain American power and hegemony, whether through the creation of a multipolar world or through multilateral institutional constraints.

For Europe, China offers a significant low-cost manufacturing base, a nearly inexhaustible market for exports and in-country sales and therefore China is a useful 'pole' in a wished for multipolar world. China and the EU's relationship will continue to grow and develop and what this new hybrid relation means for us all will have to be assessed in the future⁵⁰.

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the EU's collaborative relationship has changed. It is obvious that the EU cannot offset US power - and this is where the relationship with China comes in. Underlying all this 'Hybridity/Hybridization' which was defined and discussed in the Introduction and then explored in subsequent parts, is an outcome which sees a closer relationship between the EU and China.

Since this time as well as a closer relationship between the EU and China, a more distant relationship has emerged between the EU and the US with increasing alienation (even after the brief interlude of 9-11)⁵¹. The EU and the US disagree over how to fight terrorism, and what a future world order should be like. The EU has a different perception of power, force, war⁵² and increasingly deals with issues of human security, soft security issues (such as illegal immigration, international crime, contagious diseases, energy, environment) and problems of poor governance whilst the US turns to the Pacific.⁵³

Taken individually, the European states are not able to compete economically with the US, however, as a single highly integrated entity, the EU can. In short, with the expansion and consolidation of the EU, the US now faces a large and formidable industrial, financial and politicized centre⁵⁴.

A key goal of Chinese Foreign Policy is to establish multipolarity (US, EU, Russia, India, Brazil, et al) which means a shift of power from developed countries (DCs) to Less Developed Countries (LDCs), from Western to non-Western countries, from Washington to capital cities of other great powers. In particular, US military domination has to be reduced, as well as US economic exploitation of the 'Rest of the World', which occurs in an indirect, neo-colonial, way. At the same time, the EU also has its own plans for its own economy - and China fits into these very well⁵⁵.

⁵⁰ See Shambaugh, David: *European and American Approaches to China: Different Beds, Same Dreams*, Washington, D.C., George Washington University and see also Shambaugh, David: "China and Europe: The Emerging Axis", *Current History*, no. 103 (September 2004).

⁵¹ See the famous article: Colombani, Jean Marie: "Nous Tous Sommes Américains", *Le Monde* (13 September 2001), at http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2007/05/23/nous-sommes-tous-americains_913706_3232.html.

⁵² See Kagan, Robert: "Power and Weakness", *Policy Review*, no. 113, (June-July 2002), at <http://www.policyreview.org/JUN02/Kagan.html>.

⁵³ See Lemann, Nicolaus: "The New World Order", *The New Yorker*, 01 April 2002, at http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2002/04/01/020401fa_FACT1.

⁵⁴ See Bertram, Christopher: "Europe's Interests: Staying Close to Number One", Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation, *Internationale Politik und Gesellschaft* (January 2003), at http://www.fes.de/ipg/IPG1_2003/ARTBERTRAM.HTM.

⁵⁵ See Rogoff, Kenneth: "Europe's Quiet Leap Forward, the United States and China Should Watch Their Backs- A New Economic Juggernaut May Dominate the 21st century", *Foreign Policy*, no. 143, (July-August 2004).



China's assessment of the risks facing its international dealings focuses on the US – China seeks 'strategic partnerships' with other countries as a counter-weight to current powers. This is where the EU comes in: China will want a strengthening of relations with the EU. However, how feasible this is is debateable, there might now be a 'EU Foreign Minister' but the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is virtually non-existing.

Out of the hybrid EU-China relations, a new qualitative relationship will emerge affecting the US greatly and will enforce China's functionalist relationship with the EU, which it sees as synonymous with its stronger members (Germany, France, Britain). China will collaborate with the EU and relations will be relatively harmonious. Nowadays, 1/3 of China's overall trade volume is done with the EU⁵⁶ and the EU and China share similar views on the reform of the international system as a well ordered system of states as decisive actors. China and the EU share views for a global peace policy and both accept national development paths rather than a 'One-Policy-Fits-All' approach.

At the same time, despite highlighting the conflicts between the EU and US, one must not forget that they also share similar views in many areas. In his 'Cooperation Among Democracies: Europe's Influence on US Foreign Policy'⁵⁷, Thomas Risse-Kappan uses four case studies (the Korean War, the 1956 Suez Crisis, the 1958-63 Negotiations on the Test Ban Treaty and the Cuban Missile Crisis), to demonstrate that Europeans influenced US policy in significant ways. Essentially, there will be hybridity in the EU-US relationship as well. The EU and the US have an interest in Chinese economic success and thus political stability, because both hope that China will become a stakeholder in the Westphalian System and that China will become a status-quo power whose interests are served by the maintenance of an open global economy.

As Nick Knight⁵⁸ established, growing engagement (in his case globalisation) translates into vulnerability, not greater power and translates into new risks from the outside and inside. The concern for liberal human rights among the US and the EU⁵⁹ also remains very strong. However, EU-US tensions will persist, not only because the US split Europe into 'Old' and 'New' Europe, but also because the EU does not want to be subordinate. If EU integration continues there will be multipolarity and strengthening of global governance, if it does not, separation from the US will be limited. At the moment however, the EU and China are gaining global influence.

The three power centres will dominate international affairs for many years to come, especially with the hybridization of EU-China relations. However, one must not forget Ferguson's concept of 'Chimerica', a term expressing the unique interdependence between US and China.

⁵⁶ See link at: "EU - China Summit The share of China in EU27 trade in goods continued to rise in the first six months of 2009 EU27 deficit fell in the first half of 2009", *Eurostat*, at <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=STAT/09/167&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>.

⁵⁷ Risse-Kappan, Thomas (1995): *Cooperation Among Democracies: Europe's Influence on US Foreign Policy*, New Jersey, University of Princeton.

⁵⁸ Knight, Nick: "Reflecting on the Paradox of Globalization: China's Search for Cultural Identity and Coherence", *China: An International Journal*, vol. 4, no.1, (March 2006), pp. 1-31.

⁵⁹ For these shared values see Garton Ash, Timothy (2004): *Free World: America, Europe and the Surprising Future of the West*, New York, Random House.



After hybridity of EU and China relations, the triangular relations of the EU, US and China will lead to more subtle manoeuvring. In the past, the bi-polar world was clear, extremely black and white. Nowadays there are more actors and a far greater variety of benefits and disadvantages for all concerned⁶⁰.

While China will not become the new hegemon it could become the core power of a system of regional blocs, with others led by the US and the EU. Whilst the 21st century will not be a Chinese century, where McDonald's is replaced by *mantou* (steamed buns) as the world's favourite fast food, CNN is subordinate to CCTV, or Hollywood is subordinate to the Chinese New Wave, China will join the US and EU as a shaper of world order, challenging Western influence in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and the former Soviet Union with a different model of globalisation⁶¹. Fundamentally though, China's eventual strength will depend on the ultimate outcome of hybridization.

⁶⁰ Shambaugh, David: "The New Strategic Triangle: US and European Reactions to China's Rise", *Washington Quarterly*, vol. 28, no. 3 (November 2005), p. 22.

⁶¹ Leonard, Mark (2008): *What Does China Think?*, London, Fourth Estate, see p. 133.





THE BEIJING CONSENSUS IN THE SHADOW OF THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS

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Abstract:

The tremendous economic growth experienced by the People's Republic of China (PRC) over the last few decades has attracted the attention of academics and policy-makers all over the world. The developing countries are not an exception and, in fact, many in Asia, Africa and Latin America may see the People's Republic of China as an example to follow. Given the PRC's economic growth and development strategies that differ from those of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, some authors consider that a new consensus, a Beijing Consensus, might be emerging and could possibly replace the so-called Washington Consensus. However, it is also undeniable that the current global financial crisis may well constitute a formidable test for the Chinese Growth Model and consequently decide the fate of the Beijing Consensus. If the PRC manages to get out of this crisis ahead of the rest, it will mean a tremendous boost for the possibilities of the Beijing Consensus. If, on the contrary, China is affected like the rest, the concept may never be realized.

Keywords: China, Beijing Consensus, Crisis, Development, Growth

Resumen:

El tremendo crecimiento económico experimentado por la República Popular China a lo largo de las últimas décadas ha atraído la atención de académicos y responsables públicos de todo el mundo. Los países en desarrollo no son una excepción y, de hecho, muchos de ellos en Asia, África y América Latina pueden ver en la República Popular China un ejemplo a seguir. Dado que es muy probable que la RPC haya seguido estrategias de crecimiento y desarrollo distintas de las aconsejadas por el FMI y el Banco Mundial, algunos autores consideran que un nuevo Consenso, el Consenso de Beijing, válido para reemplazar al llamado Consenso de Washington, podría estar surgiendo. Con todo, es innegable que la actual crisis financiera global puede constituir una prueba de primera magnitud para el modelo de crecimiento chino y consiguientemente, para el destino del Consenso de Beijing. En este sentido, si la RPC es capaz de salir mejor parada de la crisis económica que otros estados, ello supondrá un enorme impulso a las posibilidades del Consenso de Beijing. Si, por el contrario, China acaba viéndose tan afectada como el resto, el concepto habrá muerto definitivamente antes incluso de haber nacido.

Palabras clave: China, Consenso de Pekín, crisis, desarrollo, crecimiento.

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1. Introduction

The existence of a new model of development inspired by the People's Republic of China has been subject to passionate debates among experts, practitioners and academics for the last few years. Whereas some of them consider a Beijing Consensus suitable to replace the Washington Consensus, others question the viability of the Chinese model, its likelihood to succeed, and the very existence of such an alternative model.

This paper will try to explain the so-called Beijing Consensus. Chinese development has been based on policies and measures different from those of the global financial institutions and relies on principles far different than the Washington Consensus. The paper will explain the differences between the two, the Beijing Consensus' appeal and its possibilities of success given the current global financial crisis

2. China's Unprecedented Growth and Shortcomings

It is widely recognized that the People's Republic of China has experienced unprecedented levels of economic growth over the last few decades. It has maintained rates of economic growth close to 10% for more than twenty years, even in the wake of the financial crisis which affected East Asia in the late nineties². Such economic success has fed into the Chinese expectations of becoming a great power³.

High growth rates have allowed China to achieve a GDP which amounted to \$2.234 billion in 2007⁴. It overtook the United Kingdom in 2005 and Germany in 2008.⁵ It managed to overtake Japan in 2010; however, China's GDP is still far from the figures of the United States.

A different case is India, currently considered to be China's competitor in Asia in the medium term, though it seems to still have a long way to go before fulfilling such expectations.

² In fact, the People's Republic of China, through its opposition to devalue the Yuan, contributed decisively to contain the effects of the crisis first, and to facilitate the recovery later.

³ Actually, even in the context of the current financial crisis, according to the Chinese National Bureau of Statistics, the Chinese economy would have grown a 9% in 2008 even if the growth dropped to 6.8 in the last quarter of the year.

⁴ The Economist (2008): *Pocket World in Figures*, London, The Economist.

⁵ Scott, David (2007): *China Stands Up*, London, Routledge, p. 131.

**Table 1: Economic Growth**

Country /2008	GDP (\$bn)	Av. Ann, Growth in real GDP
PRC	2.234	9%
United Kingdom	2.199	2.7%
Germany	2.795	1.4%
Japan	4.534	1.3%
United States	12.417	3.4%
India	806	6.3%

Source: The Economist (2008): *Pocket World in Figures*, London, The Economist

China's current economic position is noteworthy considering that almost half of its population is employed in the agricultural sector. This is possible due to the fact that China is responsible for the production of 9% of all consumer goods produced globally as well as 4% of total world trade.

In this sense, we must also take into account China's trade balance which has reached an estimated \$273-billion surplus for 2009. This amount is 8.6% lower than the \$298-billion positive trade balance in 2008,⁶ making the United States push hard in favour of a revaluation of the Chinese currency in 2005. The Yuan was finally revaluated by 2.1% that year⁷. Furthermore, from July 2008 until mid-June 2010, China re-pegged the Yuan to the dollar to help fight the global financial crisis⁸. China freed the Yuan in June and has let it gain about 2.8 per cent against the dollar until October 2010.

However, there are doubts regarding the sustainability of such growth rates. Those doubts stem from the increasing income inequalities with which China seems to be plagued and current environmental and development practices. Up to 75% of the population (mostly in rural areas) has hardly any access to basic needs such as medical care and education.⁹ The environmental consequences of China's industrial and development practices account for

⁶ "China Trade Statistics 2009", *Suite 101*, at <http://www.suite101.com/content/china-trade-statistics-2009-a205058>.

⁷ Odgaard, Liselotte (2006): "The balance of power in Asia-Pacific security : US-China policies on regional order", London, Routledge, p 51.

⁸ "Yuan hits post-revaluation high against dollar", *Business Recorder*, 14 September 2010, at <http://www.brecorder.com/single/58/1/1102146:yuan-hits-post-revaluation-high-against-dollar.html>.

⁹ Dirlik, Arif: "Beijing Consensus: Beijing "Gongshi". Who Recognizes Whom and to What End?", University of Oregon, *Position paper* (2006), at http://anscombe.mcmaster.ca/global1/servlet/Position2pdf?fn=PP_Dirlik_BeijingConsensus.



China having 16 out of the 20 most polluted cities in the world¹⁰. A good indicator of this is the Green GDP, which results from calculating GDP and considers the economic loss caused by the eventual environmental degradation associated with growth. In the case of the PRC, its GDP would amount to 0%.

For some time now a good number of scholars – those supporting the so-called “external contradictions” hypothesis- have tried to draw attention to the imbalance of the Chinese economy towards its external side. They state that the excessive weight of the external side of the Chinese economy risks provoking a global recession which would, in turn, harm the PRC. Moreover, according to the Keynesian theory, the export-led development model would end up provoking a global deflationary crisis¹¹.

They consider it necessary for China to develop a stronger internal market which would sustain growth and correct the external vulnerabilities inherent to the current model. In the context of the global economic turmoil, many policy-makers around the world have considered increased Chinese consumer spending as a key way out of the crisis and a return to pre-crisis levels of global growth.

3. The Emergence of the Beijing Consensus and the Reaffirmation of Sovereignty

Some other developing states have been encouraged by these impressive growth rates experienced by the People’s Republic of China and have tried to follow a similar pattern of development.

The Chinese pattern of development, seen as a suitable model to be followed by other developing countries, has been named the Beijing Consensus. Andrew Leonard coined the term in the early 90s; however, the concept was first formulated by Joshua Cooper Ramo years prior.

What is interesting about the Beijing Consensus as a pattern of development is the fact that it represents a clear departure from the classical mechanisms promoted by the global financial institutions, i.e. the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund, and could possibly replace the Washington Consensus.¹²

The Washington Consensus was a set of development principles established in 1989 by John Williamson, an economist of the World Bank. It relied on elements such as privatization of production, free markets, strong fiscal discipline, and globalized economies. The concept would be expanded by another economist of the World Bank, Daniel Rodrik, later on in the early nineties. The concepts were in principle designed to respond to the deteriorated economic situation in Latin America.

¹⁰ Esteban, Mario (2008): “Energía y medio ambiente en las relaciones hispano-chinas” in Esteban, Mario: *Medio Ambiente y energía en Asia-Pacífico*, Madrid, Exlibris.

¹¹ Palley, Thomas: “External Contradictions of the Chinese Development Model: export-led growth and the dangers of global economic contraction”, *Journal of Contemporary China* vol. 15, no. 46 (February 2006), pp. 69-88, p. 70 and ss.

¹² Esteban, Mario: “Why is the “Beijing Consensus” moving forward”, *Safe Democracy Foundation* (13 June 2006), at <http://english.safe-democracy.org/2006/06/13/why-is-the-beijing-consensus-moving-forw/#more-124>.



The main features of the Beijing Consensus on the other hand were outlined in a paper written by Joshua Cooper Ramo in 2004. He explains the concept based on three essential theorems¹³:

1. The importance of innovation as a means for accelerated change. It is thought that innovation is the only means through which changes may be fast enough to be even faster than the inconveniences caused by change itself.
2. Development entails much more than simply improving GDP or GDP per capita rates. It has to go beyond that. It has to be also directed at improving people's quality of life so as to reduce the possible social imbalances inherent to development. In other words, they try to make development durable, balanced, sustainable.
3. Development also requires *self-determination*, in Ramo's words, that is, to be able to influence big powers or, at least, develop relations on an equal footing with them. The third of these theorems gives an idea of the Beijing Consensus as a model of development based on a strictly classic notion of sovereignty. In other words, following Chen Zhimin,¹⁴ the Beijing Consensus would constitute a return to a Locke-based model¹⁵ of interstate relations as well as the abandonment of the Kantian-based model¹⁶ inherent to the Washington Consensus.

The Beijing Consensus appears to be a possible alternative to development and is based on a distinctive set of values¹⁷, differing from those of the post-Westphalian- Kantian model preferred by western countries and that helped form the Washington Consensus.

The model of development described above, especially in the light of its third theorem and its base on a strictly classical concept of sovereignty, may be of particular interest for other developing countries. Interestingly, it does not consider any concrete degree of political liberalisation, let alone democratisation, as a necessarily link to economic growth and development. Furthermore, the Chinese case proves that economic reform and liberalisation do not necessarily result in democratic reform¹⁸. In fact, the PRC is an example of an authoritarian political regime with a technocratic approach to governance¹⁹ which incorporates interventionist economic policies and places strong emphasis not only on the achievement of economic growth but also on the maintenance of social stability²⁰. Chinese leaders and citizens consider that the limitation of certain civil and political rights may be

¹³ Cooper Ramo, Joshua (2004): *The Beijing Consensus*, London, The Foreign Policy Centre, pp. 11.

¹⁴ Zhimin, Chen (2007): "Soft Balancing and Reciprocal Engagement: international Structures and China's Foreign Policy Choices" in Zweig, David and Chen, Zhimin (2007): *China's Reforms and International Political Economy*, London, Routledge, pp. 53.

¹⁵ The Lockean model would refer to a Westphalian conception of sovereignty according to which some issues such as the equal sovereignty of states and the non-interference in internal affairs of the other states, are considered of paramount importance and they cannot be violated even on the basis of human rights protection.

¹⁶ The Kantian model would be characterised by the higher importance accorded to issues such as democracy or to the protection of human rights even through humanitarian intervention, this is even at the expense of strict state sovereign rights.

¹⁷ Breslin, Shaun (2007): *China and the Global Political Economy*, Basingstoke, Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 1.

¹⁸ Kleine-Ahlbrandt, Stephanie and Small, Andrew: "China's New Dictatorship Diplomacy", *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 87, no. 1 (January/February 2008), pp. 38-56.

¹⁹ Desker, Barry: "Why War is Unlikely in Southeast Asia", *RSIS Commentaries*, no. 71 (27 June 2008), at <http://www.rsis.edu.sg/publications/Perspective/RSIS0712008.pdf>.

²⁰ Esteban, "Why is the "Beijing Consensus..."", *op. cit.*



necessary if economic development and stability are to be assured, something that may seem very reasonable for leaders and citizens alike in other developing countries²¹.

The Chinese model is an attractive alternative for those authoritarian leaders who may want to improve the growth and development rates of their countries without putting their regimes at risk, making economic development a priority over political reform²². At the same time, judging by the Chinese case, they will enjoy some legitimacy as long as they achieve certain economic development and welfare for a greater number, regardless of the political line they may follow.

The Beijing Consensus relies on the idea that “China’s path to development is unrepeatable by any other nation,”²³ requiring states to follow paths towards growth and development. This is the opposite of the universal prescriptions provided by the Washington Consensus, and the Chinese leaders seem reluctant to recognise the existence of any Chinese “model” which other states might copy²⁴. Chinese officials (far from adopting a position of moral authority) frequently mention that China should be considered a developing country, stressing the importance of South-South solidarity²⁵. Thus, leaders of autocratic regimes around the world can be certain that not only development and economic liberalization lead to democracy, but also that the People’s Republic of China is not going to condition its relation with them based on their democratic standards and will not criticise their internal affairs²⁶.

The People’s Republic of China is likely to be seen with much less wariness in developing countries than in Europe or the United States, since it does not have a history as a colonial power nor has China threatened or attacked any third world/developing country over the last few years. This behaviour seems consistent with its claim of seeking a “harmonious development”²⁷ in a “harmonious international society”²⁸.

In this sense, China has made tireless efforts to avoid any possible concern about a “China threat” among its potential followers and partners. Therefore, President Hu Jinta expressed his aspiration for a “harmonious world”²⁹ during his address at the 60th anniversary of the United Nations, which, as far as Chinese foreign policy is concerned, may be seen as the logical correlate of the “harmonious development” that the PRC claims to be carrying out.

²¹ Peerenboom, Randall (2002): *China's long march toward rule of law*, Cambridge; New York, Cambridge University Press, pp. 86.

²² Leonard, Mark (2008): *What does China Think?*, London, Harper Collins, pp. 96.

²³ Cooper Ramo, *op. cit.*, pp. 5.

²⁴ “The Beijing Consensus is to keep quiet”, *The Economist*, 08 May 2010, pp. 59.

²⁵ Shambaugh, David: “Beijing: A Global Leader With ‘China First’ Policy”, *Yale Global* (29 June 2010), at <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/print/6397>.

²⁶ Thompson, Drew: “China’s Soft Power in Africa: From the Beijing Consensus to Health Diplomacy”, *ASIA MEDIA*, 13 October 2005, at www.asiamedia.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=32003.

²⁷ The concept was used by Hu Jintao at the UN 60th Anniversary Summit on September 15, 2005. It embodied China’s aspiration to appear as responsible power on the global stage. It replaced the previous notion of “peaceful rise”.

²⁸ The correlate of the above mentioned Chinese “harmonious development” in its foreign policy. See Berkofsky, Axel: “The hard facts of soft power”, *Asia Times*, May 25 2007, at www.atimes.com/atimes/China/IE25Ad01.html.

²⁹ Shambaugh, David: “Understanding the Jabberwork”, *The National Interest*, no 94 (Mar./Apr. 2008), pp. 55-57.



Finally, the PRC is also seen as an example (or perhaps an icon) as it has refused to follow the prescriptions of the IMF or the World Bank in achieving higher rates of economic growth and development³⁰.

4. The Expansion of the Model and the Chinese Position in the Global Political Economy

All these circumstances, together with the PRC's increasing 'soft power,'³¹ which at least to some extent may also be the result of its pragmatic foreign policy and its economic appeal,³² have provided China with an unparalleled opportunity to increase its influence in the global political economy as a result of two sets of events:

- The rising number of developing states which are embarking upon a similar pattern of development
- The increasing number of states which are establishing trade and investment relations with the People's Republic of China.

Nevertheless, the Chinese government might be trying to consciously foster these developments in order to expand its participation in South-South cooperation. That would explain the "go out" strategy already set forth in 2001, aiming to increase Chinese investments in the Third World.³³ China did not hide the fact that it wanted to establish a new "strategic partnership in Africa,"³⁴ paying visits to countries like Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Nigeria and Kenya.

It is interesting to note that there are several cases in Asia in which countries intend to follow the development model embedded in the Beijing Consensus, and/or intensify their economic relations with the Middle Kingdom.

4.1. Asia

Some of the former Soviet Republics such as Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have seen China as a model for the management of economic issues and also an ally in their opposition to the American policies aiming to spread democracy. That said, we must remember that China sided with the authoritarian governments of some Central Asian countries when they perceived a threat of Colour Revolutions spreading from the Caucasus

³⁰ In fact, John Williamson, who - as we mentioned above - was the economist who designed the Washington Consensus, has recognized that some of the Asian States with histories of recent economic success did not follow some of its principles. See Springborg, Robert: "From Washington to Beijing: In Search of a Development Model", *The Middle East in London* (December 2007-January 2008), pp. 4.

³¹ Gill, Bates and Huang, Yanzhong: "Sources and limits of Chinese Soft Power", *Survival*, vol. 48, no. 2 (Summer 2006), pp. 17-35.

³² Thomson, Drew: "China's Soft Power in Africa...", *op. cit.*

³³ China may well be planning the construction of a gas pipeline from the Western Coast of Burma to Yunnan and Sichuan in China as a way to bypass the Straits of Malacca. See Kleine-Ahlbrandt, Stephanie and Small, Andrew, *op. cit.*

³⁴ Bhattacharya, Abanti: "Hu's Foreign Visits. Emerging Beijing Consensus", *IDSA Strategic Comments*, 11 May 2006, www.idsa.in/publications/stratcomments/AbantiBhattacharya110506.htm.



and Eastern Europe. Similarly, we should not forget how China received President Karimov of Uzbekistan shortly after the violent repression of a demonstration in Andijan in 2005, in sharp contrast with the sanctions applied by the United States and the European Union regarding the occasion.

Some Southeast Asian countries like Laos, Vietnam and Myanmar may also be interested in emulating the Chinese model and/or intensifying their relations with the PRC.³⁵ Thus Laos, following the Chinese path, has undertaken important market reforms to try to enhance the share of the economy represented by sectors other than agriculture, and increasing its participation in international trade despite still being a strictly socialist state in political terms. Meanwhile, Vietnam has tried to implement the same sort of economic, legal and political reforms which have succeeded in China.³⁶ Vietnam has transformed itself into a manufacturing export oriented economy, while also trying to attract FDI. In the case of Myanmar, the economic exchanges seem to have taken the lead, at least for the time being. A new gas field was recently discovered off the coast of Arakan,³⁷ adding to the interest that the PRC already had in this Southeast Asian country as a consequence of its access to the Indian Ocean. In exchange, the PRC has sold \$1 billion worth of military equipment to Myanmar, despite the international sanctions which are in place against Myanmar's military junta.

To gain greater access to the Indian Ocean, China has contributed to building and upgrading both the roadways and rail networks which link Yunnan (South China) with a number of points along the Myanmar coast of the Bay of Bengal. Similarly, China is involved in the modernization of the naval facilities located at Akyab (Sittwe), Mergui, Hanggyi Islands and Great Coco Islands. According to some reports, China and Myanmar will have an intelligence sharing agreement regarding India's force deployment in the North East and Bay of Bengal.

³⁵ Interestingly, most of the Southeast Asian countries interested in the Chinese pattern of development are those which have not seen the People's Republic of China as a competitor in terms of trade and foreign investment to a greater or lower extent. See Greenaway, Daved; Mahabir, Aruneema; Milner, Chris: "Has China displaced other Asian countries' exports?", *China Economic Review*, no. 19 (2008), pp. 152-169.

³⁶ Peerenboom, *op. cit.*

³⁷ China may well be planning the construction of a gas pipeline from the Western Coast of Burma to Yunnan and Sichuan in China as a way to bypass the Straits of Malacca. See Kleine-Ahlbrandt and Small, *op. cit.*

MAP 1: Arakan Projects



Source: SWET Project

Southeast Asian countries which have traditionally sided with the US, like Thailand and the Philippines, are increasingly fond of receiving trade and cooperation from the People's Republic of China.

4.2. Iran

In the Middle East, Iran is trying to emulate the Chinese experience of growth. Iran has invited Chinese experts and academics to advise it and also embarked in trade deals with China for oil and natural gas. Thus, not surprisingly, the PRC became Iran's largest trade partner in 2007 and has been negotiating agreements to invest several billion dollars in Iranian Gas Fields. Similarly, a group of Chinese companies signed a contract with Iran in order to develop a number of projects in the oil sector. Sinopec has also committed 1500 million dollars to upgrade the Arak refinery. The PRC will also conduct the exploration of the Yadavaran gas field,³⁸ and Chinese national companies such as the China National Offshore Oil Co. are investing huge amounts of money in the Azadegan oil field, despite China's support for strengthened UN sanctions against Iran. This move has been seen with dislike by the US³⁹.

³⁸ Adib-Moghaddam, Arshin: "Como abordar el desafío iran", *Foro Para un Mundo en Democracia*, *Safe Democracy Foundation* (29 January 2008), at <http://spanish.safe-democracy.org>.

³⁹ Pomfret, John "In China, officials in tug of war to shape foreign policy", *The Washington Post*, 24 September 2010, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/09/23/AR2010092306843.html>.

MAP 2: Yadavaran Area

Source Answer.com Business and Finance

4.3. Latin America

The Chinese appeal is not only limited to the Asian continent and authoritarian governments. On the contrary, in Latin America an increasing number of countries, some of them democratic, are looking towards China for inspiration. Raw materials in general,⁴⁰ not just oil and gas, call China's attention to the region.⁴¹ There has been a massive increase of Chinese FDI in those sectors, and the three biggest Chinese oil companies, CNPC, Sinopec, and CNOOC have reached exploration deals with a number of countries in the region, such as Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador, Argentina and Bolivia⁴². All in all, it is clear that China has become one of the largest trading partners for countries like Peru, Chile and Brazil, as its

⁴⁰ Malamud, Carlos: "Los actores extrarregionales en América Latina (I): China", Real Instituto Elcano, *Documento de Trabajo*, no. 50 (13 November 2007) at http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano/contenido?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_es/zonas_es/america+latina/dt50-2007.

⁴¹ Sánchez Ancochea, Diego: "El impacto de China en América Latina: ¿Oportunidad o amenaza?", Real Instituto Elcano, *ARI*, no. 119 (21 November 2006), at http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano/contenido?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_es/zonas_es/cooperacion+y+desarrollo/ari+119-2006.

⁴² Schiller, Ben: "The China Model", *Open Democracy* (20 December 2005), at http://www.opendemocracy.net/globalization-corporations/china_development_3136.jsp.



trade with the region has multiplied by ten in the last decade.⁴³ China is in the process of trying to establish strategic partnerships with several countries in the region⁴⁴.

In the case of Brazil, President Lula da Silva sent a team to China to study the Chinese economic model. Chinese oil companies have been working with Petrobras to try to increase the oil production and Baosteel, the main Chinese steelmaker, invested up to 1.4 billion dollars in a Joint Venture with Brazil⁴⁵. Furthermore, President Lula wants to create a partnership between China and Brazil, acting as an example of South-South co-operation⁴⁶. This is consistent with Jos Dyrceu's (former Brazilian Prime Minister) view that "China will be the determining factor for the development of Latin America"⁴⁷.

Apart from Brazil, other Latin America countries with clear populist inspiration, like Venezuela, are both interested in the Chinese model of development and enhancing their economic relations with the Middle Kingdom. China has invested 400 million dollars in Venezuela to foster gas production and to upgrade oil fields in order to ensure the long-term supply of petroleum.⁴⁸ Furthermore, plans are underway for Venezuela to provide Iran with assistance in channelling its oil to China⁴⁹. Finally, in Bolivia, President Evo Morales has also sought to develop a closer and broader relation with China to increase Chinese investment in the Bolivian hydrocarbons sector.

4.4. Africa

Chinese involvement in Africa over the last few years has received great attention. Its anti-colonial credentials may play a role of special importance.⁵⁰ Although it is true that China has been present in the African continent since the withdrawal of the colonial powers (supporting the independence movements in the 50s and 60s), it has massively increased its relations in the form of trade, investment and aid throughout the last years. The expansion of trade, the increase of investments and the enhancement of cooperation in the field of human resources have been substantially incremented since 2005.⁵¹

The interest between China and Africa is clearly mutual as China badly needs raw materials and energy to sustain its industry. A growing African population makes the continent a very appealing market. Thus, Chinese business and economic activity in Africa have counted on the support of the Export-Import Bank of China and the China Development Bank. These banks have helped Chinese investors and companies with loans and investment guarantees. Similarly, in December 2005, the Chinese Government launched the official "China's African Policy" by means of an "Africa White Paper", which explained the main features that would define the Chinese cooperation with Africa over the next few years,

⁴³ Carroll, Rory: "China pours its wealth into Latin America" *The Guardian*, 18 April 2010, at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/apr/18/china-brazil-south-america-trade>.

⁴⁴ Malamud, *op. cit.*

⁴⁵ Aiyar, Pallavi: "China muscling its way into the global brand race", *The Financial Express*, 18 December 2004, available at <http://www.financialexpress.com/news/china-muscling-its-way-into-the-global-brand-race/56570/2>.

⁴⁶ Kurlantzick, Joshua: "How China is Changing Global Diplomacy", *The New Republic*, 27 June 2005, at www.cerium.ca/spip.php?page=impression&id_article=1267.

⁴⁷ Castillo, Antonio: "China is good news for Latin America", *China Daily*, 19 March 2010, at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2010-03/19/content_9612186.htm.

⁴⁸ Sánchez Arcochea, *op. cit.*

⁴⁹ Kurlantzick, *op. cit.*

⁵⁰ Kleine-Ahlbrandt and Small, *op. cit.*

⁵¹ Broadman, Harry: "China and India Go to Africa", *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 87, no. 2 (March/April 2008), pp. 95-109.



servicing as a general framework for all the economic activities⁵². Furthermore, in 2007, Hu Jintao announced the creation of a new Special Economic Zone placed in Zambia and followed by two more in Mauritius and Tanzania. This created two more special economic zones, totalling five in the African continent.⁵³ In November 2009, at a meeting in Sharm el-Sheikh, Prime Minister Wen Jiabao assured that assistance to African countries would keep growing without any degree of political conditionality.⁵⁴

All these efforts have proven to be successful if we consider the rate at which exchanges between China and Africa have been growing at 56% per year over the last decade.⁵⁵

As previously mentioned, Chinese interest in Africa and other regions is driven to a large extent by its growing needs for raw materials and energy. Oil imported from Africa amounts to a third of the total Chinese oil imports, a proportion that continues to rise. Thus, oil extractive industries are involved in most of the economic exchanges with Africa⁵⁶. In fact, as much as 50% of the FDI from China goes to countries with large oil reserves like Nigeria, Sudan and Zambia, while also extending to countries like Angola, Congo, Chad and Equatorial Guinea. For instance, in the case of Angola, which recently overtook Saudi Arabia as the main supplier of oil for China, the PRC did not hesitate to offer a 2 billion dollar credit at a very low interest and without any kind of conditionality. The deal was accepted by the Angolan government, allowing it to escape from the good governance conditionalities set by the IMF for a similar loan.⁵⁷

Authorities of countries like Sudan or Zimbabwe have enthusiastically received the lack of Chinese concern regarding human rights and democracy issues, as well as its role as a sort of counterweight to the West⁵⁸. The Chinese disregard for human rights concerns has been harshly criticised by Western governments and commentators who consider China to be a “rogue donor”⁵⁹.

5. The Chinese Model and the Financial Crisis

At this point it seems clear that the first casualty of the global financial crisis has been the already weakened Washington Consensus and the economic principles which have guided the global economy throughout the last decades. It has meant, Alain Grash explains, “the

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Leonard, *op. cit.*, pp. 119.

⁵⁴ Brautigam, Deborah: “Africa’s Eastern Promise” *Foreign Affairs*, 05 January 2010, at <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/65916/deborah-brautigam/africa%E2%80%99s-eastern-promise>.

⁵⁵ Lammers, Ellen: “How will the Beijing Consensus Benefit Africa?”, *The Broker*, 01 April 2007, at <http://www.thebrokeronline.eu/en/Magazine/articles/How-will-the-Beijing-Consensus-benefit-Africa>.

⁵⁶ Broadman, Harry: “China and India Go to Africa”, *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 87, no. 2 (March/April 2008), pp. 95-109.

⁵⁷ Schiller, *op. cit.*

⁵⁸ Sautman, Barry V.: “Friends and Interests: China’s Distinctive links with Africa”, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Center on China’s Transnational Relations, *Working paper* no. 12 (2006).

⁵⁹ Freschi, Laura: “China in Africa: myths and realities” *Aidwatch*, 09 February 2010, at <http://aidwatchers.com/2010/02/china-in-africa-myths-and-realities/>.



marginalisation of the international organisations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank”⁶⁰.

The chances for the Beijing Consensus to emerge as a possible response or, on the contrary, follow the same fate of the Washington consensus depend very much on the ability of the People’s Republic of China to deal with the effects of the crisis. Nevertheless, we could say that there are already some reasons to be optimistic.

To begin with, Asian countries were initially less affected by the financial crisis⁶¹ than Europe and the US, due to being less exposed to mortgage problems. Furthermore, later growth has slowed down in Asia, and particularly Northeast Asia, leaving China less affected than Japan, South Korea, Russia and other developed countries in the region.⁶²

In 2008 the PRC experienced the lowest growth rate in five years at 9%, dropping to 8.7% in 2009 according to the National Bureau of Statistics. However, China’s economy seems relatively healthy if compared to some others worldwide.

Clearly, China has not been completely isolated from the OECD recession. Decreasing exports resulted in a drop in GDP and a downturn in China’s property market. Recently, China has registered a slowing demand for commodities, and unemployment rates have risen.

However, we can also say that the Chinese economy is healthier and better able to resist financial contagion. In fact, according to the China Daily, the Chinese banks increased their profits by a 30.6% in 2008 and the three biggest Chinese banks –China Construction Bank, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China and Bank of China- are expected to suffer less from the economic downturn.

While the collapse of Lehman Brothers provoked three days of losses in the Shanghai Index, it only needed one day to recuperate its original level after the adoption of a number of measures taken by the Chinese Government. At the same time, when compared to the reactions of the European and American markets, the Chinese government’s reactions reflect the higher degree of confidence of the Chinese economic operators and the effectiveness of the measures set in place, resulting in the increased likelihood for said measures to be successful.

According to Fernández-Stembridge, there are two elements which help explain the lesser impact of the crisis on the Chinese economy compared with those of other countries⁶³:

1. The stringent regulations and controls on capital outflows as well as its small external debt (just 11.4% of its GDP).

⁶⁰ Gresh, Alain: “Understanding the Beijing Consensus”, *Le Monde Diplomatique* (November 2008), at <http://mondediplo.com/2008/11/03beijingconsensus>.

⁶¹ Abad Quintanal, : “Asia salva al capitalismo”, *Foro para una democracia segura, Safe Democracy Foundation*, 03 November 2008, at <http://spanish.safe-democracy.org/2008/11/03/asia-salva-al-capitalismo>.

⁶² Marquina, Antonio (2010): “De la globalización económica a la crisis financiera y económica. Su impacto en el sistema internacional” in Pérez de Nanclares, Juan (ed.): *Estados y Organizaciones Internacionales ante las nuevas crisis globales* AEPDIRI, pp. 434 and ss.

⁶³ Fernández-Stembridge, Leila: *Crisis Financiera: ¿Es China Endeble?*, Observatorio de Política Exterior Española, *Memorando OPEX*, no. 101 (15 October 2008), pp. 2.



2. The massive capital inflows provoked by the revaluation of the Yuan since 2005 and the fact that China has become a major destination of investments in the context of the current crisis.

Both elements would give reasons for investors to consider China a safe place for their funds in the current situation.

In fact, China's sound economic situation allowed the PRC to offer a \$500 billion loan to the United States in order to rescue its economy.

The global crisis has been a crucial test for China, forcing the country to adjust to the slowdown in Chinese exports and industrial production, including the car industry which adds a lower investment in the property sector. Similarly worrisome is the decrease in business activity and confidence of the economic operators.

Chinese leadership seems to have chosen a new path. Economists who have warned about the external contradictions of the Chinese Development Model may have been right. Chinese leaders, while making calls to avoid protectionism,⁶⁴ are also adopting measures to enable a solid increase in domestic demand and private consumption as well as public spending (especially in infrastructures). Thus, money is being devoted in particular to rural areas, transportation infrastructures, public housing, environmental projects, health and social services.

The rise in public spending has meant an injection of up to four trillion RMB (\$ 586 billion), funded partially through funds from the local government and the private sector. An increase of the deficit through an increase in debt sales and the issue of treasury bonds will also be among the measures undertaken⁶⁵.

In order to strengthen the economy, these funds have been invested in the development of rural areas, the construction of transportation infrastructures, public housing, environmental projects, health and social services. In sum, an increase in domestic consumption and investment will compensate for the slow down of the external side of the economy. Furthermore, the government will seek to increase currency flow throughout the country to alleviate the loss of confidence and business activity.

Since the second half of 2008, there has been a change in the discourse of the Chinese leadership. Previously, the government was concerned with the "two contentions" of economic growth and inflation, however, it is now clearly oriented to sustain economic growth and monitor inflation.⁶⁶ Maintenance of economic growth appears to now be of top priority, while the control of inflation is no longer such an important concern. (According to the World Bank, inflation in 2008 was only 4.6 % lower than the previous year).

⁶⁴ Marquina, *op. cit.*, p. 441.

⁶⁵ Batson, Andrew: "Beijing Reveals Small Parts of Big Stimulus", *The Wall Street Journal*, 15 November 2008, at <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122670803014529937.html>.

⁶⁶ Fernández-Stembridge, *op. cit.*, p. 3.



In other words, as the aforementioned economists of the “external contradictions” hypothesis predicted, the current crisis seems to be one of deflation and not one of inflation. This could be beneficial for a country like China which has had inflation difficulties over the last few years.

Current measures are aimed at maintaining the growth rate at levels of 8%, the rate considered necessary to contain unemployment. In any case, when compared to some western countries like the UK, the measures have steadily increased retail sales and appear to be successful.

The loan offered to the US is also in China’s best interest as it would help restore one of its most important markets and would allow the PRC to gain greater influence on the western financial system.

It seems clear that if the PRC had failed to make the necessary adjustments to maintain its growth and development at reasonable levels amid the crisis, the model would have never emerged in the first place. On the contrary, should China finally manage to handle the consequences of the Global Economic Turmoil (as it seems to be doing), the Beijing Consensus would only be reinforced as an alternative pattern of development.

6. Conclusion

These developments, which contribute to explain the increasing importance of the People’s Republic of China within the functioning of the global economy, may have the potential to prompt a reconfiguration of the global economy, giving rise to an order articulated on the basis of Chinese interests⁶⁷ and practices.

This could end up altering the balance of world economic and presumably military power, causing reason for concern in different circles in the United States⁶⁸.

Many countries could escape from the isolation of the West and find a comfortable partner in China, resulting in a complex network of relations of countries which the West (and especially the US) has alienated itself from. It seems clear that this growing web of foreign relations and increased leverage is not only beneficial for China in economic terms but also in political terms, which could be eventually useful as a balancing tool versus the West.

If the PRC emerges victorious from the crisis, the Beijing Consensus as a model of development (and state capitalism as a new model of managing globalisation) will have triumphed. In other words, as its critics repeatedly mention, the Beijing Consensus is not an alternative to capitalism and globalisation, it is another way to understand and manage them.

Many Chinese leaders, probably conscious of the implications of such a decision, insist on considering their country as a developing one and not as a Great Power.⁶⁹ This self-image may also be cultivated to avoid any reference to the so-called *China’s rise*, one of the terms which may have helped to feed the China threat theory mentioned above.

⁶⁷ Breslin, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

⁶⁸ Nolan, Peter (2007): *Integrating China*, London, Anthem Press, p. 152.

⁶⁹ Shambaugh, *op. cit.*



China is increasingly aware of the meaning of this enhanced economic and, in turn, political position, especially in terms of its Comprehensive National Power. This issue appears to be of paramount concern for the Chinese leadership nowadays.

Even when given the scenario of an asymmetric superpower⁷⁰, what seems certain is that China is steadily gaining influence and power at the global level and is mainly achieving it via economic instruments and strategies as opposed to military assets – irrespective of what the Chinese Revolution in Military Affairs or the Chinese Spatial Programme may state.

⁷⁰ Leonard, *op. cit.*, p. 106.



RUSSIA'S FAILURE IN ASIA¹

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Abstract:

Russia wants to be seen as a major Asian power and understands that it needs foreign investment on a large-scale to accomplish this aim. However, few Asian states really see it in this light and this is mainly due to failure by Moscow to develop the Russian Far East or to make itself truly fully relevant to its partners' or potential partners' concerns. Particularly with regard to South Korea and Japan Russia has failed not only to make the Russian Far East an attractive investment proposition, it has also failed to respond to their critical political interests in making Russia a safe haven for foreign investment or for pulling much weight in the six-party talks on North Korean proliferation. Neither has it responded to Japanese business' desire for a stable investment climate or to Japan on the so called Northern Territories issue. As a result Russia has failed to optimize the potential benefits that could accrue to it from ties with those states. As a result it really has only one partner in Asia and that is China. And under the circumstances this partnership entails growing dependence upon China, not an equal partnership nor an independent and competitive status as a great Asian power.

Keywords: Russia, Russian Far East, Asian Power, Japan, Korea, China, Dependence, Partnership.

Resumen:

Rusia quiere ser vista como una potencia asiática y entiende que necesita de las inversiones extranjeras a gran escala para lograr tal objetivo. Sin embargo, pocos países asiáticos comparten la misma visión, ello debido principalmente al fracaso de Moscú a la hora de desarrollar su región del Extremo Oriente, o por lo menos de presentarse como un actor relevante para las preocupaciones de sus socios y potenciales socios. Especialmente en relación con Corea del Sur y Japón, Rusia ha sido incapaz no sólo de convertir a su Extremo Oriente en un objetivo de inversión atractivo, sino que no ha respondido a sus principales intereses políticos convirtiendo a Rusia en un destino para inversiones o valorizando su posición como interlocutor en las conversaciones a seis bandas sobre la proliferación en Corea del Norte. Tampoco ha respondido a los deseos de los empresarios japoneses de un clima de inversiones estable, o a los intereses de Japón con respecto al contencioso territorial. Como resultado de todo ello, Rusia no ha logrado optimizar los beneficios potenciales que podrían derivarse de sus lazos con estos países. Por tanto, no le queda más que un socio en Asia, China, y por las características de tal asociación, ello conlleva una creciente dependencia de China, muy lejos de una asociación en igualdad y de un estatus independiente y competitivo como una potencia asiática.

Palabras clave: Rusia, Extremo Oriente Ruso, potencia asiática, Japón, Corea, China, dependencia, asociación.

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¹ This is an expanded, updated and revised version of an earlier article "Is Russia Courting Failure in Asia? Published by IFRI. The views expressed here do not represent those of the US Army, Defense Department, or the US Government.

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1. Introduction

Russia considers itself an Asian power and wants Siberia and the Russian Far East (RFE) to be directly involved in Asia and its security organizations like APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation).³ Toward this end it offers its abundant oil and gas, and also its supposedly equally competitive science, technology, industrial and intellectual potential.⁴ Indeed, Russia ties its further development as an Asian power to the increased participation of Asian countries in its economy particularly in Siberia and the Russian Far East.⁵ While Russia's scientific and technological competitiveness are dubious; energy has long been Russia's calling card in Asia and the key to the large-scale task of rebuilding Siberia, the Russian Far East (RFE), and ensuring Russia's recognition as a great Asian power.⁶

As Russian leaders well know and admit the reconstruction of Asiatic Russia is only possible in that context of large-scale foreign investment. Yet despite statements of Russia's readiness for it, little has been done to make such investment attractive for foreign investors and firms. Consequently that investment is not occurring. As a result not only do numerous foreign experts fail to take account of Russia as an Asiatic power as any examination of the Asian security literature will confirm, many states also do not take Russia seriously as an Asian power. This is undoubtedly galling to Russian leaders who are well aware of Russia's perceived Asian status. This Deputy Foreign Minister Alexei Borodavkin recently stated that ,

At present some countries do not wish to see us as a strong competitor. Russia should become part and parcel of the Asia-Pacific region's integrated economies. Then we shall stop being seen as a second-rate participant.⁷

Of course, Borodavkin's remarks indicate that Russia is not yet "part and parcel" of the Asia-Pacific and not seen as such by potential interlocutors. Indeed, as Gaye Christoffersen recently wrote there is "a large gap between Moscow's expectations for Russia's role in the APR (Asia-Pacific region) and how the region perceives Russia."⁸ But to a large degree, this is Russia's own fault, the consequence of misguided political and economic policies, not some nefarious foreign conspiracy. Indeed, Russia's recent history justifies investors' skepticism about repatriating profits and the safety of their investments. As a result it is not surprising that the results of Russia's quest for foreign investment with regard to Japan, South Korea, and China are not encouraging. Despite recent high-level ministerial talks with Japanese officials and mutual calls for enhanced cooperation in energy and other sectors, no new deals for specific agreements have been signed with Japan.⁹ Russian analysts still think that Japan's main reason for reluctance to invest in Siberia is due to the issue of the Kurile Islands

³ Medvedev, Dmitry: "APEC: Toward a Stable, Safe, and Prosperous Community," Presidential Speech 13th November, 2009), at <http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20091113/156810697.html>.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *ITAR-TASS, Open Source Center, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Eurasia (Henceforth FBIS SOV)*, (1 April, 2010).

⁶ Lavrov, Sergei: "The Rise of Asia and the Eastern Vector of Russia's Foreign Policy," *Russia in Global Affairs*, vol. 4, no. 3 (July-September 2006), pp. 70, 77; Lavrov, Sergei, Speech at Chulalongkorn University of Thailand, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, FBIS SOV*, Moscow (24 July, 2009); Luzyanin, Sergei: "A Greater East For a Former Superpower," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta, FBIS SOV*, 22April, 2005.

⁷ *FBIS SOV*, 1 April, 2010.

⁸ Christoffersen, Gaye: "Russia's Breakthrough Into the Asia-Pacific: China's Role" *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, vol. 6, no. 1 (2010), p. 64.

⁹ *Kyodo World Service, FBIS SOV*, October 21, 2008; *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 21October, 2008.



when in fact it is probably equally due to Russia's failure to create viable conditions for foreign investors and record of duplicity vis-a-vis both Japan and China since 2003 with regard to energy investments.¹⁰

Failure to rebuild Siberia and the RFE has clear and profound consequences. If Russia cannot attract foreign investment from Japan and South Korea it will necessarily have to concede primacy in the RFE to China with the negative results that many Russian leaders and analysts fear. As Russian officials well know nowhere is domestic policy so clearly a precondition for success abroad as in the Far East. As Russia's Ambassador to South Korea, Gleb Ivashentsov recently said,

In no other region are internal and external interests of Russia so interconnected as in Northeast Asia. For the future of Russia as a great power to a great extent depends on the economic, technological, and social uplift of Siberia and the Russian Far East. To achieve that aim we need the absence of external threats. By Russia's view such guarantees could be best provided by promoting positive relations with her neighbors.¹¹

Here Ivashentsov was merely echoing his boss Foreign Minister Lavrov who wrote in 2006 that,

Russia can join the integration processes in the vast Asia-Pacific region only through the economic growth of Siberia and the Russian Far East; in other words, the modernization of these regions is an axiom. Therefore, there does not exist any contradiction between the general vector of Russia's internal development, described as "the European choice," and the objectives of our policy in Asia. --- Moreover, our domestic and foreign policy interests converge in Asia as in nowhere else; because without economic progress there cannot be a solid foundation for our policy in this region. In turn, this policy directly depends on the social, economic, and infrastructural, and other development of Siberia and the Russian Far East.¹²

Consequently failure to develop the RFE inhibits if it does not preclude Russia's successful integration into the Far East.

To be sure not everything is bleak. For example, ASEAN is considering expanding the ASEAN + 6 group to include both Russia and the United States. At the recent 16th ASEAN summit in Hanoi the Chairman's statement said that,

¹⁰ Katz, Mark: "Exploiting Rivalries for Fun and Profit: An Assessment of Putin's Foreign Policy approach", *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol. 52, no. 3 (May-June, 2005), pp. 25-31; Blank, Stephen (2006): *Russo-Chinese Energy Relations: Politics in Command*, London, Global Markets Briefing; Ito, Shoichi: "Sino-Russian Energy Partnership: The Dilemmas of Cooperation and Mutual Distrust," Austin, Greg and Schellekens-Gaiffe, Marie-Ange (eds.) (2007): *Energy and Conflict Prevention*, New York, Institute for East-West Studies, p. 64.

¹¹ "Address by H.E. Mr. Gleb A. Ivashentsov, Ambassador of Russia to the Republic of Korea", 5th *Jeju Peace Forum*, Jeju (13 August, 2009), at

http://www.russian-embassy.org/Press/20090813_Chej.htm.

¹² Lavrov: "The Rise of Asia..." *op. cit*, pp. 70, 77.



We recognized and supported the mutually reinforcing roles of the ASEAN = 3 process, the East Asia Summit (EAS), and such regional forums as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), to promote the East Asian cooperation and dialogue towards the building of a community in East Asia. In this connection, we encouraged Russia and the US to deepen their engagement in an evolving regional architecture, including the possibility of their involvement with the EAS through appropriate modalities, taking into account the Leaders-led, open, and inclusive nature of the EAS.¹³

That invitation reflects a sense of Russia's growing political role in Asia, no doubt helped by Russian energy assistance and arms sales to Southeast Asian states. But when we look at Russia's economy and continuing failure to reform or modernize to escape the dead ends that Medvedev has been harping on for over a year, it becomes clear that Moscow has failed to utilize the eight good years it had through 2008 to realize an effective program for the RFE. Now, under conditions of crisis the consequences of that failure are plainly visible. That outcome is the conversion of Russia into a kind of colonial raw materials appendage to China with equivalent political consequences to follow from this state of excessive dependence upon China. Foreign analysts too grasp this thus Christoffersen observes that Russia's "invisibility" in Asia is the basis for Chinese claims that China serves as Russia's "gateway" into Asia.¹⁴ Likewise Asian diplomats quoted by Christoffersen argue that if Russia wants to be an Asian power it must upgrade Asia's place in its foreign policy for otherwise that outcome will not materialize.¹⁵ Similarly, Robert Kaplan points to China's economic encroachment in search of raw materials and energy into the RFE which is where Russian authority is at its most feeble as part of its imperial reemergence.¹⁶

But equally importantly, if China truly is the gatekeeper for Russia's entry into Asia that means it can define the limits of that Russian engagement with Asia and keep Russia dependent upon it. Consequently we can see that beneath Russia's swaggering diplomacy there lies a barely concealed anxiety about the RFE.¹⁷ When the leadership speaks to Russian audiences concerning the RFE whose effective development is the precondition for success in Asia, we find a visible anxiety, sense of frustration, even of a loss of way, and mounting apprehension about the RFE's future. That anxiety reflects the ample evidence of apprehension about the RFE and especially China lurking under Moscow's contemporary encomia to Beijing.

For example, in 2000 President Putin warned local audiences that unless Russia intensified the region's development they would end up speaking Korean, Japanese, or Chinese, leaving little to the imagination concerning Russian fears over the RFE and who might supplant it there.¹⁸ In 2002 he reiterated the multiple security problems that could erupt in the RFE, stressing terrorism, crime, drug trafficking, but also economic backwardness as well as giving concrete instructions for the development of its energy and transport

¹³ *Vietnam News Agency Online*, 9April, 2010, *FBIS SOV*, 10April, 2010.

¹⁴ Christoffersen, *op. cit.* p. 62.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 64

¹⁶ Kaplan, Robert: "The Geography of Chinese Power," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 89, no. 3 (May-June, 2010), p. 28.

¹⁷ "Strategiia Natsional'noi Bezopasnosti Rossii do 2020", *Security Council of the Russian Federation* (12 May, 2009), *FBIS SOV*, 15 May, 2009, www.scrf.gov.ru; in English it is available from the *Open Source Center Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Central Eurasia* (Henceforth *FBIS SOV*), 15 May 2009, in a translation from the Security Council website (Henceforth *NSS*).

¹⁸ *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, July 22, 2000; *BBC Monitoring*, 22 July, 2000.



infrastructure.¹⁹ Also in 2002 the prestigious Council on Foreign and Defense Policy (SVOP) admonished its elite audience that Siberia and the RFE would inevitably be depopulated. It warned that, “One should not turn a blind eye to the risk of some Chinese-related dangers that could materialize within the next 10-15 years.”²⁰ In November, 2002 the Deputy Secretary of the Russian Security Council, Vladimir Potapov, said that the RFE aroused more concern than did many other regions, not just because of its vastness, remoteness, sparse and declining population, long foreign borders, weak internal communications and infrastructure, and large distances between land and naval bases, but also because, “This region is rich in very diverse resources and, consequently, is attractive economically. It has as neighbors countries which are densely populated, which lead quite poor lives, and which evidently need new sources of existence,” i.e. China.²¹ This dovetailed with Putin’s earlier threat assessment in 2002.²²

By 2005 Putin claimed that there was a targeted Federal program for developing the RFE that at his and Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov’s instruction ministers had recently elaborated the outlines for developing it, and had set the priority areas for federal funding allocated to it.²³ In other words, evidently little had been done since 2000 to implement his previous program. Only in September 2005 did Minister of Economic Development and Trade German Gref promise a doubling of state support for the RFE to \$612 million in 2006, and consideration of allocating a new \$2.5 Billion infrastructure fund for projects there.²⁴ But this time he guaranteed that all the new programs would be implemented.²⁵ Meanwhile political figures like Viktor Ozerov, Chairman of the Federation Council’s Defense and Security Committee, were warning of a military threat or threats in the Far East and decrying the predatory use of the region’s resources, and large-scale illegal immigration even though admittedly no imminent threat was visible.²⁶

At the end of 2006 Putin warned that the socio-economic isolation of the RFE and its failure to exploit its resources represented a threat to national security. Typically and not unjustly he attributed the problem to the failure to coordinate a comprehensive state program to strategic development of the RFE and advocated a new socioeconomic commission to be formed and formulate a regional development strategy despite the program he had set up in 2005. Evidently federal government policies were not being delivered adequately the the RFE. Specifically he complained that foreigners keep coming while Russia’s population declines, therefore the region is becoming separated from Russia and “emerges as the biggest threat to Russia”.²⁷ The government appeared to follow suit, establishing such a commission that was supposed to have “the status of a governing body and could be a ministry for the Far

¹⁹ *ITAR-TASS*, 27 November, 2002, *FBIS SOV*, 27 November, 2002.

²⁰ Council on Foreign and Defense Policy: “New Security Challenges and Russia,” *Russia in Global Affairs* (10 November, 2002), <http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/New-Security-Challenges-and-Russia-2>.

²¹ Alexseev, Mikhail A.: “Vostok-2003 War Games: Preparing To Defend a Nigeria On the Pacific”, Program on New Alternatives in the Study of Russian Society (PONARS), *Policy Memo 317* (2003), p. 4.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ For a brief overview see Poussenkova, Nina: “Russia’s Future Customers: Asia and Beyond,” in Perovic, Jeronim; Orttung, Robert W. and Wenger, Andreas (eds.) (2009): *Russian Energy Power and Foreign Relations: Implications for Conflict and Cooperation* London, Routledge, pp. 136-141.

²⁴ Elizabeth Wishnick, “Russia and the CIS in 2005,” *Asian Survey*, vol 46, no. 1 (2006), p. 72.

²⁵ “President’s Live Television and Radio Dialogue With the Nation” (27 September, 2005), at, <http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/>.

²⁶ Rzhesevskiy, Alexander: “Far East Military threats: Old and New,” *Parlametnskaya Gazeta*, in Russian, 24 May, 2005, *FBIS SOV*, 14 May, 2005.

²⁷ Kim, Woo-Jun: “Cooperation and Conflict Among Provinces: The Three Northeastern Provinces of China, the Russian Far East, and Sinujiu, North Korea,” *Issues & Studies*, vol. 44, no. 3 (September 2008), p. 219.



East.”²⁸

Concurrently several pundits warned about the need for caution in Russia's ties with China citing either potential military threats or mass illegal immigration.²⁹ This signified a clear debate with the semi-official SVOP replying that it had growing confidence in the relationship with China.³⁰ Clearly by the end of his term and the start of Dmitri Medvedev's presidency Putin had failed to achieve a meaningful transformation of the RFE. In September 2008 Medvedev warned in Kamchatka that if Russia fails to develop the RFE it could turn into a raw material base for more developed Asian countries and “unless we speed up our efforts, we can lose everything.”³¹ Again, it also is clear to whom Russia could lose or fall into a pattern of a neo-colonial trading relationship where it is the colony.

Meanwhile Dmitri Trenin of the Moscow branch of the Carnegie Endowment was also telling readers that Siberia's development was Russia's civilizational challenge of the century and that failure to master this problem could become Russia's most urgent challenge.³² By 2006 he was clearly pessimistic about Moscow's success in meeting this challenge. Trenin observed that,

The principal domestic reason is the situation of eastern Russia, especially East Siberia and the Russian Far East. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the territories have been going through a deep crisis. The former model of their development is inapplicable; a new model is yet to be devised and implemented. Meanwhile, the vast region has been going through depopulation, deindustrialization, and general degradation. Russia's territorial integrity and national unity in the twenty-first century will not be decided by Chechnya. Rather it will depend on whether Moscow will find a way to perform the feat of dual integration of the Far East and Siberia, that is, with the rest of Russia and with its Northeast Asian neighborhood. Eastern Russia is vulnerable. The quality of Moscow's statesmanship will be tested by whether it can rise up to the challenge in the East.³³

Just as Putin in 2000, SVOP in 2002, Trenin in 2006, and Medvedev in 2008 all warned; failure to develop this region into something more than a raw material outpost for more developed East Asian states could lead to a Chinese takeover of the region, not by migration, as is widely but mistakenly feared, but rather by economic means of trade and investment. As Bobo Lo writes in his recent excellent study of Russo-Chinese relations,

The significance of local xenophobia, political manipulation, and demographic trends pales, however in comparison with Moscow's continuing failure to implement a viable

²⁸ “Isolation of Russian Far East Threat to National Security-Putin,” *RIA Novosti*, 20 December, 2006, at <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20061220/57396954.html>.

²⁹ *Open source Center FBIS Analysis, FBIS SOV*, September 7, 2005; *Open Source Center, OSC Analysis, FBIS SOV*, January 10, 2006; *Internet, Novyi Region, FBIS SOV*, November 14, 2007.

³⁰ *Open Source Center, OSC Analysis, FBIS SOV*, 6 September, 2007.

³¹ “Medvedev: Far East Ignored Too Long Without Action, Russia Will Lose It, He Says,” *Analytical Department of RIA RosbusinessConsulting*, September 26, 2008; *Johnson's Russia list*, September 27, 2008.

³² Trenin, Dmitri (2002): *The End of Eurasia: Russia on the Border Between Geopolitics and Globalization*, Washington, D.C., Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

³³ Trenin, Dmitri: “Russia's Asia Policy Under Vladimir Putin, 2000-2005”, Rozman, Gilbert, Togo, Kazuhiko and Ferguson, Joseph P. (eds.) (2006), *Russian Strategic Thought Toward Asia*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, p. 131.



development strategy for the RFE (Russian Far East). Although the Kremlin signed off in 2002 on a Strategy for the Social and Economic Development of Eastern Siberia and the Russian Far East, very little has been achieved. The region continues to be one of the most backward in Russia; the local economy is increasingly reliant on Chinese goods, services, and labor; and local out-migration shows little sign of reversing. For all the early promise under Putin, Moscow's policy towards the RFE is barely more effective than during the dismal Yeltsin years.³⁴

Furthermore he also notes that the southern RFE, the more settled area of this region, is already quite effectively integrated with China more than it is with Russia.³⁵ In this context we can see that Russian officials have repeatedly reiterated their opposition to being merely China's source for raw materials and demand equal status in economic-technological exchanges with China.³⁶ Russian leaders also know that if they fail to be competitive economic players in East Asia they will also be at a serious disadvantage at home and in Central Asia. For, if Russia fails to become "a worthy economic partner" for Asia and the Pacific Rim, Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksei Kudrin warned that, "China and the Southeast Asian countries will steamroll Siberia and the Far East."³⁷ China would then also steamroll Russia in Central Asia too.

Russia's plans for this region were and are highly ambitious.³⁸ Primarily they revolve around building energy infrastructure to leverage exports and attract investment so that the capital necessary for a comprehensive renovation and modernization of the regional infrastructure will take place.³⁹ In 2006 Industry and Energy Minister Andrei Dementyev said that,

A program for the development of natural gas resources in East Siberia and the Far East would be submitted to the Russian government in 2006. A single system of gas production, transportation, and supplies will be created in the region, with account for exports to the markets of China, the world's largest energy consumer, and other Asia-Pacific countries.⁴⁰

According to Dementyev, construction of the East Siberia-Pacific Ocean (ESPO) pipeline whose estimated cost was then \$11.5 Billion began in April, 2006.⁴¹ Russia was also

³⁴ Lo, Bobo (2008): *Axis of Convenience: Moscow, Beijing, and the New Geopolitics*, Washington D.C., Brookings Institution Press, p. 66.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

³⁶ Blagov, Sergei: "Russia Wants to Be More than China's Source for Raw materials", Jamestown Foundation, *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, vol. 2, no. 181 (30 September 2005).

³⁷ *Interfax, Presidential Bulletin, FBIS SOV*, 21 August, 2001; "Asia and the Russian far East: The Dream of Economic Integration", *AsiaInt Special Reports*, November 2002, pp. 3-6, at www.Asiaint.com.

³⁸ Gulkov, Alexander N.: "Basic Concepts of Cooperation in North-East Asia in the Oil and Gas Sector for the Period 2010-2030," *Northeast Asia Energy Focus*, vol. 7, no. 1 (Spring 2010), pp.10-15; Kulagin, Vyacheslav: "The East as the New Priority of the Russian Energy Policy," *Northeast Asia Energy Focus*, vol. 7, no. 1 (Spring 2010), pp. 36-43.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ "Russia to Drastically Raise Oil Exports to Asia-Pacific-President," *RIA Novosti*, 17 September, 2006.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*



vigorously pushing Putin's idea for building an international center for spent fuel and nuclear energy, and nuclear waste in Russia and the construction of atomic power centers in Asia, hoping to raise its profile in the export of nuclear energy to the global market, and reach orders of \$25 Billion.⁴²

Subsequently, in 2007, Dementyev said that the new government program to develop an integrated gas production complex in East Siberia comprising production, transportation, and supply to both Siberia and the Far East will require 2,400 billion rubles (\$92 Billion). Gas production centers would be established on Sakhalin, and in Yakutia, Irkutsk and Krasnoyarsk regions. Russian gas exports to China and South Korea after 2020 will amount to 25-50 BCM (billion cubic meters) annually.⁴³ These investments include geological surveys to raise proven reserves in Eastern Siberia and the Far East. By 2030 gas production in those two regions would total 160 BCM while LNG production would amount to 20BCM a year. Gazprom believes that gas production could even reach 200 BCM annually after 2030 and is formally asking the government for licenses to develop new fields in Yakutiya and Sakhalin and insists that it could raise annual production to 570 BCM in 2010 and 670 BCM in 2020 a 14% increase over present projections.⁴⁴ All these projections, of course, were based on continuing high energy prices and probably will have to be revised downwards to account for the current protracted crisis.

However, from 2006-2008 little was accomplished. ESPO's travails during that period epitomize the real disarray in Russian policy here. On his February 2008 tour of the region Medvedev learned first-hand of the problems connected with ESPO. Nikolai Tokarev, head of Transneft, said that ESPO was unlikely to be finished before the end of 2009. The first stage of the pipeline was 46% ready, though the original plans called for 67% readiness by then. While it was 87% ready in Irkutsk region, in Yakutiya it was only 18% ready. Consequently costs rose from \$11.2 Billion in late 2006 to \$12.5 Billion in August, 2007 and Transneft suggested delaying its launch. These difficulties are attributed to the harsh climate and topography, the decision to move the ESPO away from Lake Baikal, contractors defaulting on their obligations, and the slowness of the government to decide upon a final terminus for the pipeline before settling on Kozmino Bay on the Pacific. Once that terminus is chosen it would take 20 months to construct it. Thus the calls by Tokarev's predecessor at Transneft, Semen Vainshotk, that ESPO could be commissioned by the end of 2008 were shown to be unrealistic.⁴⁵ But this report also showed the enduring eternal pathologies of the Russian bureaucracy, passivity as well as shoddy follow through on implementation. Accordingly in December 2007 Transneft's Board of Directors, despite these obstacles, rejected proposed adjustment to its investment schedule in 2008, including a postponement of the commissioning of the first phase of the ESPO pipeline because supposedly making changes in this schedule was part of the government's responsibilities, as if Transneft was not part of the government.⁴⁶ But it is all too clear that these problems stem for both corporate and governmental (in Russia the two are virtually indistinguishable) malfeasance, corruption, and incompetence.

⁴² 25 January, 2006; *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 6 April, 2006, at www.president.ru.

⁴³ "Russia Needs 92 Billion Dollars to Develop Eastern Gas Deposits by 2030," *Energy Daily*, June 22, 2007; Blagov, Sergei: "Moscow Considers Enormous Investment in Eastern Russia's Gas Sector", Jamestown Foundation, *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, vol. 4, no. 191 (19 June, 2007).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Blagov, Sergei: "Medvedev Eyes Far Eastern Revival", Jamestown Foundation, *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, vol. 5, no. 33 (21 February, 2008); *Interfax, FBIS SOV*, 19 February, 2008.

⁴⁶ *Interfax, FBIS SOV*, 5 February, 2008.



The upshot of all this failure was that by late 2008 when the current crisis hit, ESPO was not ready and major firms like Rosneft, Transneft, and Gazprom were struggling under crushing debt levels that precluded any rapid further advance. Not surprisingly China stepped in with its loans for oil plan.⁴⁷ But that move and developments since then all point to the outcome of Chinese suzerainty over the RFE's future and with it Russia's entry into Asia.

For Russia to avert this Chinese takeover it must devise comprehensive, large-scale investment cooperation with Japan and South Korea lest China dominate the RFE. While Russian leaders know this they have failed to act upon that insight. Yet it has failed in this effort to make those connections to Tokyo and Seoul or more importantly, regenerate its own economy. First of all, the verdict of the last two decades is clear.

The rapidity of growth in China's economy – and in the challenge it poses to Russia – is evident from the following data: according to the World Bank, while the Russian and Chinese economies were roughly the same size in 1993, China's was over 3.5 times larger than Russia's in 2008. Moreover, even since 1998, when Russia began a rapid economic recovery, China has grown at a faster rate. The current economic crisis is only widening the gap, as China's economy continues to grow and Russia's falters. Finally the quality of China's growth has been superior, leading to the creation of new productive capacity, whereas Russia's recovery has been based largely on reutilizing Soviet-era capacity that had been idled during the economic crisis of the 1990s.⁴⁸

Even India's economy is now 1.5 times greater than Russia's and the gap continues to grow.⁴⁹ Moreover, "China has experienced the strongest growth in scientific research over the past three decades of any country, according to figures compiled for the Financial Times, and the pace shows no sign of slowing." As part of that trend regional science networks are developing in the Asia-Pacific. But Russia produced fewer papers than did Brazil or India in 2008.⁵⁰

Due to those failures, in 2009 China, through its deals with Russia on energy and the RFE, has made major deals with Russia and begun to consolidate a new Asian order where it will finance much of this development and be its primary beneficiary, particularly in energy.⁵¹ For example, on May 21 2009 President Medvedev admitted that unless China invested in large-scale projects in the RFE, Moscow could not realize its grandiose development plans. Medvedev frankly admitted that the RFE's economic development depends not on Russia's ties to Europe but rather on the development of its ties with Russia's main Asia-Pacific partners. Therefore the RFE's regional development strategy must be coordinated with China's regional strategy of rejuvenating its old industrial base in Heilongjiang province.⁵²

⁴⁷ Blank, Stephen: "Loans for Oil, the Russo-Chinese Deal and Its Implications", *Northeast Asia Energy Focus*, vol. 6, no. 2 (Summer 2009), pp. 19-29.

⁴⁸ Graham, Thomas: "The Sources of Russia's Insecurity," *Survival*, vol. 52, no. 1 (2010), p. 63.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Cookson, Clive: "China Set For Global Lead in Scientific Research," *Financial Times*, 26 January, 2010.

⁵¹ Blank, Stephen: "Russia's New Gas Deal With China: Background and Implications," *Northeast Asia Energy Forum*, vol. 6, no. 4 (Winter 2009), pp. 16-29; "China's Russian Far East", Jamestown Foundation, *China Brief*, vol. 9, no. 16 (5 August, 2009); "At a Dead End: Russian Policy and the Russian Far East," *Demokratizatsiya*, vol. 17, no. 2 (Spring 2009), pp. 122-144.

⁵² "Russian President Urges Coordination With China on Regional Development", *People's Daily Online*, 21 May, 2009; "Medvedev: Russia Should Interest China IN Investing in Far East", *People's Daily Online*, 21 May,



Other officials quickly followed suit. Nikolai Patrushev, Secretary of the Security Council, conceded the weaknesses of the RFE but called the RFE's most important priorities, "The development of cross border cooperation with neighboring countries, enhancement of transit possibilities, development of infrastructure and capacities for wood processing, seafood processing and output of products competitive on the world market."⁵³

Since Medvedev's announcement in May, 2009 further developments have confirmed that Russia's development plan for the RFE failed to provide for an essentially self-sufficient developmental strategy and therefore is being increasingly tightly bound to China's regional developmental strategy. Although both states have talked about investing in the other the facts speak for themselves. As of early 2008, direct Russian investments in China totaled \$14.2 million and direct Chinese investments in Russia stood at \$415 Million.⁵⁴ This disparity is only likely to grow as the global economic crisis and falling energy prices force Russia to retract its economic ambitions. Chinese investment is, however, likely to grow because Russia cannot sustain its visions for the Far East without large-scale foreign investment. For example, a consortium of Chinese engineering firms led by Harbin Turbine will be building coal-fired turbines in the RFE to develop 41,000 megawatts of new generating capacity by 2011. Stanislav Nevynitsyn, Executive Director of the Russian power producer OGK, admitted that, "It is simply a necessity for us to work with the Chinese - we will not get the capacity built otherwise."⁵⁵ Thus Russia is becoming increasingly dependent upon Chinese capital.

Putin's proposal for Russian firms to invest in Western China long ago fell flat.⁵⁶ For its part China too has long sought opportunities to invest in Russia, particularly in the energy sector. But Russian energy policy betrayed a definite reserve, if not something stronger, about ceding too much influence in Russia or Central Asia to China.⁵⁷ Chinese interest in high-speed transportation arteries between European and Asian Russia also went nowhere.⁵⁸ So while China sought to invest in Russian energy and infrastructure during the period from 2002-09 and Russian officials even talked about making China the most welcome investor in the Russian economy, in fact Russia denied CNPC (China National Petroleum Company) a stake in Rosneft in 2006 even after China had loaned it money to buy the remnants of Yukos. At best there were discussions about investing in Sakhalin, but no apparently no conclusions were ever reached.⁵⁹

2009; "Excerpts From Transcript of Meeting With Students From Pacific National University, Khabarovsk," *FBIS SOV* (21 May, 2009).

⁵³ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 03 July, 2009.

⁵⁴ *Interfax, FBIS SOV*, 27 October, 2008.

⁵⁵ Shuster, Simon and Cowhig, Jacqueline: "Chinese Playing Big Role in Russian Power Expansion," *International Herald Tribune*, 5 May, 2008, at www.iht.com/bin/printfriendly.php?id=12574835.

⁵⁶ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 15 October, 2004.

⁵⁷ Lelyveld, Michael: "Russia: Moscow's Oil Pipeline Plan to China Stalls," *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty* (Henceforth *RFERL*), *Newsline*, December 10, 2002; on Slavneft see Lim, Le-Min: "China Sees Russian Barrier to Slavneft," *International Herald Tribune*, 17 December, 2002; "Anti-China Sentiment Plays Into Duma vote," *Stratfor*, 16 December, 2002, "Chinese Drop Plans to Bid for Slavneft," *Rosbusiness consulting*, 17 December, 2002; Wonacott, Peter and Whalen, Jeanne: "China and Russia Prepare to Sign Pipeline Agreement," *Wall Street Journal*, 02 December, 2002: "Japan, Russia Discussing Pipeline Construction", *Moscow Times*, 28 December, 2002.

⁵⁸ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 22 July, 2005.

⁵⁹ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 03 November, 2005; *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 07 April, 2006; Blagov, Sergei: "Chinese Investors Consider Joint Projects With Russian Far East", Jamestown Foundation, *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 01 June, 2006; O'Rourke, Breffni: "China/Russia: CNPC Denied Intended Stake in Rosneft" *RFE/RL*, 19 July, 2006.



Now, however, the current financial crisis is giving China an opportunity to invest in Russia on a grand scale. The loans for oil program was one such example, the penetration of the RFE is another. Gao Jixiang, Associate Research Fellow of the Russian Economy Research Office of the Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of social Sciences told a reporter that while at the end of 2007 China's investments in Russia totaled \$1.374 Billion; based on the current velocity of investment, that total will reach \$12 Billion by 2020.⁶⁰ In 2008-09 alone total investments rose from 25.4% to \$2.24 Billion and direct investment went from \$240 Million to \$410 Million.⁶¹ Chinese enterprises now believe that investing in Russia is vital if they are going to "go global and Russian officials like St. Petersburg Governor Valentina Matviyenko eagerly solicit Chinese investments.⁶² And once the two governments agreed on a plan to coordinate regional investments between the RFE and Heilongjiang in September 2009 their regional authorities have signed agreements to begin building these regional projects.

The point here is that under pressure due to its own political-economic failures during a time of crisis Russia has had to solicit Chinese intervention in its economy and thus the display of Chinese economic power in ways that have forced it to reverse long-standing Russian policies in the RFE. Russia's Bank for Development and Foreign Economic Affairs, Vnesheconombank (VEB) had to borrow money from China and as it has now become a major stockholder in Lukoil, China indirectly has leverage over that firm as well as the bank. Second, two and a half years after forcing Shell to sell its share of Sakhalin-2, Russia had to welcome it back to Sakhalin. Third, after having excluded foreign firms from bidding on the huge Udokan copper mine in Southeast Siberia, Moscow had to welcome Chinese, South Korean, and Kazakh miners and refiners back into the bidding for it. Total has been welcomed back to the Arctic. All these moves constitute a complete reversal of past Russian policy for energy and mineral investment dating back to 2003.⁶³ Similarly Bloomberg News reports that Russian companies may invest in oil exploration and natural gas distribution in China (for which they lack the capital at present) but that Chinese firms (who have huge amounts of capital for investment) may also invest in developing oil and gas fields in Russia along with liquefaction plants.⁶⁴

2. Japan

During 2008-2009 two significant events occurred presaging potentially major changes in Russia's relationship with Japan. The first is the opening of the Sakhalin LNG (liquefied natural gas) field in February and the second is the renewed and intensified search for a Russo-Japanese peace treaty and resolution of the Kurile Islands question in the wake of the change of government in Japan due to its elections. However, the outcome of these two events is, at least for the present, inconclusive in suggesting a breakthrough in Russo-Japanese relations. Perhaps the most outstanding recent success story among Russia's deals with other Asian states is the opening of an LNG plant at Sakhalin-2 field. This deal supplies

⁶⁰ Yuejin, Wang and Na, Zhang: "Russia: Is It a New Investment Opportunity for China?", *Zhongguo Jingli Shibao Online*, 23 September, 2008, *FBIS SOV*, 07 October, 2008.

⁶¹ *Interfax*, *FBIS SOV*, 22 March, 2010.

⁶² *Xinhua*, *FBIS SOV*, 22 March, 2010; *ITAR-TASS*, *FBIS SOV*, 21 March, 2010.

⁶³ Helmer, John: "Kremlin Extends Welcome to Foreign Miners," *Asia Times Online*, 01 July, 2009, at www.atimes.com; *Interfax Russia & CIS Oil and Gas Weekly*, *FBIS SOV* 17 June, 2009; Ram, Vidya: "Russia's Energy Rethink", *Forbes*, 29 June, 2009, at www.forbes.com.

⁶⁴ "Russia, China May Jointly Invest in Oil, Natural Gas Products," *Bloomberg News*, 30 June, 2009.



Osaka gas with over 967 trillion cubic feet of LNG annually or 200,000 tons at least through 2030. Supposedly this deal also stimulates Russo-Japanese cooperation as gas will go to Tokyo Electric Power and seven other Tokyo gas companies. Sakhalin gas has also signed contracts with South Korean and US companies.⁶⁵ There are even reports (which probably remain speculative or an effort to pressure Japan because it is unlikely that such investments will occur without resolving the Kurile Islands issue or improved economic practices in Russia) that Japan will also contribute \$7 Billion to the completion of the East Siberia Pacific Ocean (ESPO) oil pipeline even though the costs have risen substantially and are still rising.⁶⁶

Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs also reports that both sides reached agreement on reinvigorating bilateral cooperation in energy, specifically the possibility of creating an LNG plant in Primorye (The Maritime Territory also known as Primorskii Krai) and a gas chemical plant there, as well as the development of coal fields in Yakutia and Tuva.⁶⁷ In early 2009 Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso also expressed hope that these projects will inspire further efforts at Russo-Japanese cooperation to develop energy and other industries in the RFE and improve bilateral political relations, including the search for innovative and even unorthodox ways of settling the dispute over the Kurile Islands.⁶⁸ While Sakhalin gas will be the raw material base for the LNG plant; gas will be supplied through the Sakhalin, Khabarovsk, Vladivostok pipeline that is supposed to begin construction later in 2009 and finish in 2011. Clearly these projects are to be part of the developing Far Eastern energy complex with ESPO, and the building of tankers to carry LNG to Russia, railroads and ports.⁶⁹ But this gas' future destination remains quite uncertain at present and may end up being used for domestic use rather than exports. Gazprom's Deputy Chairman, Alexander Medvedev (no relation to the president) also expressed his hope to see cooperation with Japan beyond LNG to encompass manufacturing gas chemical products.⁷⁰

But since Moscow in 2006 forced the Japanese companies involved here, Mitsui and Mitsubishi, to sell their majority stake to Russia we should be cautious concerning reports about Japanese investment in Russia in general and in energy projects in particular. And given past history we should also be wary of promises that major infrastructural projects will be completed on time and at cost. It also is possible, in view of China's plans or proposals for at least a dozen LNG terminals, that some in Russia hope to sell China gas from Sakhalin-2's or other facilities' future LNG holdings now that it has mastered the technology.⁷¹ Finally President Medvedev professes that completion of this project greatly strengthens Russia's position as a global gas supplier and this may well be true as regards Europe. Thus Gazprom is simultaneously looking to Spanish companies to participate in gas development and liquefaction in Russia, first of all at the Yamal project. Russia's interest in buying into the Spanish firm Repsol is openly linked to getting Repsol to lead the way in such projects, thereby allowing Russia to sell Europe LNG through a company where it has a commanding if not controlling stake.⁷² Meanwhile Medvedev claims that Sakhalin-2 will be able, at full capacity, to produce around 10 million tons of LNG and up to 5% of global LNG supplies,

⁶⁵ *UPI.com*, 04 March, 2009; *ITAR-TASS*, *FBIS SOV*, 04 March, 2009.

⁶⁶ *FBIS SOV*, 05 February, 2009.

⁶⁷ *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation*, *FBIS SOV*, 24 February, 2009.

⁶⁸ Golovnin, Vasily: "Interview With Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso" *Kommersant*, *FBIS SOV* 18 February, 2009.

⁶⁹ *ITAR-TASS*, *FBIS SOV*, 25 February, 2009.

⁷⁰ *The Daily Yomiuri Online*, 16 February, 2009, *FBIS SOV*, 17 February, 2009.

⁷¹ "Pipeline & Gas Journal's 2008 International Pipeline Construction Report," *Pipeline & Gas Journal*, (August, 2008), p. 20.

⁷² *ITAR-TASS*, *FBIS SOV*, 03 March, 2009.



allowing Russia for the first time to bring LNG to Europe and further extend its hold on Europe's gas consumption.⁷³ For example, Gazprom openly aspires to control 20-25% of the global LNG market by 2020.⁷⁴ Certainly there is no danger of a third country blocking seaborne transport as is the case with Ukraine and Europe.⁷⁵

The prospects for a major step forward in LNG globally emerge out of the experience of cooperation with Japan on Sakhalin-2 and may advance with the advent of a new Japanese government. Russian officials believe that the new government led by Premier Yukio Hatoyama seeks to raise the bilateral relationship to a qualitatively new strategic level, i.e. a more genuine strategic partnership.⁷⁶ Similarly Russia's energy strategy to 2030 envisages a direct growth of 12% of foreign investment (among which must be Japanese investment) in Russia's fuel and energy sector with an increase of the share of LNG produced to 14-15% of its total production. Russia also intends to increase the share of exports to the Asia-Pacific to 26-27%. Gazprom has also resumed discussions with Mitsui and Mitsubishi on new LNG projects, possibly Sakhalin-3.⁷⁷ Clearly Mitsui and other firms like Marubeni-Itochu Steel are looking at energy projects in the RFE. Thus Marubeni-Itochu is discussing with Gazprom projects to construct the gas transportation network linking Sakhalin, Khabarovsk, and Vladivostok, the links in Gazprom's Greater East Asia plan, something that would clearly counter Chinese presence in the RFE.⁷⁸

For such projects to materialize, Russia must regain its credibility as a place where foreign energy investment is welcome and not obstructed or molested and reverse Russia's proven record of mistreatment of foreign investors.⁷⁹ Second there must be a credible political rapprochement and resolution of the Northern Territories issue (The Kurile Islands). Without that political signal and given the bad record of Russian business practice, truly large-scale Japanese investment, about which Moscow has been talking for over 35 years, will not happen. Indeed, Tokyo expressly links investment to this political resolution.⁸⁰ Despite both sides' numerous past missteps or obstructive tactics Moscow still will not meet Japanese demands, leading observers to depict its calls for rapprochement as being dictated by a desire to balance China, not deal credibly with Japan as it really is. As Marcin Kaczmarek notes,

In spite of Moscow's readiness for rapprochement with Tokyo, as signalled during Putin's time as president, Japan did not become sufficiently important for Russia as a geopolitical or economic factor to induce Moscow to make major concessions. It turned out that the territorial issue continues to define bilateral relations in the political sphere and is impeding strategic cooperation, for example, in the energy sphere. In addition, Japan is bound by a political and military alliance with the United States, as a result of which Moscow's chances of getting Tokyo involved in anti-Western cooperation are next to none. Moreover, the US-Japanese alliance may be strengthened as a result of Japan's growing commitment to the US project to build a global missile system. The attempt at rapprochement with Japan which Putin

⁷³ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 18 February, 2009.

⁷⁴ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 08 October, 2009; *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 18 October, 2009.

⁷⁵ Kyodo: "Gazprom Vows Stable LNG Supply For Japan", *The Japan Times*, 08 February, 2009, at <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20090208a4.html>.

⁷⁶ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 29 October 29, 2009.

⁷⁷ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 26 October 26, 2009; *Interfax, FBIS SOV*, 22 October, 2009; *Nikkei Telecom, FBIS SOV*, 17 October, 2009.

⁷⁸ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 14 August, 2009; *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 16 September, 2009.

⁷⁹ Bradshaw, Michael: "The Changing Political Economy of Foreign Investment in the Russian Oil and Gas Industry," *Northeast Asia Energy Focus*, vol. 6, no. 3 (Fall, 2009), pp. 10-17.

⁸⁰ *Interfax, FBIS SOV*, 28 December, 2009.



undertook should be viewed not so much as a measure to ‘steal’ an ally from the United States, [but] as a way to balance Chinese domination in the Asian direction of Russia’s foreign policy.⁸¹

Should, however, the new initiative or energy in the Russo-Japanese relationship generated by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama’s coming to power engender a rapprochement, then a major political restructuring of relationships in Northeast Asia could occur. But such an accord contains its own difficulties for Russia. For example, In this context Russia may also have to decrease the number of exercises and patrols by the Pacific Fleet and strategic bomber patrols, most notably by TU-95 bombers, in Japan’s vicinity. These activities have raised Japanese concerns about a revival of Russian military power and threatening behavior against Japan and surprised the Japanese military, forcing Japan’s national security community to advocate enhanced monitoring of Russia.⁸² And as we shall see below the Northern Territories issue seems to remain as intractable as before. Consequently for an agreement that entails genuine normalization to come about one or both parties will have to make major concessions.

In February 2009 Moscow professed its “strong hopes” of engaging Japan politically to resolve the Kuril Islands issue and secure Japanese funding for future energy plans in Asia as Japan now claims that “Russia has become a constructive partner in the Asia Pacific region.”⁸³ Thus Medvedev insisted that Gazprom will be a reliable long-term supplier to Japan. This is important for Japan since the Sakhalin-2 project will account for 7.2% of Japan’s LNG imports.⁸⁴ Indeed, in 2007 Russia approved its Eastern Gas Program that calls for spending \$28Billion to link the Kranoyarsk, Irkutsk, Yakutsk, and Sakhalin gas fields into a unified gas supply system (UGSS) that could be used with LNG facilities to sell gas to Japan, South Korea and even the United States.⁸⁵ Nonetheless it is clear that extraordinary efforts must be made to regenerate political cooperation due to the issue of the Kurile Islands or what the Japanese call the Northern Territories issue. Beyond the existence in both countries of strong, politically well-connected, domestic factions with equally powerfully developed and inflexible views on the issue, Moscow refuses to entertain even the question that the islands might not belong to Russia, a stance that limits progress on this issue from the outset.⁸⁶ Thus in March, 2009 Moscow stated that,

South Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands were attached to Russia lawfully by the decision the allies made in 1945. They are an inseparable part of the Russian Federation. --- this is an objective reality formed on the results of World War II and [is] solidly based

⁸¹ Kaczmarek, Marcin: “An Asian Alternative? Russia’s Chances of Making Asia an alternative to Relations With the West”, *Centre for Eastern Studies* (2008), p. 41, at <http://www.osw.waw.pl/>.

⁸² “The Defence of Japan 2008”, cited in Taylor, Claire (2009): *Russia’s Military Posture*, London, House of Commons Library International Affairs and Defence Section, p. 52; Ryall, Julian: “Japanese Alarm At Rise in Russian Military Activity,” *Telegraph*, 05 September, 2008.

⁸³ Bierman, Stephen and Pronina, Lyubov: “Russia, Japan Should Boost Trade Ties,” *Bloomberg*, 18 February, 2009; *Interfax*, *FBIS SOV*, 18 February, 2009.

⁸⁴ *Kyodo World Service*, *FBIS SOV*, 06 February, 2009; “Russia Unveils Its First LNG Plant In Sakhalin-2” *RIA Novosti*, 08 February, 2009, at <http://en.rian.ru/Russia/20090218/120196973.html>.

⁸⁵ *Yonhap*, *FBIS SOV*, 18 February, 2009.

⁸⁶ *ITAR-TASS*, *FBIS SOV*, 06 March, 2009.



on international laws. Thus any attempts to question this reality, no matter what reservations they are accompanied with, are unacceptable.⁸⁷

Russia also warns Japan against raising the issue lest it disrupt bilateral relations including energy deals. Thus it also stated that,

It is absolutely obvious that such statements do not facilitate the joint constructive work of developing the Russian-Japanese cooperation and cause significant damage to the general positive atmosphere of the bilateral relations, confidence, and good neighborliness, which are indispensable in resolving the existing complex bilateral issues.⁸⁸

Likewise, Japan has been equally intransigent insisting that all four islands be returned as a condition of major economic deals.⁸⁹ This mutual stubbornness naturally produces a standoff. Clearly despite the Sakhalin-2 deal, prospects for political resolution of the Kuriles issue and a subsequent breakthrough on bilateral economic relations are not good. That may limit future economic cooperation.⁹⁰

Nonetheless upon taking power in August, 2009 the Hatoyama government immediately announced its serious intention of making progress on the issue, and Moscow reciprocated that intention.⁹¹ At their September 2009 meeting in New York at the UN General Assembly session Hatoyama and Medvedev agreed to hold regular foreign ministers' meetings on territorial and other bilateral issues, promote economic and technological cooperation, including on developing resources in eastern Siberia, and Hatoyama reiterated his hope of resolving the territorial question during the present generation's lifetime.⁹² Indeed, he wants to make discernible progress within half a year, i.e. the first part of 2010.⁹³ Hatoyama also clearly envisions a win-win strategy for both sides regarding Siberia's development which would certainly redound to Russia's benefit vis-à-vis China.⁹⁴ At present his government commands a majority of the Diet which supports his negotiations with Moscow.⁹⁵

Nevertheless such progress is easier said than done. Russia appears to be hesitant. Foreign Ministry spokesman, Andrei Nesterenko welcomed Hatoyama's initiative but cautioned that while both sides want to solve this problem as soon as possible, "it is rather difficult to determine any concrete terms." He also stated that both sides need to have

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Interfax-AVN Online, FBIS SOV* 06 March, 2009.

⁸⁹ Tannai, Atsuko: "Aso Tells Putin That '1956 Declaration Will Never Resolve' Northern Territories Dispute," *Asahi Shimbun Online, FBIS SOV*, 22 May, 2009.

⁹⁰ *The Daily Yomiuri Online, FBIS SOV*, 16 February, 2009.

⁹¹ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 29 October, 2009; see also "Hatoyama's Speech of October 26, 2009 to the Japanese Diet", *Kyodo World Service, FBIS SOV*, 26 October, 2009.

⁹² *Kyodo World Service, FBIS SOV*, 23 September, 2009.

⁹³ *Interfax, FBIS SOV*, 17 September, 2009.

⁹⁴ *Asahi Shimbun Online, FBIS SOV*, 25 September, 2009.

⁹⁵ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 18 September, 2009.



common views on how to break the deadlock.⁹⁶ Similarly Medvedev called on Hatoyama to “avoid extreme positions,” i.e., demanding all four islands back.⁹⁷

So while Russia welcomes the Hatoyama initiative and the renewed possibility of large-scale Japanese economic cooperation in Siberia, it appears unready to depart substantially from its positions.⁹⁸ For example, when Tokyo began issuing certificates to Japanese citizens certifying their rights of succession to real estate in the Kurile Islands Nesterenko replied that,

We proceed from the assumption that the Japanese authorities are issuing these certificates arbitrarily and their obtaining cannot have any legal consequences, since the southern Kuriles are part of Russia’s territory on legitimate grounds and in full compliance with the norms of international law.⁹⁹

Similarly Japan’s government has turned out to be equally adamant in its approach towards Russia. Seiji Maehara, the Minister for Okinawa and the Northern Territories (Japan’s name for the islands) said on October 17, 2009 that Russia’s occupation of those islands was illegal and Japan should keep saying so and demand all four islands’ return to Japan. Naturally this led to Russian counter-blows about his regrettable, legally unfounded, and unacceptable remarks and that they placed obstacles on the way to improved bilateral relations.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless on November 24, 2009 the Japanese government formally stated that,

The Russian Federation illegally occupies four northern islands. Under these circumstances our citizens cannot travel to these islands, because of Russia’s territorial claims. Russia’s position does not coincide with our position on the northern territories, and there is no change in the situation.¹⁰¹

The December 27-28, 2009 talks between foreign ministers did not resolve the situation despite Russian talk of unconventional solutions.¹⁰²

As of the spring of 2010 this stalemate appears to still be the case even though Hatoyama is pledged to achieving resolution of the issue and both sides have agreed to conduct more vigorous negotiations and more frequent summits.¹⁰³ Yet at the very same time the Japanese government approved modifications and amendments to its so called Basic Policy to facilitate a solution to the issue of the Kurile Islands that emphasize intensified advocacy of Japanese claims to all four islands, including the use, for this purpose of a visa-fee exchange with Russians living there. As could be expected the Russian government

⁹⁶ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 17 September, 2009.

⁹⁷ *Interfax*, 15 September, 2009.

⁹⁸ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 29 October, 2009.

⁹⁹ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 01 October, 2009.

¹⁰⁰ *Kyodo World Service, FBIS SO*, 17 October 2009; *Kyodo World Service, FBIS SOV*, 19 October, 2009; *Kyodo World Service, FBIS SOV*, 20 October, 2009.

¹⁰¹ “Japan Accuses Russia of “Illegal Occupation.” *Russia Today*, 24 November, 2009, at <http://rt.com/Politics/2009-11-24south-Kurils.html>.

¹⁰² *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 28 December, 2009; *Jiji Press, FBIS SOV*, 28 December, 2009.

¹⁰³ *Interfax, FBIS SOV*, 13 April, 2010; *Kyodo World Service, FBIS SOV*, 13 April, 2010; *Jiji Press, FBIS SOV*, 13 April, 2010.



sharply rebuffed these moves and deplored them as showing that Tokyo wants to put contentious issues and “quite sensitive aspects” of its relationship with Russia in the foreground. It called these territorial claims groundless and warned that they cannot benefit a bilateral dialogue or the maintenance of contacts between the South Kuril Islands which are part of Sakhalin Oblast and Japan.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore President Medvedev’s chief of Staff, Sergei Naryshkin, stated during a visit to Japan that while an intensive dialogue on bilateral relations is occurring such statements by Tokyo obstruct the necessary calm atmosphere needed to resolve the issue which he called the “so-called territorial issue.”¹⁰⁵ So even if Naryshkin and Japanese officials say that very good relations or that stably developing relations are taking place between the two governments this may be a pro forma statement rather than the actual truth.¹⁰⁶ On this basis one cannot be too optimistic about a resolution even though the RFE clearly desires Japanese investment.¹⁰⁷

Moscow’s Presidential Representative to the Far East, Viktor Ishayev recently told Japanese businessmen that the regional economy will soon pick up, government investment and pipelines will develop, refineries will transform crude oil into finished products, airports and shipyards will be modernized, and investments will top \$300 Billion. Like many before him he emphasized that the Russian and Japanese economies are mutually complementary and that many infrastructure, shipping, construction, and energy partnerships are possible here.¹⁰⁸

But we have heard this siren song for almost 40 years with little progress on a peace treaty and normalization and decidedly meager economic results from these two supposedly complementary economies. Therefore we must be very wary about a genuine breakthrough either in regard to economic projects to develop Siberia and the RFE, including further major energy projects, and a political and strategic rapprochement. Indeed, Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada expressed Japanese distrust of Russia, saying that without a territorial settlement partnership is just words.¹⁰⁹

And if that is the case it will be difficult if not impossible for Russia to develop a Japanese option as an alternative to its increasing dependence upon China.

3. Korea

There is obviously growing anxiety in Russian policy circles about the situation on the Korean peninsula and in particular North Korea’s nuclearization and the accompanying breakdown of the six-party talks.¹¹⁰ Some analysts even want Russia to drop out of the six-party talks.¹¹¹ Moscow even deployed its new S-400 SAM to the Russian Far East region from fears that North Korea might launch more missiles that either go awry or even provoke a

¹⁰⁴ *Interfax, FBIS SOV*, 01 April, 2010; *Interfax, FBIS SOV*, 02 April, 2010; *Ministry of Foreign Affairs, FBIS SOV*, 02 April, 2010.

¹⁰⁵ *ITAR-TASS*, 15 April, 2010, *FBIS SOV*; *Interfax, FBIS SOV*, 15 April, 2010;

¹⁰⁶ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 13 April, 2010; *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 15 April, 2010.

¹⁰⁷ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 12 April, 2010.

¹⁰⁸ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 20 April, 2010.

¹⁰⁹ *Interfax-AVN Online, FBIS SOV*, 25 December, 2009.

¹¹⁰ M. Sharko: “The Korean Nuclear Problem: In Search of Stable Solutions,” *International Affairs (Moscow)*, no. 2 (2010), pp. 57-66.

¹¹¹ “Russia Needs Independent Policy on North Korea-Experts,” *RIA Novosti*, 03 March, 2010, at www.en.rian.ru/russia/20100330/158367224.html.



major conflict in Northeast Asia.¹¹² There are multiple possible threats on the Korean peninsula all of which possess negative implications for Russia. Continued North Korean nuclearization spurs an arms race, inciting even greater US-Japanese-ROK defense cooperation, including missile defenses, which strikes at both Russian and Chinese interests. It also precipitates continuing tensions and even fosters polarization of Northeast Asia into rival blocs. North Korea's reckless behavior, its proliferation and attacks on South Korean ships, for example, raise the danger of a war on Russia's borders from which it cannot profit but which could lead to major military clashes involving US Korean, and Chinese forces and could easily go nuclear. At the same time North Korea faces possible economic and/or political collapse which opens up a Pandora's Box of unpalatable alternatives, massive refugee flows, civil war with nuclear weapons, etc.¹¹³ Yet because Russia formulates its Korea policy in the framework of its broader global relations with the United States, according to Alexander Vorontsov, head of the Korean Department at the Institute of Oriental Studies,

It is not surprising that in such a scenario, the possibility of establishing a trusting relationship between Moscow and Pyongyang is almost impossible. --- A real chance for Russia to act as an independent player, capable of making a real impact on the development of the situation around Korean affairs is close to zero.¹¹⁴

For Russia 2009 was a difficult year as regards Korea. Russia has primarily sought to ensure its inclusion in the six-party talks on North Korean proliferation and to establish itself as a reliable partner for both Koreas. It also has repeatedly expressed interest in a "concert of great powers" in Asia.¹¹⁵ Moscow intends to use its ability to supply both Koreas with energy both to ensure its place in the settlement, and to unite them with Russia in an enduring economic-political association. Once the six-party agreement took shape in February 2007 ITAR-TASS reported comments by a foreign policy expert that Russia could create the conditions needed to implement "a series of major multilateral projects with the participation of both North Korea and Russia," including oil and gas transit, electricity transfers, and the so-called TKR-TSR project connecting a Trans-Korean railway with Russia's Trans-Siberian railway, the centerpiece of Russian transport policy for Asia.¹¹⁶ Significantly this source saw these projects as benefiting not just Moscow and Pyongyang, but also Seoul.¹¹⁷

Both the ROK and Russia also eagerly wish to consummate a Russian gas pipeline through both Koreas, complete with a petrochemical industrial park and a LNG plant. That should begin in 2010 be completed in 2015 and ship 7.5 million tons of gas (measured in LNG) annually for 30 years, 20% of the ROK's annual import of natural gas.¹¹⁸ The cost of this so-called PNG (Natural Gas Pipeline) project is enormous.

¹¹² "Russia Deploys S-400 Air Defense Systems in Far East" *RIA Novosti*, 26 August, 2009, at http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20090826/155930246.html.

¹¹³ "The Korean Nuclear Problem...", *op. cit.*, pp. 57-66; Fedorov, Yuri: "Never Before, All Over Again," *Security Index*, vol. 16, no. 01 (2010), p. 76.

¹¹⁴ "Russia Needs Independent Policy...", *op. cit.*

¹¹⁵ Lo, Bobo (2008): *Axis of Convenience: Moscow, Beijing, and the New Geopolitics*, Washington D.C., Brookings Institution Press, pp. 123-125.

¹¹⁶ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 13 February, 2007.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Ko, Jae-Nam: "Review of Korea-Russia Summit Talks and Future Prospects," *Korea and World Affairs*, vol. 22, no. 4 (Winter, 2008), p. 442.



If it succeeds, this will be a super-size economic cooperation project worth over \$100 US Billion, covering the purchasing price of natural gas (US \$90 Billion), construction costs for the petrochemical industrial park (US\$ 9 Billion), and construction costs for the PNG through North Korea. (US\$ 3 Billion) This project will represent a typical energy development project promoted by the Lee-Myung Bak government.¹¹⁹

The opportunity to provide North Korea and through it South Korea with reliable sources of energy is essential if Russia is to be a meaningful presence in the Korean peninsula and Northeast Asia's regional security order. Indeed, energy supplies might be the only way Russia can play a major role in any Korean peace process. And even that might not be enough. Foreign diplomats have privately ridiculed Russia's contribution to the process as being "more nuisance than value", demonstrating its low standing in Asia and on the Korea problem.¹²⁰ In 2007-08 there was even speculation that Russia is wearying of the Six-Party talks due both to North Korea's obstreperous behavior but also because the bilateral talks between the US and North Korea had sidelined it and Japan relegating them to a lower status in the talks.¹²¹ In the Russo-Japanese foreign ministers talks in December 2009, Foreign Minister Lavrov dismissed such talk, suggesting Russia's fears of any bilateral US –DPRK deal.¹²²

Consequently the collapse of the six-party process is a major loss for Russia because it delays and minimizes Russia's chances to count for something serious in the Korean security equation. Not surprisingly it has consistently counseled moderation towards North Korea, been very cautious about sanctions even though Medvedev considers North Korea a greater threat than Iran, and has steadfastly argued for resuming the six-party talks despite North Korea's provocative nuclear and missile tests. Moscow has steadily argued against military action, hinted that sanctions might be lifted if the DPRK rejoined the talks, suggested that the IAEA become involved with this issue, and proclaimed its willingness to provide economic assistance.¹²³ But it is Washington and Beijing not Moscow that will decide the issue of the talks for Pyongyang, signifying Russia's limited power to influence events here.

The breakdown of those talks also nullifies the discussions that Moscow sponsored about creating a multilateral security mechanism for Northeast Asia as part of the 2007 agreements, a long-standing point in Soviet and Russian foreign policy. Absent such a mechanism Moscow finds it harder to play a role in Northeast Asia as an independent competitive actor. Nonetheless Moscow keeps devising formulas for regional conflict resolution because it now publicly admits to anxiety about the future security equation. Deputy Foreign Minister Alexei Borodavkin, Moscow's representative to the six-party talks, announced that Russia's discussions with the other five parties led it to formulate a draft on "Guiding Principles for Peace and Security in Northeast Asia. Borodavkin admitted that existing conflicts in Korea and Afghanistan worsened in 2009. Consequently, "We proceed from the assumption that one of the most important prerequisites and components of the

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ "Axis of Convenience...", *op. cit.*, p. 240.

¹²¹ Ferguson, Joseph: "U.S.-Russia Relations: Weathering the Storm," *Comparative Connections* (April, 2008).

¹²² *Stenograma Vystupleniya I Otveta Ministra Inostrannykh Del Rossii S.V. Lavrova Na Voprosy SMI v Khode Sovmestsnoi Press-Konferentsii Po Itogam Peregovorov s Ministrom Inostrannykh Del Yaponii K. Okadoi, Moscow*, 28 December, 2009, at http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/0/A4B0E5CBD7934B02C325769A004DD828.

¹²³ Baek, Jun Kee: "Medvedev's Russia, a 'Revisionist Power' Or an 'Architect of a new World Order'?" *The Evolution of Ideational Factors and Its Cases*, *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, vol. 22, no. 4 (December, 2009), pp. 477-481; *Interfax-AVN Online, FBIS SOV*, 17 December, 2009; *Xinhua, FBIS SOV*, 23 December, 2009; *Interfax, FBIS SOV* 11 December, 2009; *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 23 December, 2009.



denuclearization process is the formation of regional common security institutions which would be based on the principle of equal security to all parties.”¹²⁴ Such calls underscore Moscow’s less than equal status here that makes their success unlikely. But Borodavkin further underscored Russia’s genuine alarm about Korea by stating that the aggravation of Asian conflicts, together with the global economic crisis have created a situation where, “Under current circumstances, peace and security in the region is a priority task because we believe that neither nuclear deterrence nor military deterrence may ensure security in this sub-region and in the entire world.”¹²⁵ According to Borodavkin this danger means Russia must participate more actively in the region, and its activity has become more substantive, focused on economic integration.¹²⁶

Finally the talks’ breakdown also inhibits Moscow from playing a serious role in the U.S., China, and South Korean rivalry for economic access and thus influence upon North Korea. Those states’ behavior, despite the gyrations concerning the six-power talks, shows that they all are investing or transferring substantial amounts of money in and to North Korea with the clear expectation of obtaining such influence in the future.¹²⁷

Although Russia clearly wants to be the supplier of energy to both North and South Korea, It has also had to concede that Japan, China, and/or South Korea could join with it in providing nuclear power to North Korea.¹²⁸ Similarly, at various times during those talks, South Korea has both offered and delivered energy to North Korea. It is not clear if these earlier offers of energy deliveries involve the ROK’s shipping of Russian gas or for gas from other sources.¹²⁹ There also is abundant talk that China and/or America might follow suit and give more energy to North Korea.¹³⁰ Meanwhile China remains the DPRK’s largest supplier. These moves demonstrate the conscious rivalry to be the DPRK’s main energy provider and trade partner even as they work out the modalities of doing so. Indeed, Russia’s political motives of finding a partner in Asia besides China and of ensuring Russia’s prominence in a Korean settlement are not far from the surface here. Thus, if Moscow’s energy project to supply both Koreas goes through

If the project is successful, Korea’s gas pipe will be connected to the Eastern Gas Supply system (UGSS) that Russia is operating. This not only means that Korea will gain an advantage in future competition over East Siberian energy resources, but also that Korean companies will have the upper hand in development projects in the Far East and Siberia.¹³¹

This is an enticing vision, but Russia’s energy companies cannot afford it. Therefore it is difficult to see who will pay for this pipeline and infrastructure. Since paying for the pipeline gives that payer a leg up in the rivalry to influence North Korea, it will not be too interested in benefiting Russia more than necessary. Moreover, North Korea has, if anything obstructed this and every other initiative by its insistence upon testing new missiles in April 2009. So

¹²⁴ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 18 December, 2009.

¹²⁵ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 23 December, 2009.

¹²⁶ *ITAR-TASS, FBIS SOV*, 23 December, 2009.

¹²⁷ This is the subject of a future article by the author

¹²⁸ *Interfax, FBIS SOV* 10 April, 2007.

¹²⁹ *Yonhap*, , *FBIS SOV*, 31 March, 2003; Ward, Andrew: “Deal for Gas Pipeline Could Solve Korean Nuclear Crisis,” *Financial Times*, 31 March, 2003,; and more recently Seoul, *Hankoyreh, FBIS SOV*, 17 April, 2007.

¹³⁰ *Yonhap, FBIS SOV*, April 15, 2007

¹³¹ “Review of Korea-Russia Summit Talks and Future Prospects...”, *op. cit.*, p. 442.



this grandiose decade-long vision may continue to languish for several years, causing Russia to fail to achieve its main economic-political objective in Korea. Indeed, Samuel Kim pointed out in 2004 that,

Perhaps the most revealing part of the DPRK- Russia Moscow Declaration of August 4, 2001 is embodied in Point Five: “In order to carry out a series of bilateral plans, the Russian side confirmed its intention to use the method of *drawing financial resources from outsiders*, on the basis of understanding of the Korean side.” In other words, Moscow and Pyongyang are now looking to Seoul, Washington, and Tokyo to foot the bill.¹³²

Under present conditions neither Seoul nor Moscow can meet these objectives and it is unclear who will support those Russian objectives out of his own pocket.

Sakhalin-2 is also important for South Korea as it too will be receiving LNG from here that will be much cheaper and more reliable than Middle Eastern gas. Second, when the gas from Sakhalin-2 is added to other gas pipeline projects that are being discussed between Seoul and Moscow the total size of the imports South Korea then receives could become quite substantial, a major benefit from its and Russia’s perspective.¹³³ Indeed, it is clear that Seoul, building upon deals signed with Russia in 2008, is angling for a pipeline connection from Siberia to its territory. Samsung is pursuing cooperation with Gazprom in the latter’s projects on the Yamal peninsula and the Shtokman field in the Russian North and Russia offered to provide Samsung technologies in the projects even though most analysts believe those fields are earmarked for Europe.¹³⁴ Seoul is also, not surprisingly, interested in importing oil through ESPO.¹³⁵ So on the one hand Gazprom and Kogas, South Korea’s national gas company, are continuing discussions based upon agreements signed in 2008.¹³⁶ And Hyundai is looking to participate in building energy infrastructure from the RFE to South Korea and has signed an MOU with Russia’s private equity firm Industrial Investors to participate with it in energy development and infrastructure, shipping, and logistics projects.¹³⁷ But obviously even major success with South Korea (and that is hardly proven on the basis of this record) cannot compensate for the dependence upon China and the failure to come to terms with Japan.

Failure to play a major role in Korea’s future economic and political direction severely diminishes Russian hopes for a lasting position in Asia. Some observers argue that if Russia cannot play a major role in Northeast Asia because it cannot contribute to the region’s development, its proposals for a multilateral regional order will also fall by the wayside. Thus Dr. Kang Choi of South Korea’s Institute of Foreign Policy and National Security (IFANS) wrote that,

¹³² Kim, Samuel S. (2006): *The Two Koreas and the Great Powers*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p. 149.

¹³³ *Yonhap*, *FBIS SOV*, 18 February, 2009.

¹³⁴ *Interfax*, *FBIS SOV*, 19 February, 2009; *Interfax*, *FBIS SOV*, 20 February, 2009; *Interfax*, in English, 11 September, 2008, *FBIS SOV*, 22 September, 2008; Blank, Stephen: “Recent Trends in Russian-South Korean Economic Relations”, *Northeast Asia Energy Focus*, vol. 5, no. 4 (Winter, 2008), pp. 12-16.

¹³⁵ “South Korea Eyes Greater Pipeline Opportunities With Russia,” *Pipeline & Gas Journal* (December, 2008), p. 18.

¹³⁶ *FBIS SOV*, 17 November, 2008.

¹³⁷ Kim, Yoon-mi: “Hyundai To Tap Energy, Shipping Business in Russia,” *The Korea Herald Internet Version*, *FBIS SOV*, 11 November, 2008.



Russia will be the front-runner in promoting a multilateral security framework as it did in the past. But it is unclear whether Russian proposals or initiatives can be met positively by other regional states. It might depend upon the level and scope of the physical contribution and substantive support Russia can provide in dealing with issues of peace and stability on the Korean peninsula and beyond.¹³⁸

But Moscow's failure to undertake genuine economic integration with Japan or meaningfully advance its interests regarding North Korea leaves it with no choice but to emphasize China as the party with whom it integrates to a much greater degree than anyone else. Consequently it is becoming increasingly dependent upon China.¹³⁹ The fact that Russia must coordinate so much with China on Korea, the RFE, and even Central Asia attests to its continuing inability to play the great power role and validates this paper's central argument, namely that by failing to capitalize on its Asian capabilities Moscow has opened the door to a new Chinese-led security order in Asia, including the RFE.

4. Conclusions

Every Russian leader and analyst knows that Russia claims to be an Asian and/or Pacific power and aims to play a great independent role in Asian security. Yet due to the nature of its economic and political system Russia is steadily failing to realize the domestic prerequisites of that posture. These self-imposed constraints greatly contribute not only to developmental failures but also to the inability to optimize relations with Japan and South Korea and achieve a genuine balance in its foreign policies here. And beyond that fact foreign policy constraints like North Korea's refusal to accept any restrictions on its nuclear program also undermine prospects for achieving the goals of Russian foreign policy here. As a result it has had to mortgage its Far Eastern domestic policy to China. As we have seen, critical voices say Russia cannot play an independent role on the Korean peninsula which is the region's most acute military-political crisis. Likewise, its political relationship with Japan, whose resolution is the precondition for unlocking Japanese investment, is also at an impasse. Under the circumstances it behooves us to ask where exactly Russia is succeeding in Asia and what are the consequences of this ongoing failure to meet the challenges posed by contemporary developments in Asia, the most dynamic sector of the global economy?

¹³⁸ Choi, Kang: "Six-Party Talks and Multilateral Security Cooperation," *The 15th IFANS-IMEMO Conference on the Current Situation in Northeast Asia and Russian-Korean Relations*, Seoul, Institute of Foreign Relations and National Security, 2005, p. 12

¹³⁹ "Axis of Convenience...", *op. cit.*, Tsygankov, Andrey: "What Is China To Us? Westernizers and Sinophiles in Russian Foreign Policy", IFRI, *Russie.Nei.visions*, no. 45, 2009.



EL DESPLIEGUE ESTRATÉGICO DE EEUU, LA REPUBLICA POPULAR DE CHINA Y LA SEGURIDAD EN ASIA 2001-2010

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Resumen:

Este artículo analiza la postura estratégica de los EEUU y de la RPC y su impacto en Asia. Aunque ambos estados mantienen una relación económica y estratégica vital, esto no ha reducido las tensiones de fondo en la zona, no sólo entre ambos países sino en las relaciones de la RPC con sus vecinos del norte y sur de Asia. Este progresivo cambio en la posición de la RPC y su programa militar sin precedentes, están creando un creciente dilema entre los estados de la zona a pesar de su retórica del “ascenso pacífico”: ¿está la RPC buscando su seguridad en un sistema internacional cambiante o es un estado revisionista que busca modificar el estatus quo regional? En este sentido la estrategia de los EEUU parece buscar un escenario estratégico que “guíe” las posibles elecciones estratégicas chinas de una manera constructiva y favorable a los intereses norteamericanos más que establecer una nueva política de contención. Por ello, los EEUU, con el mayor despliegue militar y diplomático en Asia en décadas, está reasegurando a sus aliados asiáticos mientras realiza un re-despliegue militar más acorde con esta nueva visión estratégica.

Palabras clave: Estado revisionista, seguridad, estatus quo, despliegue estratégico.

Title in English: “The Strategic Deployment of the US, the People’s Republic of China and the Security in Asia 2010-11”

Abstract:

This article analyzes the United States and the RPC posture, and their impact in Asia. Both states maintain a key economic and strategic relation, but this has not reduced tensions in the area, not only between both countries but also the PRC’s relations with its neighbours in Asia. Despite its rhetoric about China’s “Pacific Rising”, this apparent change in its posture and an unprecedented military budget is creating an increasing dilemma among Asian states: Is the PRC seeking for security or is it a revisionist state searching to change the regional status quo? In this sense, US policy seems to seek a strategic scenario that “guides” the possible Chinese strategic options in a constructive way, avoiding a new Containment policy. Thus, thanks to the most important diplomatic and military developments in decades, the US is trying to reassure its Asian allies and carrying out a military redeployment according to this vision.

Keywords: Revisionist State, Security, Status Quo, Strategic Deployment.

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1. Introducción

¿Se encuentra la República Popular China ante un dilema de seguridad o es una potencia revisionista? ¿Cuáles son las consecuencias reales de esta situación para los Estados Unidos, Asia y el futuro de la seguridad internacional? ¿Cuáles son las posibles estrategias y políticas para hacer frente a este problema y evitar un proceso en espiral que pueda acabar en conflicto e incluso en una guerra?

Este artículo analiza la postura estratégica de los EEUU y de la RPC y su impacto en Asia. Los EEUU siguen afectados por la crisis económica, y también la RPC tiene una situación complicada debido a la recesión, además de otros problemas de desequilibrios internos. Sin embargo, aunque los EEUU y la RPC mantienen una relación económica y estratégica vital, esto no ha reducido las tensiones de fondo, que incluyen el tema de Taiwán (de nuevo candente tras el anuncio de venta de armas por parte de los EEUU por un montante de 6.400 millones de dólares), pero también la creciente reafirmación china en cuanto a Corea-Mar Amarillo y las aguas del Mar del Este de China como el Mar del Sur de China, como se ha visto recientemente en su posición ante las maniobras conjuntas entre Corea del Sur y los EEUU, y el incidente de buques de japoneses con uno chino cerca de las Islas Senkaku (reclamadas por la RPC y Taiwán). Estos no son hechos aislados o fortuitos, y es consecuente con el progresivo cambio en la posición de la RPC: el mayor ejemplo es la modificación oficial en 2008 de su postura defensiva en el Libro Blanco de la Defensa y se ha embarcado en un programa militar sin precedentes, todo ello a pesar de la retórica del “ascenso pacífico”. ¿Está la RPC buscando su seguridad en un sistema internacional cambiante o es un estado revisionista que busca modificar el estatus quo regional? Si es la última alternativa, la RPC podría estar buscando aumentar su poder a través de un programa masivo de modernización de sus fuerzas armadas, incluyendo su fuerza nuclear estratégica, medios navales y espaciales, además de un cambio en sus estrategias y doctrinas con el fin de maximizar su influencia e incluso cambiar el entorno regional². En caso contrario, la RPC buscaría un mecanismo de protección, ya que percibe un dilema de seguridad, debido a la distribución de las capacidades, la postura de los EEUU en la región y los cambios en el equilibrio de poder del sistema, regional y mundial.

En este sentido, los EEUU han mantenido en líneas generales su postura estratégica en Asia-Pacífico con la nueva administración continuando la revisión del despliegue global defensivo comenzado en 2004 (Global Defense Posture Review, GDP). Sin embargo, hay temas a los que la Administración Obama ha tenido que prestar mayor atención en función a las necesidades, preferencias y peticiones de los aliados asiáticos. Estos eran conscientes de que, al menos en un principio, los EEUU se centraron en temas más acuciantes como la crisis económica, Afganistán, Irán y Rusia. Incluso China no parecía ser uno de los temas prioritarios para la Administración Obama, aunque a largo plazo, las relaciones económicas y estratégicas de ambos estados conformarán la estabilidad de la zona. Esta visión ha cambiado, dando una gran prioridad a las relaciones con la RPC.

La política de los EEUU hacia Asia-Pacífico en los últimos 15 años ha estado determinada por varios temas básicos que conforman la posición estratégica norteamericana: la alianza con Japón, una política cooperativa con la RPC, la salvaguarda de la seguridad de

² En este sentido, hay autores que defienden esta tendencia. Véase Mearsheimer, John: “China's Unpeaceful Rise”, *Current History*, vol. 105, nº 690 (Apr. 2006); también en este sentido Siddal, Alexandra: “The Misapplication of Defensive Realism: the Security Dilemma and rising powers in East Asia”, *The 42nd APSA Annual Conference* (03-06 October 2000). Otras posturas se pueden encontrar en Christensen, Thomas: “The Contemporary Security Dilemma: Deterring a Taiwan Conflict”, *The Washington Quarterly* vol. 25, nº 4 (2002).



Taiwán, una solución al programa nuclear de Corea del Norte, la nueva aproximación a la India, y una cierta pérdida de importancia del Sudeste Asiático. La Administración Bush cambiaría la postura norteamericana en dos parámetros: un endurecimiento claro en cuanto al programa nuclear de Corea del Norte, y sobre todo, el cambio de valoración estratégica de China desde socio a competidor estratégico. Sin embargo, los ataques del 11 de septiembre de 2001 cambiarán esta posición inicial hacia China y el sudeste asiático en función de la Guerra Global al Terror (GWOT)³. A la vez, la reevaluación de la presencia global defensiva de EEUU tras el fin de la Post-Guerra Fría, llevada a cabo desde 2004, tendrá uno de sus mayores impactos en Asia con la reducción de unas 20.000 tropas y un re-despliegue en Japón y Corea del Sur. Los cambios producidos sobre todo desde 2001 en el sistema internacional, y sobre todo con el ascenso imparable de la RPC como gran potencia, llevarán a que, a partir de 2006-7, se produzca una política basada en acelerar el ascenso de potencias clave aliadas en Asia, (que no socaven la posición de EEUU) que establezcan centros de poder para constreñir cualquier intento hegemónico de la República Popular China y permitan preservar la posición estratégica decisiva norteamericana en la zona. Por ello, los EEUU están facilitando el ascenso de Japón y la India, además de fortalecer las alianzas con Australia, Singapur, Filipinas, Tailandia e Indonesia, mientras realiza un re-despliegue militar más acorde con esta nueva visión estratégica. Así, la presencia avanzada en Corea o Japón se está reduciendo en número de efectivos, pero con una mayor flexibilidad estratégica y una cooperación más estrecha con algunos de los estados clave: la retirada de fuerzas en Corea y Japón y re-despliegue norteamericano, pero una mayor responsabilidad de estos estados en su seguridad y la estabilidad regional. La Administración Obama en principio mantuvo en gran medida estos parámetros, ya que se sigue manteniendo una aproximación bipartita hacia Asia-Pacífico, aunque con una especial atención al sur de Asia y a la solución definitiva del programa nuclear en Corea del Norte, pero se puede observar una valoración preocupante de la evolución militar de la RPC en algunas manifestaciones del Secretario Gates, el informe al Congreso sobre el poder militar chino en 2010⁴ y la estrategia de seguridad nacional de EEUU.

2. La evolución de la postura estratégica de EEUU en Asia-Pacífico

Estados Unidos ha mantenido la seguridad y la estabilidad de Asia-Pacífico a través de un entramado de alianzas, tratados y acuerdos comerciales y económicos desde el final de la Segunda Guerra Mundial. Como piedra angular de este sistema se encuentra el tratado de defensa mutua con Japón firmado en 1960 con el que se creará una alianza entre ambos países que será la base del dispositivo de seguridad norteamericano en Asia durante la Guerra Fría. Junto a ésta existían los tratados con Filipinas (1952), con Corea del Sur (1954) y la creación de la SEATO (South East Asia Collective Defense Treaty) creada en 1955 que incluía a Francia, Gran Bretaña, Australia, Nueva Zelanda, Tailandia y Filipinas. Esta alianza, la única realmente multilateral, desaparecerá en 1977, aunque la alianza con Filipinas y Tailandia se mantendría gracias al llamado Pacto de Manila; el ANZUS, con Australia y Nueva Zelanda, aunque ésta última lo abandonó en 1985. Finalmente, EEUU mantiene un compromiso defensivo con Taiwán a través de la *Taiwan Relations Act of 1979*, que sustituía al tratado defensivo de 1954. Pero a pesar de que, en palabras de Henry Kissinger, se está produciendo

³ Véase García Cantalapedra, David; Abad, Gracia; Yang, Eun Sook (2004): *The crisis in Korea*, UNISCI Papers nº 31., p. 5.

⁴ "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China", Annual Report to Congress, *US Office of the Secretary of Defense* (August 2010).



una transferencia fundamental de poder en el sistema internacional y el centro de los asuntos mundiales ha pasado del Atlántico a Asia-Pacífico, la región, sin embargo, realmente carece de una estructura de seguridad permanente. El *ASEAN Regional Forum*, a pesar de que sus miembros y observadores cuentan con casi la totalidad de estados asiáticos y observadores como EEUU, Rusia y la UE, no se puede considerar un foro que pueda lidiar con los problemas de seguridad tal como lo hace la OTAN, la OSCE o la UE, limitándose a aspectos de diplomacia preventiva, medidas de confianza y otros aspectos de “soft security”, aunque sí que son activos en aspectos de la lucha antiterrorista y crimen organizado. La propia idiosincrasia de la zona y de los intereses de algunas potencias como China, inhiben a esta organización de adentrarse en otros problemas de seguridad como es Taiwan o Corea del Norte y la proliferación de armas de destrucción masiva.

La política de EEUU hacia Asia-Pacífico en la última década ha estado basada en dos informes producidos de forma bipartita en 2000 y en 2007. El primero fue el llamado informe Armitage/Nye I, “The United States and Japan: Advancing Toward a Mature Partnership” de octubre de 2000⁵. Tanto el que sería después Vice-Secretario de Estado en la primera Administración Bush, Richard Armitage, como Joseph Nye, Secretario de Defensa Adjunto para Seguridad Internacional en la Administración Clinton y artífice de las estrategias norteamericanas hacia Asia de 1995 y 1998, establecerían el informe director de la política exterior de EEUU en Asia para la siguiente administración. En gran medida continuaba la política iniciada al finalizar la Guerra Fría y muchas de las iniciativas de las Administraciones Clinton. El informe de 2000 establecía la expansión del papel de Japón en la alianza con EEUU; una visión diferente hacia China, vista más que como un socio como un competidor estratégico, aunque no significó una ruptura de la política de “una China, dos sistemas”; un visible endurecimiento de la posición hacia Corea del Norte; el mantenimiento de la aproximación a la India, y una reducción de la atención hacia el sudeste asiático. Varios de estos parámetros cambiarían tras el 11 de septiembre y el comienzo de la Guerra Global al Terror, (GWOT) sobre todo en cuanto a China y el sudeste asiático. Desde 2001 EEUU lanzó una serie de iniciativas que buscaban reafirmar y renovar las alianzas en la zona, pero no con el modelo bilateral de la Guerra Fría sino desde un novedoso modelo multilateral: por ejemplo, la Iniciativa Trilateral de Seguridad entre EEUU, Japón, Australia de 18 de marzo de 2006, países que lanzaron sus primeras maniobras conjuntas *Malabar 07* en septiembre de 2007. Ésta se unía a la Iniciativa de Asociación ASEAN-EEUU lanzada en noviembre 2005, incluyendo la firma de varios tratados de libre comercio con Malasia y Singapur, que además disfrutará del llamado *Strategic Framework Agreement* en seguridad y defensa. Mientras se realizaban las primeras maniobras militares conjuntas entre EEUU, Tailandia, Singapur “Cobra Gold” con la participación de Japón. Junto a estas iniciativas, la postura defensiva norteamericana se establecerá básicamente a través de las alianzas con Japón, Corea del Sur, la India y Australia, y con la ejecución de la *Global Posture Review* de 2004, que establecerá el re-despliegue militar en Asia con la retirada de 20.000 tropas, fundamentalmente desde Corea del Sur y Japón.

El nuevo informe Armitage-Nye II, de febrero de 2007, titulado “The US-Japan Alliance: Getting Asia right through 2020”⁶, responde a la visión de continuidad en la defensa de los intereses vitales de EEUU en la política hacia Asia fuera cual fuese el resultado de las elecciones presidenciales tal como fue la filosofía del primer informe de 2000. La publicación

⁵ Armitage, Richard L. et al.: “The United States and Japan: Advancing Toward a Mature Partnership,” INSS, National Defense University, *Special Report* (October 2000).

⁶ Armitage, Richard L. & Nye, Joseph S.: “The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Getting Asia Right through 2020”, CSIS (16 February, 2007).



de 2007 continúa situando la alianza entre EEUU y Japón como el centro de la seguridad de Asia. Sin embargo, la dinámica en la zona es diferente a la de finales de los años 90, y el informe realiza su análisis en función de la emergencia de grandes potencias. EEUU buscará acelerar el ascenso de potencias clave aliadas en Asia, (que no socaven la posición de EEUU) que establezcan centros de poder para constreñir cualquier intento hegemónico chino y permitan preservar la posición estratégica decisiva norteamericana en la zona. En definitiva, la estrategia de EEUU busca establecer un escenario estratégico que “guíe” las posibles elecciones estratégicas chinas de una manera constructiva y favorable a los intereses norteamericanos más que establecer una nueva política de contención. Por ello, EEUU está facilitando el ascenso de Japón y la India, además de fortalecer las alianzas con Australia, Singapur, Filipinas, Tailandia e Indonesia, mientras realiza un re-despliegue militar más acorde con esta nueva visión estratégica.

En este sentido se realiza un análisis del ascenso de China, India, Corea y Rusia hacia el 2020, incluyendo las dinámicas en Corea y en el sureste asiático. Desde este punto de vista, se establece que EEUU y Japón buscarán mejorar sus relaciones estratégicas con la India, promoviendo su status de gran potencia y su papel estratégico en la política asiática de EEUU. En gran medida, el motor de esta política sigue siendo la incertidumbre ante la dirección del futuro desarrollo de China, ya sea como un estado “responsable”, o como una amenaza para sus vecinos. La primera visión respondía a la posición del Departamento de Estado y sobre todo de su vicesecretario en la segunda Administración Bush, Robert Zoellick, preocupado con el carácter y el contenido de la influencia global de China, sobre todo en relación al efecto del tamaño económico y su impacto en el orden económico mundial y su sistema de reglas⁷. La visión de Zoellick se refiere a la participación de China en un sistema del cual obtendrá amplios beneficios y su capacidad para colaborar en la resolución de problemas como la no proliferación y el terrorismo: en suma, de que la RPC se convierta en un actor responsable de la estabilidad del sistema y no se convierta en un estado revisionista que busque promover sus intereses nacionales sin crear una competición con EEUU que desestabilice el sistema internacional.

3. Asia-Pacífico y la revisión de la postura global defensiva de los EEUU (GDP 2004)

La Administración Bush ya se había planteado una revisión de su presencia global militar antes del anuncio del GDP de 2004, y en este sentido incluso se había contemplado la reducción de presencia militar en Europa y Asia (50.000 y 20.000 tropas respectivamente). Esto era un cambio significativo en cuanto a la postura estratégica de los años 90 respecto a la presencia militar norteamericana. Así, los informes sobre la estrategia para Asia de 1995 y 1998 (los llamados EASR-Nye Reports) mantenían unas 100.000 tropas en Asia como mecanismo de disuasión y presencia avanzada, debido a varios factores: la crisis nuclear de Corea del Norte en 1994, los intentos chinos de amedrentamiento de Taiwan en 1995-6, las pruebas nucleares de Pakistán y la India, y el lanzamiento de misiles balísticos coreanos de 1998.

Pero ya, incluso antes del GDP, se había previsto el re-despliegue en Corea del Sur y se había planteado el progresivo abandono de Okinawa. En el caso coreano, la intención de

⁷ Zoellick, Robert: “Whither China: from Membership to Responsibility”, *National Committee on US-China Relations* (21September, 2005).



modificar su presencia significaba también el cambio en la estructura de mandos conjuntos: *Combined Forces Command* (mando conjunto Corea- EEUU) y el CINCUN (mando de la ONU). Sin embargo el GDP 2004 no es un plan de retirada sino una re-configuración más eficiente de las fuerzas norteamericanas, y que facilita el despliegue rápido de sus fuerzas en un escenario global cambiante⁸. Esta nueva configuración está influenciada en el análisis de la situación de la seguridad global y los avances tecnológicos y organizativos (la llamada Transformación) en las fuerzas armadas que realizan la revisión cuatrienal de la defensa de 2001 y de 2006 (Quadrennial Defense Review, QDR), y la aparición de nuevas concepciones estratégicas y militares establecidas en la *Joint Vision 2020*. Estas concepciones establecen la flexibilidad estratégica, fuerzas expedicionarias y de despliegue rápido, interoperatividad, la modernización y transformación de las fuerzas armadas, que permiten la reducción de la presencia de sus fuerzas militares. En este sentido también se había producido un cambio en las misiones del mando norteamericano del Pacífico (USPACOM) de apoyo y coordinación a la GWOT, no sólo en las operaciones en Afganistán, sino en la coordinación de otras agencias como el FBI y cooperación con aliados en la lucha contraterrorista. Para coordinar el USPACOM, el Departamento de Defensa y otros departamentos y agencias en su área de responsabilidad, el USPACOM ha creado el *Joint Interagency Coordination Group for Counterterrorism*, JIACG/CT, que coordina estas agencias, desarrolla objetivos para las operaciones militares, planea las campañas regionales y las operaciones contraterroristas de EEUU y de sus aliados del sudeste asiático. Además el componente del Ejército del USPACOM, el US Army Pacific (USARPAC) está encargado del *Joint Command for Homeland Defence/ Civil Support/Consequence Management*. EL USPACOM *Counterintelligence Program* une estas misiones con la *Joint Terrorist Task Forces* del FBI y agencias de estados aliados incluyendo el programa *Joint International Training on Asymmetric Warfare*. Mientras el componente de Fuerzas Especiales, el SOPCOM-PAC y la Joint Task Force 510 se coordina con los aliados gracias al *Joint Combined Exchange Training*, JCET, y los *Theatre Security Cooperation Programs*, TSC. En general, el USPACOM facilita inteligencia y vigilancia en la búsqueda de terroristas en Indonesia y Filipinas.

Desde este punto de vista, el GDP realizará un nuevo despliegue mediante un nuevo tipo de bases: Bases Principales de Operaciones donde aún se mantiene presencia permanente de fuerzas de combate, estructuras de mando y instalaciones de apoyo, por ejemplo, la base aérea de Kadena en Okinawa y Camp Humphreys en Corea. También hay instalaciones de operaciones avanzadas (Forward Operating Site) para operar en caso de necesidad con equipo pre-posicionado, que en algunos casos son instalaciones de uso conjunto, como las instalaciones en el puerto de Sembawang en Singapur: aquí situó en 1992 el mando logístico para el Pacífico Occidental (COMLOG WESTPAC) su cuartel general para proporcionar apoyo logístico a la VII Flota en sus operaciones en el Pacífico y el sudeste asiático. Ya desde 1998, Singapur permite a los buques de la *US Navy* atracar en la nueva base naval de Changi y usar sus servicios, teniendo capacidad para los portaviones norteamericanos desde 2001. Finalmente, instalaciones de contingencia (Cooperative Security Location), en instalaciones de aliados, que mantienen o no personal norteamericano, y que podrían convertirse en instalaciones de operaciones avanzadas.

⁸ “We need the global posture changes to help us reposition our forces from around the world so that we're stationed not where the wars of the 20th century happen to end, but rather they're arranged in a way that will allow them to deter and, as necessary, defeat potential adversaries who might threaten our security or that of friends and allies in the 21st century. “Testimony of Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld before the Senate Armed Services Committee”, *US Senate, Global Posture*, Washington D.C. (23 Septiembre, 2004).

**BASES Y FUERZAS DE EEUU ESTACIONADAS EN ASIA-PACÍFICO**

	Personal (en miles)			Instalaciones
	Combate	Apoyo y Administración	Total	Total
Army	13	17	30	95
Air Force				
Japón	7	7	14	44
Corea del Sur	7	3	10	19
Otros	<u>0</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>4</u>
Subtotal	14	10	23	67
Navy				
Japón	0	6	6	12
Corea del Sur	0	0	0	2
Otros	<u>0</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>2</u>
Subtotal	0	6	6	16
Marines	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Japón	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	37	43	79	180

Fuente: "Options for changing Army's Overseas Basing", *US Congress, Congressional Budget Office* (CBO), Washington D.C. (May 2004).



4. Japón, Corea y la India en la revisión de la postura estratégica de los EEUU en Asia

La expansión del papel de Japón en la alianza con EEUU (en palabras de algunos expertos, la alianza de seguridad más importante del mundo) tal como se había llevado a cabo desde la declaración Clinton-Hashimoto de 1996 y la revisión de 1997 de las “*Guidelines of U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation*”, había sido la primera realizada desde 1978 y tras el fin de la Guerra Fría. Esta ampliación del papel de Japón y el continuado compromiso de la disuasión extendida de EEUU (sobre todo en el caso de Corea del Norte) se iban a establecer en los sucesivos comunicados en 2002, 2005 y 2007 del “*U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee*”. En 2002 se establecía una revisión de la política de seguridad a través de la *Defense Policy Review Initiative*, y en 2005 se establece una serie de 12 objetivos estratégicos comunes, desde una nueva situación de seguridad marcada por la incertidumbre y falta de predictibilidad en la dinámica en la zona, las WMD, la modernización militar en el área (sobre todo de China) y la conducta de Corea del Norte. Ambos estados apoyan, entre otros, la reunificación de Corea solucionando todos los temas de seguridad relativos a los programas nucleares y de misiles balísticos, la cooperación y la transparencia con China, la solución pacífica de las controversias sobre Taiwan y la promoción de un sudeste asiático estable y cooperativo. Japón a su vez ha realizado compras de armamento por \$8.000 millones a EEUU, siendo su tercer cliente tras Egipto y Arabia Saudí. Japón compra y produce al menos 28 sistemas de armas como el caza F-15 *Eagle*, los sistemas de defensa antimisiles *Patriot PAC-2* y *PAC-3*, el helicóptero de ataque *Apache* y el sistema de defensa antimisiles naval *Aegis*, incluyendo inversiones en BMD y ha co-desarrollado la siguiente generación del misil *SM-3* y sus radares de control de fuego. Sin embargo, la presencia militar de EEUU en Japón, a pesar del aumento de las responsabilidades y medios japonesas, significan una capacidad de despliegue y de proyección de fuerza, sobre todo naval, de primera magnitud. El tiempo de tránsito a zonas estratégicas vitales se reduce considerablemente: un grupo de combate tardaría en alcanzar el Golfo Pérsico 19 días desde la costa oeste de EEUU; desde Japón serían solo 11. A Corea tardaría 9 días; desde Japón, sólo uno.

Las fuerzas desplegadas en Japón incluyen la 5ª Fuerza Aérea, la VII Flota que incluye un Grupo de Ataque CSG de portaaviones, el CNV-73 *George Washington*, con base en Yokosuka, y las 17.000 tropas de la *III Marine Expeditionary Force*. El re-despliegue en Japón significa la recolocación del cuartel general del I Cuerpo de Ejército (I Corps) desde Fort Lewis en EEUU a Camp Zama en Japón, creando un cuartel general de una *Joint Task Force*, a la vez que las fuerzas de autodefensa japonesas crean un mando *Central Readiness Force Command* también en Zama para una mayor coordinación; la reducción de la presencia de la *III Marine Expeditionary Force* en Okinawa en 8.000 marines que se envían a la isla de Guam con la 5ª Fuerza Aérea, donde reside la 13ª Fuerza Aérea formada por el 18º escuadrón de caza F-16, la 5ª Ala de Bombarderos B-52H y la 7ª Ala de Bombarderos B-1B (*Global Strike Task Force*). Aún así, se creará un centro de operaciones conjuntas bilateral en la base aérea de Yokota para defensa aérea y antimisiles, tanto terrestres como navales. Además, se producirá a la vez un aumento de la presencia y rotación en Guam de las fuerzas aéreas de bombardeo estratégico y de 3 submarinos nucleares de ataque. Además se realizará una transferencia un grupo de ataque de portaaviones y de varios submarinos de ataque desde el Atlántico al Pacífico hasta que se llegue a mantener 31 submarinos en 2010.

De acuerdo al GPR, el Ejército de EEUU está reduciendo su presencia en Corea, basada en las 37.000 tropas del 8º Ejército y su 2ª División de infantería y la 7ª Fuerza Aérea (4 escuadrones de caza F-16 y A-10), en unos 12.500 soldados hacia 2014. A la vez, los



25.000 soldados restantes se concentrarán desde 43 bases a lo largo del país a 16 bases en dos áreas principales al sur del río Han desde la DMZ (Demilitarized zone) y devolverá el control de el área de seguridad conjunta de Panmunjon a la República de Corea del Sur. Mientras, también transferirá el cuartel general conjunto EEUU-Corea, el de fuerzas combinadas y el de Naciones Unidas fuera de la base de Yongsan en Seul, y el cuartel general del 8ª Ejército se transferirá a Hawaii. En este sentido las fuerzas norteamericanas en Corea se reorientarán a misiones multifuncionales y de carácter expedicionario. En este sentido, se han realizado inversiones para aligerar y hacer más móviles las fuerzas en el país a través de vehículos ligeros *Bradley* y helicópteros de ataque AH-64D *Longbow*. En otras palabras, las fuerzas de EEUU seguirán manteniendo la defensa de zonas críticas de Corea con una reducción de la vulnerabilidad a ataques directos, pero también estarán preparadas para llevar a cabo operaciones en cualquier teatro regional. Mientras, las fuerzas de Corea del Sur se ocuparán realmente de las contingencias peninsulares, aunque el país tiene una capacidad industrial militar y una visión estratégica que rebasa la simple defensa territorial, también alentada por EEUU. En este sentido, tras la reunión del Secretario de Defensa Robert Gates con su homólogo coreano Lee Sang Hee el 17 de octubre de 2008 en Washington, se especuló con la venta a Corea del avión de reconocimiento no tripulado RQ- 4 *Global Hawk*. La capacidad y uso estratégico de vigilancia y reconocimiento de este aparato va más allá de un elemento más de vigilancia sobre Corea del Norte, dado el alcance de este sistema a una altura máxima de 20.000 metros unido a su capacidad para permanecer en el aire por 36 horas, lo convierte en el vigilante perfecto, capaz de llegar al interior de la costa china.

En este sentido, el régimen de Corea del Norte sigue ofreciendo la amenaza nuclear más acuciante, junto a Irán, para EEUU. La capacidad militar convencional norcoreana está en tal proceso de degradación por falta de mantenimiento y modernización que cada vez más le hará confiar en su capacidad nuclear, aunque esto no hace que todavía sea una fuerza operativa en una posible campaña contra Corea del Sur. Las negociaciones a seis bandas han permitido a EEUU comenzar el camino de desnuclearización (en el caso de la producción de plutonio) aunque esto no ha impedido que Corea del Norte abandone sus ambiciones nucleares ni su programa de misiles balísticos, ni el mantenimiento de otros programas de armas químicas y biológicas. Los tests de los misiles Taepodong de julio de 2006 y la prueba nuclear de septiembre de 2006 así lo atestiguan, con un anuncio de lanzamiento de un satélite con un nuevo modelo mejorado de Taepong 2 este año. Y aunque este anuncio parece ser un movimiento calculado por parte de Pyongyang hacia la nueva Administración Obama, junto con su retirada de los acuerdos intercoreanos y sus declaraciones de advertencia incluso acerca de su retirada del Tratado de No Proliferación, sus efectos van más allá de la relación bilateral. El efecto del mantenimiento o modernización de su fuerza nuclear podría tener un efecto de espiral de inseguridad en la zona a pesar de las negociaciones a seis bandas que afectaría a la valoración de la amenaza de Japón y Corea del Sur. Corea del Norte puede realizar estos movimientos para llamar la atención de EEUU y conseguir concesiones para volver al status quo anterior, con poco coste para Pyongyang en un momento en que Washington está concentrado en Irak, Afganistán, Irán y Rusia. Pero esto podría incluso afectar la revisión que la Administración Obama está realizando sobre el sistema BMD en Europa en sus negociaciones con Rusia en relación a Irán, fortaleciendo la idea de su mantenimiento tras un lanzamiento por parte de Corea del Norte, aunque no el re-despliegue norteamericano ni la modernización de las fuerzas coreanas.

La aproximación a la India no ha sido una iniciativa de la Administración Bush, pero sí uno de sus éxitos estratégicos. Ha continuado la política comenzada desde el fin de la Guerra Fría y pacientemente llevada a cabo por la Administración Clinton. Sobre todo gracias a la apertura económica india de los años 90, también se realizaron los primeros pasos de



colaboración militar y defensiva en 1991 con las llamadas “propuestas Kicklighter” y los acuerdos de 1995 (*Agreed Minute on Defence*) que establecieron dos grupos de trabajo (*Defense Policy Group*, DPG) y el *Joint Technical Group*, JTG). A pesar de las sanciones impuestas por la Administración Clinton por las pruebas nucleares indias de 1998, se mantuvieron todas las opciones abiertas y EEUU finalmente obvió el último gran obstáculo que bloqueaba una asociación estratégica con la India, es decir, el programa nuclear indio y su no adherencia al Tratado de No Proliferación. Precisamente a través de un acuerdo sobre energía nuclear civil como núcleo duro de su política, la Administración Bush firmó un acuerdo de defensa por 10 años con la India en 2005. Las buenas relaciones entre la Administración Bush y el gobierno del BNP del primer ministro Atal Bihari Vajpayee permitieron la colaboración en la GWOT que llevarían a la aprobación de una legislación antiterrorista (*Prevention of Terrorist Act*, POTA) y la firma en enero de 2004 del acuerdo *Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP)* que llevaría a un Dialogo Estratégico en 2005, firmado por el gobierno del Partido del Congreso y su coalición UPA, del primer ministro Manmohan Singh (incluyendo el *Framework Indo-US Defence Agreement* de 2005), y finalmente a la Asociación Estratégica de 2006. Este acuerdo incluye cooperación nuclear civil, seguridad y defensa, salud, educación, comercio, inversión y agricultura, medioambiente y tecnología. Así, la estrategia de seguridad nacional de EEUU de 2006 (*National Security Strategy 2006*) establecía en este sentido que “India now is poised to shoulder global obligations in cooperation with the United States in a way befitting a major power”. Desde el punto de vista de la cooperación defensiva, se mantienen ejercicios rutinarios entre ambas fuerzas armadas, por ejemplo entre las Fuerzas Especiales de EEUU con las indias o la participación en las maniobras *Malabar* y *Red Flag*. En esta línea, India ha comprado armamento a EEUU por unos \$5000 millones, que son el 20% de las ventas totales de armamento realizadas por EEUU durante 2007.

5. El Libro Blanco de Defensa de la RPC de 2008

Por otro lado, la visión de la RPC como amenaza para sus vecinos se apoya en la incertidumbre de la conducta futura de la RPC, sobre todo a la vista del gasto militar chino y sus programas de modernización: este gasto se ha cuadruplicado en términos reales desde mitad de los años 90, siendo en 2007 de 35.000 millones de dólares (un 14,7% mayor que el de 2006). Aún así, los cálculos sobre el gasto real varían entre 40-140.000 millones de dólares según los análisis, con un crecimiento durante 2003-05 de más de 10% anual. Además en mayo de 2006 la RPC aprobó un plan nacional en 15 años para el desarrollo de ciencia y tecnología militar, sobre todo enfocado en I+D sobre armamento de alta tecnología y una la creación de una fuerza militar basada en tecnologías de la información. En este sentido la tendencia de EEUU ha sido promover un mayor papel político y de seguridad de Japón, recomendando que llegará a ser la “Gran Bretaña del Lejano Este”. Aún así, el informe establece que la estabilidad en Asia descansará en las relaciones del triángulo EEUU-Japón-China, y que uno de los objetivos en esta relación debe ser la cooperación y las medidas de confianza, sobre todo a través de transparencia en operaciones militares. En este sentido, la RPC también ha buscado intentar conformar la posición de la Administración Obama desde el principio al publicar su Libro Blanco de la Defensa el mismo día de la de la toma de posesión del presidente. La visión sobre la RPC entonces no será una cuestión de elección norteamericana solamente: Clinton eligió la asociación estratégica; Bush un competidor estratégico mientras China se mantuvo en una situación reactiva. Ahora China esta preparada para elegir su propio estatus *vis-a-vis* con EEUU si así lo requiere.



El Libro de Defensa establece a la RPC como un poder militar emergente con crecientes capacidades nucleares, con una modernización acelerada en el campo convencional y con una agresiva adopción de tecnología que le permita capacidades operativas anti-satélite y de ciberguerra. El cambio desde la edición de 2006, centrada en enfatizar las reformas dentro de las fuerzas armadas, relativas a la educación de sus fuerzas para la mejora de su personal, la versión de 2008 ha tomado el enfoque de las operaciones internacionales, y en este sentido se comienza de una manera poco agresiva a hablar de las llamadas Operaciones Militares diferentes de la Guerra o MOOTW (Military Operations Other Than War), que van desde operaciones de mantenimiento de la paz o de ayuda humanitaria hasta seguridad marítima. En este sentido, el PLAN (la Marina del Ejército Popular) ha enviado dos cruceros lanza-misiles hacia Somalia para luchar contra la piratería. Con ello la RPC comienza una serie de movimientos para hacer visible la capacidad operativa de sus fuerzas. También se ha doblado el número de patrullas de submarinos de ataque desde 6 en 2007 a 12 en 2008 (en 2006 no hubo ninguna). Desde el punto de vista de la disuasión nuclear, el PLAN ha puesto en marcha un programa de submarinos balísticos, 2 ó 3 SSBN clase Jin, y se han realizado al menos algunos entrenamientos en 2008 aunque no se hayan producido patrullas. A pesar de ello, el PLA y la fuerza nuclear estratégica terrestre formada por 31 ICBM DF-31 se ha mantenido más en el camino de la modernización que en su expansión, que asegure su credibilidad y supervivencia a largo plazo, manteniendo su doctrina de disuasión limitada, no solamente en relación a EEUU sino a otras potencias nucleares vecinas como Rusia, la India y Pakistán. Sin embargo, la modernización de la fuerza nuclear y el lenguaje del Libro Blanco llevan a la conclusión de que la RPC busca la creación de una triada estratégica (ICBM, SSBN y bombarderos) y un cambio en su doctrina de disuasión limitada. Quizá el aspecto más importante es que por primera vez se habla del papel y misiones de las armas nucleares en la política de defensa de la RPC incluyendo una descripción de doctrina y capacidades con la introducción de la creación de una “Triada” estratégica.

Estas crecientes capacidades y cambios doctrinales establecen una serie de objetivos en términos de capacidad de disuasión, represalia y contraataque, con un control de crisis y escalada que permitan detener y represaliar un ataque nuclear mediante una estrategia más flexible. En este sentido, se describe la misión del II Cuerpo de Artillería en cuanto a las operaciones de las fuerzas nucleares en diferentes niveles de crisis. Se describen 3 niveles en control de escalada en crisis: tiempo de paz, crisis nuclear y ataque nuclear. Los submarinos estratégicos SSBN clase Jin (3-4) cumplirían también una misión de disuasión y represalia, aunque no mantendrían todavía operaciones de alerta en tiempo de paz, aunque sí en crisis, con la capacidad de contraataque en conflicto nuclear sobre todo con los nuevos misiles SLBM JL-2. Pero quizá la mayor innovación corresponde a las fuerzas aéreas, ya que progresivamente se han introducido nuevas capacidades gracias a la modernización tanto de cazas como bombarderos y un nuevo concepto de operaciones. Se ha producido una transición de una defensa aérea territorial a una cierta capacidad de proyección estratégica y de ataque a larga distancia, probablemente a que bombarderos H-6 puedan utilizar misiles de crucero (DH-10) con cabeza nuclear.

Estas nuevas capacidades permitirán mayor flexibilidad en los mecanismos de disuasión y por tanto, la política de no primer uso en cualquier circunstancia no parece muy creíble, sobre todo en caso de ataque convencional que amenace la supervivencia del estado o sus armas nucleares. Incluso esta política no parece muy creíble en el caso de un conflicto con los EEUU en que se utilizaran sus bases en Japón o Corea del Sur. Además es el único de los 5 estados nucleares del Tratado de No Proliferación que está aumentando el número de sus armas nucleares, el número de cabezas, y desplegando nuevos sistemas. Sin embargo EEUU tiene en sus sistemas de defensa antimisiles un importante activo estratégico, tanto en su



sistema BMD como en su programa naval conjunto TMD con Japón. Aunque en gran medida éste último está dirigido hacia la limitada capacidad de Corea del Norte, también afecta a la RPC y a sus ICBM principalmente. Esto podría llevar a China a aceptar esta situación en el futuro o mantener la tendencia señalada en el Libro Blanco de 2008, con lo que se podría producir en un momento determinado una carrera de armamentos, ya que no hay que olvidar las capacidades nucleares rusas, indias y paquistaníes, y la percepción china de que la capacidad BMD norteamericana reduce la supervivencia de sus medios espaciales⁹. En este sentido, ya en junio de 2008 en Singapur el Secretario de Defensa Robert Gates no veía solamente estas dinámicas relativas a las fuerzas nucleares y espaciales solamente desde un punto de vista defensivo. Además ante el Senado ha demostrado su preocupación por las inversiones y modernización china en guerra espacial, submarinos armas anti-buque y misiles balísticos, todas ellas dirigidas a la capacidad de proyección de fuerzas de EEUU en el área y la cooperación con sus aliados en la zona, sobre todo tras los sucesivos informes sobre el poder militar chino que ofrece todos los años el Pentágono al Congreso. En este sentido, aunque EEUU se enfrenta a limitaciones en sus fuerzas debido a Irak, Afganistán y la GWOT, Gates mantiene la capacidad de enfrentarse a un conflicto convencional a corto o medio plazo, sobre todo en Corea o en el Estrecho de Taiwán, recordando el proceso de modernización acelerado del PLA¹⁰. A pesar de ello, se han mantenido las relaciones entre los dos ministerios de defensa y se creó una línea directa entre ambos¹¹.

6. La Administración Obama, la Estrategia de Seguridad Nacional de los EEUU (NSS 2010) y el análisis del poder militar chino

EEUU ha reafirmado con la Administración Obama la visión que se ha mantenido en los últimos 15 años en la seguridad de Asia, aunque ve el fin de la posguerra fría y se plantea el ascenso de nuevas potencias, de nuevas amenazas transnacionales, pero también de problemas con los aliados como Japón¹², cuya alianza es la base de todo el dispositivo de seguridad de EEUU en Asia. La visión de la Administración Obama, traducida además en constantes viajes de miembros de la administración a la zona, tiene tres elementos: mantener los tradicionales lazos bilaterales; construir nuevos lazos de cooperación con las potencias emergentes de Asia; y construir nuevas estructuras de cooperación en la región que permitan a Asia ser parte activa con el sistema internacional¹³. Siguiendo esta estela, probablemente la nueva Estrategia de Seguridad Nacional de EEUU ha respondido a las esperanzas de muchos gobiernos en cuanto al abandono de cierto lenguaje, pero también a la visión de las prioridades de seguridad y su tratamiento por parte de EEUU. Esto le producirá muchos menos problemas a algunos

⁹ Véase García Cantalapiedra, David: "EEUU, China, Rusia y la lógica inevitable de la militarización del espacio", Real Instituto Elcano, ARI nº 46 (13 Mayo, 2008), en http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano/contenido?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_es/zonas_es/eeuu-dialogo+trasatlantico/ari46-2008.

¹⁰ "Statement of Secretary of Defense Robert Gates before US Senate Foreign Affairs Committee", *US Senate* (27 Enero, 2009), p. 4. Véase también Gates, Robert: "A Balanced Strategy", *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 88, nº 1 (Enero-Febrero 2009).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

¹² Véase Abad, Gracia: "Japón: hacia una política exterior y de seguridad más independiente y asiática", Real Instituto Elcano, ARI nº 109 (25 Junio, 2010), en http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano/contenido?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_es/zonas_es/defensa+y+seguridad/ari109-2010.

¹³ Steinberg, James B.: "Engaging Asia 2009: Strategies for Success", Remarks by Deputy Secretary of State, *Office of the Deputy Secretary, National Bureau of Asian Research Conference*, Washington, DC. (01 Abril, 2009).



gobiernos asiáticos en términos de opinión pública, pero quizá los creará también desde un punto de vista estratégico. Probablemente establece *de facto* y *de iure* la visión de la política exterior y de seguridad de EEUU menos “eurocéntrica” desde la Administración Nixon, con un análisis del sistema internacional que nos recuerda más al periodo entreguerras que al de la post-Guerra Fría; esto es, una de las políticas más realistas y pragmáticas que EEUU ha establecido desde la Doctrina Nixon y la Tripolaridad creada por Kissinger y el Presidente Nixon en los años 70 del siglo pasado, aunque también mantiene una vuelta a la estrategia de Compromiso Global (Global Engagement) de la Administración Clinton¹⁴. La NSS 2010 realiza una serie de planteamientos estratégicos y un cambio en ciertas prioridades, aunque mantiene de fondo la mayoría de las amenazas ya establecidas por los NSS 2002 y 2006. Efectivamente, acaba con el lenguaje de la “Guerra Global al Terror” e incluso con el propio término¹⁵; desaparece la doctrina de acción anticipatoria (pre-emptive action); y establece una visión multilateralista y multipolar, refiriéndose a “otros centros de poder”. Hay una clara intención de desmilitarizar en lo posible la política exterior, pero no un abandono del uso de la fuerza militar en temas como el terrorismo, y una atención mayor a las cuestiones estratégicas regionales y globales. Realmente, el abandono de la retórica de la GWOT es una concesión al lenguaje aunque también una re-priorización de las políticas estratégicas a largo plazo, sobre todo en Asia. Además, esta visión plantea una problemática en el ámbito estratégico y militar, tanto desde esa planificación a largo plazo como para las respuestas a los problemas actuales. Esto se refleja en el QDR 2010. En última instancia, la revisión tiene por objeto responder a la pregunta de si EEUU debe concentrar sus adquisiciones en el tratamiento de las amenazas convencionales provenientes de la competencia de potencias emergentes o más en las amenazas asimétricas procedentes del terrorismo y los Estados débiles y fallidos. Gates establece el “equilibrio” entre estas dos prioridades en competencia, haciendo hincapié en la necesidad de institucionalizar las capacidades tales como la contrainsurgencia al mismo tiempo mantener su ventaja tecnológica frente a otros países. La búsqueda de respuestas se está estructurando en torno al concepto de “guerra híbrida”, que requiere la más amplia gama posible de las capacidades y la flexibilidad de todo el espectro de las operaciones. La guerra híbrida puede ser una mejora intelectual sobre el énfasis en la lucha de guerra convencional en los exámenes anteriores, pero hasta ahora el concepto es tan vagamente definido, que no establece criterios claros para la toma de decisiones. Habrá grandes esfuerzos para definir lo que hasta ahora han sido poco más que listas de la compra para todas las contingencias posibles.¹⁶

En este sentido, el último informe del Departamento de Defensa al Congreso sobre el poder militar chino publicado el 16 de agosto de 2010¹⁷, plantea claramente una serie de problemas, ya que establece una visión no sólo en un nivel regional de la seguridad de la RPC: detalla la evolución de la estrategia militar de la RPC, la modernización militar de procedimientos para aplicar la estrategia militar en evolución, y la estructura de fuerzas a lo largo del Estrecho de Taiwan. A la vez, aborda la cuestión de la proyección de poder que va

¹⁴ Es interesante observar el parecido de esta estrategia que nunca se puso en práctica (Diciembre de 2000) con la nueva de 2010: Clinton, William: “A National Security Strategy for a Global Age”, President of the US, Report to Congress, *US Congress*, Washington D.C. (Diciembre 2000).

¹⁵ Eso no quiere decir que Obama y su administración no consideren al país en guerra. Véase: Barack H. Obama: “Our nation is at war against a far-reaching network of violence and hatred”, President of the US, Inaugural Address, *The White House*, Washington DC. (20 Enero, 2009). Véase en este sentido García Cantalapiedra, David: “EEUU y las prioridades de política exterior de la Administración Obama”. Real Instituto Elcano, *Documento de Trabajo* nº 16 (26 marzo, 2009).

¹⁶ Cordesman, Anthony H., Fitzgerald, Erin K.: “The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review; A+, F, or Dead on Arrival?”, *CSIS* (08 Septiembre, 2009), en <http://csis.org/publication/2010-quadrennial-defense-review>.

¹⁷ “Military and Security Developments...”, *op. cit.*, section 1246.



más allá de Taiwán, y ofrece un análisis de la situación emergente vis-á-vis la India, Rusia, Asia Central y el Mar del Sur de China. Sin embargo, el informe tiene una serie de luces y sombras, más desde el punto de vista político que militar, por su contenido, el tipo de análisis y el retraso en su publicación. Esto nos puede dar una idea de la posición de la Administración Obama en relación a la RPC en un contexto de re-alineamiento internacional, problemas económicos serios y operaciones militares que restringen la habilidad de EEUU en caso de crisis. Sin embargo, esto lleva a evitar un debate serio sobre el incremento del poder militar chino en función de determinada política y gran estrategia. En este sentido el informe, a pesar de que la modernización se está produciendo a través de todas las áreas (el presupuesto de defensa oficial de la RPC es de 70.000 millones, pero se cree que pueda ser de hasta 150.000 millones de dólares), no explica cómo estos cambios están relacionados entre sí o con los objetivos estratégicos de Beijing. ¿Qué papel juegan en la estrategia de seguridad y en la estrategia militar de China?

Así, el título del informe ha cambiado desde “poder militar de la RPC” a “acontecimientos militares y de seguridad en los que esta involucrado la RPC”, pasando incluso a evitar cualquier mención o análisis de los principios y la evolución probable de la gran estrategia china, como se realizaba hasta 2009 en el sentido de analizar las posibles tendencias en la estrategia china destinadas a establecer a la RPC como la primera potencia política de Asia-Pacífico y con una presencia política y militar en otras regiones del mundo. El objetivo del informe es guiar al Congreso en las discusiones del presupuesto de defensa (*National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011*) que la ley exige que se le envíe el 1 de marzo. Pero este año, para evitar las protestas chinas, que se han quejado sobre el informe año tras año, la Casa Blanca retrasó su lanzamiento, presumiblemente porque se consideró demasiado provocativo (los chinos se quejaron de todos modos.) Para cuando el Pentágono publicó el informe, el Congreso estaba en receso y el público de vacaciones. Pero el mayor problema es la falta de análisis del impacto real y el significado de la estrategia y el incremento de ciertas capacidades por parte del PLA. Una de las características clave de su estrategia en evolución es la de denegación de acceso a ciertas áreas junto con medios asimétricos. La guerra asimétrica sigue siendo un componente importante de la estrategia militar china, dada la existencia de lagunas en varias áreas vitales y se ven obligados a confiar en los medios asimétricos para atacar a las fuerzas enemigas. Hay una gran dependencia de EEUU en una serie de sistemas de inteligencia, comunicaciones y satélites de navegación, y el PLA busca neutralizar la ventaja de EEUU en el espacio, enfatizando la ciberguerra ofensiva y defensiva.

La RPC ha dominado la estrategia de denegación esencialmente restringiendo la capacidad de otros países para utilizar un determinado espacio o instalación. Esto permitirá establecer una zona de amortiguación en torno a la China continental y su periferia marítima que a su vez aumentará la dificultad para otros estados para operar cerca de la parte continental de China. Pero, ya se ha producido una visión en cuanto a la necesidad de la RPC de proyectar sus fuerzas para la protección de sus intereses. En este sentido, se está produciendo el ascenso de visiones marítimas por parte del PLAN, ya señaladas en el Libro Blanco de 2004, aunque con diferentes posibles proyecciones. Desde mitad de los años 80, el creador de la modernización del PLAN, el almirante Liu Huaqing¹⁸, establecía las áreas donde la RPC debía de tener capacidad de actuación en diferentes fases: en la primera fase, ya cubierta totalmente, la RPC debía de ser capaz de llevar a cabo operaciones defensivas en la llamada “primera cadena de islas”, esto es, el Mar Amarillo, los Mares del Sur y el Este de

¹⁸ En cuanto a esta visión, véase Colmes, J. y Yoshihara, T. (2008): *Chinese Naval Strategy in the 21st Century*, New York, Routledge, pp. 25-48.



China, el Estrecho de Taiwan y las Islas Ryukyu. De hecho las actividades del PLAN han sido llevadas a cabo incluso de forma agresiva en esta zona: sobre todo, en el Estrecho de Taiwan, para denegar la capacidad de operar a las fuerzas norteamericanas (y japonesas) en un conflicto por la isla; en el Mar del Sur de China, compite en las reclamaciones de soberanía sobre diversas islas y grupos de arrecifes, incluyendo las Islas Spratly (llamado Nansha por China) y las Islas Paracelso (llamado Xisha por China) en la afirmación de la RPC de la soberanía sobre todo el Mar del Sur de China. En este sentido, las maniobras realizadas en el Mar Amarillo y las protestas anteriores a las maniobras conjuntas entre EEUU y Corea del Sur, obligaron a cambiar éstas de área. A esta concepción habría que incluir el aumento de la importancia de la seguridad energética y de su suministro en estas consideraciones. Sin embargo en la Fase II, el PLAN y la fuerza área deberían de ser capaces de llevar a cabo operaciones en la segunda cadena de islas y más allá, esto es, las islas Kuriles, Japón, Australia, Guam, las Marianas y las Carolinas. De hecho, el proyecto de construcción de un portaaviones (por lo tanto de un grupo de combate y una capacidad de proyección de fuerza)¹⁹ y la creación de la flota de submarinos de ataque más grande del mundo²⁰, más el establecimiento de bases o acuerdos portuarios en Gwadar (Pakistán), Marao (Maldivas) Hambantota (Sri-Lanka), Chittagong (Bangladesh) y Sittwe (Akyab, Myanmar)²¹ darán esta capacidad operativa al PLAN.

La RPC sigue preocupada por la persistencia de los conflictos fronterizos con la India así como también las consecuencias estratégicas del ascenso económico, político y militar indio. Así, como mecanismo de disuasión regional, el PLA ha reemplazado los CSS-3 de medio alcance de combustible líquido por los CSS-5 MRBM de combustible sólido (que permiten un lanzamiento más rápido) y ha establecido planes de contingencia para tropas aerotransportadas en la región. La infraestructura de la frontera se ha estado reformando. Hay un claro desequilibrio militar entre los dos lados, en términos de equipos y unidades, así como la infraestructura física. El desarrollo de infraestructuras que la RPC ha llevado a cabo en la Región Autónoma del Tíbet (TAR), así como en la frontera Indo-China, en los últimos años, permitirían al PLA movilizar las fuerzas y equipos en las fronteras de la India en un lapso mucho más corto de tiempo. La RPC tiene actualmente una red de carreteras de 40.000 kms. en el Tíbet, además de los enlaces ferroviarios como el de 1118 kilómetros de Lhasa a Gormo en la provincia de Qinghai. Esto permitiría a China movilizar grandes cantidades de fuerza en tren y por carretera en las fronteras de la India. En relación a Rusia, aunque parece el "socio más cercano internacional," a Beijing le sigue preocupando que los intereses a largo plazo de Rusia no son totalmente coherentes con los chinos. No sólo los intereses no son consistentes,

¹⁹ Declaraciones del jefe del PLAN Almirante Wu Shengli en: "Military and Security Developments...", *op. cit.*, p. 57.

²⁰ En 2007, un submarino de ataque chino penetró con éxito en la pantalla defensiva del grupo de combate del USS *Kitty Hawk* en el Océano Pacífico y apareció a una distancia suficiente como para hundir el portaaviones.

²¹ Ya desde 1992, el PLAN tiene un centro de seguimiento en las Islas Coco para controlar las actividades de la marina India. Véase Selth, Andrew: Burma's Coco Islands: rumours and realities in the Indian Ocean, South East Asian Research Center, SEARC, *Working Paper Series* nº 101 (Noviembre 2008), en http://www6.cityu.edu.hk/searc/Data/FileUpload/294/WP101_08_ASelth.pdf. China realiza la construcción de un puerto de aguas profundas en Kyaukpyu, que se encuentra en la ruta que conecta la ciudad de Kunming, Sur-Occidental de China con Birmania Sittwe, en Arakan. El puerto tiene una profundidad de agua de 20 metros y es capaz de alojar buques portacontenedores. Un estudio de viabilidad para la construcción de puertos marítimos y por carretera, se refirió a como Kunming-Mandalay, Sittwe Kyaukpyu-, se hizo en 2005. Una vez que la carretera de Kunming-Kyaukpyu se complete, se espera facilitar el comercio de tránsito. La RPC asiste en la construcción de una base naval en Sittwe (Akyab), un puerto de importancia estratégica cerca del puerto y la ciudad más grande del este de la India, Kolkata. También financia la construcción de carreteras que une Rangún y Akyab, proporcionando la ruta más corta hacia el Océano Índico desde el sur de China. Ver Ullah, Uman: "India and China competing for Malacca Straits in Burma", *SouthAsiaSpeaks* (23 junio 2009), en <http://southasiaspooks.wordpress.com/2009/06/23/india-and-china-competing-for-malacca-straits-in-burma/>.



el PLA ve a Rusia como un desafío potencial militar de largo plazo: durante los últimos ejercicios militares llevadas a cabo por el PLA, se han ensayado operaciones a gran escala contra Rusia, y hay una tendencia en el PLA a ensayar intervenciones militares en Asia Central y Rusia. Rusia tiene sus propias preocupaciones sobre el creciente poder de China, sobre todo por la estructura de fuerzas en Lanzhou, Beijing y Shenyang, además de sus fuerzas nucleares. Es también importante subrayar que la Doctrina Militar de 2010 rusa no hace referencia a la RPC, aunque se tenía en mente la amenaza creciente que representa China²².

7. Conclusiones

A pesar de la retórica de la necesidad de mejorar el “soft power” de EEUU en su política exterior, éste disfruta de una salud bastante buena en la zona y entre sus aliados. Un estudio realizado por el *Chicago Council on Global Affairs* llamado “Soft Power in Asia” señala la posición en cabeza de EEUU por delante de la RPC en la mayor parte de Asia, y señalan en Japón (74%), en Corea del Sur (74%) e Indonesia (47%) que se considera a la RPC una posible amenaza militar para sus países. Paradójicamente, y a pesar de la estabilidad en Asia, también siguen existiendo los conflictos heredados de la Guerra Fría: el status de Taiwán, la situación en Corea del Norte y su programa nuclear y los conflictos Pakistán-India, aumentados por la GWOT y Afganistán. En gran medida EEUU sigue manteniendo su política de seguridad en Asia-Pacífico a través de su red de alianzas en la zona y, sobre todo, a través de su relación cuasi-simbiótica con Japón. Ya en su primer viaje de la Secretaria de Estado Hillary Clinton a Asia visitando a algunos de los principales aliados y la RPC, pidió apoyo para la política global de EEUU, pero también en ciertas áreas como Afganistán y la GWOT.

Aunque el fin de la Guerra Fría, los atentados del 11 de septiembre y la emergencia de grandes potencias en Asia-Pacífico ha llevado a una reevaluación de la visión estratégica norteamericana en el último lustro, tanto en un nivel regional como global, la Administración Obama en principio ha mantenido en gran medida la política de EEUU diseñada desde un punto de vista bipartito hacia Asia-Pacífico desde el final de la Guerra Fría, y en algunos casos, mantenida desde la Segunda Guerra Mundial: la alianza con Japón y Corea del Sur, una política cooperativa con la RPC, la salvaguarda de la seguridad de Taiwán, una solución pacífica del programa nuclear de Corea del Norte, la nueva aproximación a la India, y un aumento de importancia del Sudeste Asiático. Pero EEUU, a pesar de la reaproximación a Beijing por la GWOT, sigue viendo el ascenso de la RPC como una posible amenaza y buscará acelerar el ascenso de potencias clave aliadas en Asia para constreñir cualquier intento hegemónico chino, que permitan preservar la posición estratégica decisiva norteamericana, pero con una especial atención al sur de Asia y a la solución final del programa nuclear en Corea del Norte. La escasa transparencia en asuntos militares y de

²² Las maniobras de las fuerzas armadas rusas *Vostok 2010* parecen dirigidas directamente a China. Comprenderán diversos ejercicios con armas combinadas con unidades de los distritos militares de Siberia, Urales-Volga, y el Extremo Oriente, así como de las fuerzas aéreas, la Flota del Pacífico, y tropas aerotransportadas. Hay que recordar que la población china al sur del río Amur es varias veces superior a la rusa y se ha producido alta inmigración china a las regiones de la zona como a la Región de Javárovsk y la Región de Amur. También véase: Giles, K.: “Russia’s National Security Strategy to 2020,” *NATO Defense College, Research Division* (Junio 2009), p. 4. También: McDermott, Roger: “Russian Military Doctrine Looks East”, Jamestown Foundation, *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, vol. 7, nº 36 (23 Febrero, 2010), en http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=36076.



seguridad de la RPC aumenta la incertidumbre y aumenta las posibilidades de malentendidos y errores de cálculo²³. Beijing no explica satisfactoriamente el razonamiento detrás de su modernización militar agresiva, lo que genera preocupación y desconfianza entre sus vecinos y en EEUU. La RPC se ha centrado cada vez más en las operaciones militares diferentes de la guerra (MOTW), como el mantenimiento de la paz internacional, el alivio de desastres, operaciones contra la piratería, y estas capacidades en sí mismas podrían convertirse en opciones para Beijing para obtener ventajas diplomáticas o resolver las controversias a su favor.

En el caso de Corea del Sur, esta política ha dado la oportunidad a Seúl de reexaminar su alianza con EEUU y ha permitido una línea más independiente en seguridad nacional, con lo que también se ha producido un esfuerzo de modernización de sus fuerzas armadas dirigido tanto para aumentar su capacidad de alcance regional como para defenderse de la amenaza militar de Corea del Norte. Sin embargo Japón ha estado durante largo tiempo revisando su política de seguridad en gran medida impulsando por EEUU, sobre todo en el sentido de expandir su papel militar en Asia-Pacífico. En gran medida, la cooperación militar entre ambos estados le ha proporcionado a Japón la oportunidad de avanzar en este sentido, aunque EEUU ha presionado para un avance mucho más rápido que Tokio tampoco ha encontrado cómodo, ya que lo percibe como pérdida de cierta flexibilidad estratégica, además de observar con precaución que el fortalecimiento de esta alianza le arrastrará a un posible conflicto entre EEUU y la RPC. Aún así, Japón ve cada vez con mayor preocupación la proyección de las intenciones de la RPC a largo plazo y el incremento de su poder militar, y esto mantiene la visión de su alianza con EEUU como el núcleo de su seguridad. En este sentido, Japón se está moviendo desde una fuerza defensiva a unas fuerzas armadas completas en el evento del fin de sus limitaciones constitucionales, lo cual también influirá claramente en la seguridad de la zona. Así nos encontramos con una dinámica de modernización y expansión de capacidades militares en todas las partes implicadas en la seguridad de la zona, ya sea la RPC, Corea del Norte, Corea del Sur, la India o Japón, mientras EEUU re-despliega sus fuerzas de acuerdo a esta situación. Aún así, la India se podría alzar progresivamente con una importancia estratégica a largo plazo para EEUU en el siglo XXI que podría compararse a la importancia de la relación con Japón.

En definitiva, la estrategia de EEUU busca establecer un escenario estratégico que “guíe” las posibles elecciones estratégicas chinas de una manera constructiva y favorable a los intereses norteamericanos más que establecer una nueva política de contención. Por ello, EEUU, con el mayor despliegue militar y diplomático en décadas²⁴, está reasegurando y facilitando el ascenso de Japón y la India, además de fortalecer las alianzas con Australia, Corea del Sur, Singapur, Filipinas, Tailandia e Indonesia, mientras realiza un re-despliegue militar más acorde con esta nueva visión estratégica.

²³ Véase la opinión del Secretario Gates en: “Strengthening Security Partnerships in the Asia-Pacific”, The Shangri-La Dialogue, *The 9th IISS Asia Security Summit*, Singapore (05 Junio, 2010).

²⁴ Bayan. “They have returned”, *The Economist* (14 Agosto, 2010) p. 42.





CLASH OF IDENTITIES WHY CHINA AND THE EU ARE INHARMONIOUS IN GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

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Abstract:

China and the EU should not be inharmonious in global governance if both sides grasp the true essence of the relations and our times. This paper argues that the real reason for China-EU disharmony is the clash of identities. China is trying to keep balance among four identities: i) developing country; ii) emerging power; iii) eastern civilization; and, iv) socialist state; while the EU also holds four identities in the eyes of Chinese: i) the biggest developed bloc, ii) post-modern model, iii) western civilization and iv) European capitalism. This entails four paradigms for China-EU relations: i) relations between the biggest developing country and the biggest developed bloc, ii) between an emerging power and post-modern model, iii) between eastern and western civilizations, and iv) between socialism and capitalism. The dynamic identities of both China and the EU lead to natural partnership for the two key players in constructing a multipolar world and ushering in effective multilateralism while at the same time result in clash of identities between each other. In the eyes of Europeans, it is difficult for China to hide behind the developing country curtain, being expected to play a more responsible role as an emerging global power, competing with and confusing the EU with its reserved and efficient way in dealing with global issues as eastern civilization and socialist state. And vice versa, in Chinese eyes, the EU is failing to represent the developed countries, the post-modern model, the western bloc, and capitalism. The mission for China and the EU is to bridge the identity and misperception gaps and seek new global consensus towards a harmonious world, while leaping forward on the back of common interests, common challenges and common values.

Keywords: China, the EU, Identity, Global governance, Harmonious World

Resumen:

China y la UE no deberían de mantener una falta de armonía en cuanto a la gobernanza mundial si ambas partes entienden la verdadera esencia de sus relaciones y de nuestra época. Este artículo afirma que la verdadera razón por la que las relaciones mutuas no son armónicas, es por un choque de identidades. China intenta mantener el equilibrio entre cuatro tipos de identidades: i) país en vías de desarrollo, ii) país emergente, iii) civilización oriental, y iv) estado socialista; mientras, la UE también está dotada de cuatro identidades a los ojos de China: i) el mayor bloque desarrollado, ii) un modelo posmoderno, iii) civilización occidental y iv) capitalismo europeo. Ello implica que hay cuatro paradigmas en las relaciones China-UE: i) relaciones entre el mayor país en desarrollo y el mayor bloque desarrollado, ii) entre un poder emergente y un modelo posmoderno, iii) entre la civilización occidental y la civilización oriental y iv) entre socialismo y capitalismo. Las identidades dinámicas tanto de China como de la UE conducen hacia una asociación natural para dos actores clave para la construcción de un mundo multipolar y la entrada en un multilateralismo efectivo, mientras que al mismo tiempo tiene lugar un choque de identidades. En los ojos de los europeos, es difícil para China mantenerse detrás del velo del país en desarrollo, esperándose de él un papel más responsable como un poder global emergente, a la par que compite con y confunde a la UE con su modelo reservado y eficiente de lidiar con los problemas globales como país oriental y estado socialista. Para China igualmente, la UE está fracasando a la hora de presentarse simultáneamente como país desarrollado, modelo posmoderno, bloque occidental y país capitalismo. La misión para China y la UE es superar las diferencias de identidad y percepción y perseguir un nuevo consenso global hacia un mundo armónico, al mismo tiempo que se progresa sobre la base de los intereses comunes, desafíos comunes y valores comunes.

Keywords: China, la UE, identidad, gobernanza global, mundo armónico.

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1. Introduction

Traditionally speaking, China-US relations cannot be worse and China-EU relations cannot be better since the former has overlapping geopolitical interests while the latter has not. But even China and the EU are not cooperating well in Africa where they have increasingly overlapping geopolitical interests. This reminds us that to grasp the true essence of China-EU relations, we should go beyond traditional realist or liberalist perspectives.

As both an old and new country, China shares more similarities with the EU than with the US. We can draw such conclusion either from the shared diverse cultures, hierarchical tradition and secular society of China and the EU, or from American exceptionalism based on Protestantism and its anti-communism gene. China is an old civilization but a new player in world affairs, so is the EU. China is a culture community instead of a nation-state,² so is the EU. China enjoys dynamic and diverse identities, so does the EU, which causes both clashes and collaborations between China and the EU.

2. China's Dynamic Identities in Today's World

Liang Qichao, a great scholar at the end of the Qing Dynasty, has classified Chinese history as "China's China", "Asia's China" and "the World's China" which also embodied China's three identities.³ In today's world, "China's China" refers to socialism with Chinese characteristics.⁴ "Asia's China" refers to eastern civilization (East Asian civilization, the same below). "The World's China" refers to developing country and emerging power.

China lost its traditional identity since the Opium War (I: 1840-42, II: 1856-60) and has witnessed the long march to seek its new identity. The traditional Chinese world outlook "All-under-heaven"⁵ ("China's China", in which China equals the world) collapsed fundamentally when China lost the war with Japan in 1895. Not until 1912, when the Republic of China was founded as the first democratic nation in Asia, did China finally accept the new identity of "Asia's China" and partly "the world's China",⁶ with the integration of the western system based on sovereignty and nation-state, while combining with traditional the Chinese political structure.⁷ When the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949,

² China has 56 nations which is not the typical nation-state. In fact, although the development of nations in China has a long history, it was usually called race, tribe, etc., but not "nation". The word "nation" was translated from the Japanese language. Wang Tao, a thinker in the late Qing Dynasty, first introduced the word "nation" in his article "Foreign Affairs is about Learning Others' Advantages" in 1882. So is nationalism, nation-state, sovereignty, territory, etc. See Wang, Yiwei: "Seeking Chinese New Identity: the Myth of Chinese Nationalism", *World Economy and Politics*, no. 2 (2006).

³ Liang, Qichao: "Introduction to Chinese History", *Yinbinshi Heji* (Complete Works of Liang Qichao), Beijing, Beijing Press, vol.1, no.6 (1901), pp.11-12.

⁴ Socialism with Chinese characteristics is something that combines the basic principles of scientific socialism with the facts of building socialism unique to China. Socialism is the common rule and essential feature of the practice, while Chinese characteristics are what the basic principles of socialism really embody in China. See: "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics", *People's Daily*, 30 September 2007, at <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90002/92169/92211/6275043.html>.

⁵ Zhao, Tingyang: "The Concept of All-under-heaven: A Semantic and Historical Introduction", at <http://transculturajura.uni-sb.de/publications/zhao-le%20robert1.doc>.

⁶ For instance, one of the two Chinese Communist Party founding fathers Chen Duxiu only knew in his twenties that China is just "one country" in the world

⁷ The founding father of Republic of China, Dr. Sun Yat-sen developed Abraham Lincoln's thought "of the people, by the people and for the people" into "the Three Principles of the People" (Nationalism, Democracy, the



China got a new identity: socialist state. At the same time, China identified itself as the big brother of the third world during Mao's era. After China began to open and reform, China has been an emerging power by integrating with Asia and the world through embracing regionalization and globalization, through which Chinese identities as "Asia's China" and "the world's China" have fully come into being.⁸

Until now, the relations between China and the world have reached the stage of "the World's China" vs. "China's World", i.e., between "China in the world" and "Chinese version of the world", which was indicated by the "peaceful rise/peace development" strategy and "harmonious world" outlook.⁹ With the rise of economic China, political China follows and cultural China comes thereafter. And today's Chinese aggressive diplomacy and public opinions indicates that the China's focus has shifted more and more from "the world's China" to "China's world".

No doubt, "the world's China", i.e. China's identities as a developing country and emerging power, are more discussed and recognized in today's world. "China's China" and "Asia's China" are working under domestic constrains in shaping China's international behaviour.

Of course, China's identity is changing, not just because China is undertaking a transition during the open and reform period, but partly because the world's identity is also changing, i.e., a new world identity is shaping up. Since World War II, a new international order has been emerging. The Western/American version of globalization is giving way to diverse globalizations. China cannot just rely on it and should adjust itself to match the world future. The world should also adjust itself to match the rise of the emerging powers.

Then, how does one make China's four identities into harmonious co-existence? Chinese historian Zhang Baijia discovered it famously in his article "Changing the World through Changing Itself" by describing the mutual impact between China and the world as "the world impacts China through China's self-changing".¹⁰ Based on such logic, one can understand why China was a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society, while India was fully colonized in the 19th century, and why the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, but China is still keeping its own political system. To cultivate China as another India or expect China will follow the step of Soviet Union is an illusion, in James Mann's word "the China Fantasy".¹¹

Also, because of that, China always claims that foreign policy is the extension of domestic politics and highlights the guideline of non-interference in the internal affairs of others, considering it as one of the five principles of peaceful co-existence. Chinese low-

People's Livelihood) and John Locke's thought "the Separation of The Three Powers (executive, legislative and judicial)" into "the Five Power Constitution" (five branches of government, named *Yuan*: Executive *Yuan*, Legislative *Yuan*, Judicial *Yuan*, Examination *Yuan*, and Control *Yuan*).

⁸ China joined the WTO in 2001, which usually was considered as the milestone that China got its full membership as "the world's China".

⁹ As the "harmonious world" outlook, see: Hu, Jintao: "Making Great Efforts to Build a Harmonious World with Long-lasting Peace and Common Prosperity", Speech, *United Nations (UN), Summit 60th Anniversary*, New York (16 September 2005), available at <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjdt/zyjh/t212614.htm>; Hu, Jintao: "Unite as One and Work for a Bright Future", Statement, *United Nations (UN), General Debate of the 64th Session of the UN General Assembly*, New York (23 September 2009), at <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t606276.htm>.

¹⁰ Zhang, Baijia: "Gaibian Ziji Yingxiang Shijie" [Changing Thy Self, Influencing Thy World], *Zhongguo Shehui Kexue [Social Sciences in China]*, no. 1 (2002), pp. 4-19.

¹¹ Mann, James (2007): *The China Fantasy: How Our Leaders Explain Away Chinese Repression*, New York, Viking Adult, pp. 1- 144.



profile diplomacy “*tao guang yang hui*” can also be grasped in such logic, which makes Chinese government always focusing on domestic politics first. China hesitated to take diplomatic initiatives in former times.

Does the logic change now? Has China reached the stage of “Changing Itself through Changing the World”? Partly yes. After all, the world is on the eve of dramatic changes to cope with global challenges and to meet the demand of the rise of emerging powers. But such changes are far behind China’s changes. Whatever China has changed, some countries are still unsatisfied with a quite new but not totally new China.

Partly no. We should not exaggerate or over-explain China’s rise which is mainly benefiting from globalization. The rising Chinese power is not just an independent power which China can use freely but a structural power depending on the world. And most importantly, China is still a developing country. Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao often uses such comparison with multiplication-division:

As premier of China, my responsibility is heavy, the job is demanding, and there is endless work to do. 1.3 billion is a very big number. So if we use multiplication, any small problem multiplied by 1.3 billion will end up being a very big problem. For a very big aggregate divided by 1.3 billion, it will come to a very tiny figure. This is something that is quite difficult for foreign visitors to understand and appreciate.¹²

To keep the balance between “China’s world” and “the world’s China”, the future is determined by the interaction between China and the world, which will be tested by China-EU clash of identities.

3. The EU’s Identity Crisis or Identity Dilemma?

Different with China’s enduring dynamic identities, “Europe, as a whole, is going through a clear identity crisis at both national and individual levels.”¹³ As George Weigel has pointed out,

Europe, and especially Western Europe, is in the midst of a crisis of civilization morale. The most dramatic manifestation of that crisis is not to be found in Europe’s fondness for governmental bureaucracy or its devotion to fiscally shaky health care schemes and pension plans, in Europe’s lagging economic productivity or in the appeasement mentality that some European leaders display toward Islamist terrorism. No, the most dramatic manifestation of Europe’s crisis of civilization morale is the brute fact that Europe is depopulating itself.¹⁴

¹² “Interview With Wen Jiabao: A Complete Transcript From Chinese Premier’s Meeting”, *The Washington Post*, 21 November 2003, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn?pagename=article&node=&contentId=A6641-2003Nov22¬Found=true>.

¹³ Radu, Michael (2010): *Europe’s Ghost. Tolerance, Jihadism, and the Crisis of the West*, New York, Encounter Books.

¹⁴ Weigel, George: “Is Europe Dying? Notes on a Crisis of Civilization Morale”, *AEI Online* (March 2005), at <http://www.aei.org/outlook/22139>.



The European sovereign debt crisis puts the retirement age as a hot controversial issue among the EU member states, which not only reveals the above European civilization problem as “European society has lost its moral and cultural bearings” but also reveals the European identity crisis as post-modern model and European capitalism. The post-modern European economy cannot avoid the pitfall of modern economic crisis but endures longer than other modern countries.

Besides the identity crisis, the EU is facing identity dilemmas also. The EU’s identity in general can be described as a normative power. However, the EU’s such self-identification draws both identity advantages and disadvantages.

In European’s eyes, the EU is a *sui generis* normative power which distinguishes it from others and from history as discovered by Ian Manners:

[...] the EU is a normative power: it changes the norms, standards and prescriptions of world politics away from the bounded expectations of state-centricity. However, it is one thing to say that the EU *is* a normative power by virtue of its hybrid polity consisting of supranational and international forms of governance; it is another to argue that the EU *acts* in a normative (i.e. ethically good) way.¹⁵

Ian Manners also outlined ‘sustainable peace’ as a prime normative principle of the EU. However, an international survey seriously questions the EU’s role in the world:

Europe should be a force for stability in the world. But an EU without an effective foreign policy mechanism, without the ability to shoulder its share of the military burden associated with keeping the world safe, with a faltering Euro and with too many new members is a big void where the world needs strength. Sometimes the greatest threat comes from those who could take action to preserve stability but who do not.¹⁶

In today’s world, mutual learning and tolerance among different civilizations is an inexhaustible source of strength for social progress. The European Union is a rising power on a declining continent, which reveals the dilemmas of representativeness, integration and words & deeds concerning the EU’s identification as a normative power.¹⁷

Besides normative power, Robert Cooper inclined to identify the EU as “post-modern” model comparing with other countries still living in “modern stage” like China or “pre-modern” stage like Afghanistan.¹⁸ However, other countries are not living in Europe’s history.

¹⁵ Manners, Ian: “The Normative Ethics of the European Union”, *International Affairs*, vol. 84, no.1, (2008), p. 65.

¹⁶ Rothkopf, David: “The world’s 10 most dangerous countries”, *Foreign Policy* (07 August 2009).

¹⁷ See Wang, Yiwei: “The Identity Dilemmas of EU Normative Power: Observations from Chinese Traditional Culture”, chapter 6, in Gerrits, André (ed.), “Normative Power Europe in Global Politics”, Clingendael, *European Papers* (December 2009), at http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2009/20091200_cesp_paper_gerrits.pdf.

¹⁸ Cooper, Robert (2000): “Post-Modern State and the World Order”, Demos.



Such argument is full of European superiority and ‘centralism’, with strong mentality of linear evolution and with the pitfall of dichotomy.¹⁹

Even though with post-national is meant a political form of identity that is founded on the recognition of constitutionally entrenched democratic values and human rights, which is very different with Chinese culture. Europe’s post-modern identity to its essence, is very similar to Chinese traditional identity of the Four Yi:

The Yi [of the east], Man [of the south], Rong [of the west], and Dí [of the north] are together called the Four Yi. According to the system of nine zones, the land they inhabit is in the strategic zone and the desolate zone. The [deeper] meaning of [the language used in] the Chunqiu is to regard Zhuxia as compatriots and Yi-Di as foreigners. Because their languages are not intelligible to us, their gifts and trade goods are different, their laws and customs are strange, and their racial type is abnormal, they therefore live outside the furthest frontier, beyond the mountains and the Yellow River, in mountainous and inaccessible valleys, their soil separated from that of Zhongguo. We do not invade them or impose our taxes and corvée on them, nor do we require them to observe our calendar. Hence it is said, “The Son of Heaven who knows the Way defends his realm from the Four Yi.”²⁰

This is the reason that when the EU inclines to identify China as modern country while the EU has reached the post-modern stage, China however considers Europe’s universalism as today’s “All-under-heaven” which China gave up a century ago. In this regard, the EU is still living in Chinese history also.

4. Clash of Identities between China and the EU

Similar to China, the EU holds four identities in the eyes of Chinese: the biggest developed bloc, post-modern model, western civilization, and European capitalism. Then, according to the multiplication principle, there should be $4 \times 4 = 16$ combinations for China-EU relations.

However, only reciprocal combinations make sense, in other words, there are four kinds of clash of identities for China-EU relations:

1. Socialism vs capitalism: China’s China vs. EU’s EU, i.e., China still feels the ideological gap with the EU. Some countries of Eastern Europe even consider China as communist country like Soviet Union, which brings with less flexible position on democracy or human rights for the EU towards China. However, China highlights people’s heart in socialism, i.e., the essence and goal of democracy and human rights, not just the means and procedures that European green-liberal party particularly claims.
2. Eastern civilization vs. western civilization: Asia’s China vs Europe’s EU, i.e., China

¹⁹ Wang, “The Identity Dilemmas...”, *op.cit.*

²⁰ Jiang Tong(江通), *Xironglun* (《西戎論》), in 299 (Xi Jin Dynasty).



still feels the cultural gap with the EU. China is probably the only ancient civilization that has not been colonized by Europe, which leads to today's confrontation over universalism. China considers European's universalism as Europeanism especially when "the silent majority" wakes up with the rise of the middle class in BRICs countries.

3. Developing country vs. developed countries bloc: The World's China I vs. the world's EU I, which invites controversial debate over China's international responsibility. China defines itself as a developing country since China's per capital GDP ranks only 103 in the world; while Europeans consider it as China's irresponsible to hide behind the curtain of a developing bloc.

4. Emerging power vs. post-modern model: The World's China II vs. the world's EU II, which causes a possible zero-sum game between China and the EU in the eyes of conservative Europeans. The World Bank recent increased sharply China's weight at the cost of the Europe's and Japan's gave the evidence for such mentality. Different with European image of post-modern model as surpassing the modern stage, Chinese realists simply treat Europe as defensive or declining power

The clash of identities between China and the EU can be traced back to the geopolitics of emotions:

In general terms, the Asian world today is characterized especially by hope, the Arab-Islamic world by humiliation and the western world by fear... fear is the absence of confidence; hope is the expression of confidence; humiliation is the loss of hope that results from wounded confidence... What may appear initially to be a reductive and stereotypical vision turns out to be a clear-sighted plea for understanding 'the Other' in the age of globalization.²¹

It would be much more productive if the EU accepted the China model as an alternative to its own, considering China as a different civilization, and not attempting to tailor it according to modern EU mentality, including such issues as human rights and democracy. As one of the hottest global issue, climate change issue reveals these lessons more clearly.

5. Case Study: Why China and the EU are Inharmonious in Coing with Climate Change

Identity follows responsibility and responsibility reflects identity. Multilateral and dynamic identities draw multilateral and dynamic responsibilities. Both China and the EU should have their appropriate responsibilities following their respective four identities.

Let's take climate change as an example. China's position on climate change should keep in balance the following four dimensions to match China's four identities:

²¹ Moisi, Dominique (2009): *The Geopolitics of Emotion: How Cultures of Fear Humiliation and Hope are Reshaping the World*, New York, Doubleday.



- **China's China:** The basic human rights for Chinese are the right of living and developing. Facing the global climate change, to feed up 1.3 billion people and to provide the comfortable environment for them are the two basic responsibilities for Chinese government. In doing so, Chinese emission rights have not been used up comparing with other countries. Chinese per person emission is less than one third of that of the developed countries.

- **Asia's China:** Asian countries are the most to suffer from climate change because of its population density. As the biggest country in Asia and the most populous country in the world, China will an increasingly leading role in building up an Asian regional mechanism to cope with climate change on the base of the 10+1 and 10+3 frameworks.

- **World's China:**

- 1) **Developing country:** as a P-5 member of the UN Security Council representing the developing countries, China should protect their rights by highlighting the principle of "common but differentiated responsibility" under the Kyoto Protocol, preserving sovereignty by not accepting international inspection or deep quantified emission cuts, but volunteering to reduce emissions in their own ways besides the survival emissions. For developing countries, development is the key.

- 2) **Emerging power:** China is one of the emerging powers in the process of rapid development. One of the third Chinese emissions of greenhouse gas is international transferring emissions. In other words, China exports products but inputs pollution at the same time. "Made in China" is not just made for Chinese people, but is largely consumed by foreigners especially the westerns without paying a tax on international transferring emissions.

As a special developing country and emerging power, China plays a leading role in the developing world and among emerging powers, in coping with climate change beyond its national interests. Climate change is not just a challenge but also an opportunity to change the Chinese development model. Having realized this, even the Chinese per person emission level is quite low, but considering the trends of climate change and wooing to win the future international competitions advantages, China is taking full consideration of its total emissions level and voluntarily cutting its greenhouse gas emissions intensity per unit of GDP by 40-45% below 2005 levels by 2020.

Of course, the order and level for the above identities/responsibilities are changing with time, but the identity of "China's China" is always the basic and the core.

At the same time, the EU plays a leading role in climate change as the biggest developed bloc, post-modern model, western civilization, and European capitalism.

Then, the climate change issue entails four paradigms for China-EU relations:

1. Relations between the biggest developing country and the biggest developed bloc, which means that China-EU relations over climate change leads to a convergence of the main contradictions between the two blocs, which holds the key for negotiation.



2. Relations between an emerging power and post-modern model, which result in potential a zero-sum game between China and the EU over the contemporary and historic responsibilities for climate change.
3. Relations between eastern and western civilizations, which lead to the different approaches in dealing with climate change: adaptation or mitigation?
4. Relations between socialism and capitalism, which brings together different mentalities in negotiating: justice or efficiency?

China plays the key role in bridging the gap between the developing world and developed world and between emerging powers and developed countries in particular. So, to deal with China in climate change and other issues is to deal with the developing world and BASIC (emerging powers) countries. The EU disappointed China again in the Copenhagen climate change conference by not only missing the opportunity to cooperate with China in global governance, but even tended to isolate China and blamed China for arrogance after failing to do so.²²

Again, the Copenhagen climate change conference revealed the current difficulties in China-EU relations which can be traced back to China's identity dilemma in the eyes of Europeans: difficult to hide behind the developing country curtain, and expected to show more responsibly as an emerging global power; confusion and competition from China's reserved and efficient way in dealing with global issues as an eastern civilization and socialist state; and conversely, the EU's identity dilemmas in Chinese eyes: failing to represent the developed countries, the post-modern model, the western bloc, and capitalism, while keeping its self-identity

China's complex identities and stage of development indicates that the soft conflict with the EU is unavoidable over international responsibilities in global affairs. However, it will be part of the relations between China and the EU during the transition period. China's identities will shift from history-oriented, present-oriented to future-oriented sooner or later. As a consequence, China will share more and more common understandings and responsibilities with the EU on global affairs. The EU should be patient to wait for a new China, at the same time, should give up the illusion of westernizing China and getting out from the anxiety of being Chinanized.²³ Harmonious co-existence and intensive cooperation between China and the EU will not only offer more hopes for global security, but also will reduce global insecurity.

The climate change issue reminds us again that China-EU relations should going beyond the bilateral dimension and reach the true essence of the relations of the above four paradigms. The difficulties and complexities also mean a great hope for a relationship that pursues a mission for humanity.

²² "Chinese premier responds to "arrogance" charge", *Xinhua*, 14 March 2010, at http://english.gov.cn/2010-03/14/content_1555804.htm.

²³ For instance, the British scholar and journalist Martin Jacques warns the West that the world will be Chinanized not Westernized any more in the coming future, which is the revival of "Clash of Civilizations" by other means, see: Jacques, Martin (2009): *When China Rules The World: The Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World*, London, New Statesman.



As the UK House of Lords, European Union Committee - Seventh Report argued after three months introspection:

As was shown at the Copenhagen climate change conference in 2009, the balance of global power is moving strongly eastwards and southwards. Without resolving its relationship with China, the EU cannot achieve its aims. The role which China and the EU can play in shaping 21st century global affairs will be crucial to solving the world's problems.²⁴

6. Looking Ahead: Build a Harmonious World Starting From China-EU Harmony

Identity not only means self-identification but also means being identified by others. The mission for China and the EU is to bridge the identity and perception gaps.

Around 2,500 years ago, Confucius argued □ “The gentleman aims at harmony, and not at uniformity. The mean man aims at uniformity and not at harmony.” How can China and the EU handle the new paradigm of the relationship to avoid the “mean man” outcome? This is a true challenge for the future leaders both in China and in the EU.

Given the diverse and dynamic identities, both China and the European Union share ambitions to shape the international order according to their own values. The only way to avoid a clash of ideas and identities is to look for, and to stress, the elements of agreement and consensus. Surpassing domestic and ideological disputes, China and Europe share more and more common international values, such as effective multilateralism and global governance. But even in the domestic field, China shares common social values with Europe, such as secularity in the societal sphere and cultural diversity.

With four identities for both, China and the EU are the most important pillars as the world hardware and software (cultural “G2”) not only in traditional international regime such as UN security council but also the new platform such as G20, to bride the gaps between developing countries and developed countries, to get the win-win result for emerging powers and the developed world, to create a harmonious relations for eastern civilization and western civilization and to reach the same goal by different means through the coordination between socialism with Chinese characteristics (China model) and European capitalism (EU model). In one word, the dynamic identities of both China and the EU lead to natural partnership for the two key players in constructing a multipolar world and ushering in effective multilateralism; while at the same time surpassing the clash of identities in dealing with global challenges. This is the mission for both China and the EU, which are the possible only two consistent and ancient civilizations with dynamic identities in the world.

²⁴ “Stars and Dragons: The EU and China”, Seventh Report 2009-10, *UK House of Lords, European Union Committee* (23 March 2010), at <http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/ld200910/ldselect/ldecom/76/76i.pdf>.



In the times of uncertainty, China–EU relations needs a leap forward, from common interests and common challenges to common values (consensus) and to work on a new global consensus and to build a harmonious world with long-lasting peace and common prosperity.





CHINA, AMÉRICA LATINA Y EL CARIBE: EL DOBLE FILO DE UNA RELACIÓN POSITIVA¹

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Resumen:

El éxito del desarrollo económico de China es quizá uno de los fenómenos más importantes de finales del siglo XX y lo que va del presente y los países de América Latina son parte de esta realidad. En poco tiempo China se ha convertido en el principal o uno de los principales socios comerciales de los países de América Latina. El acercamiento político, el intercambio comercial y la cooperación con el hemisferio americano se han incrementado desde la llegada de Hu Jintao al poder y ante el aumento de la demanda de materias primas y recursos naturales. Sin embargo esta creciente relación tiene dos aristas, por un lado casi todos los países guardan un superávit comercial con China, no obstante la mayoría de ellos se apoyan en la exportación de energéticos y de un número reducido de materias primas y alimentos. Esta situación puede crear una dependencia comercial con potenciales efectos negativos dado lo volátil de los precios de estas mercancías y del poder de compra internacional que guarda China.

Palabras clave: China, América Latina, el Caribe, comercio exterior, diplomacia, comunidades chinas.

Title in English: "China, Latin America and the Caribbean: the Double Edge of a Positive Relation"

Abstract:

Chinese economic development has been a phenomenon of the late 20th Century and will continue to impact the future. Latin American countries make up part of this new reality. In just a few years, China has become one of the most important economic partners for several Latin American countries. Political partnership, commercial exchange and bi-lateral cooperation with Latin America have increased drastically since Hu Jintao's arrival to power. This is largely due to China's demand for raw materials and natural resources. However, the growing relationship has a few rough edges. The majority of Latin American countries maintain a commercial surplus with China; however, this is heavily dependent on energy exports and a reduced number of raw materials and food. This situation could create a commercial dependency with potentially negative effects given the volatility of commodity prices of and China's international bargaining power.

Keywords: China, Latin America, The Caribbean Region, Foreign Trade, Diplomacy and Chinese Communities.

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1. La creciente importancia de China para América Latina

Recientemente la Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL) señaló que en la próxima década, China será el segundo mercado más importante para los países del área, con excepción de México y algunas otras economías que venden poco pero importan mucho a esta nación asiática. También señala que sin una estrategia regional no se abatirán las debilidades del intercambio actual, ya que mientras China exporta a la región bienes manufacturados, América Latina vende materias primas. Europa dejó de ser el segundo mercado más atractivo para los exportadores latinoamericanos, en tanto que Estados Unidos se mantendrá como el principal cliente de la región³.

A partir de unos años a la fecha se puede leer diariamente en los diarios del hemisferio latinoamericano columnas, noticias, reflexiones y artículos que resaltan la importancia de la relación que se tiene actualmente con China. Como si apareciera de la nada, para los medios y la sociedad en general latinoamericana, a partir de la segunda mitad de la década de los noventa China se ha convertido en uno de sus socios más importantes. Esta tendencia de acercamiento comercial se ha visto fortalecida con en el inicio de negociaciones y firmas de tratados de libre comercio, como lo han sido el caso de Chile, Perú y recientemente Costa Rica. Así mismo, China ha firmado con Argentina, Brasil, Chile, México, Perú y Venezuela “asociaciones estratégicas”. Esta modalidad de fortalecimiento de las relaciones bilaterales vía acuerdos y convenios legales se empezó a partir de 2004 a la fecha, lo cual denota la rapidez con la que se han estrechado los vínculos, pero sobre todo, la importancia para ambas regiones de asegurar una relación recíproca en oportunidades y ganancias.

Ante esta realidad, la mayoría de los países de América Latina se han visto rebasados para administrar su relación con China, básicamente en dos aspectos; por un lado, ante la necesidad de ampliar y reforzar la presencia de sus representaciones diplomáticas y de oficinas de promoción comercial en China, así como con tener más personal, sobre todo que pueda entender el idioma y la cultura de este país. Por otro lado, como hemos comentado en líneas anteriores, casi todos los países de América Latina guardan un superávit comercial con China, sin embargo esta ganancia reside en la exportación de un número reducido de bienes primarios, con poco valor agregado, con salarios bajos y con pocos productores nacionales. Pero sobre todo, el gran problema radica en el hecho de que China se está convirtiendo en el comprador más importante a nivel mundial de todos estos productos, con lo cual podrá fijar el precio en un futuro no muy lejano. Por si fuera poco, la región de América Latina no está invirtiendo lo suficiente en innovación y desarrollo de tecnología con lo cual seguirá dependiendo de la exportación de bienes primarios o de manufactura ligera.

En el documento de la CEPAL titulado "La República Popular de China y América Latina y el Caribe: hacia una relación estratégica"⁴ se pronostica que en los próximos diez años el porcentaje del total exportador de la región al mercado de China se elevará de 7.6 % en 2009 a 19.3 % en 2020. La CEPAL señala que el déficit comercial con China por parte de la región se acentúa por el desproporcionado saldo negativo que sostienen México y Centroamérica con el país asiático. En contraste, las economías de América del Sur muestran un balance comercial equilibrado, aunque las exportaciones sudamericanas sean principalmente materias primas. Por ello las naciones que más aprovecharán esa relación

³ “La República Popular de China y América Latina y el Caribe: hacia una relación estratégica”, CEPAL, Santiago, Chile (2010).

⁴ Ver CEPAL, *op. cit.*, p. 23.



serán Chile, que actualmente envía 13 % de sus exportaciones a ese país; Perú, con 11 %; Argentina, 9 %; Costa Rica, 7 %, y Brasil, 7 %.

Por su parte, en otro escenario totalmente diferente, México sólo exporta a ese país 0.6 % del total de sus ventas al exterior. Eso a pesar de que las exportaciones de éste país a China se han incrementado de manera importante. Datos de la Secretaría de Economía y del Banco de México establecen que las importaciones de China hacia México se elevaron en más de mil por ciento en el periodo del 2000 al 2009, pasando de tres mil 190 millones de dólares a 34 mil 754 millones de dólares, mientras que las exportaciones mexicanas a ese país se incrementaron en 600%, de 310 millones a dos mil 215 millones de dólares⁵.

El comercio de China con América Latina pasó de \$200 millones de dólares en 1975 a más de \$50 mil millones de dólares en 2005. Tan sólo con el Caribe el comercio totalizó \$2 mil millones de dólares en 2004. En una reunión con parlamentarios brasileños el presidente chino, Hu Jintao, señaló que el comercio con el hemisferio podrá llegar a los \$100 mil millones de dólares a finales 2010. El mandatario chino se quedó corto, ya que en tan sólo en 2007 se llegó a los \$102.6 mil millones de dólares, un aumento de 42% con respecto a 2006⁶.

Los diez socios más importantes de China en América Latina son, en orden de importancia: Brasil, México, Chile, Argentina, Perú, Venezuela, Panamá, Colombia, Costa Rica y Cuba. Sólo con cuatro de ellos el volumen de comercio bilateral excede los \$10 mil millones de dólares, según cifras de la aduana china de 2008: Brasil con \$48.5 mil millones de dólares, México con \$17.56 mil millones de dólares, Chile con \$17.5 mil millones de dólares y Argentina con \$10 mil millones de dólares⁷. Con este ritmo de crecimiento del comercio bilateral con China, Estados Unidos dejó de ser el socio número uno de Chile y Brasil y China pasó a ocupar esa posición a partir de 2009. Para el resto de los países del hemisferio China ya es el segundo o tercer socio comercial, por ejemplo para México es desde 2008 su segundo socio comercial. Es importante recalcar que estas cifras tan elevadas de comercio obtenidas en tan corto plazo se han dado sin la firma de tratados de libre comercio con China, se prevé que en el caso de Chile, de Perú y Costa Rica el comercio se triplique en los próximos años con las firmas de los tratados de libre comercio que se han firmado.

No es casualidad que este crecimiento explosivo coincida con la primera visita del presidente Hu Jintao a la región en 2004. Con motivo de esta visita se desarrolló el primer documento de política exterior de China hacia América Latina. A este documento se le conoce como el documento blanco, el cual deja claro que el gobierno de China intenta ser proactivo haciendo una serie de propuestas al resto de los países de la región, con el fin de encontrar la manera de que se establezca un mutuo beneficio y una verdadera reciprocidad. China sabe que a pesar de que la mayoría de los países tienen un superávit en el comercio bilateral, este comercio es en su mayoría de materia prima y alimentos, industrias con poco o nulo valor agregado. Los líderes chinos están conscientes de que esta es una relación muy desbalanceada y que en el mediano plazo será contraproducente a la imagen país de China en el hemisferio, de esta manera se está tratando de que los países latinoamericanos establezcan políticas bilaterales con China de intercambio y cooperación científica, tecnológica y educativa. China está dispuesta a transferir tecnología para que los países del hemisferio logren no sólo agregar valor, sino crear valor, es decir crear sus propias tecnologías vía la investigación científica y la innovación tecnológica.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁶ Zhu, Zhiqun (2010): *China's New Diplomacy. Rationale, Strategic and Significance*, Farnham, England; Burlington, VT, Ashgate.

⁷ Can, Jin: "Los socios más importantes de China en América Latina", *The People's Daily*, 5 noviembre 2009.



Es importante señalar que este fenómeno no es nuevo, durante los ochenta y noventa Japón hizo algo muy semejante con los países del Sudeste de Asia, que al igual que América Latina para China, éstos eran los proveedores de materias primas e insumos baratos para el aparato manufacturero japonés. Sin embargo con el tiempo, países como Tailandia y Malasia llevaron a cabo sendos proyectos de modernización basados en desarrollar la industria intensiva en capital y en tecnología, pero sobre todo en desarrollar clúster estratégicos. Hoy día estos dos países son un verdadero ejemplo a seguir para países como Chile, Perú, Argentina, pero también para México y Brasil. Si estos países desarrollasen este tipo de planes basados en políticas industriales y planes a mediano y largo plazo, con el apoyo de China podrían lograr etapas de desarrollo tecnológico como los casos de los países del Sudeste de Asia que hace tan sólo treinta años eran eminentemente rurales y atrasados.

Los dos casos más emblemáticos de crecimiento de su comercio y relación con China son Chile y Perú. Desde 2007 exportan cerca del 40% de sus exportaciones totales a la región de Asia Pacífico, mayoritariamente a China. En el caso de Perú, por ejemplo, las exportaciones a China representan casi el 20% del total de sus exportaciones totales. Y sin embargo, como se ha señalado en párrafos anteriores, en ambos casos entre el 70% y 80% de lo exportado a China se concentra en no más de cuatro productos, donde se destacan los productos generados por la minería, básicamente cobre y hierro. Este porcentaje de comercio según los expertos crecerá dado que estos dos países consolidaron sus relaciones comerciales y políticas a través de la firma de tratados de libre comercio. Chile fue el primer país no asiático en firmar un TLC con China en 2005, mientras que Perú firmó el TLC con China en 2008⁸.

Para ninguna parte es un secreto que el interés que tiene China en América Latina se explica por el crecimiento sin precedentes de la economía china, que ha llevado a esta nación a importar grandes cantidades de todo tipo de materia prima y alimentos del mundo, pero sobre todo a asegurar la proveeduría de estos bienes con el fin de consolidar su capacidad manufacturera. China ya es el primer o segundo mayor importador de casi todo energético, materia prima o alimento que el mundo produce, según los expertos esta a pocos años de ser el número uno y rebasar a Estados Unidos permanentemente.

Por su lado, América Latina se estima que tiene 13.5% del total de las reservas probadas de petróleo, y sólo representa el 6% del total de la producción mundial, con lo cual hay un gran margen para aprovechar esta brecha⁹. China depende de sobre manera del petróleo del Medio Oriente y necesita a toda costa diversificar su proveeduría de petróleo. Por ende, el hemisferio latinoamericano se presenta como una región de importancia geoestratégica para el aseguramiento de combustibles. Para ello ha firmado múltiples acuerdos y convenios, así como consolidado inversiones en este rubro en países como Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Perú, Argentina y Bolivia, incluso hasta en México ha hecho inversiones menores, aun a pesar de que las leyes internas de este país todavía prohíben la participación o coinversión privada en este sector.

Ante la necesidad de asegurar el abastecimiento de estos bienes, el gobierno chino ha incrementado los intercambios políticos, económicos y culturales con América Latina. El número de visitas de altos funcionarios hacia ambos lados del Océano Pacífico se han incrementado desde la llegada de Hu Jintao al poder. El gobierno chino no discrimina ni

⁸ CEPAL, *Op. Cit.*, p. 58.

⁹ Jiang, Wenran: "China's Global Quest for Energy Security", *Canadian Foreign Policy*, vol. 13, no. 2 (2006), pp. 23-28.



privilegia partidos ni ideologías gobernantes en los diversos países de América Latina, su política exterior refleja su pragmatismo y el hecho de alcanzar su objetivo fundamental que es el de asegurar el crecimiento económico de más de 7% anual. Lo mismo recibe a Hugo Chavez de Venezuela que a Álvaro Uribe de Colombia.

América Latina representa no sólo aseguramiento de bienes y manufacturas, también de apoyo en foros globales como Naciones Unidas o la Organización Mundial del Comercio (OMC), entre otros, así como de reconocimiento internacional. En América Latina están la mayoría de países que todavía reconocen a la República China (Taiwán) como la única China. En este momento China mantiene relaciones con 21 de los 33 países de la región, el resto de los países (12)¹⁰ mantiene relaciones con Taipéi, sin embargo esta situación se espera que cambie en el corto y mediano plazo basado en casos como el de Costa Rica que después de más de cincuenta años de relaciones con la isla, el 6 de junio de 2007 rompió relaciones con Taiwán y reconoció a China. Se espera que otros países de Centroamérica y Sudamérica sigan los pasos de Costa Rica, en el inter tanto Beijing como Taipéi harán sus esfuerzos diplomáticos para lograr que se queden con el segundo o que reconozcan al primero.

2. Una larga tradición histórica de acercamiento y cooperación: desde los primeros chinos en América hasta la apertura económica de China

Las relaciones entre ambas regiones se pueden remontar a la ruta de la seda, época de dominio colonial de España y Portugal en América Latina, que coincidió con el régimen de dinastía Ming (1368-1644)¹¹. A través de la Nao de China o el Galeón de Manila, decenas de productos y materias primas cruzaron los océanos Atlántico y Pacífico haciendo escalas en América y Asia. La ruta partía de Sevilla en España hacia La Habana, de ahí al puerto de Veracruz en México hasta alcanzar el extremo occidente en el puerto de Acapulco. Desde aquí se aprovechaban las corrientes marítimas y los vientos para llegar al puerto de Manila, que durante muchos años, siglos, sirvió como punto de encuentro de comerciantes del Este, Sur y Sudeste de Asia. Es relevante comentar que existen hipótesis como las presentadas por el inglés Gavin Menzies¹², donde al parecer la relación entre China y América sería mucho más antigua, esta se remontaría a la época en que el almirante chino de la dinastía Ming, Zheng He, llegó a América mucho antes que Cristobal Colón. Este almirante eunuco y practicante del islam condujo la flota más grande que había surcado los mares, la cual por sus dimensiones y hazañas pudo potencialmente haber llegado a las costas de lo que hoy es América Latina.

En todo caso, lo que es un hecho es que los primeros vínculos oficiales se empezaron a establecer entre el 1870 y principios del 1900, entre las naciones recién independizadas y la última dinastía China, la Qing (1644-1911). Parte de esta historia tiene que ver con un fenómeno que es sumamente importante a más de cien años de distancia: la migración de

¹⁰ Aquí la lista de países y las fechas de reconocimiento de Taiwán: Belice (1989), El Salvador (1961), Guatemala (1960), Haití (1956), Honduras (1965), Nicaragua (1990), Panamá (1954), Paraguay (1957), República Dominicana (1957), San Cristóbal y Nieves (1983), Santa Lucía (1984-1997, 2007) y San Vicente y las Granadinas (1981).

¹¹ Recordar que esta dinastía fue la última gobernada por la etnia Han, aunque fue la penúltima dinastía de la China imperial.

¹² El libro de este comandante de la naval británica, “1421: The year China Discovered America”, ha sido duramente criticado por el mundo académico, en parte porque no ha presentado evidencia sólida, en parte porque no habla el idioma chino por lo que, al parecer, ni siquiera se basó en fuentes chinas.



trabajadores chinos a diversos países de América Latina, mejor conocidos como los *coolíes* (o *kulies*).¹³

A partir de las independencias de los países de América Latina, la esclavitud se empezó a abolir. Así mismo, en la segunda mitad del siglo XIX en Estados Unidos se había abolido esta infame institución, no sin antes haber pasado por una terrible guerra civil. Ante la imposibilidad, por lo menos legal, de seguir importando mano de obra esclava de África, se tuvo que pensar en otras opciones dada la necesidad en el hemisferio de construcción de infraestructura (sobre todo portuaria y de vías férreas), de explotación de minas, de cultivos intensos en mano de obra como en los cañaverales, entre otros. Ante la reducción obligada de importación de más esclavos negros, surgió una nueva industria, la importación de mano de obra de chinos bajo supuestos contratos entre el gobierno chino y compañías privadas o gobiernos nacionales. En todo caso, en la realidad eran tratados como esclavos, llevados a lugares remotos, con nula comunicación, en condiciones de insalubridad y sin acceso a clínicas y hospitales, mucho menos recibían remuneraciones adecuadas. Además, la mayoría de las veces sin el consentimiento de estos trabajadores, se les alcoholizaba o drogaba para amanecer en medio del mar hacia lugares que ni se imaginaban que existían.

Cientos de estos trabajadores murieron, ya fuese por el clima, por enfermedad o de plano por suicidios masivos ante los miserables tratos de los empleadores. En la mayoría de los países y sociedades a los que llegaban eran vistos como trabajadores inferiores a los negros. A partir de 1882, se promulgó Ley de Exclusión de Chinos en Estados Unidos, sin embargo los chinos fueron usados para construir el ferrocarril que unió por primera vez la costa Este con California, así como para explotar las minas de California durante la fiebre del oro y construir el tren transpacífico en Canadá.

Aquellos que lograron sobrevivir y soportar los malos tratos, al acabar sus contratos fundaban pequeños negocios de comercio al menudeo (zapaterías, restaurantes, hoteles, panaderías, jugueterías, etc.), especialmente tienditas de abarrotes y comida al menudeo. Con el tiempo las minorías chinas dominaron el mercado del menudeo casi por completo, rivalizando con las tiendas monopólicas de los terratenientes (en el caso de México fueron llamadas tiendas de raya). Las razones de su éxito son varias, sin embargo se destaca su cultura de trabajo y la filosofía confuciana que subraya la importancia del ahorro, la inversión, pero sobre todo la frugalidad y el trabajo duro. Así mismo, la idea de que el capital debe de estar al servicio de la comunidad en su totalidad y no para amasar fortunas.

Las tiendas y comercios abiertos por los emprendedores chinos se caracterizaron por otorgar créditos amigables, por dar servicio a domicilio, por abrir sus tiendas más temprano y cerrarlas más tarde. Por dar precios mucho más bajos y tener una mayor variedad de productos. Era común el “yapa” o el regalar mercancía a manera de agradecimiento por la preferencia de sus clientes, sus tiendas estaban en casi cada esquina. Sobre todo cuidaron mucho el evitar incurrir en tener prácticas monopólicas. Todos cooperaban entre sí dentro y fuera de los negocios y formaban redes de distribución a través de extensos territorios, así mismo desarrollaban estudios de mercado. Estos factores de su éxito obligaron a los locales a renovarse, progresar, invertir y volverse más competitivos.

¹³ El término *coolíe* no sólo describe a los chinos que fueron llevados a varios destinos en el mundo como trabajadores a destajo bajo supuestos contratos. Este término, de origen incierto, también aplicó a los trabajadores indios de distintos orígenes y procedencias en el subcontinente, así como otras etnias del Sur y Sudeste asiático.



Según variaban las oportunidades y las actitudes de los locales hacia ellos, los chinos se movían dentro de la región en busca de mejores oportunidades o la posibilidad de pasar ilegalmente a Estados Unidos. Donde se establecieran, los chinos siempre se mezclaban con las culturas locales y creaban una nueva. En ese nuevo hogar se daba un gran intercambio cultural, desde el gastronómico hasta el literario, las artes marciales, la medicina, la lengua, entre otros.

Los inmigrantes que llegaron por primera vez no sabían hablar la lengua del país pero invirtieron casi todo su dinero para que sus hijos tuvieran educación profesional y que aprendieran la lengua desde pequeños. Para muchos, América Latina era la posibilidad de estar cerca de cruzar a Estados Unidos, el destino final al que se cruzarían ilegalmente, sin embargo muchos cambiaron de opinión cuando se integraron a la sociedad y la mayoría prefirió quedarse en América Latina.

Tristemente, por diversas razones, las comunidades chinas fueron permanente objeto de violencia, sino fobia, intolerancia, envidia y frustración por su éxito. Se acentuaron los casos en épocas recesivas como durante la Gran Depresión, o en revoluciones sociales como la de México donde inclusive se dieron matanzas, violaciones y persecuciones de las comunidades chinas en la costa Oeste y en el Norte del país.¹⁴

Después de décadas de establecerse en los diversos países de Latinoamérica, se fueron integrando a la sociedad y se fue reforzando su sentimiento de identidad del país en el que habían vivido y dónde posiblemente morirían. Muchos de ellos participaron y dieron su vida en las guerras de independencia, de especial mención es el caso de los chinos en Cuba. Otros lo harían defendiendo la soberanía de su país contra otras naciones, como fue el caso de los chinos en Chile durante las distintas guerras que se libraron.

La aportación de estas comunidades chinas no sólo se vio reflejada en el involucramiento personal o familiar en las guerras que libró su país, también en la creación de asociaciones de ayuda a la gente de escasos recursos del país. Donaciones de escuelas e instituciones sociales, donaciones monetarias a damnificados y pobres, así como al gobierno para realizar las fiestas patrias locales.

Revisando casos particulares, en el caso de México los comerciantes chinos, inteligentemente, iban siguiendo la inversión estadounidense que llegaba al país con el fin de proveer bienes y servicios a los trabajadores empleados en sus fábricas. Se establecían como vendedores ambulantes para cubrir todo tipo de necesidades de los trabajadores mexicanos que laboraban en las fábricas norteamericanas, mayormente en la frontera de Sonora con Arizona. Curiosamente, eran los estadounidenses quienes presionaban al gobierno mexicano para que protegiera a los chinos, ya que no tenían representación legal o como cámara. Por su parte en Panamá, era normal que los chinos mandaran dinero a su casa en China para mantener a sus hijos y esposa. Los que traían a su familia con ellos eran considerados los chinos ricos.

Los lugares en donde se concentró la mayor cantidad de comunidades de chinos fue en: Cuba, Jamaica, México (Sonora y Sinaloa), Chile (Antofagasta e Iquique), Perú (Lima), Panamá y Brasil (Sao Paolo). A diferencia de la creencia común, en todos estos lugares los

¹⁴ Más triste es aun que en México no se haya hecho conciencia de esto, ni en los libros de texto o de historia, ni en documentos históricos de difusión masiva se hace mención a este lamentable hecho. Quizás sea un buen momento en la conmemoración de los cien años del inicio de la Revolución mexicana para asegurarse que este episodio se conozca y ayude a fortalecer las relaciones con este país.



chinos siempre se mezclaron con las culturas locales y creaban una nueva. Después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, en casi todos estos países, empezaron a surgir empresarios chinos ya establecidos como nacionales de los países donde habían emigrado sus ancestros, en los cuales invirtieron en fábricas e industrias. Hoy día se han convertido, de facto, en los puentes entre sus países y la República Popular China¹⁵, sin embargo al día de hoy poco crédito y espacio político se les han dado a estas comunidades en los países del hemisferio donde se encuentran.

Al momento de fundarse la República Popular de China el 1º de octubre de 1949, muy pocos países decidieron reconocer su gobierno. En parte por la hegemonía de Estados Unidos al término de la Segunda Guerra Mundial y su lucha para frenar el comunismo, en parte porque se temía que el gobierno liderado por un partido de campesinos no llegaría a durar mucho en el poder. En todo caso, ningún país de América Latina reconoció al nuevo gobierno, todos se adhirieron a mostrar su apoyo al gobierno de Taipéi, encabezado por el general Chiang Kaishek. Sin embargo, con el paso del tiempo, sobre todo tras la política de acercamiento de la administración de Nixon a China tras la visita de éste a Beijing en 1972, los países de la región empezaron a reconocer al régimen de Mao Zedong.

El primer país en reconocer a la llamada China comunista fue Cuba en 1960, posteriormente una década después en 1970 el gobierno de Allende reconoció a China. En esa década la mayoría de los países del hemisferio trasladaron sus embajadas de Taipéi a Beijing. China continental empezó a cobrar más importancia para la región, sin embargo el intercambio comercial representaba números muy pequeños. La relación bilateral en esta época pasaba más por cuestiones ideológicas, por las prioridades y visiones del Partido Comunista chino, más que por la cancillería o la presidencia. Los temas de la agenda eran políticos e ideológicos, pasaban por la lucha contra el imperialismo, la consolidación de un frente socialista unificado y por la imposibilidad de evitar la guerra contra el imperialismo. Es decir, las relaciones se dieron en el marco de la guerra fría donde China, bajo el gobierno de Mao Zedong, se había quedado aislada después de que en 1961 la URSS le retirara el apoyo económico y técnico. Beijing se quedó atrapado entre dos grandes imperios, el soviético y el estadounidense.

China pasó por una serie de experimentos económicos y sociales, muchos de los cuales terminaron en tremendos fracasos como el Gran Salto Adelante y la Gran Revolución Cultural, sin embargo estos temas fueron los que prevalecían en las agendas bilaterales. En estos momentos se crearon en América Latina una gran cantidad de grupos de amistad con China, de intercambios culturales y académicos, así como de reconocimiento y apoyo a partidos políticos afines al régimen maoísta.

Todo este escenario cambiaría radicalmente a la muerte de Mao y con la llegada de la nueva camada de líderes comunistas encabezada por Deng Xiaoping, denominado como el padre de las reformas de apertura en China y del milagro económico que representan. Por supuesto, la política exterior se modificó radicalmente, pasando de incentivar la agenda política e ideológica a fortalecer el intercambio comercial y la atracción de inversión extranjera directa. América Latina en el inicio de la apertura de China no jugó un papel muy importante, pero conforme China empezó a crecer y ser importadora neta de combustibles, recursos energéticos, alimentos, productos básicos, entre otros, regiones como África y Latinoamérica se convirtieron en zonas estratégicas para el siglo XXI.

¹⁵ Cabe mencionar que también se han convertido en puente con los chinos de Taiwán, así como con las comunidades chinas de ultramar en el Sur y Sudeste de Asia.



3. La política exterior de China hacia América Latina: ¿Hacia una cooperación Sur-Sur?

La política exterior de China hacia América Latina se ha transformado sin duda alguna después de la implementación de las reformas económicas bajo el liderazgo de Deng Xiaoping. La lógica detrás de la misma y sus objetivos cambiaron al enfocarse en el desarrollo económico nacional. De esta manera, la estrategia China hacia los países latinoamericanos desde entonces se enfoca en promover el desarrollo económico de ambas regiones, especialmente con aquellos países en los cuales China puede encontrar lo que necesita para su propio crecimiento económico, que es, a final de cuentas, uno de los factores más determinantes en la dirección y motivación de su política exterior.

América Latina no es la única región del “Tercer Mundo” en la que China se ha involucrado económica y políticamente desde las reformas económicas, incluso se podría argumentar que es la región de este bloque con la que menos ha tenido intercambios comerciales e inversiones al compararla con el Sudeste Asiático y el Medio Oriente. Sin embargo, lo que se puede inferir de la “nueva” estrategia exterior china hacia estas regiones, es que su motivación deriva de su propia necesidad de desarrollarse económicamente a grandes pasos con el fin de seguir construyendo y disfrutando de las oportunidades que el desarrollo representa para la sociedad china, para la legitimidad del Partido Comunista y para el país en el escenario internacional.

Si partimos de esta premisa, el razonamiento detrás de estas actividades se hace evidente. “Actualmente, China está involucrándose con estas regiones por razones altamente pragmáticas- primordialmente para encontrarle mercados a sus productos y para satisfacer la creciente demanda de energéticos y recursos naturales, destinados a saciar sus industrias y promover su crecimiento económico.”¹⁶ Por otra parte, la ideología cesa de ser importante en un contexto que prioriza el intercambio comercial, y por lo tanto deja de tener un papel determinante en las relaciones internacionales. “La política exterior china es aplicada de acuerdo a las consideraciones pragmáticas derivadas del desarrollo económico, y de esta forma, sin prestar importancia alguna al sistema político o ideología de la nación en cuestión.”¹⁷

Esto es factible en gran medida gracias al pronunciamiento de Deng Xiaoping en 1989 en el que implementaba una “Guía de 24 Caracteres”¹⁸ que debía practicarse en las relaciones exteriores del país. Ésta, no obstante, no modificaba los “5 Principios de Coexistencia Pacífica” enunciados por el primer ministro Zhou Enlai en 1953¹⁹, sino que los reforzaba y complementaba al describir la manera en cómo China debe conducir su política exterior para alcanzar sus objetivos. Así, los “5 Principios de Coexistencia Pacífica” de Zhou Enlai, sin su

¹⁶ Eisenman, J.; Heginbotham, E; & Mitchell, D. (2007): *China and the Developing World, Beijing's Strategy for the Twenty-First Century*, New York, M. E. Sharpe, pp. 13-23.

¹⁷ Mitchell, D. & McGiffert, C.: “Expanding the ‘Strategic Periphery’, a History of China’s Interaction with the Developing World”, in Eisenman, Heginbotham & Mitchell, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-25.

¹⁸ La “Guía de 24 caracteres” se basa en 6 recomendaciones centrales: observar los eventos mundiales con calma, mantenerse firme, confrontar las dificultades con confianza, mantener un perfil bajo, nunca asumir el liderazgo y tomar acción (Shixue 2008).

¹⁹ Los 5 Principios: respeto mutuo de la integridad territorial y soberanía, no agresión, no interferencia en los asuntos internos, igualdad y beneficio mutuo, y coexistencia pacífica (Mitchell & McGiffert 2007).



inclinación ideológica, y la “Guía de 24 Caracteres” de Deng Xiaoping se convierten en los principios rectores de la política exterior china, continuando vigentes en el siglo XXI.²⁰

Al final de la década de los setenta, el gobierno chino se encuentra en la necesidad de complementar la política interna con su política exterior y, consecuentemente, con sus estrategias de relaciones internacionales. Lo anterior, dado que debido a la implementación de las reformas económicas, Beijing cayó en cuenta de la necesidad de cambiar la imagen revisionista, ideológica y revolucionaria que China había ostentado hasta entonces. La campaña de política exterior enfocó sus esfuerzos con el fin de reforzar su política de liberalización económica, es decir, de atraer inversión extranjera y motivar el intercambio económico.

Siguiendo esta línea y reforzando la campaña en pos de los intereses nacionales, “en 1982, Deng Xiaoping establece el compromiso chino hacia una “política exterior independiente de paz”, con la que buscaba asegurar a la comunidad internacional de la nueva orientación pragmática y no alineada de Beijing, la cual continúa siendo el slogan de la política internacional de la República Popular China”.²¹ Durante gran parte de la década de los ochenta, Beijing enfocaría todos sus esfuerzos para cambiar la imagen de China y asegurarle a la comunidad internacional que el cambio era verdadero y que ahora se apegaba al sistema internacional vigente. De este modo, China se unió al Banco Mundial y al Fondo Monetario Internacional, asimismo con la idea de poder ser prestatario de estos organismos, cuestión que se cumplió ya que China empezó a ser uno de los mayores receptores de apoyos económicos del Banco Mundial.

Además de esta campaña de imagen internacional, la economía china ya empezaba a despuntar aceleradamente en los ochenta, por lo que mantener relaciones saludables con las potencias extranjeras, especialmente con Estados Unidos, se convirtió en uno de los intereses primordiales de la política exterior china. Esto, debido a que el crecimiento económico chino necesitaba de mercados donde vender sus productos así como de transferencia de tecnología, y por el momento, sólo podía encontrar y satisfacer ambos objetivos recurriendo al mundo desarrollado. Sin embargo, Beijing mantuvo una política de normalización de las relaciones bilaterales con otros países, lo cual le permitió acercarse a la comunidad internacional.

La política exterior china de tintes pragmáticos y económicos continúa y se fortalece en la década de los noventa. Gracias a los esfuerzos realizados en las décadas anteriores, la economía china sigue creciendo y las relaciones políticas con el resto del mundo se normalizan. Es entonces que el gobierno chino refuerza su postura en el escenario internacional y enfoca su atención a otra situación de mucha importancia para Beijing: Taiwán. En esta década, China incrementa la presión entre los países que aún reconocen diplomáticamente a Taiwán, entre ellos la mayoría en la región de Centroamérica y el Caribe.

Otra de las características de la política exterior china al término del siglo XX, es el apoyo hacia un sistema internacional multipolar, con el cual busca afianzar su postura en los foros multilaterales. Este cambio en el discurso chino es un intento del gobierno por proteger sus intereses a nivel internacional y mejorar su imagen y credibilidad frente a los países en desarrollo. China, debido a su mismo crecimiento económico y nivel de intercambio comercial con el resto del mundo, se siente vulnerable en un sistema internacional en el que no tiene poder decisivo, por lo que optar y proponer uno multipolar le conviene de

²⁰ Para un análisis más detallado de la evolución de la política exterior china: Mitchell, & McGiffert, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-25.

²¹ Ver *Ibid.*, p. 28.



sobremanera para velar por sus intereses ahora tan unidos al destino de la comunidad internacional.

Asimismo, al buscar consolidar sus relaciones con países estratégicos en las regiones en desarrollo y mejorar su postura frente a los mismos, el pronunciarse a favor de un sistema multipolar lo aleja de sospechas de objetivos imperialistas y lo acerca políticamente a estas regiones. “A pesar de que los líderes chinos mantienen algunas sospechas en cuanto a las organizaciones regionales e internacionales que actúan principalmente a instancias de Estados Unidos, han llegado a creer que trabajando mediante estas instituciones va a mejorar la influencia China y su imagen entre países en desarrollo más que la diplomacia bilateral tradicional”²².

A principios del nuevo siglo, China se erige como un poder mundial en potencia. El mundo es testigo de una adaptación más de la política exterior china a las necesidades económicas nacionales. En esta ocasión, sería la campaña puesta en marcha en 2000 por el presidente chino Jiang Zemin, en la que hacía un llamado a las empresas chinas a invertir en el extranjero, especialmente en países en desarrollo ricos en materias primas, política que se le conoce como “going out” o “going global”²³. Ésta se sigue explicando con los objetivos pragmáticos y económicos de la política exterior china, lo cual sugiere una continuidad en la misma, pero con una extensión en su alcance territorial y estrategias.

Además, esta campaña es complementaria a la entrada de China a la Organización Mundial del Comercio (OMC) y al subsecuente incremento en el sector industrial y de exportación que ha convertido a China en la fábrica del mundo y ha disparado su necesidad de materias primas. “China se ha convertido en el mayor consumidor de cobre, estaño, zinc, platino, acero, y mineral ferroso; el segundo consumidor de aluminio y plomo; el tercer consumidor de níquel”²⁴. Asimismo, China es el principal consumidor de cemento, carbón y desde 2004, sobrepasó a Japón para convertirse en el segundo mayor consumidor de petróleo en el mundo, importando más del 40% de su petróleo del extranjero²⁵. Sin dejar de lado que también es el mayor consumidor de granos y carne, excediendo la demanda de Estados Unidos por estos productos desde 2004 cuando China consumió 382 millones de toneladas de granos y 64 millones de toneladas de carne²⁶. La necesidad de conseguir materias primas del extranjero es una realidad innegable para China.

Así, en la primera década del siglo XXI, se ha hecho evidente el acercamiento y la influencia china en las regiones en desarrollo. Más aún, China sigue identificándose con el mundo en desarrollo, a pesar de sus niveles de crecimiento y poder comercial, lo cual le ayuda en sus objetivos. “La identificación de la RPC con el mundo en desarrollo no es sólo retórica sino que refleja una coincidencia de intereses materiales en aumento. De hecho, China necesita del mundo en desarrollo en un sentido bastante elemental: necesita de sus recursos naturales y, para pagarlos sin incurrir en un déficit en su cuenta corriente, necesita de sus mercados”²⁷. De esta forma, el acercamiento a las regiones en desarrollo se ha convertido en

²² Gurtov, M.: “Changing Perspectives and Policies”, en Dittmer, L. & Yu, G.T. (eds) (2010): *China, the Developing World, and the New Global Dynamic*, Colorado, Lynne Rienner Publishers, pp. 13-28.

²³ Dittmer, L.: “China’s Rise, Global Identity, and the Developing World”, in Dittmer, L. & Yu, G.T., *op. cit.*, pp. 203-230.

²⁴ Teng, C.: “Hegemony or Partnership, China’s Strategy and Diplomacy Toward Latin America”, in Eisenman, Heginbotham & Mitchell *op. cit.*, pp. 84-112.

²⁵ Ver Eisenman, Heginbotham & Mitchell, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

²⁶ Ver Teng, *op. cit.* p.139.

²⁷ Ver Dittmer, *op. cit.*, p. 229.



una estrategia fundamental de la política exterior china y de la política nacional para el crecimiento económico.

Tabla 1. Comercio entre China y las regiones en desarrollo, 2005.²⁸

Región	Exportaciones		Importaciones	
	\$Miles de millones	Porcentaje	\$Miles de millones	Porcentaje
Comercio de China con las regiones en desarrollo				
África	16.3	2.1	20.0	3.0
Asia	249.7	32.7	250.7	37.9
Hong Kong	124.5	16.3	12.2	1.8
Rep. ex Soviéticas	37.2	4.9	23.7	3.6
Medio Oriente	24.5	3.2	32.3	4.9
América Latina	22.8	3.0	26.4	4.0
Comercio de las regiones en desarrollo con China				
África	17.0	7.0	17.5	7.6
Asia	293.7	12.7	271.7	12.5
Hong Kong	130.3	45.0	135.1	45.0
Rep. ex Soviéticas	20.0	2.6	39.8	5.3
Medio Oriente	28.6	5.4	26.6	6.9
América Latina	19.7	3.4	37.1	6.7

Fuente: FMI, Dirección de Estadísticas de Comercio Anuario, 2006.

La política exterior china en América Latina sigue esta línea. Por tal motivo, la década de los noventa es imprescindible para las relaciones de China con la región, puesto que es cuando la cooperación entre ellos se formaliza e intensifica, como consecuencia inevitable de la

²⁸ Ver Stallings, B.: "The U.S.-China-Latin America Triangle: Implications for the Future", in Roett, R. & Paz, G. (eds.) (2008): *China's Expansion into the Western Hemisphere, Implications for Latin America and the United States*, Washington, D.C., The Brookings Institution.



activación del comercio²⁹. América Latina se erige como una región en la cual China puede satisfacer sus necesidades energéticas así como de mercados disponibles para sus productos, de tal forma que el interés principal de la política exterior china hacia la región está esencialmente relacionado al comercio. “América Latina exporta una cantidad de productos que son cruciales para la continuación del éxito del sector industrial chino...las exportaciones latinoamericanas más altas a China son metales (cobre, mineral ferroso y chatarra de metal), alimentos (soja, azúcar y trigo), y materiales industriales (algodón, lana y piel)”³⁰.

De este modo, en 2008 se pudo observar un aumento en el comercio sino-latinoamericano en general, dado que como región el total de las exportaciones hacia China incrementaron de 1% en 2000 a 6% en 2008³¹. Mientras que, si se observa el intercambio con países en específico, también se puede concluir que éste creció de manera generalizada. Por ejemplo, si se toma a Brasil, Chile y Argentina, que son los principales socios comerciales de China en América del Sur, se puede encontrar que el intercambio comercial con China ha aumentado significativamente en un lapso de 3 años. De esta forma, se tiene que en 2005 las exportaciones hacia China de Brasil, Chile y Argentina fueron de 6.8, 8.1 y 6.5 puntos porcentuales respectivamente, aumentando casi al doble con 12.5, 15.5 y 12.1 respectivamente en 2008. Las importaciones, por otra parte, también experimentaron un aumento porcentual muy importante, pues para los mismos países en 2005 éstas eran de 8.3, 11.3 y 8.8 puntos porcentuales, y para 2008 alcanzaron 11.5, 11.9 y 11.7 respectivamente³².

Aunado al comercio, la estrategia China en América Latina ha incluido la construcción de alianzas estratégicas con sus socios comerciales más importantes, así como la participación del gobierno chino en foros multilaterales latinoamericanos. La consolidación de las relaciones bilaterales y regionales, depende en gran medida de la perspectiva latinoamericana de las intenciones chinas en la región, pues, entre los países de América Latina existe una renuencia generalizada a depender de una potencia extranjera debido a su particular historia. China, consciente de esta perspectiva, ha aprovechado cada oportunidad para asegurarles a sus socios latinoamericanos que comparte sus expectativas de un sistema internacional multipolar debido a “sus experiencias similares en la lucha por la liberación nacional, la defensa de la independencia y la construcción de la nación”³³. Más aún, en discurso al Congreso brasileño, el presidente Hu Jintao, complementó esta noción proponiendo tres objetivos con América Latina: el apoyo mutuo en el campo político, el fortalecimiento de la complementariedad económica y el mantenimiento de contactos culturales³⁴.

Con el mismo objetivo China, al participar en los foros multilaterales regionales, pretende aminorar la evidente asimetría de poder económico que existe con sus socios latinoamericanos, y así ganar credibilidad y confianza entre sus pares para continuar con su estrategia. “China ha tenido el estatus de país observador en la Organización de los Estados Americanos y en la Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración, y en enero³⁵ se convirtió en

²⁹ Devlin, R.: “China's Economic Rise”, in Roett & Paz, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-147.

³⁰ Stallings, *op. cit.*, pp. 239-259.

³¹ Phillips, N. (2010): “China and Latin America: Development Challenges and Geopolitical Dilemmas”, in Dittmer & Yu *op. cit.*, pp. 177-197.

³² Ver *Ibid.*, p. 199.

³³ Jiang, S.X. (2006): “Una Mirada China a las Relaciones con América Latina”, *Nueva Sociedad*, vol. 203, no. Mayo/Junio (2006), en <http://www.nuso.org/revista.php?n=203>.

³⁴ Ver *Ibid.*, p. 10.

³⁵ China se convirtió en el 48º miembro del BID, siendo el segundo socio comercial de la región (en 1995 era el 12º socio comercial), su incorporación al banco se veía como algo esperado, y hasta cierto punto deseado por los fondos que puede aportar como donante. El ingreso de China fue aprobado el 15 de octubre de 2008. Los 26 países prestatarios de América Latina y el Caribe poseen 50,02% de las acciones del BID. Estados Unidos



miembro del Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo y del Banco de Desarrollo del Caribe...la aproximación multilateral china a los foros regionales reduce la otrora asimetría entre los dos lados que intimida a la hora de las negociaciones, mientras utiliza la psicología de grupos para promover la cooperación política-económica”³⁶.

La desventaja de negociar con América Latina para China es que pone en tensión su relación con los Estados Unidos. China ha hecho prioridad de su política exterior evitar a toda costa tensiones que puedan dañar las relaciones bilaterales con su socio más importante. Sin embargo, la búsqueda de energéticos y de mercados le ha puesto en una posición en la cual debe llevar a cabo su estrategia en esta región, para continuar con la tasa de crecimiento económica deseada, mientras que expone inevitablemente su relación con Estados Unidos. Esta situación no sólo ocurre en América Latina, también han arreciado las críticas internacionales debido a su concentración de inversiones y comercio en África, especialmente en países como Sudán, que según la comunidad internacional viola los derechos humanos. Pero en el caso particular de América Latina, la proximidad geográfica con Estados Unidos le imprime una característica especial a sus relaciones con esta región. Por lo tanto, para evitar tensiones y confusiones, Beijing ha enunciado en cada oportunidad sus intenciones meramente comerciales con América Latina, alejándose completamente de acusaciones geopolíticas o de expansión ideológica en la región. “En su discurso en 2005 en los Estados Unidos, Zheng Bijian reiteró que China no representa ninguna amenaza a otros países o personas, y que no remplazaría o desplazaría a los Estados Unidos. Asimismo, antes de la visita de Hu Jintao a los Estados Unidos en 2006, Zheng sugirió que China no exportaría su modelo de desarrollo a América Latina”³⁷.

Lo anterior, se ha visto reforzado por la política de “Ascensión Pacífica” expuesta por el presidente Hu Jintao en 2003, como uno más de los intentos del gobierno chino por asegurarle a las potencias, específicamente a Estados Unidos, que sus objetivos en el sistema internacional no son revisionistas. “En lo político, “ascensión pacífica” implica que “China debe buscar un ambiente global pacífico para desarrollar su economía, incluso si trata de salvaguardar la paz mundial por medio del desarrollo” y nunca desafiará o remplazará a los poderes hegemónicos, ni buscará la confrontación política”³⁸.

Por otra parte, la política exterior china hacia América Latina se ve complementada por la búsqueda del reconocimiento como la única representante de la nación china, queriendo desplazar definitivamente los intentos de autodeterminación de Taiwán. En este rubro, América Latina y el Caribe figuran al inicio de la lista al contar con la mitad de las naciones que todavía reconocen diplomáticamente a la isla.

Por varios años, Taiwán ha utilizado la diplomacia del dólar para “comprar” estos votos, ya sea por medio de ayuda económica o inversiones en los países latinoamericanos y caribeños, consiguiendo mantener su apoyo hasta hoy en día. Sin embargo, China después de las reformas económicas, con el crecimiento económico y ahorro nacional a su favor, ha enfocado sus esfuerzos para ganar terreno en la región, convirtiéndose éste en uno de los principales objetivos de la política exterior china en América Latina y el Caribe. Por

controla un poco más de 30 por ciento de las acciones. China adquirió 184 acciones (0,004 por ciento del capital ordinario del BID) disponibles después de la disolución de Yugoslavia. China es el tercer país de Asia oriental que se integra al BID. Japón y Corea se sumaron en 1976 y 2005, respectivamente.

³⁶ Ver Dittmer, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

³⁷ Ver Teng, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

³⁸ Texto en comillas dentro de la cita es de: Lam, W. (2006): *Chinese Politics in the Hu Jintao Era.*, New York, M. E. Sharpe, p. 166.



paradójico que parezca, Beijing y Taipéi mantienen una lucha en el Caribe por obtener el reconocimiento de estos países, a pesar de que su importancia comercial es ínfima. Sin embargo estos países han recibido una derrama importante de fondos, en donde la situación precaria en la que viven sus sociedades hace de esta lucha china una ventaja económica, indispensable para sobrevivir. Por lo tanto, difícilmente se puede divisar un fin próximo a esta situación.

La estrategia china en América Latina tiene varias dimensiones y diferentes temas, cada uno de los cuales tiene una gran importancia para la consecución de sus intereses nacionales en el extranjero, específicamente mantener la tasa de crecimiento económico. Si bien se puede hablar de una política exterior china hacia América Latina en general, es imprescindible estudiar los países y sus casos particulares en su relación con China, pues debido a particularidades ideológicas, de gobierno, recursos naturales y legales, cada uno presenta un contexto e intereses diferentes para China.

4. La agenda de las relaciones de China con América Latina en el siglo XXI: ¿Cómo se pueden ganar?

Según el Banco Mundial, la interacción económica de algunos países de América Latina con China ha sido uno de los factores para una recuperación más vigorosa luego de la crisis económica. América Latina emerge de la crisis con una nueva robustez económica que se explica también por el hecho de que se tiene un mejor escenario macroeconómico, una integración a los mercados financieros con menos riesgos y una mayor inversión extranjera directa. Países como Chile, Perú, Colombia, Brasil, Argentina y Uruguay cuyas economías cada vez están más relacionadas con la región asiática y en particular con China, tienen mejores perspectivas de crecimiento.

El caso de Chile es emblemático ya que a partir de la entrada en vigor de su tratado de libre comercio con China, ahora le exporta más a este país que a Estados Unidos y Europa. China interactúa con los países de América Latina no sólo a través de las importaciones y exportaciones, sino por el enorme efecto que ese país tiene sobre el precio de los productos básicos (*commodities*). Estos productos básicos para la región representan el 97% de la actividad económica latinoamericana y 93% de la población latinoamericana vive en estos países que se benefician de los precios altos de los *commodities*. México, a *contra sensu* de casi toda la región, fue uno de los países más golpeados por la crisis, entre otras cosas porque sigue dependiendo en gran medida del mercado estadounidense y de las manufacturas medias y esta débilmente conectado a los mercados de Asia, principalmente China.

Por otro lado se está presentando un fenómeno muy interesante y de doble filo. La mayoría de los países de América Latina guardan superávit comercial con China provocado en parte por el escalamiento generalizado del aumento de los precios de los *commodities*, así como por el crecimiento sin precedente de la demanda china por productos básicos y energéticos. Este fenómeno ha dividido las posiciones sobre la relación con China dentro de las sociedades de los países de América Latina. Para la mayoría de los funcionarios que ostentan el poder en estos momentos es ventajoso porque está atrayendo inversión directa de China, porque la balanza comercial es superavitaria y porque esto se está traduciendo en empleos y en capital para apoyar programas, por ejemplo sociales, pero también de infraestructura. Sin embargo para otros sectores este beneficio no es tan claro, o mejor dicho no está habiendo beneficio.



Para algunos empresarios esta realidad se inclina más hacia lo negativo por diversos factores. Por un lado, debido a que están perdiendo presencia en su mercado dado la competitividad china, por otro lado, porque no es fácil negociar con los empresarios chinos y hay muchas historias de casos de corrupción y de engaños, de problemas de calidad, entre muchos otros problemas que han enfrentado algunos empresarios latinoamericanos. Es decir, en esta relación creciente con China se ven claramente los que están ganando y los que están perdiendo en el aspecto más micro de la relación.

Por ejemplo, para José Augusto de Castro, vicepresidente de la Asociación de Comercio Exterior de Brasil (AEB), el intercambio con China es "un retroceso" para este país. Cuando se trata de materias primas "el importador decide, controla cantidad y precios", por lo que se genera un "mercado inestable", al contrario de lo que sucede con los bienes manufacturados. Además, los productos básicos generan trabajos de pésima calidad, mientras los manufacturados utilizan mano de obra calificada y de mejor nivel salarial, tienen un efecto multiplicador en el empleo al alargar la cadena productiva, y expanden el mercado interno.³⁹

En un espectro de visión más amplia, el temor de los expertos es que si los países de América Latina, fuertes hoy día en la extracción, producción y venta de materias primas y energéticos como los son Chile, Perú, Venezuela, Argentina, entre otros, no invierten en el corto plazo en educación, en ciencia y tecnología con el fin de innovar y desarrollar tecnología propia y pasar a una economía de clúster industriales basados en tecnología e investigación avanzada, esta década será de ganancias nimias dado que en el siglo de las economías del conocimiento apostarle sólo a los sectores primarios como motor de desarrollo económico y comercio exterior es algo más que un suicidio, más aun si vemos como otros países, sobre todo del Sur y Sudeste de Asia, como Malasia, Tailandia, e Indonesia y ahora India, están creando valor y están más cerca y más conectados con las potencias comerciales, económicas y financieras del Este de Asia: China, Japón, Corea del Sur, Taiwán y Hong Kong, es decir con la región que más ha crecido en términos económicos los pasados veinticinco años y la que más va a crecer las décadas siguientes.

Si los países como Chile, Paraguay, Argentina, Perú o Venezuela sólo van a depender de la exportación de estos productos estarán a merced de los cambios abruptos que pueda haber en los precios internacionales, hoy dominados por China, pero sobre todo estarán desarmados para tener poder de negociación en un futuro cercano para negociar con China, u otros países, en un ámbito de reciprocidad. Por ejemplo, ya hubo un atisbo de estos posibles escenarios cuando China decidió suspender las importaciones del aceite de soja argentino, por un valor de alrededor de 200 millones de dólares anuales. Por otro lado, como se ha mencionado en líneas anteriores, los países del Cono Sur latinoamericano no son los únicos productores mundiales de bienes primarios, ni los más cercanos al mercado de China. Basta recordar el reciente acuerdo de libre comercio entre China y los 10 países de la Asociación de Naciones del Sudeste Asiático (ANSEA), que entró en vigor el 1 de enero de 2010, el cual potencialmente perjudicará a las exportaciones latinoamericanas dado que países como Camboya, Vietnam, Filipinas, Malasia e Indonesia pueden exportar frutas, vegetales, hierro y casi todos los productos manufacturados a China sin pagar impuestos aduaneros, lo que representa una fuerte competencia para vender sus productos a China. Por si fuera poco, las monedas fuertes latinoamericanas dificultarán aun más que los países de la región puedan competir en Asia. Varios países de la región, especialmente Brasil, han visto sus monedas

³⁹ Osava, Mario: "Comercio Brasil-China un avance regresivo", *IPS Noticias*, 17 febrero 2010.



fortalecerse en más de un 20% en los últimos 12 meses, lo que hace que sus productos sean más caros en el exterior.

El gobierno de China esta consciente de este escenario y ha desarrollado una política exterior para América Latina que permita mejorar no sólo su imagen país, sino alentar que la relación pueda darse en un marco de reciprocidad, por lo menos potencialmente⁴⁰. En este documento el gobierno chino pone a disposición de los países de la región esquemas de cooperación con el fin de transferir tecnología, conocimientos técnicos, alentar la coinversión, entre otros esquemas. Este formato propuesto por China recuerda el esquema que siguió Japón en la región asiática y que de cierta manera también trató de desarrollar en América Latina en los setenta y ochenta. En todo caso, América Latina puede tener acceso a esquemas de cooperación científica y tecnológica que pudieran impulsar el desarrollo de otros sectores como el de servicios o manufacturas con mayor valor agregado.

Así mismo, cabe recordar que China esta empezando a consolidarse como un fuerte origen de inversión extranjera directa en el mundo. Con las grandes reservas que ha acumulado, China puede disponer de capital para invertir o coinvertir en distintos proyectos de toda índole en el hemisferio. De hecho, como lo señalamos anteriormente, China es parte del Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (BID), así mismo participa como observador en varios organismos de cooperación y desarrollo de la región. En materia de inversión, China ha empezado a colaborar en proyectos de infraestructura carretera y portuaria en países como Argentina, Paraguay, Chile, México, Perú y Brasil. Será labor de los gobiernos de estos países el poder generar una contrapropuesta, es decir su propio “documento blanco” con el fin de poder exigir al gobierno chino mutuo beneficio y reciprocidad con el fin de que el momento de crecimiento de exportaciones de la región se pueda mantener, pero con base en el desarrollo de otras áreas y con proyectos de cooperación en campos donde América Latina pueda desarrollar su potencial.

Al parecer el mecanismo de la firma de tratados de libre comercio ha funcionado para algunos países, como es el caso de Chile, Perú y recientemente Costa Rica, aunque no han quedado lejos de fuertes críticas de varios sectores al interior de estos países. Por ejemplo en Costa Rica la opinión de los sectores privados, tales como la Cámara de Industrias, es que “China no es un socio de confianza”, o que “...Hay mucha pequeña y mediana empresa que trabaja para exportar a Centroamérica y el mercado local, con fabricación de productos que se vería desplazada por el precio de los bienes chinos, esas Pymes desaparecerían”, “Hay sectores que a lo mejor no han nacido y con China como socio a lo mejor no llegan a nacer nunca”. (Diario Extra 16 de febrero de 2009).

Para países como Brasil y México quizás esta no sea una de las soluciones en el corto plazo. Brasil, que es por lejos el mayor socio comercial de China en la región y el único país que el presidente Hu Jintao ha visitado en sus tres viajes oficiales a Latinoamérica, no ve la ventaja de negociar con China un TLC en estos momentos, esto en parte porque el mercado de Brasil sigue bastante restringido a las importaciones, también porque el gobierno esta tratando de desarrollar sus propias empresas y debe protegerlas de la competencia de China. En el caso de México sería muy peligroso ya que compiten casi en las mismas industrias. De toda América Latina, México es el país con el sector manufacturero más fuerte, donde se originan la mayor cantidad de empleos, los mejores salarios y el mayor porcentaje de exportaciones, de

⁴⁰ Este documento se desarrolló para fortalecer la agenda del presidente Hu Jintao al hemisferio en 2004. Conocido como el documento blanco (“*White paper*”), es el primer documento oficial de política exterior hacia América Latina.



tal suerte que esta realidad ubica a México como el país que más compite directamente con el sector industrial de China. Casi todo lo que China manufactura y exporta en México también se fabrica y vende al exterior. Y no sólo eso, pero casi todas las firmas extranjeras que manufacturan en México también lo hacen en China, a costos mucho más bajos y en tiempos de producción mucho más competitivos.

Pero quizá el mayor temor para que México pueda firmar un tratado de libre comercio con China es el hecho de que el mercado meta de más del 80% de las exportaciones de México es a Estados Unidos, mercado que cada vez es más importante para los productos manufacturados en China, no por nada el déficit que tiene Estados Unidos con China no sólo es el más grande que guarda con ningún otro país, pero también es el más desigual. En 2009, Estados Unidos marcó un déficit comercial con China de unos 226.000 millones de dólares en bienes y servicios, déficit que supera por quinto año consecutivo el umbral de los 200.000 millones.⁴¹ Aunado a todo lo anterior, no se puede obviar la falta de recursos humanos tanto en los sectores gubernamentales, privados y académicos de México para poder administrar un tratado de libre comercio con China, razón en parte por la cual, por cierto, México acumula un déficit comercial con China de más de 20,000 millones dólares y que seguirá creciendo.

En todo caso, con o sin tratados de libre comercio, lo que más necesita Latinoamérica es, entre otras estrategias, diversificar sus exportaciones como lo es en el caso de México que depende en más de 80% de un solo mercado que es Estados Unidos, el cual por cierto está en franco deterioro. Así mismo, encontrar un modelo latinoamericano en el cual se pueda incentivar el desarrollo de centros de innovación tecnológica y científica, de diseños que ayuden a los empresarios a desarrollar marcas y diseños apreciados por los mercados y consumidores internacionales⁴². Para algunos economistas de la región el concepto de política industrial les es adverso por diversas razones, sin embargo lo que han hecho los gobiernos que han liderado el despegue de los países otrora atrasados de Asia ha sido justamente el priorizar desde el Estado los sectores que se incentivarán y se apoyarán para competir nacionalmente y posteriormente internacionalmente. Si este no es el modelo adecuado para los países de América Latina en siglo XXI, entonces se deberá de buscar otro esquema que lleve al mismo puerto, es decir a pasar de meros transformadores de materias primas en manufacturas con tecnologías y diseños importados, o de producción de materias primas y energéticos sin valor agregado.

Finalmente, en cuanto al potencial conflicto que se pueda detonar con Washington al estar aumentando su presencia en América Latina, Beijing tiene muy claro que la prioridad en su agenda exterior es mantener una diplomacia que evite el enfrentamiento directo con Estados Unidos. China ha dejado muy claro que el único interés en la región es el comercio, no piensa en influir ni en gobiernos locales, ni en apoyar regímenes contrarios o antagónicos a Washington. Tal es el caso de Hugo Chavez en Venezuela o de Fidel Castro en Cuba. Beijing nunca ha hecho un llamado a unirse a la política exterior beligerante de estos dos

⁴¹ El tema del déficit de Estados Unidos con China tiene muchos matices y ha generado un gran debate entre los expertos internacionales. Para unos es un gran problema que debe resolverse a la brevedad con medidas tales como apreciar la moneda china, entre otras medidas. Para otros, este déficit no es tan grave dado que el valor agregado se produce en Estados Unidos, es decir desde los diseños, las patentes, la tecnología, etc. Que en el largo plazo Estados Unidos gana más de lo que pierde dado que logra crear empleos mejor pagados en el sector servicios. En todo caso es innegable la escandalosa cifra de casi un cuarto de billón de dólares de déficit.

⁴² Como ejemplo de esto, está el caso de Tailandia donde el gobierno diseñó, construyó y financia un centro de diseño para que sus empresarios puedan crear valor a sus manufacturas o servicios y posicionarlos a nivel internacional. En 2005 fue inaugurado el *Thailand Creative and Design Center* (ver la página oficial: <http://www.tcdc.or.th/?lang=en>).



países. Cuando Chavez ha dicho que Venezuela seguiría el modelo chino y que deben estar juntos para luchar contra el imperialismo estadounidense, Beijing simplemente ha guardado silencio y no ha dado una opinión al respecto. También queda claro que a pesar de la intensa relación comercial entre Venezuela y China con base en el interés por obtener su petróleo, Beijing no se enfrentará con Washington por el régimen de Chavez y otro mandatario con esas características en la región, China evitará a toda costa el enfrentamiento con Washington. Es más rentable para China una relación de cordialidad con Estados Unidos, además de que a fin de cuentas la verdadera área de influencia geopolítica de China es el Este y Sudeste de Asia, de donde dependerá su futuro como potencia regional y para asegurar la proveeduría de materias primas y manufacturas intermedias, así como un mercado de consumo para sus bienes finales.

5. Consideraciones finales

Para América Latina la relación con China ya es estratégica, la forma en la que se pueda traducir como beneficios o como una relación positiva para la región dependerá de muchos factores. Por un lado, los empresarios del hemisferio deben conocer o reconocer la importancia de la región asiática, particularmente la de China. Las pequeñas y medianas empresas latinoamericanas, que producen el mayor número de empleos y de impuestos recolectados por los gobiernos de estos países, tienen un gran temor de la relación con China, en parte por desconocimiento desde cuestiones culturales básicas, el modelo de desarrollo económico hasta las oportunidades de negocios que se pueden llevar a cabo, pero sobre todo por el hecho de que en diez años casi todo lo que producen ahora lo hacen las empresas en China, y cada vez pierden más presencia o mercado, o de plano han tenido que cerrar.

Para las grandes empresas o para aquellos sectores que extraen minerales o que producen bienes primarios y alimentos, la relación con China ha sido benéfica, sin embargo a costa de que en el largo plazo esta dependencia cada vez mayor se pueda tornar en contra al bajar los precios o la demanda del sector productivo en China. Hasta hoy, las grandes empresas públicas o privadas de Chile, Argentina, Perú, etc. que producen soja, miel, carne, hierro, cobre, entre otros productos, se han visto beneficiadas y el sentir de este sector es que debe estrecharse más la relación, en parte por ello se han empezado a firmar tratados de libre comercio con China.

Para el sector gubernamental, sobre todo en el Cono Sur, el comercio exterior con China ha sido un alivio, o por lo menos un paliativo, ante los años previos de crisis y caída en el crecimiento económico y generación de empleo. Todas las esferas de gobierno de casi todos los países de América Latina han incentivado el acercamiento diplomático y comercial con China. No hay un solo presidente o primer mandatario latinoamericano que no haya visitado China por lo menos una vez durante su mandato. Casi todos los ministros de economía y comercio han hecho lo propio. En reciprocidad el gobierno chino ha hecho visitas al hemisferio, cuando no es el presidente es el primer ministro o algún otro funcionario de alto nivel que ha visitado o ha iniciado giras por los países de la región. Por otro lado, una gran mayoría de los países de América Latina ha incrementado en la medida de lo posible su presencia en China, ya sea a través de aumentar el personal de sus embajadas o consulados, o abriendo nuevas oficinas o consulados en otras ciudades de China.

En cuanto al sector académico es quizás el más desprovisto en la región. Existen muy pocos centros de investigación sobre la región asiática, pocos programas de excelencia de



estudios sobre la historia o la contemporaneidad de China y Asia. Si bien es cierto que ha aumentado el número de estudiantes de mandarín en todos los países del hemisferio, hay muy pocos recursos humanos que dominen el idioma o tengan un conocimiento profundo de la región. China ha negociado de manera bilateral con casi todos los países de la región para aumentar el número de becas para estudiar en sus universidades y centros de excelencia tanto el idioma como posgrados de diversa índole, sin embargo son muy pocos los estudiantes latinoamericanos que deciden irse a China. Por su lado, los chinos que eligen venir a América Latina a estudiar también son muy pocos, ya sea por desconocimiento o porque hay otras regiones que potencialmente les proporcionarían más oportunidades profesionales. Por ejemplo, casi todos los chinos que dominan el castellano han ido a estudiar o a perfeccionar el idioma a España, cuando hace tan sólo diez o quince años iban a México. En cuanto al intercambio de científicos, la relación esta casi en pañales, el intercambio es esporádico y muchas veces no se le da seguimiento.

Una de los grandes riquezas con el que cuentan la mayoría de los países latinoamericanos no se ha aprovechado en toda su dimensión. Las comunidades étnicamente chinas que viven en nuestros países desde décadas atrás podrían ser los mejores puentes para poder aprovechar las oportunidades que China ofrece, desde atraer inversión hasta poder servir de intermediarios y puentes culturales con aquel país. Además, como se ha señalado en párrafos anteriores, estas comunidades de chinos han mostrado tener un gran sentido de pertenencia a la patria que los acogió y donde han nacido y crecido sus descendientes. Ya sea por desconocimiento o por un cierto grado de racismo, los gobiernos y las cámaras empresariales de los distintos países de América Latina siguen sin aprovechar este gran activo fijo de contar con comunidades de chinos que podrían ser los mejores embajadores en China.

En suma, los países de América Latina se encuentran pobremente preparados para aprovechar las ventajas que podrían obtener de China y de la región del Sur y Sudeste asiático. Como hemos señalado no es sólo la falta de recursos humanos calificados, pero sobre todo por el hecho de que los gobiernos de los países latinoamericanos no sólo no tienen clara las prioridades de corto y mediano plazo con respecto a China y Asia en general. No quiere decir que las cancillerías no cuenten con una política exterior hacia la región, lo que se señala es la falta de integración de un proyecto nacional que involucre a los sectores gubernamental, privado y académico para poder diseñar estrategias que puedan generar proyectos competitivos, eficientes y productivos, no sólo para poder aprovechar las ventajas que ofrece China por su dimensión productiva y su capacidad de compra, pero sobre todo para atraer capitales chinos para desarrollar plantas, parques industriales, mayor infraestructura encaminada a bajar costos de la logística comercial, entre muchos otros proyectos.

De nada sirve que el gobierno de algún Estado, Provincia o Dependencia de algún país latinoamericano realice una misión comercial a China sino cuenta con un proyecto de largo plazo bien fundamentado, pero sobre todo en coordinación con el gobierno central para desarrollar infraestructura física y humana, sin el poder de negociación del Estado es muy difícil obligar a la contraparte para asegurar una reciprocidad y mutuo beneficio. Así mismo, de poca relevancia es el hecho de que el primer mandatario viaje en sendas misiones a China sino no hay órganos y dependencias que den seguimiento a lo acordado con este país. Lo cual es muy difícil sino hay una meta clara de lo que se quiere lograr, sino hay seguimiento del personal que negoció y planificó la misión, si no hay recursos humanos que puedan ayudar a la traducción de las barreras culturales y si no hay fondos para que todo lo anterior se dé. En Asia esto existe y es base de la meritocracia que se ha generado en los diferentes ministerios y dependencias gubernamentales nacionales y regionales, con lo cual pueden dar un verdadero



seguimiento y seguir generando estrategias que generen más riqueza para el sector productivo del país.

Además seguimos desconectados de China. Si bien es cierto que la línea aérea Aeroméxico lanzó en 2008 un vuelo directo hacia China continental sin pasar por el territorio estadounidense, las frecuencias de vuelo siguen siendo reducidas y el costo del vuelo por lo general está más caro que si se viaja por alguna línea aérea estadounidense. Los sudamericanos viajan ya sea vía Europa o por el cono Sur haciendo escala en Sudáfrica. Esto hace que nuestro hemisferio quede en verdad lejos de China y que desincentive al turismo chino o al sector empresarial. Eso sin contar el hecho de que nuestro hemisferio en sí mismo está muy mal conectado y comunicado tanto por vía terrestre como por vía aérea o marítima.

Si todo sigue como hasta ahora en términos de crecimiento del producto nacional bruto, es de esperarse que países como China, India, Tailandia, Malasia, Vietnam, entre otros de la región serán un mercado importantísimo para los productos generados en nuestro hemisferio, pero también es cierto que serán nuevos competidores con los que habrá de competir en el mercado global. Por ende es imprescindible que las economías de América Latina no sólo agreguen valor a sus productos e industrias, sino que logren crear valor con base en sus raíces, sus tradiciones y sus fortalezas nacionales y regionales. Estados Unidos ya no es la máquina del tren que podía jalar todos los vagones, ahora se necesitan otras máquinas que tengan este potencial, China es sin duda alguna una de ellas.





**THE FALLACY OF MULTILATERALISM RHETORIC IN CHINA-
SOUTHEAST ASIA RELATIONS
– A NEO-REALIST PERSPECTIVE ON REGIONAL ORDER-
BUILDING –**

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Abstract:

Observers of Sino-Southeast Asian relations are easily blinded by political rhetoric. This paper argues that ASEAN has not succeeded in engaging China in a multilateral framework of regional cooperation but that Beijing has developed a tightening network of bilateral relations with individual ASEAN members that has significantly strengthened the PRC's position in the region. Just as in the cases of Pax Britannica and Pax Americana, the (re-)emerging Pax Sinica is characterized by the creation and enforcement of rules that favor the dominant state at the centre of the regional order. At the same time the policies of China as a pre-eminent power on the horizon also bring economic, security and stability benefits to the states in its zone of influence. Thus, relations between China and Southeast Asia potentially take the form of a positive rather than a zero-sum game.

Keywords: Sino-South East Asian Relations, ASEAN, Pax Sinica, positive sum game, dominant state, regional order.

Resumen:

Observadores de las relaciones China-Sureste Asiático se dejan fácilmente cegar por la retórica política. Este artículo defiende que ASEAN no ha logrado implicar a China en un marco multilateral de cooperación regional mientras que Pekín ha desarrollado una red cada vez más firme de relaciones bilaterales con miembros de esta organización, reforzando la posición de la RPC en la región. Al igual que en los casos de Pax Britannica y Pax Americana, la (re-)emergente Pax Sinica se caracteriza por la creación e imposición de reglas que favorecen un estado dominante en el centro del orden regional. Al mismo tiempo las políticas de China como un poder pre-eminent también dejan intuir el horizonte de beneficios en materia económica, de seguridad y estabilidad para los países en su zona de influencia. Por tanto, las relaciones entre China y el Sureste Asiático toman la forma de un juego de suma positiva más que de suma cero.

Palabras clave: Relaciones China-Sureste Asiático, ASEAN, Pax Sinica, juego de suma positiva, estado dominante, orden regional.

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1. Introduction: The Seeming Revival of ASEAN-based Multilateralism in Regional Order-Building

Barack Obama's victory in the US presidential race created an immediate expectation for an improvement and expansion in Washington's relations with Southeast Asia. While the preceding administration of George W. Bush had briefly given ASEAN prominent attention in the wake of the 'war against terrorism', there can be little doubt that Washington was losing interest in ASEAN as a regional bloc and increasingly opted for a bilateral route rather than multilateral approaches towards Southeast Asia. Hopes for a post-Bush revival of multilateralism and an upgrade in US-ASEAN relations were not disappointed. In February 2009 Hillary Clinton not only included Indonesia on her first overseas trip in office but also paid the first ever visit of a US Secretary of State to the ASEAN Secretariat. Following on from her meetings in Jakarta, in July 2009 the US signed an agreement to accede to the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) after 17 years of consideration in an attempt to boost multilateral approaches to regional security. A total of 26 states have now signed the 1976 regional code of conduct, making the TAC one of ASEAN's most significant international successes. However, while Southeast Asia has undoubtedly re-gained its previously lost geo-strategic importance and priority on the US foreign policy and defence agenda, it is clearly visible that Washington engages ASEAN (and not the other way round) as a supplementary strategy to the prevailing approach of bilateralism. In a similar vein this applies to China. The PRC's increasing pro-multilateralism rhetoric does seem to point in the direction of an ever-growing relevance of regional dialogue mechanisms and cooperation guided by the so-called ASEAN way. This, however, is only the convenient façade that masks China's ambitions at establishing itself as a benign pre-eminent power in Southeast Asia that – just like the US – uses multilateralism whenever it suits as a vehicle to achieve policy goals based on national interest. This paper argues that ASEAN has not succeeded to engage China in a multilateral framework of regional cooperation but that China has developed a tightening network of bilateral relations with individual ASEAN members that has significantly strengthened Beijing's position in the region. Sino-Southeast Asian rapprochement is not driven by a process of regional identity or institution building (as social constructivist and liberal institutionalists respectively try to make us believe) but by strategic thinking and cost-benefit considerations in both Beijing and Southeast Asian capitals.

Beijing increasingly exerts regional leadership by setting the rules and organizing a growing network of bilateral and multilateral relationships in economic and security (both with regards to traditional and non-traditional security) fields. Just as in the cases of Pax Britannica and Pax Americana, the (re-)emerging Pax Sinica is characterized by the creation and enforcement of rules that favor the dominant state at the centre of the regional order. At the same time the policies of China as a pre-eminent power on the horizon also bring economic, security and stability benefits to the states in its zone of influence. Thus, relations between China and Southeast Asia potentially take the form of a positive rather than a zero-sum game.

Robert Sutter links China's rise to the potential emergence of "an 'inside-out' model of regional governance [which might be] displacing the past half century's 'outside-in' model led by the United States through its regional allies".² While such a model has not emerged yet as China is still predominantly a one-dimensional power, based first and foremost on

² Sutter, Robert: "China's rise, Southeast Asia, and the United States: is a China-centered order marginalizing the United States?", in Goh, E. and Simon, S. W. (eds.) (2008): *China, the United States, and Southeast Asia. Contending perspectives on politics, security, and economics*, New York and London, Routledge, p. 93.



economic strength that cannot match the multidimensional power (hard and soft power) of the United States, the materialization of such a scenario is already looming large. In the current three way competition among the US, Japan and China for regional influence in Southeast Asia, China appears to be the most pro-active power. China has already started to act like a traditional big power, proactively drawing up its own blueprints for regional order and pulling smaller neighbors along in its wake. “China is making big loans for big projects to countries that used to be the sole preserve of the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the United States and Japan”.³ The ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (ACFTA), which was formally launched in 2002, is another example for China’s increasing leverage over the international relations of the Asia-Pacific. In May 2009 the PRC agreed to contribute US\$ 38.4 billion (the same amount as Japan and significantly more than all other involved states: South Korea and the 10 ASEAN members) to a 120-billion-dollar emergency currency pool to boost liquidity and help the region overcome the current global financial crisis.⁴

With the rapid growth of its economy, China has become increasingly involved in Southeast Asia’s traditional security affairs as well. Beijing has established military links with Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Burma/ Myanmar, Cambodia, and Malaysia. This extends not only to military aid and loans, bilateral talks on military issues, joint production of military equipment, and joint training exercises; it also includes participation in regional security forums and the signing of defense memoranda of understanding (MOU). The view among Southeast Asian elites that ASEAN and China share the profits of security management in an overall situation of a positive-sum game (or win-win situation according to the official Chinese term)⁵ has been growing, particularly since the beginning of the *Hu Jintao-Wen Jiabao* era in 2002-03. The foreign policy of the so-called ‘fourth generation’ leadership (after those led by Mao, Deng, and Jiang) has put strong emphasis on the fostering of friendly and mutually beneficial relations with neighbouring states.

Leadership in international relations can only emerge and be institutionalized if the dominant regional power is willing to assume the responsibilities associated with it, is capable (in material terms of both hard and soft power) of establishing primacy, and is acceptable as a regional leader in the eyes of the subordinated states. In the following I will try to provide empirical evidence that, while several conflicts and disputes (mainly with regard to border and territorial issues) remain unresolved in China-Southeast Asia relations, the PRC’s scores increasingly well in all three categories of leadership. I will begin with a brief elaboration on Chinese approaches to regional conflict management using the example of the South China Sea. This will be followed by a discussion of Beijing’s attempts to increase energy security for itself by strengthening bilateral and multilateral relations with its Southeast Asian neighbors in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS). In the third steps, I will delve into a so far under-researched development: China’s emergence as an international donor in the region. Some reflections on, first, the question as to whether ASEAN-centered regional cooperation in the region mediates a potentially emerging Pax Sinica, second, and the level of regional acceptance of Chinese pre-eminence and the limitations to it conclude the paper.

³ Perlez, Jane: “China Competes with West in Aid to Its Neighbors”, *New York Times*, 18 September 2006, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/18/world/asia/18iht-web.0918aid.2845121.html>.

⁴ Coates, Stephen: “ASEAN, China, Japan, S. Korea finalise crisis fund pact”, *Agence France Press*, 3 May 2009.

⁵ “China to Pursue “Win-win” Opening-up Strategy”, *China.org.cn*, 18 October 2005, at http://www.china.org.cn/features/guideline/2006-02/09/content_1157490.htm.



The paper deliberately avoids the term hegemony to characterize China's rise in Southeast Asia. The Chinese translation of hegemony as *ba dao* has a noxious moral connotation as "unjust domination." It is in this context that Zhou Enlai once said "we will never be hegemons," a statement later echoed by Deng Xiaoping and many other Chinese leaders, for example Li Peng who confirmed in 2001: "China is opposed to hegemonism and will never seek hegemony itself".⁶ This part of the Maoist legacy seems to be unchanging. While the linguistic problem could be countered to some extent by stressing that the term hegemony has no normative connotation if based purely on Western International Relations terminology, any discourse on Chinese hegemony would inevitably provoke an analogy with US hegemony.

It is important to note that while the paper is written mainly from a neo-realist perspective, the potential fallacies of this approach are not ignored. Neo-realism's problem is its "insistence on the sameness effect and on the unchanging, structurally determined nature of international politics" as Paul Schroeder⁷ has reminded us in his stimulating critique of neo-realist thought. The following analysis does not pretend to paint the full picture of China's emerging position in Southeast Asia. The central question is not as to whether China is able and willing to assume the role that the US has played in the Asia Pacific over the past decades. Likewise, the following discussion does not primarily focus on China's relative power vis-a-vis Japan or other powers in the region but considers structures and processes that have contributed to the strengthening of the PRC's position in Southeast Asia in absolute terms. However, it can be useful – and it is certainly legitimate – from an analytical point of view to take just one perspective in the complex puzzle of Southeast Asia's international relations as it sharpens our eyes for developments that otherwise might get lost in *theoretical eclecticism*.

2. Joining the Chinese Bandwagon for Economic and Security Benefits: The Spratly Islands Dispute

Until recently, China, with the exception of the Mongol Yuan Dynasty and a short period in the early Ming Dynasty, was a land-oriented empire and not a maritime power. During most of Chinese history, the most dangerous threat came from nomadic powers in Inner Asia, which diverted Chinese strategic attention toward the northern and western frontiers. In addition, as agriculture provided the basis of Chinese economy in the pre-modern times, China did not need to develop a powerful navy or conquer maritime territories to secure its access to resources. All this has changed with the programs of modernization following the defeat of Qing China at the hands of maritime powers. The largest threat now came from the southeastern coasts and a modernizing China's growth and stability would depend in large part on its connection with the world market and overseas resources, primarily through the East and South China Seas. It was in this context that in the early 20th century Chinese authorities began to assert Chinese sovereignty over the Paracel Islands in the South China Sea. This triggered protest by the Vietnamese court at Hue, which had established its control over the islands well before the French conquests of Vietnam. In the 1930s, while China

⁶ Peng, Li: "Deepening Understanding, Fostering Friendship and Strengthening Cooperation", Speech by Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, *Indian International Centre* (13 January 2001), at <http://in.china-embassy.org/eng/zyjh/t61434.htm> .

⁷ Schroeder, Paul: "Historical Reality vs. Neo-Realist Theory", *International Security*, vol. 19, no. 1 (Summer 1994), pp. 108-148.



began to publish maps declaring its territorial claims in the South China Sea, French authorities in Indochina also began to set up weather stations on and send garrisons to the Paracel and the Spratly Islands.⁸ The PRC and successive governments controlling South Vietnam, including the Hanoi regime since 1975, inherited this dispute from Nationalist China and French Indochina. Today, as China's participation in world trade and its demand for overseas energy and raw materials are both large and increasing, the South China Sea becomes more important for China. China's demand for imported energy resources is predicted to rise to 500 million tons of oil imports and over 100 billion cubic meters of natural gas in 2020. China's rapidly increasing energy consumption will contribute to Beijing's more active involvement of oil and gas exploration and exploitation in its adjacent sea areas, and in securing the oil supply routes at sea.⁹

At the heart of China's interests in the South China Sea lay the Spratly islands - a collection of mostly barren coral reefs, atolls, and sand bars, many of which disappear at high tide, covering an area of some 70,000 square miles. This area is claimed, in whole or in part, by China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, and the Philippines. The other major area of dispute in the South China Sea concerns the Paracels, which are claimed by China and Vietnam. With the exception of Brunei, all of the disputants maintain a military presence on some of the islands. Since 1978, when the Philippines set out its Exclusive Economic Zone formally including the island Kalayaan claimed by Manila, the parties in the dispute have held generally consistent claims. However, the controversy itself lay relatively dormant until 1988 when China and Vietnam clashed over Fiery Cross Reef. Since then hostilities in the South China Sea have regularly erupted, most prominently between China and the Philippines. The Philippines considers China's occupation of Mischief Reef in 1995 and repeated Chinese incursions into Scarborough Reef since 1997 as direct assaults on the Philippines' territory.¹⁰ Although a resolution of the disputes is not in sight, the ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea of 1992 (signed by China in 2002) is often praised as a first step toward a peaceful settlement. Though nonbinding and from a formal institutional point of view not even a code of conduct, politicians and many scholarly observers alike hope that the agreement will nevertheless oblige the Southeast Asian claimants and China to avoid any activity that would damage or complicate their relations. In a very optimistic liberal-institutionalist scenario the declaration constructively contributes to the avoidance of armed clashes among the parties over their conflicting claims on the sovereignty of the Spratly Islands¹¹ and the "declaration's confidence-building measures have appeared to appease claimants".¹²

⁸ Chemillier-Gendreau, Monique (2000): *Sovereignty over the Paracel and the Spratly Islands*, The Hague, Kluwer Law International; Nguyen, Nha (1975): "Thu dat lai van de Hoang Sa" [Reconsidering the Paracel Islands Issue], *Su Dia* [History and Geography], no. 29 (1975); Li, Jinming and Li Dexia: "The Dotted Line on the Chinese Map of the South China Sea: A Note", *Ocean Development & International Law*, no. 34 (2003), pp. 287-295.

⁹ Keyuan, Zou: "Conclusions: towards an EU-China research-agenda 2010", in Wiessala, Georg, Wilson, John and Taneja, Pradeep (eds.) (2009): *European Union and China: interest and dilemmas*, New York, Rodopi, pp. 275-289.

¹⁰ Odgaard, Liselotte: "The South China Sea: ASEAN's Security Concerns About China", *Security Dialogue*, vol. 34, no. 1 (2003), p. 16.

¹¹ Cheng, Joseph Yu-Shek: 'The ASEAN-China Free Trade Area: Genesis and Implications', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 58, no. 2 (2004), p. 259.

¹² Philippines "All Parties" to ASEAN Declaration on Spratlys urged to observe Peace principles", *Thai Press Reports*, 17 March 2009.



One has to remain skeptical, however, that ASEAN's multilateral approach based on consensus building and voluntary, nonbinding commitment to the principle of non-use of force will provide a sustained institutional framework for security management, particularly since the Declaration on the South China Sea lacks any specific provisions on how to resolve the conflict. Samuel Sharpe finding that ASEAN has not been able to establish sufficient leverage in seeking a wider code of conduct with China is still valid.¹³ The more effective strategy of maintaining peace in the South China Sea is based on bilateral and multilateral negotiations initiated and facilitated by the PRC. Most importantly, Vietnam signed a land border treaty with China in 1999, and another treaty on the demarcation of the Gulf of Tonkin in 2000 that came into effect in June 2004 after more than three years of negotiations on how to implement the agreement (the demarcation itself was still ongoing early 2010). These treaties have narrowed down the scope of territorial disputes at least between these two countries relating to the Paracel and Spratly archipelagos.

In September 2004 the Philippines jumped on the Chinese bandwagon with the signing of an agreement for joint marine seismic exploration in the South China Sea for possible undersea oil. Vietnam joined the agreement in March 2005, when the Vietnam Petroleum Corporation (PetroVietnam), the Philippines National Oil Company (PNOC), and the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) finalized a tripartite agreement in Manila to jointly exploit oil and gas resources in the South China Sea. Philippines Foreign Minister Alberto Romulo and Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Nien praised the deal as a significant measure to strengthen ASEAN-China cooperation and possibly pave the way for settlement of the South China Sea dispute. Beyond the political rhetoric, the agreement does not reflect core ASEAN values and norms but rather mirrors a new strategic setting in which the Southeast Asian claimants compete for the most favorable bilateral or multilateral agreements with China as the driving force behind the creation of regional order. This perception corresponds with the views of a Chinese government official who was involved in the negotiations.

When we signed the agreement with the Philippines in 2004 it meant that Vietnam had fallen behind. And although Vietnam joined the agreement later, we are still more advanced in our negotiations with the Philippines. We are also speaking to Malaysia but these talks are less developed than those with the Philippines and Vietnam. A very important achievement in our relations with Vietnam is our joint maneuvers with the Vietnamese navy in the Beibu [Tonkin] Gulf.¹⁴

In late April 2006 the Chinese navy began its first-ever patrols with a foreign ally, sending ships to patrol with Vietnamese warships in the Gulf of Tonkin. According to the Chinese Ministry of National Defense, the joint patrols were intended to strengthen joint cooperation and maintain security of fishing fleets and oil exploration. The PRC is strengthening its naval power – driven at least partly by the concern that any disruption to energy shipments through the major sea lanes of communication would act as a brake on the nation's economic (in 2003, China surpassed Japan as a consumer of petroleum, moving into second place behind the

¹³ Sharpe, Samuel (2003): "An ASEAN Way to Security Cooperation in Southeast Asia?", *The Pacific Review*, vol. 16, no. 2 (2003), pp. 31-50.

¹⁴ Author interview with a Chinese senior government official in Shanghai, May 2006.



United States): “China is pursuing sea power – measured by the Mahanian indices of commerce, bases, and ships – and it is building up a powerful navy with dispatch”.¹⁵

Furthermore, in the wake of an apparent pirate attack on a Chinese fishing vessel in the Spratlys also in 2006 that left four crewmen dead and three wounded, China, the Philippines, and Vietnam announced plans to strengthen security cooperation in the Spratlys to address piracy, smuggling, and transnational crimes. This diplomacy takes place outside the ASEAN framework and is a visible indication of a bandwagoning approach towards the PRC which is clearly also in China’s interest. The South China Morning Post quoted a “veteran regional diplomat” as saying, “China has very cleverly got every ASEAN country thinking first of its own relationship with Beijing”.¹⁶ The same article reported, Beijing had stressed “both publicly and privately that disputes should be solved bilaterally between China and individual claimant countries rather than through ‘arguments’ at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations -a move that ... effectively strengthened Beijing's position given its emerging economic and military power”.¹⁷ This author’s own research confirms the assessment. No matter how publicly and vocally Vietnam as the 2010 chair of ASEAN has tried to make the South China Sea the central agenda item of ASEAN meetings with the declared objective of reaching a legally binding code of conduct between ASEAN and China on the South China Sea, the approach has not gone beyond rhetoric. According to a high ranking government official with knowledge of the content of meetings both among ASEAN members and between ASEAN and China, “when the ASEAN governments come together there is always great optimism about engaging China on the South China Sea. However, in meetings between ASEAN and China, the ASEAN side usually waits for China to lead the discussion and set the tone. There is certainly no effective unified ASEAN position towards China and China is clearly in the driver’s seat”.¹⁸

3. Positive Sum Games in the Management of Resources?

As in the case of the Spratly Islands, the management of security in the Mekong valley first and foremost follows China’s blueprint for order maintenance based on its national interest, particularly as far as access to resources is concerned. An increasingly important aspect of China’s interests toward Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar is the enhancement of the former’s energy security. This is particularly visible within the context of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS). The GMS is a core element of Beijing’s policy outlook. The PRC has been represented geographically in GMS by Yunnan Province since 1992. In December 2004, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region was formally included in the GMS.

The Mekong River is the world’s twelfth-largest river and Southeast Asia’s longest waterway. It originates in Tibet and flows through the Chinese province of Yunnan before continuing southwards, touching the territories of six countries (China, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam) and ending in the South China Sea. The GMS covers some 2.3 million square kilometers and contains a population of about 245 million. The post-World

¹⁵ Holmes, James R.; Winner, Andrew C. and Yoshihara, Toshi (2009): *Indian Naval Strategy in the 21st Century*, London and New York, Routledge, p. 128.

¹⁶ Torode, Greg: “Hong Kong paper: Vietnam eyes ASEAN card on South China Sea dispute”, *South China Morning Post*, 4 April 2010.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Personal interview in Southeast Asia in July 2010.



War II history of cooperation within the Mekong valley dates back to 1957 when the Mekong Committee was established at the initiative of the UN Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) and four riparian countries of the lower Mekong Basin (Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and South Vietnam). For more than three decades, however, the implementation of subregional integration was halted by the prevalence of cold-war structures, or more accurately hot wars and armed conflict, in the region. The process only gained momentum in 1992 when, with the assistance of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the six riparian states of the Mekong River (Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam) entered into a program of formalized subregional cooperation.

The GMS program has been directed to the management of non-traditional security arenas such as the facilitation of sustainable economic growth and improvement of the standard of living in general and the management of environmental and energy security in particular.¹⁹ The sustainable utilization of water and natural resources in the Mekong basin is directly and inevitably linked to human survival in the region. Energy security is mainly related to the promising but not uncontroversial issue of hydroelectric power. Compared with rivers of a similar size like the Nile and the Mississippi, the Mekong is still relatively untouched. The first Mekong bridge (between Thailand and Laos) was only opened in 1994 and the first mainstream dam, the 1,500 megawatt Manwan, was only completed in 1995 in Yunnan. Since then the development of hydropower has been among the main priorities of the GMS project and resulted in the two Laos-based Theun Hinboun Hydropower Project, which started commercial operation in March 1998, and the Nam Leuk Hydropower Development that was completed in May 2000.

With international conflicts over river water becoming more frequent, there is concern that the Mekong could become a serious source of tension unless the six states can agree on rules for developing the river. The most valuable achievement to reduce the potential for conflict is a technical cooperation agreement achieved in 2002 between China and the Mekong River Commission (MRC, founded in 1995), grouping Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. The agreement commits China to sending 24-hourly water level and 12-hourly rainfall data to the MRC to help forecast floods. The design of an early flood warning strategy ranks very high on the agenda of both policy makers and international donor organizations. While China has duly provided the required information since the agreement's implementation in 2003 and also supplied water level data from its Jinghong and Manwan dams since mid-March 2010²⁰, other key data—most decisively on water quality and pollution—are kept strictly confidential. Various attempts by the lower Mekong states, particularly Vietnam, to get access have failed.²¹

On issues that would impact on national decision-making authority, such as dam building in the Chinese stretch of the Mekong, China steadfastly refuses to share information. The uncoordinated construction of power plants and irrigation systems by the Mekong countries, particularly China, which plans to build 12 hydropower dams on the lower part of

¹⁹ As of 31 December 2006, ADB had extended loans totalling almost \$1.92 billion for 28 loan and grant projects with a total project cost of \$6.8 billion. These projects are in transportation (18 projects), energy (4), health (3), and tourism (3). GMS governments and development partners have provided about \$2.2 billion and \$2.7 billion, respectively, for these 28 projects. The ADB claims that between 1990 and 2003, the proportion of people living in the GMS on less than \$1 a day fell from 46% to 33.8% in Cambodia, 33% to 13.4% in the PRC, 52.7% to 28.8% in Laos, 10.1% to less than 1% in Thailand, and 50.7% to 9.7% in Vietnam (ADB, Greater Mekong Subregion, Development Effectiveness Brief, Draft 18 July 2007).

²⁰ "China's role in Mekong River maintenance", *Global Post, VietnamNet*, 17 April 2010.

²¹ Author interviews conducted in the GMS states between June 2006 and July 2010.



the Mekong River alone,²² poses a serious challenge to subregional stability. The construction could result in a potentially explosive competition between the upper and the lower Mekong states for water resources. Politicians and senior officials from the lower Mekong states, mainly Thailand, Vietnam, and Cambodia, have regularly expressed concerns about China's proposed dam-building activities, albeit more indirectly and in private than openly and in official intergovernmental meetings. Some perceive China's ambitious hydropower plans as a zero-sum game in which the PRC's economic gains would be paid for by the lower Mekong states' environmental costs, such as rising salinity levels in Vietnam's agriculturally indispensable Mekong Delta.

Official Chinese interests in the Mekong region can roughly be divided into two realms of importance: domestic and foreign policy. The domestic interest consists of the development of China's landlocked western provinces and the promotion of border trade with the adjoining countries of Myanmar, Laos, and Vietnam. A further domestic strategy aims at narrowing the gap between the ethnic Chinese Han population and ethnic minorities. Furthermore, the government envisions that an economically emerging west will reduce internal migration from western China to the booming coastal cities. In a more general strategic sense, Beijing seeks to put its relations with Southeast Asia on an amicable basis in order to counterbalance US influence in the region.²³ The PRC is able to play a preeminent role in the Mekong valley, partly because it imposes its will on the lesser states in terms of setting the stage for, but also the limits to, cooperation, and partly because the other members benefit from China's cooperation and thus accept China's leadership.

Energy security offers a good example of the emergence of reciprocally beneficial linkages between China and the states in its zone of influence. Since September 2006 China has been supplying electricity to Vietnam through a cross-border 220-kilovolt power transmission line to ease Vietnam's chronic power shortage problems. Further transmission lines are under construction or being planned. China (through the state-owned company, China Southern Power Grid) is also involved in the building of electricity generation facilities in Vietnam, Laos, and Myanmar, enabling the Southeast Asian GMS members to deliver electricity to China's western provinces when it will be much needed in only a few years' time to further fuel rapid industrialization. The electric power trade between Yunnan and Vietnam has reached some US\$ 100 million in 2007.²⁴ In February 2009 the Chinese Guangdong Nuclear Power Group announced its interest to help Vietnam build its first nuclear power plant, comprising two 1,000-MW reactors to be located in the southern coastal province of Ninh Thuan (Grieder 2009). The trend toward ever-closer ties between China and Vietnam, which is not necessarily directly facilitated but at least underpinned by the two countries' shared political ideology, also serves the wider interests of both communist parties vis-à-vis the United States. Despite strengthening US-Vietnam economic and diplomatic ties, Vietnam is keen to avoid aligning itself too closely with the US, while China is equally eager to counter the US's growing influence in Vietnam.

²² "Thailand opposes China's Mekong River dam projects over environmental concerns", *Bangkok Post*, 01 July 2010.

²³ Dosch, Jörn and Hensengerth, Oliver: "Sub-Regional Cooperation in Southeast Asia: The Mekong Basin", *European Journal of East Asian Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2 (2005), pp. 263-85.

²⁴ "First Sino-Vietnamese Joint Power Station to Start Construction", *SinoCast China Business Daily News*, 13 November 2007, p. 1.



Relations between China and Myanmar are another case in point for the growing benefits of cooperation on energy security.²⁵ China is playing a key role in the construction of large dams on rivers in Myanmar, such as the Salween River. There are at least 14 Chinese companies involved in approximately 40 hydropower projects in Myanmar.²⁶ Chinese investors have become increasingly dominant in the energy, mining and to some extent manufacturing sectors in Myanmar.²⁷ The rapid growth of China's economy has resulted in an increasing demand for energy resources, particularly oil and gas. Although the country itself is rich in energy resources on an absolute basis, China is poorly endowed on a per capita basis. The widening gap between China's oil supply and demand and the projected gap between natural gas supply and demand mean the country will increasingly become reliant on imported oil and gas. The government encourages the biggest Chinese state-owned oil companies, including Sinopec, CNOOC²⁸ and CNPC²⁹, to find and develop new fields at home and abroad and has heavily invested in the construction of pipelines and the exploration of oil and gas fields, including in Myanmar. This meets the interest of the Burmese military junta that needs external support from to facilitate the exploitation and development of the country's energy resources. The cooperation with China offers potential areas to foreign investors while maintaining a tight control over the extraction, distribution and sale of its resources. Some observers claim that significant output of petroleum for example is not expected until after 2010.³⁰ Nevertheless, it is obvious that the Chinese government believes in the profitability of investments in Myanmar's energy sector. After all, Myanmar's energy reserves are said to be abundant, with proven recoverable reserves of 510 billion cubic meters out of a total 2.54 trillion cubic meters estimated reserves of offshore and onshore gas. In addition, its recoverable crude oil reserve is estimated to have 3.2 billion barrels.³¹ China has at least 17 onshore and offshore oil and gas projects in Myanmar. Key investors are Sinopec, CNPC and CNOOC, which signed MoUs with MOGE for the exploration and the sale of natural gas.³²

China's involvement in Myanmar provokes questions beyond energy security: has the PRC's eminent role in Myanmar's economy and – at least indirectly – the fact that this role has provided a lifeline to the Burmese generals been strengthened or even facilitated by the European and American pull out from the country? And in a more general sense with potentially far-reaching implications: does China's 'no strings attached' approach to international cooperation challenges core principal of Western and Japanese ODA in Southeast Asia?

²⁵ The following findings on China's activities in Myanmar are based on a dissertation by Pels, Daphne Berenice: "The Sino-Burmese Friendship: Origins, Development and Motivations", submitted to the *Department of East Asian Studies, University of Leeds*, in May 2008.

²⁶ Earth Rights International : "China in Burma: the increasing investment of Chinese multinational corporations in Burma's hydropower, oil & gas, and mining sectors", *Burma Project*, September 2007.

²⁷ Kudo, Toshihiro (2006): "Myanmar's Economic Relations with China: Can China Support the Myanmar Economy?", Institute of Developing Economies, Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), *IDE Discussion Papers* 66; "China: hungry for energy: Beijing hunts for a coherent policy as it gets hooked on foreign oil", *Business Week*, 24 December 2001.

²⁸ China National Offshore Oil Corporation.

²⁹ China National Petroleum Corporation.

³⁰ "World oil markets analysis to 2030: petroleum and other liquid fuels", Energy Information Administration, *International energy outlook 2007*.

³¹ Myoe, Maung Aung: "Sino-Myanmar Economic Relations Since 1988", Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, *Working Paper Series*, no. 86 (2007), p. 15.

³² Earth Rights International, *op. cit.*, p. 3.



4. China's Emergence as an International Donor: Challenging the "West" and Japan?

Development assistance of so-called emerging donor countries, such as China, Brazil, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, South Africa and South Korea, has been significantly growing. The total amount of ODA provided by non-OECD donors almost doubled from US\$ 4861.27 million in 2007 to 8678.9 million in 2008.³³ At the same time the boundaries between donor and recipient countries have become increasingly fuzzy. This is particularly the case in Asia where most of the 'new donors' are located with China being the most important one. Partly due to the successful development of China's economy, the Japanese government informed Beijing that it wanted to end its ODA yen loan program to China by 2008.³⁴

The development aid strategies and policies of OECD donors have markedly changed in recent years. In addition to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)³⁵ the promotion of democracy, good governance, respect for human rights and for the rule of law occupy centre-stage on the development agenda. However, the governance focus of the EU and the US is in stark contrast to Japan's (still) predominantly mercantilist approach to ODA and China's "no strings attached" ODA policy based primarily on national resource interests. The possible clash between OECD and Chinese concepts of development assistance towards the African continent has recently been the growing focus of academic and practical-political discourses. Yet, East and Southeast Asia have received relatively little attention, even though the seeming contradictions between European, Chinese and Japanese ODA policies and the potential long-term implications of increasing competition among donors are nowhere more obvious than in Asia. Especially China's rapid transformation from an ODA recipient to a main donor in Asia has not been researched yet.

Over decades until the recent past Japan had been successfully implementing regional foreign and foreign economic policies through the generous provision of economic and financial and above all ODA. Japan's *keizai gaiko* (economic diplomacy) was the country's most efficient and effective foreign policy tool contributing to peace and stability in the region and creating the environment and pre-conditions for stable relations between Japan and its neighboring countries in East and Southeast Asia.

Japan's rapid economic growth in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s enabled Tokyo to dedicate significant financial resources to the economic development of East and Southeast Asia while at the same time consolidating and expanding its political and economic influence and position in the region. To be sure, as a country highly dependent on the import of raw materials (due to the lack of natural resources in Japan), establishing stable and mutually beneficial relations with countries rich of natural resources in Asia (and beyond) was a necessity for Japan and its own economic development. At the heart of Japan's foreign economic policy was the country's strategy to use its wealth and economic capabilities to help creating a politically stable neighborhood beneficial to its own economic and political position and standing in the region.

From the early 1980s onwards Japan greatly increased its contributions to the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. In addition to its multilateral efforts, Japan raised its

³³ According to OECD data, at <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DatasetCode=TABLE2A>.

³⁴ Drifte, Reinhard : "The End of Japan's ODA Yen Loan programme to China in 2008 and its Repercussions", *Japan aktuell/Journal of Current Japanese Affairs*, (January 2008), pp. 3-15.

³⁵ The MDGs, among other objectives, aim at the eradication of poverty, achieving universal primary education and promoting gender equality.



share of ODA giving amongst members of the DAC from 12% in 1980 to about 20% in 1998. In 1998 Japan's ODA per capita was roughly three times that of the United States. For many years, Japanese aid has concentrated in the region of Asia. Indeed, Asian countries received an average of 60 per cent of total Japanese ODA during the 1980s and 1990s, an amount greater than any other region (Tuman/Strand 2000).

China in particular but also South Korea and a number of developing countries in Southeast Asia profited immensely from Japan's support and promotion of regional economies. Recently, however, Japan has begun to decrease its ODA payments in East and Southeast Asia and further cuts are likely in the coming years in view of Japan's rising public debt and fiscal problems. On the one hand, the Japanese government has been facing pressure from within Japan to curtail its spending on ODA. On the other hand, the international community (particularly the developing nations) expects Japan to continue to provide a high level of development assistance. The Japanese government is therefore being exposed to competing pressures from the domestic and international communities, and under these conditions it will likely find its continued active promotion of ODA much more difficult than originally anticipated.³⁶

The reduction of Japan's ODA payments to Southeast Asian countries suggests that Tokyo is prepared to let China fill the vacuum left by the cutback of Japanese ODA and other forms of economic and financial support. Despite being still a developing country itself (by official classifications) China has in recent years developed pro-active and visible foreign economic policies which in some ways resemble the Japanese version of the same policies in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.

A Japanese 2006 ODA White Paper claimed that contributions by China, India and other emerging donor nations had "become significant enough for developing countries to influence them... It is quite difficult to grasp the whole picture of aid activities by such countries. They should make their activities more transparent and follow international rules."³⁷ Indeed, China has been accused of

- unethical and string-free support for 'rogue' or 'pariah' states
- providing unconditional aid and opaque loans that are said to undermine European and multilateral efforts to persuade governments to increase their transparency, public accountability and financial management (governance agenda);
- 'free-riding' Western debt relief efforts and undermining individual country's external debt sustainability and disregarding the multilateral framework for debt sustainability;
- Intensifying global economic and strategic competition to secure energy supplies;
- using its China's self-interested strategies in dealing with developing countries, trying to assert influence and using its soft power in order to support its own development without any coordination with Western countries, often even aggressively confronting them;

³⁶ Kusano, Atsushi: "Japan's ODA in the 21st Century", *Asia-Pacific Review*, vol. 7, no. 1 (2000), p. 39.

³⁷ Quoted from *The Daily Yomiuri*, 20 November 2006.



- neglecting environmental and social standards.³⁸

In the Philippines, the Chinese government will provide US\$ 6 to 10 billion during the period 2008-2013 in loans over to finance infrastructure projects in country.³⁹ In 2009 the share of China in the Philippines's loan commitment portfolio amounted to US\$ 1.05 billion, an increase of 117 percent compared to the US\$ 0.483 billion average assistance in the last 10 years. ODA assistance from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), on the other hand, amounted to US\$ 3.47 billion in 2009, lower than the average US\$ 5.72 billion in the last 10 years.⁴⁰ In the case of Cambodia, Southeast Asia's most aid-dependent country where China has emerged as the largest foreign donor, Beijing provided at least US\$800 million in 2005 and 2006 with a focus on infrastructure and hydropower projects. The influence of other donors has inevitably declined. OECD donors are worried about their swindling leverage over key reform areas such as tackling corruption and strengthening good governance in Cambodia. "China has offered aid unconditionally, a policy line that has created tensions among parts of the donor community".⁴¹ In a similar vein, the PRC has increased its presence in Laos and established itself particularly in sectors, such as agriculture, forestry and infrastructure development, where other donors have reduced their role. Some donors perceive Laos as needing support to avoid being simply taken over by China. However, as Lao government officials point out, it is difficult to differentiate between Beijing's ODA and FDI as most of the funds are channelled through Chinese state companies.⁴²

According to the EU's Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) of 2006, European development cooperation with Asia is, *inter alia*, intended to consolidate and support democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, good governance, gender equality and related instruments of international law.⁴³ These priorities seem to be at odds with China's presumed self-interest driven motivations to extent ODA to the region. If the PRC's attempts at regional leadership already extend even to the highly normative domain of development cooperation, it is hard to imagine that growing Chinese preeminence would go unchallenged.

5. Mediating the Emerging Pax Sinica? The Role of ASEAN, Multilateral Cooperation and Regional Integration

"Everyone wants ASEAN to be in the driver's seat of regional co-operation because ASEAN's leadership is more acceptable in the region than China's or Japan's". This remark by Valérie Niquet, the Director of the Asia Centre at the French Institute of International

³⁸ Berger, Bernt and Uwe Wissenbach (2007): *EU-China-Africa trilateral development cooperation : common challenges and new directions*, Bonn, German Development Institute, p. 3.

³⁹ *BusinessWorld*, 03 January 2008.

⁴⁰ "China/Philippines: Beijing Doubles ODA to Philippines", *Philippines News Agency*, 24 May 2010.

⁴¹ Mills, Elizabeth: "Unconditional Aid from China Threatens to Undermine Donor Pressure on Cambodia", *Global Insight*, 7 June 2007.

⁴² Author interviews with bilateral and multilateral donors and Lao government officials in Vientiane, September 2008.

⁴³ "Regulation establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation", Official Journal of the European Union, L 378/42, *European Union (EU), European Parliament and European Council, 1905/2006* (18 December 2006), at

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:378:0041:0071:EN:PDF>.



Relations in Paris⁴⁴ reflects the general perception that the key-role in the search for, and maintenance of, multilateral arrangements in the region has been played by ASEAN ever since the organization took the initiative to apply its well-established model for regional security on a wider Asia-Pacific basis in the early 1990s. ASEAN was founded in 1967 and is often referred to as the most successful regional cooperation scheme outside Europe. The ASEAN dialogue mechanism, a set of various forms of official and informal consultation, coordination and networking at different levels of decision-making worked effectively enough to produce peaceful conflict management. Perhaps the most valuable achievement of the ASEAN security model is that it has successfully managed to keep residual conflicts between the members (especially territorial disputes) from leading to armed confrontation. Recent developments suggest that the peace dividend of the so-called ASEAN Way of regional cooperation might be successfully extended to relations between Southeast Asia and China. At least at first glance, empirical evidence seems to suggest that ASEAN has been successfully engaging China, thereby significantly contributing to order-building, security and stability in the Asia-Pacific. When the process of ASEAN identity formation seemingly expanded into the wider East Asian or Asia-Pacific region, academic analysis followed suit: The focus is now on East Asian community building and the assumed effects are similar to the observed empirical reality within Southeast Asia. The more the idea of community takes hold in East Asia, the more stable and secure the region will become, so the argument goes. China's integration in such a community is seen as key to the emergence of a peaceful international order, and ASEAN has regularly received credit for its leadership abilities and presumed success in engaging China in a growing network of regional consultative fora such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Plus Three Meeting (APT), and the East Asian Summit (EAS).

However, as the example of the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (ACFTA) shows, it was primarily China that engaged ASEAN, not the other way round. Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji first proposed a trade agreement at the ASEAN+China meeting in November 2000 in response to the Asian economic crisis and regional concerns about the impact of China's then-imminent WTO membership. Under the Framework Agreement on ASEAN-China Comprehensive Economic Co-Operation, which was officially announced and signed in November 2002, ASEAN and China envision the liberalization of 99 percent of their bilateral trade in stages: by 2010 for the ASEAN-6 and China; and 2015 for Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam.⁴⁵

Yet this proposal "also arose out of an acute sensitivity toward the need to maintain relations with as many states as possible in order to constrain American power under a global system defined by the struggle between 'one superpower, many great powers'".⁴⁶ Since China's admission into the WTO, ACFTA has further contributed to the enhancement of Beijing's position as a pre-eminent regional power, not only in relation to the United States but also at the expense of Japan. Tokyo reacted with alarm to the plan and subsequently entered into talks on a Japan-ASEAN FTA within the framework of the so-called Japan-ASEAN Comprehensive Economic Partnership. Within ASEAN China is perceived as an engine of growth, a distinction that previously belonged to Japan. ACFTA, accompanied by the offer of an early harvest, has strengthened China's status as a benevolent regional leader. Strategic, security, and political objectives are essential elements of Beijing's economic

⁴⁴ Author interview in Jeju, South Korea, October 2007.

⁴⁵ Fukagawa, Yukiko: "East Asia's New Economic Integration Strategy: Moving Beyond the FTA", *Asia-Pacific Review*, vol. 12, no. 2 (2005).

⁴⁶ Hughes, Christopher R.: "Nationalism and Multilateralism in Chinese Foreign Policy: Implications for Southeast Asia", *Pacific Review*, vol. 18, no. 1 (2005), p 127.



outreach. For example, according to one of the PRC's most senior economists, Ma Hong, "the pattern of setting up a free-trade region is a favorable direction for China to develop the relationship of regional grouping and *regional alliance*."⁴⁷ China's proposal of a "strategic partnership" with ASEAN that was made at the ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting in Phnom Penh in June 2003 has to be seen in the same context. Multilateralism in ASEAN-China relations has developed to a degree where Beijing is setting the regional agenda.⁴⁸ A European senior diplomat confirms this for meetings between the EU and China. "China is very proactive on political issues and increasingly open to agendas that used to be taboo only a short while ago, including regionalism, monetary integration, and even democracy and civil society. Beijing is constantly testing new ideas. Anything goes as long as Taiwan, Tibet and Falun Gong are not mentioned".⁴⁹

The first East Asian Summit in Kuala Lumpur in December 2005 is another point in case. The meeting was attended by the ten ASEAN members, China, Japan, South Korea, India, New Zealand, and Australia. Japan's suggestion that Washington at least be invited as an observer made no headway mainly as the result of Beijing's effort to exclude the United States. Behind ASEAN's closed doors, Indonesia and Vietnam were especially critical of Washington's exclusion but did not want to challenge Beijing. According to Abdul Razak Baginda⁵⁰, "there is now this feeling that we have to consult the Chinese. We have to accept some degree of Chinese leadership, particularly in light of the lack of leadership elsewhere"⁵¹. Recent interviews that this author conducted with senior officials of ASEAN member governments confirm this perception. China has both an interest and the capabilities (in terms of hard power and, most important, soft power as the example of ACFTA demonstrates) to provide regional leadership. However, this does not mean that China always gets its way. For example, prior to the first East Asian Summit China's offer to host the second meeting was rejected by ASEAN.⁵² China was equally unsuccessful in lobbying the Vietnamese government for the exclusion of Taiwan from the APEC Summit in November 2006 in Hanoi and the right of sitting next to the host at the summit meetings (the seating was instead arranged in alphabetical order as at previous APEC summits).⁵³

6. Conclusion and Outlook: Southeast Asia's Growing Acceptance of Chinese Regional Leadership – and the Limits to it

If community building and identity formation take place in the Asia Pacific in general and in Sino-Southeast Asia relations in particular, they are not the prime driving forces behind growing regional stability but rather mask, or perhaps ease, the effects of China's increasing international preeminence. From a neorealist perspective it can be argued that relative order and peace in the formerly war-prone region have not derived from ASEAN's leadership in engaging China in multilateral fora but are mainly due to the rising concentration of Chinese

⁴⁷ Keith, Ronald C.: "China as a Rising World Power and Its Response to "Globalization"", *Review of International Affairs*, vol. 3, no. 4 (2004), p. 514, emphasis added.

⁴⁸ Hughes, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

⁴⁹ Author interview in Singapore, April 2006.

⁵⁰ Abdul Razak Baginda is the executive director of the Malaysian Strategic Research Center.

⁵¹ Quoted in Cody, Edward: "China's Quiet Rise Casts Wide Shadow", *Washington Post*, 26 January 2005.

⁵² Yamakage, Susumu: "The construction of an East Asian order and the limitations of the ASEAN model", *Asia-Pacific Review*, vol. 2, no. 12 (2005), p. 3.

⁵³ Author interview with a Vietnamese journalist who covered the APEC summit and its preparations, Hanoi, April 2007.



power in Southeast Asia. When one state possesses considerably more economic, military, and political power resources than the other states in a system of states, it can use that power to coerce the other states or provide them with selective incentives in order to induce cooperation. In this manner, the dominant state increases the costs of defection and decreases the risks of cooperation, thereby making peace and stability possible.⁵⁴

On the one hand, the PRC's foreign policy since the early 1990s is characterized by a "gradual acceptance of a multilateral approach towards Southeast Asia"⁵⁵ and "a more vigorous approach to multilateralism at both the international and regional level".⁵⁶ On the other hand, there can be little doubt that Beijing is challenging ASEAN's trademark role as the architect of multilateral cooperation in the post-cold war Asia-Pacific and, partly as the result of ASEAN's weaknesses and partly due to China's quest for preeminence, has more and more assumed the position of first among equals in the existing multilateral frameworks. While China's active integration in multilateral activities has seemingly improved Sino-ASEAN relations, relative stability and peace between the two sides are not primarily the result of institution building and community formation, an eastward extension of the ASEAN way of diplomacy, or an emerging liberal peace deriving from tighter networks of economic cooperation. As the South China Sea disputes, cooperation in the GMS and the PRC's rapidly growing role as a donor demonstrate China is increasingly assuming a regional leadership role that sets the rules because this role is perceived as being favorable to the enhancement of the PRC's national interest. Furthermore, and equally important, Beijing's leading role as a manager of regional order is acceptable to key players in Southeast Asia as they see their own benefits as the result of cooperation with China. While China does not promote its system of governance abroad – in the way that OECD donors tie development aid to good governance or the US has followed the credo of manifest destiny in the transfer of political norms and values – the Deng and post-Deng reform process provides an attractive model in some parts of Southeast Asia and particularly to Vietnam and possibly also Laos.⁵⁷

While the Spratly Islands disputes remain unresolved and concerns over China's use of the Mekong's resources have not been entirely eliminated, as explained, the perception among Southeast Asian elites that ASEAN and China share the profits of regional order management in an overall situation of a positive-sum game has been growing. China *has integrated ASEAN* into a regional order that, while not hostile to multilateralism, mainly reflects hard strategic thinking on Beijing's part and is primarily based on rules established by the PRC. Unthinkable only a decade ago, the acceptance of regional Chinese leadership in the management of security has grown. ASEAN diplomats have begun turning to Chinese colleagues for guidance during international meetings. Only a short while ago Chinese diplomats were viewed as outsiders by their Southeast Asian counterparts.⁵⁸

As the PRC's growing preeminence in the management of regional order is accepted and even perceived as beneficial for the region by key governmental elites in Southeast Asia, the international relationship between China and ASEAN will increasingly generate stability. Due to the reciprocal nature of this system, which generates benefits for both the dominant

⁵⁴ Ripsman, Norrin M.: "Two Stages of Transition from a Region of War to a Region of Peace: Realist Transition and Liberal Endurance", *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 49 (2005), pp. 669-93.

⁵⁵ Hughes, *op. cit.*

⁵⁶ Keith, *op. cit.*

⁵⁷ Dosch, Jörn and Alexander Vuving (2008): *The Impact of China on Governance Structures in Vietnam*, Bonn, German Institute for Development (DIE).

⁵⁸ This assessment is based on author interviews with senior government officials conducted in Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Laos and at the ASEAN Secretariat between 2008 and 2010.



and the lesser actors, and in the absence of clear systemic alternatives, “no state believes it profitable to attempt to change the system,” as Robert Gilpin⁵⁹ put it in general terms. China-Southeast Asia relations might not have reached a state of complete equilibrium as a result, but they are more stable than they have ever been before.

Is this too simplistic a view? Do Beijing’s growing security and economic links with Southeast Asia and proactive role in multilateral fora indeed attest to China ever increasing regional influence and leadership? Or are we easily blinded by a highly successful mix of Chinese ‘win-win’ rhetoric and China hype? Certainly, it should not be ignored that there are limitations to the Southeast Asian embrace of Chinese preeminence. For example, a sense of resentment toward China, emanating from historical legacies, persists within much of Vietnam’s political élite, as remained the case with a proportion of the wider Vietnamese population. A low point in diplomatic relations was reached in December 2007 when thousands of Vietnamese took to the streets of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City to protest against what they viewed as China’s incursions into Vietnamese territory in the South China Sea (the first rally in half a century in communist Vietnam).⁶⁰ Anti-China protests resurfaced in December 2008 but were quickly overwhelmed by the Vietnamese government forces. This is where the United States re-enters the scene. No two sets of bilateral relationships are more important to Vietnam than its relations with China *and* the United States. Maintaining the best possible balance in its relations with the two powers has emerged as the cornerstone of Vietnam’s foreign relations in the post Cold War era. All Southeast East Asian governments (with Myanmar being the only notable exception) hedge against China by sustaining their links with the US because “Washington is seen as the ‘least distrusted power’ in Southeast Asia with no territorial or other ambitions directly at odds with ASEAN states’ interests”.⁶¹ In the 1990s Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia signed military access arrangements with the United States, followed in 1999 by the implementation of the US-Philippines Visiting Forces Agreement. These arrangements form part of a broader set of military cooperation and training activities in Washington’s relations with Southeast Asian states that follow a new approach of a “places not bases” policy in the region. In 2003 the US granted Philippines and Thailand “major non-NATO ally” status, which entitles the two governments to special access to US intelligence, among other privileges. In 2005 Singapore and the US signed a Strategic Framework Agreement for closer partnership in defence and security cooperation based on the explicit premise that “a strong United States military presence is vital for regional peace and stability” (Strategic Framework Agreement, Art. 1a).

Beyond long-term strategic considerations, both the US and ASEAN states consider an American military presence as a decisive – probably the most important – contribution to securing the commercial routes in the region. US military power in the Asia-Pacific is based on the presence and mission of the 7th Fleet, the largest of the Navy’s forward-deployed fleets, including 40-50 ships, 200 aircraft and about 20,000 Navy and Marine Corps personnel. As for American soft power in Southeast Asia, US exports to ASEAN are currently more than twice as large as US exports to China. Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia are among the top twenty-five trading partners of the United States. Furthermore, the United States is by far the largest overall investor in Southeast Asia, followed by Japan and the United Kingdom. Washington has signed trade and investment framework agreements (TIFA)

⁵⁹ Gilpin, Robert (1981): *War and Change in World Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p. 10.

⁶⁰ Vuving, Alexander L. (2008): “Vietnam. Arriving in the World – and at the Crossroads”, *Southeast Asian Affairs*, no. 1 (2008), pp. 375-393.

⁶¹ Goh, Evelyn and Simon, Sheldon W.: “Introduction”, in Goh, Evelyn and Simon, Sheldon W. (eds.) (2008): *China, the United States, and Southeast Asia. Contending perspectives on politics, security, and economics*, New York and London, Routledge, p. 7.



with Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam and is negotiating FTAs with Thailand and Malaysia. Preliminary free trade talks have been conducted with the Philippines and Vietnam. While “the United States has used FTAs as political rewards for countries that support US foreign and security policies”,⁶² the strategy works because it is a two-way street. American and Southeast Asian views on the mutually reinforcing links between economic and security gains overlap. Recent developments suggest that the United States will not drastically change its strategic approaches towards Southeast Asia. Absent irrational leadership or a catastrophic attack, the most likely mid-term scenario for the US role in the region is a continuation of bilateral patterns in economic and security relations characterised by economic partnerships and free trade agreements on the one hand and defence arrangements on the other with a growing number of Southeast Asian states. Furthermore, opposition to the U.S. international role has been relatively low-key in Southeast Asia in recent years, even during the Iraq war. Yet, if any single actor was to challenge the well-established American position as a *primus inter pares* among the external powers in Southeast Asia, China is the most likely candidate. For the time being and to the extent that their limited autonomy toward regional order building allows, the Southeast Asian governments – individually and collectively through ASEAN - keep their international options open and pursue a double hedging strategy which is aimed at taking maximum advantage of both Beijing’s and Washington’s strong involvement in the region while trying to prevent the (re-)emergence of any type of hegemony, be it American or Chinese.

⁶² Pang, Eul-Soon: “Embedding Security into Free Trade: The Case of the United States-Singapore Free Trade Agreement”, *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 29, no. 1 (2007), p. 2.



EL ASCENSO DE CHINA EN ASIA CENTRAL: ¿UN NUEVO HEGEMÓN REGIONAL EN GESTACIÓN?

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Resumen:

China tiene un papel cada vez más relevante en Asia Central. Beijing lidera la Organización de Cooperación de Shanghai, el foro de cooperación regional más dinámico y con una creciente relevancia en el panorama comercial, energético y de seguridad centroasiático. Este ascenso chino supone un desplazamiento progresivo de Rusia, el hegemón tradicional y cuyos intereses parecen crecientemente divergentes con los de China, a pesar del aparente entendimiento entre ambos durante los últimos años. En el artículo, se analizan la acción e intereses de China agrupados en cinco dimensiones: fronteriza, uigur, comercial, energética y geopolítica.

Palabras clave: Asia Central, China, Geopolítica, Energía, Organización de Cooperación de Shanghai, Relaciones Internacionales, Uigur, Xinjiang.

Title in English: “*The Rise of China in Central Asia: ¿a New Regional Hegemon in the Making?*”

Abstract:

China has a growing role in Central Asia. Beijing leads the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the most dynamic regional forum, which has an increasing relevance on the Central Asian trade, energy and security issues. The Chinese rise entails a progressive displacement of Russia, the traditional regional hegemon and whose interests seem increasingly diverging with Chinese ones, in spite of the apparent atmosphere of understanding between them during the recent times. In this article, the action and interests of China are analyzed grouped under the border, Uighur, trade, energy and geopolitical dimensions.

Keywords: *Central Asia, Geopolitics, Energy, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, International Relations, Uighur, Xinjiang.*

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1. Introducción

El creciente papel de China en Asia Central es una de las mayores transformaciones en la geopolítica regional desde 1991. En las casi dos décadas transcurridas desde la independencia de las repúblicas centroasiáticas, Beijing ha puesto las bases para una relación estrecha y de largo alcance con una región de interés estratégico. De un primer impulso marcado por el deseo de superación de los litigios fronterizos y el desmantelamiento del dispositivo uigur en Asia Central, se ha pasado a un periodo en el que las cuestiones energéticas y comerciales ocupan un lugar cada vez más destacado en la agenda bilateral y multilateral. Precisamente, la creciente multilateralización de esta relación a través de la Organización de Cooperación de Shanghai (OCS) es uno de los aspectos más novedosos y aparentemente con mayores perspectivas de desarrollo. Por su papel en las cuestiones energéticas, comerciales y de seguridad, China se ha convertido en un actor clave en la dinámica regional y de mantenerse la tendencia actual podría alcanzar una posición dominante en un futuro próximo.

No obstante, su acción se ve condicionada por los recelos que despierta su enorme potencial económico, demográfico y militar, especialmente en Kazajstán y Kirguistán y también en Rusia, tradicional hegemón regional y cuyos intereses parecen crecientemente divergentes con los de China, a pesar del aparente entendimiento entre ambos durante los últimos años. En su acercamiento a la región, Beijing debe contar con la acción de otros actores tales como EEUU, la UE, Japón, Turquía, India, Pakistán o Irán, cuyo interés también está relacionado con los recursos energéticos y la ubicación geoestratégica de Asia Central. Sin embargo, los intereses de China son, en algunas cuestiones, más numerosos y específicos si se comparan con los de estos actores. Así, además del evidente interés en acceder a los hidrocarburos del Caspio y el uranio kazajo, para China es de interés estratégico garantizar la estabilidad en su frontera Oeste y evitar eventuales desarrollos hostiles en la región, ya sea por la presencia de otras grandes potencias, fundamentalmente EEUU, como por la acción de organizaciones uigures con vínculos transfronterizos. Además, y vinculado con lo anterior, China quiere fomentar las sinergias económicas con los países vecinos, consolidando el rol de Xinjiang como polo de crecimiento regional de la Eurasia interior, a través, entre otros, del fortalecimiento de su papel como centro de redistribución logística y energética y del eventual establecimiento de una zona de libre comercio con Asia Central.

La acción e intereses de Beijing pueden agruparse en cinco dimensiones: fronteriza, uigur, comercial, energética y geopolítica. Estas dimensiones se han ido desarrollando, en buena medida de forma secuencial, lo cual facilita una visión cronológica y permite situar más ajustadamente los parámetros del creciente papel de China en Asia Central y evaluar sus perspectivas de evolución.

2. Dimensión fronteriza

Con la desaparición de la Unión Soviética, las cuestiones fronterizas son las primeras que ocupan la agenda entre China y las nuevas repúblicas independientes de Asia Central. En 1991, existían áreas fronterizas disputadas² y a pesar del deshielo sino-soviético de la segunda mitad de los años 80, era una cuestión que aún podía provocar fricciones graves. En Kazajstán

² Existían un total de diecinueve áreas disputadas que suponían alrededor de 34.000 km² distribuidos de la siguiente manera: once áreas disputadas con Kazajstán (2.235 km²); cinco con Kirguistán (3.728 km²); y tres con Tayikistán (28.430 km²). Véase Polat, Necati (2002): *Boundary issues in Central Asia*, Nueva York, Transnational Publishers, pp. 40 y ss.



y Kirguistán existía –y aún existe en algunos sectores– un clima de recelo y desconfianza con respecto a hipotéticas reclamaciones territoriales chinas. En un momento en el que, conviene no perder de vista, se asistía a la descomposición del Ejército Rojo y ambos países afrontaban un periodo de enorme incertidumbre institucional y política. Del lado chino se temía que una posible inestabilidad o incluso descomposición de las repúblicas centroasiáticas pudiera afectar gravemente a la propia estabilidad de la región fronteriza de Xinjiang. La preocupación china se agudizaba además por la permanencia en Kazajstán de un importante arsenal nuclear, compuesto por 104 misiles balísticos intercontinentales (ICBM) SS-18 con unas 1.200 cabezas nucleares operativas que convertían *de facto* a la nueva república independiente en la cuarta potencia nuclear mundial.

China tiene algo más de 3.300 km. fronterizos con las repúblicas centroasiáticas, distribuidos de la siguiente manera: 1.700 km. con Kazajstán, 1.000 km. con Kirguistán y 450 km. con Tayikistán. Esta frontera es el resultado histórico de la confluencia en el área de Semirechie y la Djungaria de la expansión imperial rusa y china, durante la segunda mitad del siglo XIX y había quedado fijada, fundamentalmente con el tratado de San Petersburgo de 1881 y sus provisiones subsiguientes. No obstante, la rivalidad y litigios fronterizos entre Moscú y Beijing se mantuvieron durante todo el siglo XX y, de hecho, las escaramuzas y tensiones fueron frecuentes. Las autoridades soviéticas, una vez consolidado su dominio sobre Asia Central, instrumentalizaron las aspiraciones uigures sobre el territorio de Xinjiang, en función del estado de su relación con Beijing. En algunos momentos Moscú se planteó incluso o bien incorporar parte del territorio de Xinjiang a la propia Unión Soviética o bien apoyar la creación de una república uigur independiente.³ Por su parte Beijing, una vez establecida la República Popular China (RPC), además de tratar de consolidar su dominio sobre Xinjiang frente al independentismo uigur y la penetración rusa, consideraba que los acuerdos del siglo XIX, formaban parte de los “tratados desiguales” y que, en consecuencia deberían ser revisados. De hecho, en China se utilizaban mapas en los que el territorio al sur del lago Baljash (en Kazajstán), al que China había renunciado como consecuencia del tratado de Chuguchak de 1864, formaba parte de la RPC.⁴ Estas disputas fronterizas, unidas al progresivo deterioro de la relación entre Moscú y Beijing durante los años 50 y 60, tuvieron como resultado los graves enfrentamientos armados de 1969 en los alrededores del lago Zhalanashkol (Kazajstán), además del cierre de la frontera sino-soviética desde 1962 hasta mediados de los años 80.

De esta manera, en el momento de las independencias seguían existiendo áreas fronterizas disputadas. No obstante, China fue de los primeros países en establecer relaciones diplomáticas y reconocer oficialmente a estos nuevos Estados independientes. El consenso sobre la necesidad de contar con unas fronteras seguras y claramente delimitadas facilitó el rápido inicio de las negociaciones sobre las cuestiones fronterizas cuyo marco quedó fijado en sendas declaraciones conjuntas que firmó China con Kazajstán el 28 de febrero de 1992, con Kirguistán el 6 de mayo de ese mismo año y con Tayikistán el 11 de marzo del año siguiente. Además de estas conversaciones bilaterales, se inició un diálogo multilateral paralelo sobre medidas de confianza en las áreas fronterizas bajo la fórmula conocida como 4+1, es decir de China por un lado y los cuatro Estados sucesores de la URSS con los que tiene frontera, Rusia, Kazajstán, Kirguistán y Tayikistán, por otro.

³ Fundamentalmente de 1944 a 1949 durante la existencia de la prosoviética segunda república del Turkestan Oriental en los distritos de Ili, Tarbagatai y Altai, fronterizos con la propia URSS.

⁴ Laumulin, Murat (2005): “China’s current policy in Central Asia”, *Central Asia’s Affairs*, nº 2 (2005), p. 24.



La resolución la cuestión fronteriza fue sorprendentemente rápida, si consideramos las décadas de enfrentamiento por esta cuestión. Así, en abril de 1994 Kazajstán y China firman un primer acuerdo que definía la frontera común, y dejaba la demarcación de algunas áreas disputadas para la comisión conjunta creada *ad hoc*, cuyo trabajo conduce al acuerdo fronterizo final firmado por ambas partes el 4 de abril de 1998. Con Kirguistán la cuestión fue algo más compleja debido a las repercusiones internas del proceso. El 4 de julio de 1996 se firmó un acuerdo inicial, y el 28 de octubre de 1998 un segundo acuerdo de delimitación, cuyos capítulos suplementarios fueron los que ocasionaron protestas en Kirguistán una vez que fueron conocidos durante el debate de ratificación parlamentario de mayo de 2001. El malestar con este acuerdo se derivaba de la cesión a China de unas 90.000 hectáreas de territorio montañoso rico en acuíferos y la percepción de que el entonces presidente kirguiz, Askar Akáyev, se había doblegado ante las demandas de Beijing. No obstante y a pesar de lo anterior, la realidad es que China sólo ha mantenido un 20% del territorio disputado con Kazajstán y un 30% del disputado con Kirguistán.⁵ Por último, el acuerdo entre China y Tayikistán se retrasó hasta 2002 fundamentalmente por las dificultades experimentadas por Dushanbé como consecuencia de su guerra civil (1992-1997) y por el carácter extremadamente montañoso y remoto de las áreas fronterizas. Por su parte, con Rusia existía ya un acuerdo inicial del 15 de mayo de 1991, alcanzado en los últimos meses de existencia de la URSS, y que culminó con el acuerdo final de noviembre de 1998, que ponía fin a las largas disputas fronterizas entre Moscú y Beijing.⁶ De esta manera, la cuestión fronteriza ha quedado resuelta en cuanto a delimitación y a demarcación, dando paso a cuestiones relacionadas con la gestión de los puestos fronterizos y el ingente y creciente tránsito de mercancías y personas.

Por otro lado, el diálogo multilateral sobre seguridad fronteriza condujo a la firma de dos acuerdos clave para la geopolítica regional. En primer lugar el “Acuerdo sobre la creación de confianza militar en las áreas fronterizas” firmado el 26 de abril de 1996 en Shanghai y por el que, China, Rusia, Kazajstán, Kirguistán y Tayikistán se comprometían entre otros a no atacarse, a informar de las actividades relevantes que realicen en un radio de 100 km. de la frontera y a no realizar ejercicios que puedan ser percibidos por la otra parte como una amenaza. En segundo lugar, los mismos Estados firmaron el “Acuerdo sobre la reducción de fuerzas en las áreas fronterizas” el 24 de abril de 1997, por el que se comprometían a reducir sus fuerzas, a que éstas fueran de naturaleza defensiva, a intercambiar información, supervisar al implementación del acuerdo, etcétera.⁷ A partir de entonces, los jefes de Estado de estos países mantuvieron reuniones informales con carácter anual para tratar cuestiones de seguridad regional, en lo que se conocería oficiosamente como “Grupo de Shanghai” y que fue el germen de la Organización de Cooperación de Shanghai, que se analiza con más detalle en el último apartado.

La resolución de los litigios fronterizos con los Estados sucesores de la URSS y la implementación de medidas de creación de confianza son de enorme importancia para China, porque son una garantía de estabilidad y seguridad en más de 7.000 km. de territorio fronterizo y le permiten concentrar sus esfuerzos militares en otras áreas más complejas como la frontera con Corea del Norte o el estrecho de Taiwán. Por otro lado, los 3.300 km. de

⁵ Umarov, Adiljan y Pashkun, Dmitry: “Tensions in Sino-Central Asian Relations and their Implications for Regional Security”, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, Conflict Studies Research Centre, *Central Asian Series*, vol. 06, nº 2 (2006), p.7.

⁶ Véase Polat, *op.cit.*, pp. 17-45.

⁷ Véase Huasheng, Zhao (2007): “Central Asia in China’s Diplomacy”, en Rumer, Eugene, Trenin, Dmitri and Huasheng, Zhao: *Central Asia. Views from Washington, Moscow and Beijing*, Nueva York y Londres, M.E. Sharpe, pp. 139-140.



territorio chino fronterizo con Asia Central, se encuentran en la región autónoma del Xinjiang Uigur por lo que para comprender su acercamiento a sus vecinos del Oeste también es necesario considerar la situación en esta zona.

3. La dimensión uigur

Xinjiang y la minoría uigur representan uno de los grandes desafíos nacionales de la RPC. El malestar de los uigures y el auge de las actividades secesionistas y los sucesos violentos preocupan notablemente a las autoridades chinas. En el momento actual el dominio chino y la integridad territorial de la RPC no parecen en peligro, pero la conflictividad existente puede provocar una grave desestabilización del Oeste de China.⁸

En Asia Central existe una considerable comunidad uigur que se concentra fundamentalmente en las áreas fronterizas con Xinjiang de Kazajstán y Kirguistán. Al igual que sucede con la demarcación fronteriza, la presencia de esta población está muy relacionada con la rivalidad histórica entre Moscú y Beijing en la zona. Así, las dos grandes oleadas migratorias de uigures hacia los territorios de los actuales Kazajstán y Kirguistán se produjeron en 1881-84 y en 1954-62. En el primer caso, unos 43.000 uigures se trasladaron de Guljá a Semirechie como resultado de la retirada rusa de la Djungaria acordada en el tratado de San Petersburgo de 1881, antes referido. En el segundo caso, de nuevo unos 40.000 uigures cruzaron la frontera animados por las autoridades soviéticas en plena escalada de tensión con la China maoísta.⁹ Moscú tradicionalmente instrumentalizaba a los uigures en su rivalidad y enfrentamiento con Beijing. Durante la época soviética, Tashkent y, sobre todo Almaty¹⁰ eran el centro de operaciones de la actividad antichina de la diáspora uigur.¹¹ Esta actividad contaba con el apoyo explícito de Moscú.¹²

Con la desaparición de la Unión Soviética, el principal objetivo de Beijing era evitar que las nuevas repúblicas continuaran con esta política de apoyo y promoción de la causa uigur y, al mismo tiempo, prevenir que el progresivo auge de las relaciones transfronterizas supusiera también un aumento de la cooperación entre las organizaciones de la diáspora uigur en Asia Central y los activistas uigures en Xinjiang. Aunque los contextos chino y soviético eran nítidamente diferentes, lo cierto es que la proclamación de repúblicas túrquicas soberanas en Asia Central catalizó las aspiraciones uigures de un Uiguristán o Turkeistán Oriental

⁸ Para una visión de conjunto puede verse De Pedro, Nicolás: “El conflicto de Xinjiang: la minoría uigur y la política de Pekín”, *UNISCI Discussion Papers*, nº16 (Enero 2008), pp. 111-140 ; De Pedro, Nicolás: “China: claves del conflicto de Xinjiang”, *Boletín Safe Democracy* (Julio 2009), en <http://spanish.safe-democracy.org/2009/07/15/china-claves-y-parametros-historicos-del-conflicto-de-xinjiang/>.

⁹ Para una visión de conjunto de las migraciones y comunidades uigures centroasiáticas véase Kamalov, Ablet (2005): “Uighur community in 1990s Central Asia: A decade of change” en Atabaki, Touraj y Mehendale, Sanjyot (eds.): *Central Asia and the Caucasus. Transnationalism and diaspora*, Routledge Londres y Nueva York, pp. 148 – 168; y Clark, William y Kamalov, Ablet: “Uigur migrations across Central Asian frontiers”, *Central Asian Survey*, vol. 23 nº2 (2004), pp. 167-182.

¹⁰ Alma-Ata por aquel entonces.

¹¹ Se trataba fundamentalmente de emisiones radiofónicas de propaganda uigur y soviética hacia el territorio de Xinjiang.

¹² De hecho, las autoridades soviéticas llegaron incluso a plantearse seriamente la creación de un *oblast* autónomo uigur en tres distritos del territorio kazajo. El punto culminante de esta política fue el ascenso del uigur Ismail Yusupov al puesto de primer secretario del Partido Comunista de Kazajstán en 1962, aunque fue defenestrado en 1964 poco después de la destitución de Jrushov. Por otro lado, el proyecto de creación de un *oblast* uigur en el territorio de Semirechie es uno más de los elementos que tradicionalmente han generado suspicacias entre los kazajos con respecto al activismo uigur.



independientes. A principios de la década de los noventa, esta efervescencia uigur en Xinjiang se combinaba con una cierta permisividad con las actividades de la comunidad uigur en Kazajstán y Kirguistán. Los temores kazajos y kirguises frente a las potenciales reclamaciones territoriales chinas estaban detrás de esta inicial tolerancia; y fue precisamente para revertir esta situación, por lo que Beijing impulsó un rápido acercamiento a sus nuevos vecinos.

La resolución de los largos litigios fronterizos, la predisposición cooperativa china y la delicada situación que atravesaban las repúblicas centroasiáticas en el período inmediatamente posterior a la desaparición soviética facilitaron este acercamiento. Progresivamente Beijing introdujo las cuestiones uigures en la agenda. Tanto Kazajstán como Kirguistán tenían mucho que ganar de una relación amistosa con China, y mucho que perder con una hipotética inestabilidad transfronteriza debida a la actividad secesionista uigur. Por ello, esta permisividad inicial se transformó rápidamente en control y represión sobre las actividades de la diáspora uigur.¹³

En el caso de Kazajstán, país que alberga la mayor comunidad uigur fuera de China, este acercamiento se vio facilitado por la total oposición de los dirigentes kazajos a cualquier movimiento o propuesta separatista. Fundamentalmente, por el temor ante las posibles demandas secesionistas de la amplia comunidad étnicamente rusa del norte del país, pero también por el malestar kazajo ante el desarrollo de cierto irredentismo uigur con respecto al territorio de Semirechie, fronterizo a su vez con Xinjiang.¹⁴

En cualquier caso, fueron los crecientes vínculos económicos y comerciales y las garantías de seguridad ofrecidas por la RPC las que facilitaron el acercamiento en las cuestiones uigures. Progresivamente China atrajo al resto de miembros del Grupo de Shanghai a su concepción de lucha contra las “tres fuerzas” –el terrorismo, el extremismo y el separatismo–, que es como Beijing caracteriza al activismo uigur. Así, en julio de 1998 los cinco países firmaron una declaración conjunta en Almaty en la que manifestaban su vocación de luchar conjuntamente contra el terrorismo y se comprometían a no permitir actividades en sus territorios que pudieran dañar la soberanía, seguridad o paz social de otro de los países firmantes.

Como resultado de este acercamiento, actualmente no se permite ninguna actividad uigur local que promueva o apoye el secesionismo en Xinjiang, aunque existen diferencias entre los países. Uzbekistán es el país que ejerce una mayor represión, aunque dado el menor número de uigures y la ausencia de frontera con Xinjiang resulta menos relevante para China. En Kirguistán el entorno político más abierto y las limitaciones del Estado facilitan un mayor dinamismo de la diáspora uigur local. En Kazajstán se permite la actividad cultural uigur y cierto nivel asociativo, pero bajo un riguroso control. Como resultado de estas dificultades, la actividad política de la diáspora uigur ha desplazado su centro de gravedad hacia Munich y Washington. Ocasionalmente se sugieren vínculos entre organizaciones uigures centroasiáticas y grupos separatistas dentro de Xinjiang, pero hasta el momento, no hay

¹³ Para más detalles puede verse De Pedro, Nicolás: “El Conflicto fuera de Xinjiang: la diáspora uigur y la política exterior china”, Real Instituto Elcano, *ARI*, nº 138, (Octubre 2009).

¹⁴ Así por ejemplo, no es casual que una de las mayores transformaciones dentro de la Academia de las Ciencias de la República de Kazajstán durante la década de los noventa fuera la desaparición como tal del otrora ampliamente respaldado Instituto de Estudios Uigures y su reestablecimiento como Centro Uigur adscrito al Instituto de Estudios Orientales. El descenso de categoría vino acompañado de una drástica reducción de plantilla -de más de ochenta personas a las once actuales-, financiación y más importante aún, de las líneas de investigación. Para más detalles puede verse De Pedro, Nicolás (2006): “Balance y perspectivas de la relación de Kazajstán con China (1991-2006)” en San Ginés Aguilar, Pedro (ed.): *La investigación sobre Asia Pacífico en España*, Granada, Universidad de Granada, pp.792-795.



información pública disponible ni tampoco elementos sobre el terreno que permitan inferir una colaboración significativa.¹⁵

En cualquier caso, lo que es evidente es que Asia Central no se ha convertido en ningún santuario para el separatismo uigur y que la región no tiene un influencia destacable en la estabilidad o inestabilidad de Xinjiang, que tiene causas y dinámicas internas. De hecho, la preocupación sobre las implicaciones transfronterizas del secesionismo uigur parece ahora mayor del lado kazajo que del chino.

Durante los graves disturbios de julio de 2009 en Urumchí, las repúblicas centroasiáticas apoyaron sin fisuras a las autoridades chinas. El 10 de julio la Secretaría General de la OCS, encabezada en aquel momento por el kazajo Bolat Nurgalíyev, hizo pública una Declaración mediante la que los miembros de la organización expresaban sus condolencias por las “víctimas inocentes” y se reafirmaban en el carácter “inalienable” de la soberanía china sobre Xinjiang, comprometiéndose a profundizar su cooperación en la lucha contra el terrorismo, el separatismo, el extremismo y el crimen organizado transnacional.¹⁶ Es decir, una asunción acrítica de la posición de Beijing con respecto a la situación de los uigures y Xinjiang. No obstante, en Kazajstán existen ciertas voces oficiosas críticas con respecto a la dureza china, ya que desde la perspectiva kazaja es esta misma dureza la que impide la integración armoniosa de los uigures en la RPC y promueve la radicalización de determinados segmentos de la población uigur. La preocupación de Astaná, está también muy relacionada con el alto desarrollo del comercio transfronterizo, que es clave en la economía kazaja y que representa oficialmente un 15% de su comercio exterior -aunque el porcentaje real probablemente es considerablemente mayor-.

En Xinjiang, China combina la represión con los grandes planes de desarrollo, con la expectativa de que la prosperidad diluya la resistencia uigur y la mejora de las infraestructuras y las comunicaciones fortalezcan la integración de la región autónoma con el resto de la RPC. Hasta la fecha, la explotación intensiva de las materias primas y el incremento de las relaciones comerciales transfronterizas son el eje de las políticas chinas. En ambas cuestiones, la cooperación de las repúblicas centroasiáticas resulta prioritaria. En cuanto al comercio transfronterizo, cooperar en el desarrollo de las infraestructuras, la gestión fronteriza y las facilidades fiscales es primordial. En cuanto a las materias primas de Xinjiang, el papel de Asia Central es indirecto, pero igual de relevante. La costosísima extracción de los hidrocarburos del subsuelo de Xinjiang resulta más asumible financieramente si los nuevos oleoductos y gasoductos también se alimentan de petróleo y gas natural proveniente de la cuenca del mar Caspio.

En clave uigur hay que indicar que en un primer momento, fueron, junto con los dunganos centroasiáticos, los agentes del inicial desarrollo comercial. Sin embargo, progresivamente han perdido protagonismo, tanto por el interés de China en que este comercio no esté monopolizado por uigures como por la propia participación de comerciantes chinos *han* con mayores recursos y posibilidades y la de los mismos kazajos y kirguises, deseosos de evitar intermediarios y obtener mayores beneficios del imparable auge de las relaciones comerciales con China.

¹⁵ De Pedro: “El conflicto fuera de Xinjiang:...”, *op.cit.*, p. 3.

¹⁶ Véase “Генеральный секретарь ШОС Б. Нурғалиев сделал заявление в связи с событиями в г. Урумчи Синьцзян-Уйгурского автономного района КНР”, disponible en <http://www.sectSCO.org/RU/Yolder.asp>.



4. Dimensión comercial

La superación de las disputas fronterizas, y la incipiente cooperación y convergencia conceptual en materia de seguridad genera un clima de creciente confianza entre los vecinos centroasiáticos de China y viene acompañada del desarrollo de las relaciones comerciales; que es la dimensión en la que con mayor claridad se aprecia su creciente presencia y es en la que, con toda seguridad, su papel se reforzará aún más en los próximos años.

La reapertura de la frontera sino-soviética a mediados de los años ochenta es el punto de arranque de este comercio transfronterizo. Los contactos establecidos en las postrimerías de la Unión Soviética, facilitan su despegue después de las independencias.¹⁷ Durante la década de los 90 este comercio al alza, mantiene unos volúmenes modestos, y es a partir de los años 2000, cuando se acelera espectacularmente. Así, se pasa de un volumen de negocio entre China y Asia Central menor a 500 millones de dólares en 1992 a más de 20 mil millones en 2008. La mayor parte de este comercio se realiza con Kazajstán, que supone alrededor de un 70% del total, seguido en volumen por Kirguistán. La evolución y patrones del comercio sino-kazajo reflejan nítidamente la tendencia general. Así, se ha pasado de un total de 369 millones de dólares en 1992, a 2.300 en 2002, 8.700 en 2005 y 15.000 millones en 2008. Con Kirguistán, por su parte, se ha pasado de un volumen de negocio de menos de 200 millones de dólares en el año 2000 a casi 4.000 millones en 2007.¹⁸

La importancia cualitativa del comercio entre las dos áreas varía sustancialmente si consideramos a China por un lado y Asia Central por otro. Mientras que para China su comercio con Asia Central no representa ni un 1% de su comercio exterior, para las repúblicas centroasiáticas, la RPC es un socio comercial cada vez más importante: para Kazajstán representa un 15% de su comercio exterior, para Kirguistán el 35%, para Tayikistán un 11%, para Uzbekistán un 6% y para Turkmenistán un 2%. No obstante, con respecto a las cifras hay que indicar varias cuestiones. En primer lugar, que en los casos de Uzbekistán y Tayikistán las cifras no reflejan la situación fielmente ya que, al igual que sucede en Kazajstán y Kirguistán, hay una gran abundancia de productos chinos en sus mercados que no se importan directamente, sino que son reexportados desde Kirguistán. De hecho, hay estimaciones que sugieren que el 75% de los bienes chinos importados por Kirguistán son reexportados y que ésta es, incluso, la segunda actividad en importancia de la economía kirguiz. Por otro lado, la cifra de porcentaje total para China varía completamente si se toma como referencia exclusivamente Xinjiang, ya que el 80% del comercio de esta región se realiza, precisamente, con Asia Central y de ahí se deriva su importancia estratégica para Beijing. Por último, hay que indicar que estas cifras sirven como un buen indicador general, pero deben ser consideradas con numerosas cautelas debido también al alto nivel de fraude y a la permisividad fronteriza con el comercio informal. Por su propia naturaleza, obviamente no

¹⁷ Así, en septiembre de 1985 una delegación de parlamentarios soviéticos había visitado, entre otras partes de China, la región de Xinjiang y entre ellos figuraba el actual presidente kazajo Nursultán Nazarbayev, por aquel entonces primer ministro de la República Socialista Soviética (RSS) de Kazajstán. En julio de 1991, Nazarbayev ya como primer secretario del Partido Comunista de la RSS de Kazajstán volvió a visitar la región autónoma. Como resultado de esta visita, dentro del marco general de las relaciones sino-soviéticas, se firmó un acuerdo de cooperación entre Kazajstán y Xinjiang. Para más detalles véase Tokaev, Kassymzhomart (1998): "Kazakstan in the International Community" en AA.VV.: *History of Kazakstan*, Almaty, Gylym, p. 215.

¹⁸ Para una visión de conjunto de las relaciones comerciales véase Peyrouse, Sèbastien (2007): "The Economic Aspects of the Chinese-Central Asia Rapprochement", Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, *Silk Road Paper*; y Paramonov, Vladimir: "China & Central Asia: Present and Future of Economic Relations", Conflict Studies Research, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, *Central Asian Series*, 05/25(E) (2005). Las cifras de comercio pueden consultarse a través de la página web del Ministerio de Comercio de la RPC en <http://english.mofcom.gov.cn/index.shtml>.



existen cifras oficiales sobre este comercio, pero todas las estimaciones apuntan a que supone un 50% del flujo de mercancías entre China y Asia Central. Las propias autoridades kazajas utilizan como referencia general las cifras oficiales chinas antes que las generadas por sus propias aduanas, lo que supone una aceptación de esta realidad.¹⁹ Por el momento, no existe suficiente información para trazar un patrón general sobre cómo se desarrolla este comercio, en el que, aparentemente, participan tanto grupos criminales organizados como simples comerciantes individuales. De hecho, una de las estampas más impresionantes de la actual Asia Central es, sin duda, la de los puertos fronterizos de Dostyk-Alashankou o, especialmente el de Khorgos, cruzados diariamente por cientos de personas, algunas únicamente con los fardos que pueden acarrear por sí mismas a bordo de autobuses de línea regular, otras al cargo de decenas de contenedores, con destino a alguno de los tres grandes bazares centroasiáticos: la Baraholka de Almaty, Dordoi en Bishkek y el Karasuu en las cercanías de Osh. El crecimiento de estos tres bazares es, el mejor reflejo del auge del comercio con China, ya que los productos de los que se nutren son fundamentalmente chinos.

La proliferación de productos chinos ha tenido un enorme impacto en la vida cotidiana de los ciudadanos centroasiáticos y puede valorarse desde diferentes prismas. En primer lugar, este flujo de mercancías supone una oportunidad para los pequeños y medianos comerciantes centroasiáticos y permite que las emergentes y aún modestas clases medias locales, accedan a bienes de consumo. No obstante, la potencia competitiva china desincentiva la propia producción centroasiática, ya sea por la debilidad del tejido productivo local, caso por ejemplo de Kirguistán o Tayikistán, o por ser una tendencia asociada a las economías con un peso excesivo de la exportación de hidrocarburos en el caso de Kazajstán. Además, con el paso de los años se consolida un patrón con reminiscencias coloniales, ya que China importa materias primas tales como el crudo y sus derivados, metales, cobre y uranio y exporta bienes de consumo como ropa, calzado, electrodomésticos o alimentos. Desde la perspectiva de algunos investigadores chinos, esta realidad no es más que una muestra de la complementariedad económica entre ambas zonas.²⁰ Sin embargo, este patrón, unido a la visibilidad y sobreabundancia de los productos chinos, genera recelos entre los investigadores y autoridades centroasiáticas ante el riesgo de una potencial dominación y dependencia, o lo que es lo mismo, convertirse en una provincia económica de China. Por ello, las diferentes propuestas chinas desde septiembre de 2003 de establecer una zona de libre comercio (ZLC) en el marco de la Organización de Cooperación de Shanghai han sido recibidas con poco entusiasmo por el resto de miembros de este foro que consideran que las barreras arancelarias les protegen en parte de la dominación china. No obstante, es dudoso que estos instrumentos u otros de efecto equivalente consigan frenar una tendencia que parece imparable y obliga a las repúblicas centroasiáticas a implementar modelos de desarrollo que les permita convertir su proximidad a China en una ventaja comparativa, en lugar de un desafío irresoluble.

Para facilitar la aceptación de la ZLC, Beijing la plantea actualmente en un plazo de veinte años y, desde 2006, ha iniciado la creación de zonas económicas especiales cercanas a las áreas fronterizas. Como se ha indicado, desde la perspectiva china, este comercio está asociado al desarrollo del papel de Xinjiang como polo de crecimiento regional y por lo tanto, resulta de enorme interés para Beijing. Por ello, China promueve la construcción de puertos

¹⁹ Véase Syroezhkin, Konstantin (2009): "Social Perceptions of China and the Chinese: A View from Kazakhstan" en Peyrouse, Sebastien y Laruelle, Marlene (eds.): "Central Asian Perceptions of China", Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol. 7, nº. 1 (Febrero 2009), pp. 42 y 43.

²⁰ Véase, por ejemplo, Zhuangzhi, Sun (2007): "The Relationship between China and Central Asia" en Iwashita, Akihiro (ed.): *Eager Eyes Fixed On Eurasia*, Hokkaido University, Sapporo, Slavic Research Center, p. 41 y ss.



fronterizos e infraestructuras de comunicación con Asia Central,²¹ también con vistas a desarrollar el proyecto de Puente Continental Euroasiático que pretende unir Europa y Asia por vía terrestre, partiendo desde la costa del Pacífico, atravesando China, Kazajstán y Rusia. Tras el acuerdo de septiembre de 1995, China ofrece a Kazajstán un acceso en condiciones ventajosas al puerto de Lianyungang, en la costa del Pacífico, con lo que facilita la exportación de productos kazajos, refuerza los lazos comerciales con su vecino del Oeste y también promueve la construcción de la conexión euroasiática, que tiene su proyectado origen, precisamente, en este puerto. En clave centroasiática hay que indicar que en las dos últimas décadas se han inaugurado casi veinte puertos fronterizos terrestres.²² Entre ellos, además de los ya citados de Dostyk y Khorgos con Kazajstán, hay que destacar los de Irkeshtam y Torugart con Kirguistán. Pese a las dificultades para su aprovechamiento, fundamentalmente por lo montañoso del territorio kirguiz y la escasa capacidad financiera de Bishkek, estos dos pasos fronterizos ofrecen un enorme potencial para la conexión de Kashgar, principal ciudad de la zona meridional de Xinjiang y el valle de Ferganá. Así, está proyectada una conexión ferroviaria Kashgar-Torugart-Uzgen-Karasuu-Andiján-Tashkent (además de la conexión Urumchí-Almaty). Lo cual ofrecería a las repúblicas centroasiáticas una vía de acceso rápido al puerto pakistaní de Gwadar, a través de la conocida autopista del Karakorum, evitando el territorio de Afganistán. La posibilidad de disponer de un acceso al puerto de Gwadar, eje de un proyecto chino para construir un corredor energético y logístico a través de Pakistán, tendría un enorme impacto para Asia Central, cuyo mayor problema sigue siendo el aislamiento y la lejanía de los flujos globales de mercaderías.

Como vemos, el desarrollo de estas infraestructuras ofrece enormes perspectivas a las repúblicas centroasiáticas. No obstante, agudiza al mismo tiempo los temores sobre una potencial dominación china y se asocia con la llegada de trabajadores chinos a la región que es, sin duda, lo que despierta mayores recelos en Kazajstán y Kirguistán, las dos repúblicas centroasiáticas en las que la sinofobia es mayor. La sistemática afluencia de inmigrantes chinos *han* a la región de Xinjiang, atraídos por los grandes proyectos de desarrollo de las últimas dos décadas, alimenta los temores sobre la denominada “invasión silenciosa” o el “peligro amarillo” en Asia central.²³ La situación, simplificada, supone que por un lado está China con su incontenible crecimiento demográfico y, por otro, unos vecinos caracterizados por las riquezas naturales y los enormes espacios vacíos. La simple consideración de que sólo en la ciudad de Beijing hay más habitantes que en Kirguistán, Tayikistán y Turkmenistán juntos o que la población china crece al año en unos quince millones, una cifra equivalente al total de la población de Kazajstán, contribuyen a fijar esta impresión popular, generosamente alimentada además por la prensa local. No obstante, esta percepción, al menos por el momento no se corresponde en absoluto con la realidad que indican las cifras oficiales disponibles, según las cuales y al contrario de lo que sugiere el consenso popular, apenas ha habido matrimonios mixtos con chinos o solicitudes de residencia permanente.²⁴ Pero, como

²¹ A través por ejemplo, del ofrecimiento de créditos por valor de 900 millones de dólares en el marco de la OCS para que empresas chinas construyan estas infraestructuras.

²² Para una visión positiva del potencial transformador de China y Xinjiang véase Gosset, David: “Xinjiang y el resurgimiento de la Ruta de la Seda”, *Política Exterior*, vol. 20, nº 111 (Mayo-Junio, 2006), pp. 99-110. Para más detalles véase también la página web oficial sobre puertos fronterizos y comercio de Xinjiang, en <http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/Xinjiang/114817.htm>.

²³ Sobre la evolución de la presencia *han* en Xinjiang desde la creación de la RPC en 1949 véase, De Pedro: “El conflicto de Xinjiang...”, *op.cit.*, pp.131-132.

²⁴ En 2005, por ejemplo, hubo 1.116 solicitudes de las que 1.109 correspondían a *oralmanes*, es decir ciudadanos de la RPC étnicamente kazajos retornando al territorio de Kazajstán. Para una visión de conjunto de la inmigración china a Kazajstán véase Sadovskaya, Elena Y. (2007): “Chinese Migration to Kazakhstan: a Silk Road for Cooperation or a Thorny Road of Prejudice?”, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol. 5, nº. 4, pp. 147-170.



es sabido, en muchas ocasiones, las percepciones pesan más que realidades verificables objetivamente y lo cierto es que cualquier noticia sobre un aumento de la presencia china en Kazajstán o Kirguistán suele generar reacciones airadas.²⁵

Por el momento, la llegada de inmigrantes chinos es junto a la presencia de compañías chinas en el sector de los hidrocarburos lo que genera mayores suspicacias sobre una potencial dominación de Asia Central por parte de Beijing a medio y largo plazo.

5. Dimensión energética

El espectacular crecimiento económico de la RPC conlleva un uso intensivo de recursos energéticos primarios. Desde la primera mitad de los años noventa, China no puede cubrir sus necesidades con su propia producción y es, desde entonces, importadora neta de petróleo. Por su parte, Kazajstán y Turkmenistán, y en mucho menor grado, Uzbekistán, son países que disponen de abundantes reservas de hidrocarburos y cuyas economías están orientadas hacia su exportación. Por ello, las autoridades chinas han incluido progresivamente las cuestiones energéticas como una de las cuestiones prioritarias en su agenda centroasiática. Esto tiene importantes implicaciones y puede ser analizado desde varios ángulos. En primer lugar, desde la perspectiva del propio auge de la presencia de China y de cómo es percibida en las repúblicas centroasiáticas la participación de Beijing. En segundo lugar, el creciente papel de China en las cuestiones energéticas centroasiáticas tiene notables implicaciones geopolíticas y repercute, específicamente, en su relación con Rusia, ya que ésta es una de las cuestiones en las que los intereses estratégicos de Beijing y Moscú parecen claramente divergentes y que, potencialmente, pueden truncar el clima cooperativo de los últimos años entre ambas potencias. Por otro lado, para poder evaluar la importancia de la cuenca del Caspio para Beijing es necesario contextualizar el lugar que ocupa la región dentro de la estrategia energética general de la RPC.

Al igual que sucede en otras zonas, la compra de yacimientos o los contratos de suministro a largo plazo son los instrumentos más utilizados por China en su relación energética con Asia Central. Así, en 1997, tras tres años de negociaciones, la China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) y poco después otras compañías chinas subsidiarias, comenzaron a operar en Kazajstán. Además, Beijing y Astaná firmaron ese mismo año un acuerdo para la construcción de un oleoducto de casi 3000 kilómetros para conectar la zona del Caspio con Xinjiang.

La construcción del oleoducto sino-kazajo se dividió en tres fases. La primera sección, que conecta Atyrau (en el norte del Caspio) con Kenkiyak (en el Oeste de Kazajstán, al sur de Aktobe) fue inaugurada en marzo de 2003. Hasta la fecha, a través de esta sección se ha bombeado petróleo hacia el Oeste con dirección al oleoducto denominado Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC), que une Tengiz, todavía el yacimiento kazajo con mayores coeficientes de rendimiento, con el puerto ruso de Novorossiysk en el mar Negro, a través de Atyrau. La construcción de la segunda fase del oleoducto tuvo lugar entre septiembre de 2004 y diciembre de 2005 y se extiende desde Atasu, en el centro de Kazajstán y conectado a su vez

²⁵ Así por ejemplo, la noticia de que el gobierno de Astaná había acordado el arrendamiento de un millón de hectáreas para uso agrícola a China, provocó una manifestación de protesta en Almaty con una participación de unas 2.500 personas, un número considerable desde una perspectiva local. La noticia, (Demytrie, Rayhan: "Kazakhs protest against China farmland lease", *Gazeta*, 02 febrero 2010), puede consultarse en <http://engarticles.gazeta.kz/art.asp?aid=142471>.



con la red de tuberías de los tiempos soviéticos que une Asia Central con Rusia, con Alahsankou, puerto seco chino de Xinjiang. Como el resto de hitos de la presencia china en el sector energético centroasiático, la noticia de la puesta en funcionamiento de esta sección de casi 1.000 kilómetros generó mucho debate y ciertas estridencias, si bien y por el momento, las cantidades de crudo bombeadas anualmente han sido muy modestas. La tercera y última fase, que conecta Atasu con Kenkiyak, vía Aralsk, fue terminada en julio de 2009. La finalización del oleoducto supone que ya es posible bombear petróleo directamente desde la zona norte del Caspio hasta la refinería de Dushanzi en Xinjiang.

Para alimentar el oleoducto, China ha adquirido, a través de diversas compañías, derechos de explotación de diversos campos petrolíferos. En su estrategia de implantación en Kazajstán, las compañías chinas han tenido que hacer frente tanto al recelo que despiertan, como al relativo retraso con el que han llegado, lo que ha impedido su posicionamiento en los codiciados campos *offshore* kazajos del Caspio, a excepción del acuerdo por el yacimiento de Darkhan de octubre de 2008. No obstante, haciendo de la necesidad virtud y con una estrategia hábil y coherente, China ha invertido en campos en la región de Aktobe y en algunos yacimientos aislados, pero situados en la línea del oleoducto sino-kazajo (Buzachi Norte, Kumkol Sur y Karazhanbas).²⁶ A ello hay que añadir, la mencionada conexión de Atasu con el oleoducto que conecta con Rusia, lo que supone que el oleoducto sino-kazajo podría ser una vía alternativa para exportar petróleo ruso de los campos de Siberia occidental a China. Como resultado, Beijing tiene prácticamente aseguradas las fuentes de suministro para un oleoducto que tiene, actualmente, una capacidad máxima de 20 millones de toneladas de crudo anuales, aunque podría ser ampliado a 30.

Las inversiones chinas más destacadas en el sector hidrocarburoífero kazajo han sido la compra por parte de la CNPC de la compañía canadiense Petrokazakhstan por aproximadamente 3.500 millones de euros en agosto de 2005 y la compra, por unos 2.000 millones de dólares, de los activos petroleros en Kazajstán de la también canadiense, Nations Energy por parte de la compañía CITIC (China International Trust and Investment Corporation) en diciembre de 2006. Mediante estas dos compras, Beijing ha adquirido una posición importante en el mercado petrolífero kazajo y aunque las cifras disponibles varían sustancialmente y es un dato difícil de computar, se estima que en 2006 China fue responsable de cerca de un 25% de la extracción de petróleo en Kazajstán.

Como confirmación de los recelos que genera China en Kazajstán, este incremento de su presencia en el sector petrolífero, provocó un gran debate público liderado por aquellos que ven en la política de Beijing un peligro creciente para la soberanía económica y las perspectivas de desarrollo de Kazajstán. Si bien, algunos de los investigadores locales más conocidos disienten de esta visión mayoritaria y señalan, por ejemplo que los contratos firmados con las compañías chinas son más beneficiosos para Kazajstán que los firmados con las grandes transnacionales occidentales.²⁷ En cualquier caso, la polémica por las adquisiciones chinas culminó con la aprobación por parte del *Majilis*, el parlamento kazajo, de la introducción de una serie de enmiendas en la ley del subsuelo y uso del subsuelo; mediante las cuales el gobierno de Astaná se arroga el derecho de renegociar e incluso anular contratos que supongan un peligro para los “intereses de seguridad económica nacionales”. Además, la reforma de la ley otorga a Kazmunaigaz, el monopolio estatal kazajo, un derecho de tanteo sobre el 50% de cualquier venta de activos en el sector. De esta manera, y como resultado de

²⁶ Para más detalles véase Peyrouse, Sebastien (2008): “Chinese Economic Presence in Kazakhstan”, *China Perspectives*, nº 3 (2008), pp. 43-45, disponible en: <http://chinaperspectives.revues.org/4053>.

²⁷ Véase Syroezhkin, *op.cit.*, p. 45.



las presiones, la CNPC aceptó vender un tercio de Petrokazakhstan y la CITIC la mitad de su parte en Karazhanbas a Kazmunaigaz. De igual forma, es interesante destacar que la citada compra de Petrokazakhstan provocó una reacción similar en Rusia y, especialmente, entre las compañías presentes en Kazajstán, que comparten estos recelos ante el progresivo posicionamiento chino. Sin ir más lejos, la compra de la firma canadiense por parte de la CNPC, provocó que la compañía rusa Lukoil, que poseía un 25% de los derechos del yacimiento de Kumkol Norte, recurriera tanto a una corte de arbitraje internacional en Estocolmo como a la justicia kazaja para reclamar un derecho preferente de adquisición de todo el yacimiento. A través de esta acción, Lukoil pudo hacerse con los derechos de todo el yacimiento. Lukoil es una compañía privada, pero cuyas actuaciones, como es sabido, suelen estar en consonancia con los deseos del Kremlin. Por ello, algunos autores consideran que si bien la acción de Lukoil no fue inapropiada, pone de manifiesto que “Rusia no está dispuesta a permitir que China tenga un acceso directo a los recursos energéticos centroasiáticos”.²⁸ En el marco de la OCS, que presta una atención creciente a las cuestiones energéticas, los planteamientos de Kazajstán y Rusia van en esta misma línea.

A pesar del temor ante una potencial dominación, la presencia de China en su sector petrolífero es de interés estratégico para Kazajstán. La construcción del oleoducto sino-kazajo reduce el grado de dependencia kazajo con respecto a la red de oleoductos de la época soviética que le conectan con Rusia y que aún son la vía de exportación mayoritaria del crudo kazajo. El nuevo oleoducto le permite tener acceso directo a la economía mundial con un mayor consumo de petróleo. Por otra parte, el peso de las compañías chinas en el sector, aun siendo importante, es relativamente marginal y salvo que se produzcan nuevas compras de grandes yacimientos, su cuota del total de la producción kazaja disminuirá muy significativamente cuando empiece la extracción del crudo del yacimiento de Kashagán.²⁹

A diferencia de lo que sucede en Kazajstán, en Turkmenistán la presencia china no genera suspicacias. De hecho, la venta de gas natural a China es de interés prioritario para Asjabad, ya que, junto con las exportaciones a Irán, le han permitido acabar con el monopsonio que ejercía Rusia y que limitaba su capacidad negociadora en cuanto a los precios. El principal acuerdo con China se firmó en abril de 2006, estableciéndose la venta de

²⁸ Matusov, Artyom: “Energy Cooperation in the SCO: Club or Gathering?”, *Central Asia –Caucasus Institute, The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol. 5, nº 3 (2007), p.95. Traducción propia. Otros autores van más allá e indican que Lukoil coordinó su acción con el propio gobierno y clases dirigentes kazajas; fundamentalmente a través de Timur Kuliváyev, yerno del presidente y que dirigía KazKommertsbank, el principal banco kazajo, cuando trató de utilizar sus participaciones minoritarias en Petrokazakhstan para tomar infructuosamente el control de la compañía. Al mismo tiempo, Kuliváyev fue nombrado vicepresidente de Kazmunaigaz, monopolio estatal de hidrocarburos de Kazajstán, compañía que comparte sede en Astaná con el Ministerio de Energía y la propia Lukoil. Para más información véase Marten, Kimberly (2006): “Disrupting the Balance: Russian Efforts to Control Kazakhstan's Oil”, CSIS, *PONARS Policy Memo*, no. 428 (Diciembre 2006).

²⁹ Aunque, no es un tema presente en la agenda, al menos que se sepa, y aún está pendiente la extracción de petróleo de este yacimiento gigante *offshore* -considerado como el más complejo técnicamente del mundo- es importante subrayar que el oleoducto sino-kazajo puede ser clave cuando Kashagán entre en funcionamiento. Hay que tener en cuenta que cuando esto suceda, y si no se producen cambios, será el único de los grandes yacimientos mundiales que no disponga de una tubería propia. Además, si, como es previsible, se mantienen las disputas en torno al estatuto jurídico definitivo del mar Caspio, no será posible construir una tubería submarina que permita conectar este yacimiento con el BTC (oleoducto que conecta Bakú con Ceyhan, un puerto turco en el Mediterráneo, a través de Tbilisi) y es dudoso que Kazajstán asuma en solitario el coste del desarrollo de una flota de cinco o seis tanqueros de tamaño medio (de unas 60 mil toneladas), así como la construcción de las infraestructuras necesarias en los puertos de Aktau y Sangachal -punto de inicio del BTC-. De esta manera, y a pesar de los acuerdos firmados, podría darse el caso de que la conexión sino-kazajo deviniera en la opción más operativa y viable para la exportación del petróleo de Kashagán.



30 mil millones de metros cúbicos (mmc) de gas natural al año por un periodo de treinta años y la construcción de un gasoducto desde el Este de Turkmenistán hasta Xinjiang. Dadas las incertidumbres que existen sobre el volumen total de las reservas turkmenas y el acuerdo de abril de 2003 con Moscú, por el que se compromete a proveer 80 mil mmc a Rusia, en el momento de la firma de este acuerdo de suministro a largo plazo con China se generaron dudas sobre la capacidad real de Turkmenistán para cumplir ambos contratos simultáneamente. Parte de estas incertidumbres se disiparon con la noticia del descubrimiento de un yacimiento gigante de gas natural en el sur de Yolotán, y el anuncio, poco después, de que se permitiría el acceso a este campo a las compañías chinas; lo cual es la primera concesión de Turkmenistán a una compañía extranjera para que opere en los campos de gas natural *onshore*. Este anuncio se produjo, eso sí, poco después de que China ofreciera un préstamo de unos 3.000 millones de dólares para su desarrollo.

La viabilidad de construir un gasoducto entre ambos países también generó numerosas dudas, pero lo cierto es que, a pesar de algunos retrasos, el gasoducto de casi dos mil kilómetros que conecta Samandepé, al Este de Turkmenistán, con Xinjiang a través de Uzbekistán y el sur de Kazajistán, se llevó a cabo en apenas tres años y fue inaugurado en diciembre de 2009. Según el plan previsto, en 2012 el gasoducto operará a plena capacidad y transportará 40 mil mmc de gas natural. Además, para 2011 está prevista una ampliación que permitirá bombear también gas natural kazajo y uzbeko. Esto supone que China se conecta “simultáneamente con los tres grandes productores centroasiáticos”.³⁰ Esto, unido a la inauguración de un segundo gasoducto que conecta Turkmenistán con Irán y los planes de incrementar las exportaciones anuales de gas turkmeno hasta los 20 mil mmc, suponen un verdadero revés para los intereses rusos en el país y pone en evidencia que el verdadero desafío para la posición rusa no proviene del impulso de Washington o Bruselas en el Cáucaso Sur, sino de los avances chinos en el panorama hidrocarbúrico centroasiático.³¹ Además, como subraya Blank³², la diligencia en construir el gasoducto entre Turkmenistán y China contrasta con la falta de avances en la construcción del gasoducto paralelo al Caspio con destino a Rusia firmado con Turkmenistán y Kazajistán en mayo de 2007 y que en su momento provocó reacciones desmedidas sobre una supuesta “victoria geopolítica definitiva” o un “golpe de muerte a otros proyectos”.

En conjunto, la importancia cuantitativa para China de los recursos energéticos primarios de Asia Central no es demasiado alta. Las estimaciones de referencia prevén que China necesitará importar unas 400 millones de toneladas de petróleo anuales, y en este escenario, el crudo kazajo representará entre un 5 y un 10% del total de las importaciones chinas. El análisis con relación al gas natural es más incierto, ya que dependerá del peso que se le dé en el *mix* energético chino en las próximas décadas. Por el momento, China es prácticamente autosuficiente en cuanto al gas (produce unos 76 mil mmc al año y su consumo

³⁰ Fernández, Rafael: “El control de las rutas de exportación de petróleo y gas de Kazajistán y Turkmenistán”, Real Instituto Elcano, *ARI*, no. 80 (2010), p. 7.

³¹ En este sentido, hay que indicar que, pese a su importancia estratégica, el oleoducto BTC ha tenido un impacto menor del esperado en los países centroasiáticos ribereños del Caspio, fundamentalmente por la imposibilidad de construir conexiones submarinas; y que, por otro lado, en las condiciones actuales es más que improbable que se materialice el proyecto de gasoducto transafgano, que uniría Turkmenistán con Pakistán y tal vez India, a través de Afganistán y lo mismo puede decirse de la posibilidad de conectar la producción petrolífera del Caspio con el golfo Pérsico a través de Irán, más allá de algunos *swaps*.

³² Blank, Stephen: “The Strategic Implications of the Turkmenistan-China Pipeline Project”, Jamestown Foundation, *China Brief*, vol. 10, nº 3, (04 Febrero 2010), pp. 10-12, en [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=36010&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=414&nocache=1](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=36010&tx_ttnews[backPid]=414&nocache=1).



ronda los 80 mil mmc) y cubre su déficit con las importaciones de Gas Natural Licuado (GNL) a través de los puertos del Pacífico.

Sin embargo, la importancia cualitativa y estratégica para Beijing de la relación energética con Asia Central es muy diferente. Desde 1993, China es importadora neta de petróleo y su dependencia del suministro exterior se agudiza con el paso de los años. De mantenerse la tendencia actual, para 2025 tendrá que importar casi 11 millones de barriles de petróleo diarios, lo que supondrá un 85% de su consumo interior. Alrededor de un 80% de su suministro actual procede de Oriente Medio y África y para alcanzar China, debe atravesar en su mayor parte el estrecho de Malaca, entre Indonesia y Malasia, lo que genera preocupación entre los estrategas chinos ante hipotéticos cortes, intencionados o no, de este suministro. Esta percepción de vulnerabilidad se ve agudizada por la aún insuficiente capacidad de proyección naval de China para proteger la ruta de abastecimiento a través del Índico. Todo lo cual, supone un deterioro creciente de la seguridad energética de China.³³

Para hacer frente a esta situación, y siguiendo lo apuntado por García, China ha diseñado una estrategia general con una dimensión interna y otra externa. En el interior, las autoridades chinas se han propuesto maximizar su producción propia, mejorar las vías internas de distribución, así como su capacidad de refinado y crear una reserva estratégica. En el exterior, China espera consolidar su posición en Oriente Medio y África y diversificar las fuentes y rutas de aprovisionamiento.³⁴ De esta manera, en el conjunto de la estrategia energética china, Asia Central es relevante porque es una fuente de suministro alternativo, cuya contigüidad territorial supone que es una ruta de abastecimiento terrestre y directa, y por ello menos vulnerable frente a interferencias y presiones externas. Lo cual, ante la perspectiva de un hipotética interrupción o conflicto en la ruta del Índico-Pacífico confiere carácter estratégico al suministro procedente de Kazajistán. Además, el crudo kazajo contribuye también a la estrategia interior, ya que la costosísima extracción del petróleo que alberga la cuenca del Tarim, en Xinjiang, resulta más asumible financieramente si las infraestructuras construidas se nutren también con las importaciones procedentes de Kazajistán. De hecho, la conexión directa desde el Caspio con la refinería de Dushanzi en Xinjiang convierte *de facto* a este suministro kazajo en parte de la estructura energética interior. Por su parte, el gas natural turkmeno diluye notablemente el grado de necesidad con relación al gas ruso y ofrece a Beijing una alternativa, que combinada con un aumento de las importaciones de GNL, puede hacer innecesario un suministro masivo procedente de Rusia o suponer que las inversiones en infraestructuras que conllevaría no fueran económicamente rentables. Lo cual, junto con este creciente papel de China en las cuestiones energéticas tiene importantes implicaciones para la dinámica geopolítica regional.

6. Dimensión geopolítica

Beijing, como apunta Huasheng, no tiene una estrategia oficial definida para la región, pero de su acción y propuestas pueden inferirse unas determinadas constantes y unos objetivos políticos y de seguridad específicos.³⁵ En primer lugar, y a la vista de lo indicado en los

³³ Para una visión de conjunto véase Bustelo, Pablo: "China y la geopolítica del petróleo en Asia-Pacífico", Real Instituto Elcano, *Documento de Trabajo*, nº 38 (2005) y García, Clara (2008): "Acciones exteriores para el aprovisionamiento de hidrocarburos: ¿hacia una mayor seguridad energética en China", Real Instituto Elcano, *Documento de Trabajo*, nº 47(2008).

³⁴ García, *Ibid*, pp. 7-9.

³⁵ Véase Huasheng: "Central Asia in China's Diplomacy", *op. cit.*, pp. 137 y 151.



apartados anteriores, la política china hacia Asia Central no puede desligarse de sus objetivos estratégicos en Xinjiang. Desde la perspectiva de Beijing, ambas regiones están vinculadas en términos de seguridad tanto por las conexiones transfronterizas del activismo uigur, como por la posibilidad de que potenciales focos de descomposición centroasiática irradian inestabilidad hacia Xinjiang, o bien que se produzcan eventuales desarrollos geopolíticos hostiles en la zona o lo que es lo mismo, que Asia Central forme parte de una estrategia de cercamiento de China. Así, una política proactiva que otorgue un mayor peso a China en la región y que refuerce a las repúblicas centroasiáticas resulta la más útil para afrontar estos desafíos y coadyuva notablemente en su agenda de desarrollo y modernización para la región autónoma. De esta manera, un óptimo posicionamiento en Asia Central contribuye a su seguridad interior, pues refuerza su dominio y soberanía sobre Xinjiang y disminuye, el por otra parte escaso, riesgo de secesión liderado por la comunidad uigur.

Más allá de las consideraciones sobre Xinjiang, Asia Central puede considerarse, tomando la expresión de Huasheng, como la “retaguardia estratégica” de China³⁶. La provisión de materias primas críticas, antes analizada, si está acompañada de unas condiciones de estabilidad y respaldo político por parte de las repúblicas centroasiáticas, convierten a la región en un sólido apoyo en la ascensión internacional de China.

El establecimiento del Grupo de Shanghai en 1996 propicia una creciente convergencia de la agenda de Beijing con la de sus vecinos del Oeste y es, como se ha mencionado, el germen de la Organización de Cooperación de Shanghai (OCS) que se establece oficialmente en junio de 2001 por los cinco participantes del diálogo fronterizo, China, Rusia, Kazajistán, Kirguistán y Tayikistán, más Uzbekistán. En 2004 Mongolia adquiere estatus de observador en la organización y un año después lo hacen Irán, India y Pakistán. Belarús y Sri Lanka tienen la condición de socios para el diálogo (*partnership by dialogue*) y Afganistán y Turkmenistán han participado en algunas de las últimas cumbres anuales de la organización en calidad de “invitados distinguidos”.³⁷ La OCS, aunque coliderada por Moscú, es fruto de la iniciativa e impulso de Beijing y representa una apuesta por la multilateralización muy novedosa en su momento, de la diplomacia china. Además, a través de la OCS, China ha promovido una convergencia conceptual en materia de seguridad con los restantes miembros. Así, en el mismo momento de su constitución, la OCS adopta la “Convención para el combate del terrorismo, del separatismo y del extremismo”, en la que además de definir estos conceptos³⁸, los miembros se comprometen a reforzar su cooperación

³⁶ *Ibid* p. 148.

³⁷ Para una visión de conjunto véase Abad, Gracia: “La Organización de Cooperación de Shanghai o la Penetración China en Asia Central”, Real Instituto Elcano, *ARI*, nº 101 (Marzo 2008).

³⁸ Así en el Artículo 1 se indica que:

“1) ‘terrorism’ means:

a. any act recognized as an offence in one of the treaties listed in the Annex to this Convention (hereinafter referred to as “the Annex”) and as defined in this Treaty;

b. other act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or any other person not taking an active part in the hostilities in a situation of armed conflict or to cause major damage to any material facility, as well as to organize, plan, aid and abet such act, when the purpose of such act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, violate public security or to compel public authorities or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act, and prosecuted in accordance with the national laws of the Parties;

2) ‘separatism’ means any act intended to violate territorial integrity of a State including by annexation of any part of its territory or to disintegrate a State, committed in a violent manner, as well as planning and preparing, and abetting such act, and subject to criminal prosecuting in accordance with the national laws of the Parties;

3) ‘Extremism’ is an act aimed at seizing or keeping power through the use of violence or changing violently the constitutional regime of a State, as well as a violent encroachment upon public security, including organization, for the above purposes, of illegal armed formations and participation in them, criminally



en estas materias. Aunque cada uno de los participantes lo adapta sin dificultades a su propio contexto interno e intereses, lo cierto es que la autoría del documento debe atribuirse a China que es quien define la lucha contra estos tres fenómenos al caracterizar su política de represión del activismo uigur en Xinjiang.

Aún son muchas las debilidades que afectan a la OCS, pero resulta indudable su papel central en la evolución del panorama geopolítico centroasiático e incluso más allá, teniendo en cuenta que, en su seno terminará por definirse el nuevo modelo de interacción entre Rusia y China. De hecho, el proceso de consolidación de la OCS no puede desligarse de la evolución de esta compleja relación bilateral, que contiene elementos cooperativos y conflictivos al mismo tiempo.³⁹

Los atentados del 11-S y la consiguiente operación internacional en Afganistán suponen un punto de inflexión en el acercamiento chino hacia Asia Central. El desembarco estadounidense altera el panorama estratégico centroasiático y supone el riesgo de que Washington adquiera un rol regional preeminente y eso afecte negativamente a la seguridad y proyectos chinos. Además, la rápida disposición rusa a cooperar con la intervención estadounidense y la falta de comunicación previa con Beijing, ponen de manifiesto la fragilidad de su asociación con Moscú, a lo que se añade la disponibilidad de las repúblicas centroasiáticas para fortalecer sus relaciones con EEUU. Desde principios de la década de los 90, todas las repúblicas, excepto Tayikistán que se incorpora en 2002, participan en el programa de asociación para la paz (*Partnership for Peace*) de la OTAN y han realizado ejercicios militares con tropas estadounidense. Sin embargo, a partir de 2001 esta presencia militar de EEUU se refuerza notablemente con el establecimiento de las bases de Karshi-Janabad en Uzbekistán, hasta 2005 y de Manás en Kirguistán, aún operativa. Ambas, especialmente esta última, han sido motivo de irritación china pues facilitan un potencial ataque aéreo sobre lanzaderas de misiles en territorio de Xinjiang, hasta entonces consideradas demasiado remotas como para ser vulnerables frente a incursiones por sorpresa. Este posicionamiento estadounidense altera la dinámica previa, favorable para los intereses chinos, ya que los tratados de creación de confianza de 1996 y 1997 habían reducido muy notablemente la percepción de una amenaza militar estatal proveniente de esta frontera. Además, y pese a las preocupaciones con respecto a la minoría uigur y a que Xinjiang alberga algunas instalaciones de carácter estratégico como el polígono de ensayos nucleares de Lop Nor o diversos centros de control de telecomunicaciones y estaciones de escucha y de interceptación, la región, tal y como sugiere el análisis de Schichor, no cuenta con un despliegue de fuerzas que permitan inferir que las autoridades chinas perciben amenazas de tipo militar serias. Lo que sí se ha producido en los últimos tiempos ha sido una mejora sustancial de la capacidad de proyección y nivel de mecanización de las fuerzas estacionadas en Xinjiang, coincidiendo además con una aparente flexibilización de la doctrina sobre su utilización para la protección de los suministros energéticos provenientes del exterior.⁴⁰

prosecuted in conformity with the national laws of the Parties” en “Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism”, disponible en <http://www.sectesco.org/EN/show.asp?id=68>

³⁹ Así por ejemplo, no es casual que en julio de 2001, es decir apenas un mes después de la creación de la propia OCS, Rusia y China firman el “Tratado de de buena vecindad, amistad y cooperación”, texto en el, en línea con su declaración de partenariado estratégico de 1996, se reafirman por su apuesta por un orden internacional multipolar, con primacía del derecho internacional –es decir, del respeto de la soberanía e integridad territorial de los Estados, no injerencia y coexistencia pacífica– y por un enfoque cooperativo de la seguridad.

⁴⁰ Véase Shichor, Yitzhak (2004): “The Great Wall of Steel: Military and Strategy in Xinjiang” en Starr, Frederick (ed.): *Xinjiang: China’s Muslim borderland*, Washington, Central Asia- Caucasus Institute, pp. 120-



Como respuesta ante esta nueva situación, China promueve la consolidación de la OCS, con el objetivo de fortalecer su peso regional y al mismo tiempo, ofrecer respuestas a las necesidades de seguridad centroasiáticas. Sin embargo, hasta 2004 no se establecen la Secretaría Permanente de la OCS en Beijing y la Estructura Antiterrorista Regional (RATS por sus siglas en ruso e inglés) en Tashkent. Esta progresiva institucionalización viene acompañada de la creación de diversos foros temáticos como la Asociación Interbancaria en 2005 o el Consejo de Negocios en 2006. Lo cual pone de manifiesto el creciente peso de las cuestiones de cooperación económica regional en la agenda de la organización. Por el momento, el proceso de estructuración de la OCS es aún claramente insuficiente considerando su tamaño y objetivos.

Paralelamente, dentro del marco de la OCS se han desarrollado una serie de ejercicios militares anuales denominados Misión de Paz de naturaleza teóricamente antiterrorista y que han generado cada año diferentes controversias. Los ejercicios de 2005 y 2009 por la dificultad de encajarlos en el escenario centroasiático. Así, las maniobras de agosto 2005 en la costa norte del Pacífico consistieron en unos ejercicios de desembarco anfibio y control de áreas marítimas, en los que la utilización de medios como bombarderos estratégicos y submarinos desvirtuó su pretendido carácter antiterrorista e hizo que muchos las interpretaran como un mensaje para Japón o Taiwán. Por su parte, las maniobras de 2009, desarrolladas en el extremo oriental ruso y nordeste chino, parecían inspiradas en una hipotética crisis en la península coreana y no en algún escenario relacionado con la lucha contra el “terrorismo, el separatismo y el extremismo”.⁴¹ Hasta la fecha, la Misión de Paz de 2007 ha sido la más coherente con los objetivos declarados de la OCS y la que, además, ha contado con una participación significativa de todos los Estados miembros, aunque en grados muy diferentes.⁴² Los ejercicios de 2007, desarrollados en la región rusa de Chelyabinsk y en los alrededores de Urumchí, estaban inspirados en las incursiones del Movimiento Islámico de Uzbekistán (MIU) de 1999 y 2000 y se pueden interpretar como un intento por parte de la organización, es decir de China y Rusia, de lanzar un mensaje de capacidad operativa de respuesta. En el momento de escribir estas líneas, se están ultimando los preparativos para la Misión de Paz 2010 que se desarrollará del 9 al 25 de septiembre en la región kazaja de Zhambul.

Además de por estas provisiones de seguridad, la OCS resulta útil para las repúblicas centroasiáticas desde un punto de vista político. Por un lado, aunque sólo sea formalmente, permite a los miembros más pequeños, es decir a Kirguistán y Tayikistán, intervenir en la agenda regional en condiciones de aparente igualdad con los miembros más fuertes⁴³ y les ofrece unas posibilidades difíciles de alcanzar bilateralmente. Por otro lado, en determinados momentos, la OCS ofrece un buen respaldo político a los regímenes centroasiáticos. El caso

160; Andrew, Martin: “PLA Doctrine on Securing Energy Resources in Central Asia”, Jamestown Foundation, *China Brief*, vol. 6, nº 11 (Mayo 2006), pp. 5-8, en

[http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=31711](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=31711);

Bosbotinis, James: “Sustaining the Dragon, Dodging the Eagle and Barring the Bear? Assessing the Role and Importance of Central Asia in Chinese National Strategy”, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol. 8, nº 1 (2010), p. 74.

⁴¹ Para más detalles, véase Blank, Stephen: “Peace-Mission 2009: A Military Scenario Beyond Central Asia”, Jamestown Foundation, *China Brief*, vol. 9 nº 17(20 Agosto 2009), pp. 7-9, en

[http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=35433&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=25&chash=201d76e87b](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=35433&tx_ttnews[backPid]=25&chash=201d76e87b).

⁴² Véase McDermott, Roger: “The Rising Dragon: SCO Peace Misión 2007”, The Jamestown Foundation, *Occasional Paper* (2007).

⁴³ Bailes, Alyson J.K. y Dunay, Pál (2007): “The Shanghai Cooperation Organization as a regional security institution” en Bailes, Alyson J.K. (*et al.*): “The Shanghai Cooperation Organization”, SIPRI, *Policy Paper*, nº 17 (2007), p. 14.



más notorio se produjo en mayo y julio de 2005, tras los sucesos de Andiján en Uzbekistán.⁴⁴ Apenas dos semanas después de los hechos y cuando la presión internacional sobre el régimen uzbeko para la puesta en marcha de una investigación independiente sobre lo sucedido, se encontraba en su punto álgido, el presidente Karimov fue recibido en Beijing con todos los honores, lo que supuso un espaldarazo a su posición. Posteriormente, en la cumbre de jefes de Estado de la OCS celebrada en julio en Astaná, la declaración final incluyó una solicitud un tanto imprecisa, pero clara, sobre la fijación de un calendario de retirada para las fuerzas de la coalición internacional para Afganistán estacionadas en Asia Central. Esta declaración coincidía con la solicitud de Tashkent para que las fuerzas estadounidenses desalojaran la base de Karshi-Janabad en un plazo de 180 días. De esta manera, la OCS ofreció al régimen uzbeko respaldo y un foro en el que amplificar su demanda. Esta declaración provocó la reacción de aquellos que la valoraban como una peligrosa deriva antioccidental de la organización y veían en ello la potencial constitución de una alianza euroasiática sólida enfrentada a la OTAN. No obstante, pasado el tiempo y tal como apuntan Matveeva y Giustozzi, declaraciones de este tipo no se han repetido y además, para valorarlas en su justa medida, no se debe perder de vista el aparente carácter improvisado y la inclusión en el último momento de la referencia a las tropas internacionales en la declaración final de la cumbre de Astaná.⁴⁵

En cualquier caso, las valoraciones encontradas sobre el impacto y perspectivas de la OCS son una constante desde el nacimiento de la organización. Esta situación es un claro resultado de los diferentes objetivos y expectativas sobre lo que debe ser la organización entre sus propios miembros. La OCS como tal, también se ve atenazada por los recelos que despierta China en los restantes miembros y por el deseo evidente de Moscú de mantener su posición dominante y privilegiar los foros de integración regional que lidera en solitario como la Organización del Tratado de Seguridad Colectiva (OTSC) y la Comunidad Económica Euroasiática (EvrAzES). De hecho, se intuye con claridad un uso muy diferente por parte de ambos países del foro de Shanghai. Así, mientras que para China es su plataforma de proyección hacia Asia Central, para Moscú parece más bien un instrumento útil para controlar y contener los avances chinos en la región. Así por ejemplo, no parece casual que el por aquel entonces presidente ruso, Vladímir Putin, lanzara la propuesta de creación de un Club de la Energía de la OCS en junio de 2006, poco después de que China comenzara a recibir petróleo kazajo vía oleoducto, en lo que fue interpretado más como un movimiento anticipatorio que como un propuesta cooperativa sincera.⁴⁶ Por otro lado, además de lo apuntado sobre la irritación de Moscú por la penetración china en el sector energético en el apartado anterior, hay que indicar que el establecimiento del Club en junio de 2007 y las sonoras propuestas relativas a la creación de un “mercado energético unificado” en el marco de la OCS generan más dudas que certidumbres. El hecho de que las reservas combinadas de gas natural de Rusia, Irán y Asia Central supongan más del 50% de las reservas probadas mundiales, no diluye las dudas sobre cómo se pueden armonizar los intereses divergentes de productores, áreas de tránsito y consumidores, o lo que es lo mismo, los intereses de los diferentes

⁴⁴ Para un resumen de estos trágicos sucesos y las controversias desatadas puede verse De Pedro, Nicolás: “La seguridad en Asia Central y sus dilemas”, Real Instituto Elcano, *Documento de Trabajo*, nº 4 (Enero 2009), pp. 19 y 20.

⁴⁵ Véase Matveeva, Anna y Giustozzi, Antonio: “The SCO: A Regional Organisation in the Making”, Crisis States Research Centre, LSE, *Working Paper*, nº 39 (Septiembre 2008), pp. 10-11.

⁴⁶ Véase Matusov, Artyom: “Energy Cooperation in the SCO: Club or Gathering?”, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol 5, nº 3, (Agosto 2007), pp. 83-99; Wishnick, Elizabeth (2006): “Smoke and Mirrors in the Shanghai Spirit”, *International Relations and Security Network* disponible en <http://www.iiss.org/whats-new/iiss-in-the-press/press-coverage-2006/july-2006/smoke-and-mirrors-in-the-shanghai-spirit/>.



miembros de la OCS, que por otro lado privilegian los acuerdos bilaterales. Además, tres años después el Club se mantiene como un espacio de diálogo oficioso con escasas competencias y agenda. De igual forma, es conocido el rechazo de Moscú ante cualquier rumor o insinuación sobre una presencia militar china permanente en Asia Central, una dimensión militar de la OCS o una cooperación en esta materia con la OTSC⁴⁷, que se mantiene como el principal foro de cooperación militar, tanto por la voluntad política mostrada por sus miembros como por contar con las estructuras e instrumentos más desarrollados.⁴⁸

Los diferentes objetivos, percepciones y expectativas entre los miembros también se reflejan en las muy diversas valoraciones sobre la utilidad y relevancia que ha despertado la OCS entre los analistas. Así por ejemplo, uno de los investigadores kazajos más conocidos señalaba en su momento que “Kazajstán no está cosechando ningún beneficio real de su membresía de la OCS [...] ni tampoco avances en ningún asunto particular”.⁴⁹ Por el contrario, reconocidos expertos chinos como Pan Guang, son los que evalúan más positivamente los logros de la OCS, aunque desde una perspectiva un tanto contra factual ya que, según apunta, en ausencia de esta organización “los talibán podrían haber continuado avanzando hacia el norte y el conflicto afgano muy bien podría haberse extendido a los países vecinos. En este sentido, la OCS está jugando un rol esencial en el mantenimiento de la seguridad y estabilidad regionales”.⁵⁰ La prevista retirada de la OTAN del teatro afgano permitirá testar este argumento, ya que lo cierto es que hasta la fecha, la contribución de la OCS y de su grupo de contacto con Afganistán, establecido en noviembre de 2005, no ya a la resolución, sino a la simple contención en sus límites geográficos del conflicto afgano, ha tenido escasos resultados tangibles.

En cualquier caso, que la OCS y China jueguen un mayor papel en el panorama de seguridad regional no dependerá sólo del grado de necesidad que dicten las circunstancias sino, principalmente de la evolución de la relación bilateral entre Beijing y Moscú. A corto y medio plazo, tal como apunta Bobo Lo “la divergencia estratégica parece más probable que la convergencia estratégica [...] pero la confrontación geopolítica sino-rusa no es inminente”.⁵¹ Es decir, que por el momento su conocida fórmula del “eje de conveniencia” seguirá siendo la más ajustada para caracterizar esta relación en la que los intereses compartidos –la estabilidad regional, la lucha contra el terrorismo islamista, el narcotráfico, el rechazo al unilateralismo estadounidense y su presencia enraizada en Asia Central– seguirán pesando más o al menos, mitigarán los puntos de fricción –las cuestiones energéticas, el rol dominante y sobre todo, las suspicacias rusas sobre las intenciones chinas a largo plazo–. Sin embargo, no hay que perder de vista que más allá de defender sus intereses y perseguir sus objetivos, nada hace suponer que China aspire a ocupar una posición dominante en la región; lo cual puede suavizar en parte las ansiedades rusas por lo que sucede en su patio trasero. Pero no completamente ya que si bien Moscú dispone aún de suficientes elementos con los que mantener su posición dominante, lo cierto es que en el conjunto del Asia Central se vive un cambio de tendencia

⁴⁷ Véase Frost, Alexander: “The Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and Russia’s Strategic Goals in Central Asia”, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol 7, nº 3 (Agosto 2009), pp. 83-102.

⁴⁸ Como las Fuerzas Colectivas de Reacción Operativa (*CSTO Collective Operational Reaction Forces*); aunque la OTSC también está sujeta a tensiones internas por las discrepancias entre sus miembros, fundamentalmente Uzbekistán y, en tiempos recientes, Belarús.

⁴⁹ Laumulin, Murat (2006): “The Shanghai Cooperation Organization as “Geopolitical Bluff?” A View from Astana”, IFRI, *Russie.Nei.Visions* (Julio 2006), p. 18.

⁵⁰ Guang. Pan: “A Chinese Perspective on the Shanghai Cooperation Organization” en Bailes, Alyson J.K (*et al.*): “The Shanghai Cooperation Organization”, SIPRI, *Policy Paper*, nº 17 (2007), p. 51.

⁵¹ Lo, Bobo (2008): *Axis of Convenience: Moscow, Beijing and the New Geopolitics*, Londres y Washington; Chatham House-Brookings Institution Press, p.114.



histórica, ya que si hace algo más de un siglo era Rusia la que abría consulados en el Turkestán oriental (Xinjiang) y amenazaba el dominio chino sobre aquella región, ahora es China la que penetra con fuerza en el Asia Central postsoviética desplazando progresivamente a Rusia.

Por el momento, las últimas dos grandes convulsiones vividas en el espacio euroasiático –la guerra en Georgia en agosto de 2008 y la crisis en Kirguistán en 2010– han evidenciado las contradicciones y limitaciones del eje Moscú-Beijing y en consecuencia, de la propia OCS y de sus planteamientos inspirados en los principios de la coexistencia pacífica dimanados de la diplomacia china. Así, en la cumbre de la OCS que se celebró en Dushanbé pocos días después de la ofensiva rusa sobre Georgia se ofreció un apoyo muy mesurado a las acciones emprendidas por Moscú y se rechazó reconocer las independencias de Osetia del Sur y Abjazia. Lo cual resulta razonable teniendo en cuenta que la lucha contra el separatismo es de uno de los tres pilares conceptuales de la organización; y el respeto de la soberanía y la integridad territorial parte de sus fundamentos normativos. Además, tanto los dirigentes centroasiáticos como los chinos son muy sensibles ante cualquier movimiento irredentista y especialmente reacios a cualquier modificación fronteriza por cuanto consideran que podrían ser víctimas de un fenómeno similar dentro de sus propias fronteras. De hecho, como se ha indicado en varias ocasiones, el temor al independentismo uigur en la región de Xinjiang fue uno de los grandes catalizadores para que Beijing promoviera la creación de la propia OCS. Por no mencionar que el rechazo a la secesión de Kosovo fue uno de los factores que galvanizaron el acercamiento entre rusos y chinos. Por todo lo cual, no deja de resultar un tanto sorprendente que el Kremlin tratara de utilizar este foro para legitimar internacionalmente su posición.

Por otro lado, en la reciente crisis en Kirguistán, el papel de la OCS se ha limitado a emitir diversos comunicados mostrando su “profunda preocupación” por los acontecimientos y poco más. El hecho de que actualmente la Secretaría General esté encabezada por el ex ministro de Asuntos Exteriores kirguiz, Muratbek Imanaliev, no ha tenido mayor trascendencia y su papel se ha limitado a una visita de trabajo entre el 18 y el 21 de abril de 2010 para reunirse con la jefa del gobierno interino Roza Otunbáyeva. Este escaso papel ha reavivado el debate sobre el impacto real de la OCS y sus instrumentos.⁵²

7. Conclusiones

En dos décadas, China ha conseguido sus principales objetivos en su relación con Asia Central. Políticamente, se han establecido las bases para una relación estrecha y energéticamente la cuenca del Caspio se reorienta progresivamente hacia China. Además, las relaciones comerciales han experimentado un crecimiento imparable, lo que está contribuyendo notablemente a la agenda desarrollista de Beijing para la agitada región de Xinjiang. Para las repúblicas centroasiáticas, China representa un contrapeso frente a su excesiva dependencia de Rusia y para los regímenes locales, un aliado que, en línea con sus propias concepciones, prioriza la estabilidad sobre cualquier otra consideración. La cercanía con una de las economías más dinámicas del mundo es una espada de doble filo, ya que si bien ofrece muchas oportunidades, también supone notables riesgos y desafíos para los débiles tejidos productivos centroasiáticos.

⁵² Debate al que también se ve sometida la OTSC.



En cuestiones de seguridad, el impacto chino es menor y se mantendrá supeditado a la compleja relación bilateral con Rusia, que observa con aprensión el creciente papel de Beijing, en lo que aún sigue considerando su patio trasero y zona de influencia privilegiada. Por el momento y previsiblemente, se mantendrá la tendencia actual y China querrá mantener un perfil bajo, o al menos no alimentar los temores y la sinofobia en Kazajstán, Kirguistán y Rusia. Un Asia Central estable y amigable es un sólido apoyo en la ascensión internacional de China y le permite concentrar su atención en otros escenarios más complicados. A pesar de los recelos, Asia Central es una de las regiones fronterizas más receptivas ante las demandas de Beijing. No obstante, el peso chino en las cuestiones comerciales y energéticas muy probablemente continuará aumentando y con ello las suspicacias rusas. Si bien, los intereses compartidos, fundamentalmente la lucha contra el terrorismo de matriz islamista, la lucha contra el crimen organizado y el narcotráfico y el temor a una posible inestabilidad y descomposición de las repúblicas centroasiáticas, seguirán pesando más en la relación entre Moscú y Beijing. La prevista retirada de la OTAN y de EEUU del escenario afgano, puede alterar, en parte, esta dinámica ya que, hasta la fecha, el deseo compartido de evitar un enraizamiento de la presencia estadounidense en la zona ha sido un catalizador del acercamiento entre Rusia y China. Está por ver pues, cómo evolucionará la relación en ausencia de ese factor aglutinador. Lo que es seguro es que el ascenso de China, junto con las diferentes facetas del fenómeno islamista, será uno de los grandes vectores que moldearán el futuro de Asia Central.



LAS RELACIONES SINO-PAKISTANÉES: ¿HACIA UN NUEVO PARADIGMA?

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Abstract:

La relación bilateral entre la República Popular de China y Pakistán tiene unas claras implicaciones tanto para los dos actores implicados, como para la región en sí misma. Se trata de un caso claro de equilibrio de poder dentro de un sistema regional cuyas unidades son la India, Pakistán, China y EEUU. Desde la partición de la India británica en 1947 existe un “gap” estratégico entre los dos Estados ya que las capacidades de la India son muy superiores a las de Pakistán. Sin embargo, la alianza sino-pakistaní ha provocado un reequilibrio en la zona que ahora se ve amenazado por la creciente presencia norteamericana y por la desestabilización regional creciente de Afganistán.

Keywords: República Popular China, Pakistán, equilibrio de poder, sistema regional, “gap” estratégico, reequilibrio, desestabilización regional, Afganistán

Title in English: “PRC-Pakistan Relations: Towards a new Paradigm?”

Abstract:

The bilateral relation between the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the People’s Republic of China has important implications not only for these two states but also for the region. This is a clear example of regional balance of power which involves China, USA, Pakistan and India. From 1947 there is a strategic gap between Pakistan and India which Islamabad seems unable to control. Nevertheless, the Sino-Pakistani alliance has allowed to redress this disequilibrium, a situation now threatened by the growing American presence in the area as well as for the growing regional instability stemming from Afghanistan.

Keywords: People’s Republic of China, Pakistan, Balance of Power, Regional System, Strategic “Gap”, Rebalancing, Regional Destabilisation, Afghanistan.

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1. Introducción

Antes de comenzar el artículo me gustaría hacer una pequeña aclaración. El artículo que aquí comienza tratará de analizar las relaciones entre la República Popular de China y la República Islámica de Pakistán². Sin embargo, este artículo no pretende estudiar dichas relaciones desde el punto de vista chino sino desde el pakistaní. Por lo tanto, aunque se abordarán asuntos desde la perspectiva china el punto de vista será el pakistaní y como se concibe a la R.P.China como aliado.

La relación entre la R.P.China y la R.I.Pakistán tiene algunos elementos que deben ser tenidos en cuenta. Se trata de dos países asiáticos con sistemas políticos no democráticos y que poseen intereses comunes. Quizás el interés común más evidente es la enemistad con la India. Ambos Estados mantienen conflictos activos con India basados en una disputa territorial. Al mismo tiempo su relación está basada en el interés mutuo aunque eso no significa que esté exenta de problemas. De hecho, la relación es absolutamente asimétrica ya que Pakistán se encuentra en una situación de dependencia con la R.P.China que hace que la relación no sea entre iguales. A este se le suman una serie de problemas actuales como la desestabilización de Pakistán y su extensión a otras zonas incluyendo china, la irrupción de Estados Unidos en la región y su alianza con la India o la proyección de China fuera de su tradicional área de influencia.

Estos elementos y otros más serán estudiados en este artículo que tendrá la siguiente estructura. En primer lugar trataremos de hacer un rápido resumen de la relación entre China y Pakistán para centrarnos posteriormente en la situación actual. Ésta será desgranada en tres aspectos: los políticos, los económicos y los militares y de seguridad. Finalmente recogeremos unas conclusiones que pretende al tiempo resumir el artículo y dar una cierta perspectiva que arroje alguna luz sobre esta importante pero poco estudiada relación.

2. Historia de la Relación la República Islámica de Pakistán-República Popular de China.

El inicio de las relaciones entre la R. P. China y la R. I. Pakistán se remontan a la década de los 50, concretamente a 1951 cuando Islamabad -entonces Karachi- y Beijing establecieron relaciones diplomáticas. Desde entonces Pakistán se convirtió en uno de los grandes aliados internacionales de Beijing, especialmente durante los años 60 y 70 cuando China vivió los años de mayor aislamiento internacional³.

Para entender la relación entre Pakistán y China hay que entender cuales son los condicionantes estratégicos de Islamabad. Desde la partición de la India Británica, Pakistán arrastra dos problemas que determinan su política exterior y de seguridad:

- a) Su encajonamiento geográfico.
- b) Su “gap” estratégico respecto a la India.

² A partir de aquí nos referiremos a la República Popular China como China y a la República Islámica de Pakistán como Pakistán.

³ Talbot, Ian (2005): *Pakistan. A Modern History*. London, Hurst and Co.

a) Desde su creación en 1947, Pakistán, tiene la sensación de encontrarse cercada por sus dos principales enemigos, la India y Afganistán. Cuando se produjo la partición los objetivos de la India y Pakistán eran absolutamente diferentes y contrapuestos. Mientras que para la India su meta era lograr la independencia del Reino unido para Pakistán su meta era lograr un lugar seguro a los musulmanes⁴ que era objetivo de los nacionalistas indios. Sin embargo, la India hoy no ha renunciado a su idea de unificar el subcontinente y de ahí los problemas por Cachemira⁵ que han enfrentado militarmente a India y Pakistán hasta en cuatro ocasiones⁶.

En lo que al flanco norte se refiere Pakistán ha vivido la amenaza Pastún y el sueño nacionalista de crear el Gran Pastunistán. De hecho, uno de los principales problemas en las relaciones entre Pakistán y Afganistán es la no aceptación por parte de Kabul de la frontera - Durand Line- fijada en siglo XIX por la autoridad colonial británica y no aceptada por el pueblo Pastún.

Gráfico 1: Frontera Afgano-Pakistaní y Población Pastún



Fuente: Universidad de Texas. Colección Perry Castañeda.

⁴ Synnot, Hylary (2009): *Transforming Pakistan. Ways out of instability*, London, Routledge/IISS, p. 17.

⁵ La importancia e Jammu y Cachemira es mucho mayor de lo que parece ya que siguiendo “la teoría de las dos nacionalidades” de Jinnah que dio pie a la partición aquellos territorios que tengan mayoría musulmana deberán integrarse en Pakistán. Además de estos territorios, esta teoría, permitiría que algunos territorios de India de mayoría musulmana pudieran integrarse en Pakistán. Con esta idea varios think-tanks chinos han vaticinado la insurrección de algunos territorios indios.

⁶ Algunos autores hablan de tres guerras que incluyen la última del Kargil hablan de cuatro

Esta necesidad de mantener al menos uno de los frentes en paz fue lo que a Pakistán a apoyar a los Muyahidines en los años 70 y en los 80 cuando la URSS invadió el país provocando una islamización del país que hoy se ha convertido su principal problema de seguridad.

b) El “gap estratégico” entre la India y Pakistán es abismal. Tanto en población, en recursos, como en capacidades militares la comparación entre la India y Pakistán nos llevaría a buscar símiles tales como David y Goliat o los legendarios relatos de las Termópilas.

TABLA 1: Superioridad Estratégica (Gap) de la India sobre Pakistán

	PAKISTAN	INDIA	Superioridad para India
Población (m)	157,90	1.103,40	+ 945.5
PIB(\$bn)	110,70	805,70	+ 695
PIB per cápita (\$PPP)	2.370	3.450	+1080
Área (000 sq Km)	804	3.287	+2483
Crecimiento anual (1995-2005)	4.00 %	6.30 %	+2.30%
Nivel de reservas (\$bn)	11.1	137.8	126.8

Fuente: Priego, Alberto “Las relaciones entre Estados Unidos y Pakistán. Continuidad y cambio con la Administración Obama”, Instituto Franklin, *Tribuna Norteamericana* (Mayo, 2010).

Como se aprecia las capacidades militares de la India superan con creces a las del país musulmán, lo que históricamente ha obligado a Pakistán a buscar otros “instrumentos” que compensen esa asimetría. Esencialmente podemos hablar de dos vías para superar ese desequilibrio.



1) El incremento de las capacidades que en ocasiones se ha traducido en una militarización del país llegando incluso dejar el país controlado por el ejército. Es precisamente este hecho lo explica la nuclearización de Pakistán, vieja aspiración de los gobernantes del país que se convirtió en realidad en los tiempos del Presidente Bhuto. gracias precisamente a la ayuda de China⁷.

2) La necesidad de tener un “hermano mayor” que protegiera al país de su gran enemigo: la India. En un primer momento este lugar fue ocupado por Estados Unidos pero la falta de ayuda norteamericana en las guerras con la India y sobre todo las presiones democrática de Washington provocaron que Islamabad se acercara cada vez a Beijing que por un lado rivaliza con la India y por otro no pone condicionantes democráticos en sus relaciones bilaterales.

Así podemos afirmar que Pakistán depende absolutamente de China para su propia supervivencia ya que entre otras cosas fue China quien le proveyó de material fisible para construir sus primeras centrales nucleares y en la actualidad, China es el principal socio militar de Pakistán. En palabras del embajador pakistaní en Washington “China is high-value guarantor of security against India⁸” lo que confirma la hipótesis de que se trata de una relación absolutamente asimétrica en la que Beijing marca el paso y Pakistán obedece ya que su propia supervivencia depende de sus relaciones con China.

A este elemento hay que sumarle que desde el punto de vista económico aunque las relaciones entre Pakistán y China ha ido siendo cada vez más importantes, históricamente el país surasiático no suponía una importante oportunidad de negocio para el gigante asiático, lo que desde luego le restaba interés. En cambio la India sí que supone un importante mercado para los productos chinos aunque desde el punto de vista estratégico Pakistán es la prioridad además de un importante aliado.

Así cabe preguntarse cuáles son los aspectos de esta relación que hacen que China considere al país musulmán como una prioridad. Esencialmente podemos destacar dos. En primer lugar el poder político internacional de Pakistán, sobre todo en el mundo islámico, donde desde hace muchos años ocupa el rol de portavoz de China. De hecho, cuando el gigante asiático pasaba sus momentos más duros fue Pakistán quien levantó la voz para pedir un asiento en el Consejo de Seguridad de la ONU. En segundo lugar, el hecho de compartir enemigo –la India- convierte a Pakistán en el aliado perfecto que provoca un desgaste que permite a China tener ocupado a Dehli. A esto, en segundo lugar, se le suma la necesidad de la India de buscar aliados internacionales para mantener el equilibrio de poder, históricamente la URSS⁹ y actualmente Estados Unidos¹⁰.

⁷ “Poco a poco la cooperación chino-pakistaní se fue incrementando y las visitas de científicos chinos a lugares como Karachi (KANUPP) Gwadar, Chashma Barrage (Chashma Nuclear Power Plan) se hicieron cada vez más frecuentes”: Priego, Alberto: “Estados Unidos y Pakistán”, *Revista Culturas*, nº 1 (2008), p. 78.

⁸ Afridi, Jamad and Bajoria, Jayshree: “China Pakistan relations” *Council on Foreign Relations*, (06 de Julio 2010), en www.cfr.org/publicaciones/10070/chinapakistan_relations.html.

⁹ “The long term impact of that conflict, and the subsequent regional containment of India by China through military assistance and diplomatic support in a facto alliance with Pakistan, made India highly dependent on the Soviet Union for arms” Nayar, Baldev Raj (2003): *India in the World Order. Searching for Major-Power Status*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p. 164.

¹⁰ “As India’s April 2001 agenda indicates, it is critically important to India that America treat it as an equal and that this relationship lead to partnership where security cooperation placed a prominent role”: Blank, Stephen J. (2005): *Natural Allies? Regional Security in Asia and prospects for Indo-American strategic Cooperation*, Washington, Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) p. 74.



Por ello China sigue pensando que las relaciones con Islamabad son fundamentales aunque existan elementos como el citado auge económico de la India, la llegada de Zardari al gobierno y, sobretudo, la creciente inseguridad de los ciudadanos chinos en Pakistán han hecho tambalearse la relación. Sin embargo, ambos gobiernos y en especial el pakistaní han hecho esfuerzos ímprobos por superar estos obstáculos y por mantener la relación estratégica que mantienen desde el año 1951. El mejor ejemplo son las declaraciones de Zardari en el pasado julio cuando se comprometió a visitar China cada tres meses si fuera necesario¹¹.

Así la relación entre China y Pakistán puede ser catalogada de asimétrica, contradictorio y necesaria para ambas partes por lo que aunque con altos y bajos parece que se mantendrá en términos similares a los que conocemos actualmente. Vamos a hacer un análisis pormenorizado de esta relación bilateral centrándonos en los aspectos políticos, económicos y de seguridad.

3. Relaciones bilaterales entre China y Pakistán

Además de las características que hemos señalado anteriormente –asimétrica, contradictoria y necesaria- la relación entre Pakistán y China tiene otras características que deben ser analizadas. Cada una de las partes pone mayor énfasis en un aspecto concreto de la relación ya que así pueden cubrir aquellos elementos en los que es más débil. Por ello China ha centrado su interés en los aspectos políticos logrando una mayor representatividad a nivel internacional. No obstante, en los últimos años han sido los elementos estratégicos y de seguridad los que han recibido más atención. Sirvan de ejemplo, la construcción del puerto de Gwadar o la autovía del Karakorum que permite a China hacerse con un puerto profundo en el Mar Árabe a pocos kilómetros del estratégico Estrecho de Ormuz.

Por su parte si bien es cierto que la relación militar sigue siendo de gran relevancia para Pakistán, últimamente los aspectos económicos y sobretudo lo relativo a las infraestructuras han ganado peso específico. Por ejemplo, desde 2008 China está construyendo dos centrales nucleares más en suelo pakistaní (Chashma III y IV) permitiendo a Pakistán ser menos dependiente de otras energías¹².

A continuación vamos a hacer un análisis pormenorizado de los distintos aspectos de la relación entre China y Pakistán para descubrir que aspectos son más importantes para unos y cuáles para otro a fin de lograr una idea de conjunto del entramado de relaciones entre Islamabad y Beijing. Así podemos decir que, aunque con muchos matices, China está más interesada en los aspectos políticos, Pakistán en los económicos y que ambos comparten intereses de seguridad aunque en este último punto las agendas y los intereses muchas veces no coinciden.

3.1. Política

La relación entre Pakistán y China comienza con un interés político mutuo. En 1951 Pakistán, gran enemigo del comunismo y aliado de los Estados Unidos, estableció relación

¹¹ “President Zardari announced that he would visit China every three months” Bajoria, Jaysree: “Intensifying China-Pakistan ties”, *Council on Foreign Relations* (07 Julio 2010), en http://www.cfr.org/publication/22603/intensifying_chinapakistan_ties.html.

¹² La Construcción de las centrales Chashma III y IV ha provocado la queja norteamericana al entender Washington que viola el acuerdo de Nuclear Supplier Group.



diplomáticas con la escasamente reconocida República Popular de China. De hecho, durante los años de aislamiento chino -60 y 70- Pakistán jugó un papel fundamental en foros internacionales tales como las Naciones Unidas. En esta misma línea, Pakistán sirvió de mediador entre China y los Estados Unidos para que la Administración Nixon accediera al reconocimiento internacional de Beijing como poseedor de los instrumentos de la soberanía china que hasta la fecha estaba en manos de la República de China, es decir Taiwán. Precisamente este asunto, el de Taiwán junto con el Tíbet y Xingjian, es donde Pakistán ha mostrado su apoyo más firme a China incluyendo foros como Organización para la Conferencia Islámica donde China no tiene voz, aunque habla por boca de Pakistán.

En esta línea de cooperación se produjeron visitas oficiales, demarcaciones de frontera y como colofón final chinos y pakistaníes firmaron un acuerdo de amistad y cooperación (1963) que certificaba la buena sintonía. Gracias a estos años de cooperación entre China y Pakistán se forjó una alianza que se vio reforzada por la percepción de traición que se generó en Pakistán tras la falta de apoyo norteamericano en las guerras con la India de 1965 y 1971. De hecho, en esta última contienda el apoyo chino resultó fundamental para que disimular la derrota que acabó con la independencia de Bangladesh, hasta entonces Pakistán Oriental.

Quizás el momento cooperación política más profunda -aunque también militar- llegó en la década de los 70 cuando China proveyó a Pakistán de la tecnología nuclear que Francia y Canadá, tras presiones norteamericanas, le habían negado. En este momento la relación estratégica entre los Estados Unidos y Pakistán se vio sustituida por otra donde Beijing ocupó el lugar de Washington. La transferencia de este tipo de tecnología fue calificada por Zulfikar Ali Bhutto como “la contribución más importante para la supervivencia de nuestra nación”¹³

Sobre esta base China y Pakistán han ido forjando una relación que llega hasta hoy aunque tras muchos años de una salud excelente aunque tampoco está exenta de problemas. En palabras del actual embajador Pakistaní en Washington Haqqani “China y EEUU son cruciales para Pakistán pero si tuviéramos que elegir optaríamos por China”¹⁴

Un elemento que ha fortalecido la cooperación política entre China y Pakistán es el lanzamiento del concepto “AkPak”. Islamabad ha entendido que enmarcar a Pakistán y Afganistán dentro de una realidad es un acto de menosprecio que se enmarca dentro de la línea de desaires que Washington tiene con el país Sursiático. Este sentimiento ha sido utilizado por China para reforzar más la relación y para convertir en más dependiente aún a Pakistán quien concibe a China como su único aliado de peso en el mundo. Esta percepción no es del todo errónea y está reforzada por acciones llevadas a cabo por Beijing tales como enviar una delegación de bajo perfil a las reuniones multilaterales de “Friends of Democratic Pakistan”. En 2008 China mandó a un representante de menor nivel a una reunión de carácter ministerial pero el colofón llegó en septiembre de 2009 cuando a instancia de Estados Unidos se reunieron en Nueva York una docena de Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno entre los que estaban Gordon Brown, Nicolas Sarkozy o el propio Barack Obama. A modo de “protesta” la delegación china estuvo encabezada por el Embajador Chino ante las Naciones Unidas Zhang Yessui.

¹³ Synnot, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

¹⁴ “Pakistan thinks that both China and the US are crucial. If push comes to Shore it would probably choose China”: Jaysree, *op. cit.*

3.2. Económica

La relación económica entre China y Pakistán es igual de asimétrica que el resto. De hecho, bien podría ser entendida como una compensación china a los servicios prestados por parte de Pakistán a China. Beijing ha invertido un gran cantidad de dinero en el desarrollo de las infraestructuras pakistaníes, algo que por sí sólo Islamabad no puede llevar a cabo. Sin embargo, esta inversión no es sólo una compensación sino una oportunidad para China tal y como ocurren con el puerto de Gwadar, la autovía del Karakorum o una variedad de centrales Hidroeléctricas. En total en el año 2007 China tenía invertido en Pakistán un total de 7000 millones de dólares y este año se espera que pueda alcanzar, aun con la crisis, la friolera de 10.000 millones de dólares¹⁵.

Los primeros pasos se remontan a los años 60 y concretamente al acuerdo económico de 1963. Sin embargo, la relación comenzó a ser importante en los años 90 al calor del desarrollo económico chino y aunque no pueda compararse con otras como la que mantiene con la India, cada vez ocupa un lugar más importante. En el año 2008 China y Pakistán firmaron un nuevo acuerdo comercial mucho más ambicioso que el de 1963 que certifica las buenas relaciones entre los dos Estados

En los últimos años, a pesar de la crisis económica, la relación económica entre Pakistán y China ha ido creciendo hasta alcanzar los 15.000 millones dólares (2010) que si bien están lejos de los 40.000 que representa la relación con la India se ha duplicado respecto a 2008 cuando sólo era de 7.000 millones de dólares.

En la siguiente tabla se puede apreciar la diferencia entre las relaciones comerciales con la India y con Pakistán:

TABLA 2: Relaciones Comerciales China-Pakistán/China-India

	Importaciones chinas (millones de \$)			Exportaciones chinas (millones de \$)		
	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009
India	14.658.8	20.341,1	13.704,1	24.036.4	31.516,5	29.570,4
Pakistán	1105.3	1007.1	1258.7	5784.9	5991.4	5517.0

FUENTE: World Trade Atlas

Merece la pena detenerse mínimamente en dos de los grandes proyectos de infraestructuras chinos en Pakistán: el puerto de Gwadar y la autovía del Karakorum. Recientemente se ha especulado sobre las reservas de gas y petróleo del Baluchistán pakistaní. Si estas reservas se confirman China estaría en la mejor de las posiciones para su explotación y posterior transporte hasta su territorio ya sea usando la redes ya establecidas hasta Xingjian (Autovía del Karakorum) o las importantes instalaciones de Gwadar donde recordemos que se está

¹⁵ *Ibid.*



construyendo una refinería¹⁶. Sin embargo, este punto que es de interés de los Estados se ve amenazado por la presencia de grupos terroristas como el ETIM o el TIM que pretenden desestabilizar la zona para crear un Estado Islámico independiente en Xingjian.

3.3. Militar y de Seguridad

Las relaciones militares entre China y Pakistán siempre han ocupado un lugar de excepción. El Ejército de Liberación del Pueblo mantiene excelentes relaciones con lo el Ejército Pakistán y los gobernantes chinos han expresado en muchas ocasiones que se sienten más cómodos tratando con los militares pakistaníes que con los civiles¹⁷.

En los años setenta de la mano de las excelentes relaciones políticas entre China y Pakistán se celebraron algunos acuerdos de carácter militar como la construcción de una factoría de carros de combate construida por Beijing en Taxila, cerca de Islamabad.

En 1976 -dos años antes de que la India realizara sus primeros test nucleares- Pakistán, con ayuda China, llevó a cabo el suyo. Unos años más tarde, China transfirió tecnología nuclear para la construcción de una planta, en Kahuta, orientada al diseño al enriquecimiento de uranio con fines no pacíficos. Los empleados de dicha planta recibieron instrucción en China. La cooperación chino-pakistaní no sentó nada bien a Washington que impuso sanciones sobre Pakistán. Con este aislamiento internacional China se convirtió en el único apoyo de Pakistán lo que reforzó aun más la alianza y la asimetría de la misma¹⁸.

El 14 de agosto de 2006, día de la independencia de Pakistán, el entonces Presidente Musharraf anunció la creación en cadena del J 17 Thunder, un caza de cuarta generación, producido por la empresa china CATIC y la pakistaní PAC. Se trata de un caza ligero de combate de producción chino-pakistaní que muestra la cooperación entre los dos Estados. El primer vuelo de prueba había tenido lugar en 2003 y el primer avión fue mostrado por Pakistán en noviembre de 2009. Sin embargo la cooperación aeroespacial chino-pakistaní no se reduce a este caza sino que existen otras iniciativas como avión de entrenamiento ligero K-8 Karakorum que también es una iniciativa chino-pakistaní.

La marina es otro de los campos donde China se está modernizando más ya que ha dejado de ser una potencia regional. Fruto de esta necesidad China está fabricando conjuntamente con Pakistán las fragatas F22-P, fragatas modernas que necesitan puertos de gran calado como el Gwadar. En total y hasta la fecha se han fabricado cuatro, tres para China y una para Pakistán. Son el fruto del trabajo conjunto de la empresa China Shanghai Hudong Zhonghua y de la Pakistaní Karachi Shipyard and Engineering Works.¹⁹

¹⁶ "Large-scale projects in telecommunications and hydropower the Chinese-built port at Gwadar in Baluchistan potentially provides both an energy and transshipment route": Small, Andrew: "China's Caution on Afghanistan-Pakistan", *Washington Quarterly* (July 2010), p. 82.

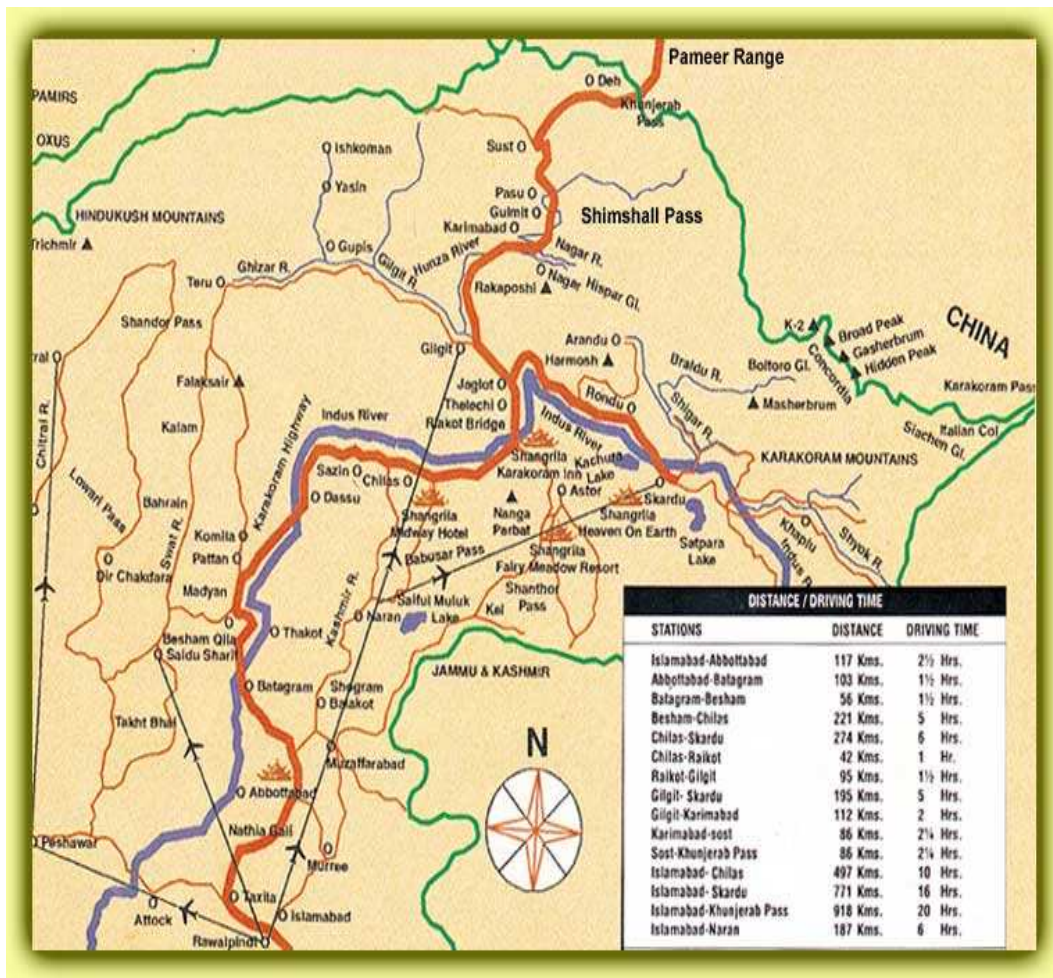
¹⁷ "Chinese interlocutors freely admit a preference for the military-led governments of Pakistan's past and it is primarily Pakistan's military that Beijing continues to view as the reliable guarantor of PRC interests in China" Dumbaugh, Kerry B.: "Exploring the China-Pakistan Relationship", *CNA China Studies* (June 2010).

¹⁸ Priego, Alberto "Pakistan: between Central and South Regional Security Complex": Upsala University-Sweden, *Central Asia and the Caucasus* (December 2008).

¹⁹ Datos obtenidos de Jane's Defence and Markets (March 2010).

Sin embargo, el mayor éxito de la cooperación chino-pakistaní ha quedado cristalizado en el propio puerto de Gwadar²⁰, un puerto profundo en aguas del Mar Árabe que permite a China tener profundidad estratégica al controlar la salida del Estrecho de Ormuz, ruta donde circula el 40% del crudo mundial. Junto a las posibilidades estratégicas que le otorga este puerto hay que percatarse de las posibilidades comerciales ya que usando la autovía del Karakorum China puede darle una salida a la siempre bloqueada región de Xingjian.

Gráfico 2: Autovía Karakorum



Fuente: Pamir Tour.

Si bien es cierto que el puerto de Gwadar otorga a China grandes posibilidades, no es menos cierto que también le ha provocado grandes problemas. Los grupos islamistas imperantes en Pakistán han puesto en el punto de mira a los trabajadores chinos que han sido continuamente atacados por grupos radicales que se oponen al modo de vida de los chinos que allí residen. La persecución de ciudadanos chinos²¹, cuya máxima expresión se dio en 2007 con la

²⁰ El 80% del coste de la construcción del puerto ha sido cubierto por China.

²¹ Se calcula que entre 7000 y 10000 chinos viven en Pakistán.



tristemente famosa Mezquita Laj-Mashij²² (Mezquita Roja) puso en peligro las relaciones entre Beijing e Islamabad. Junto a este hecho, tan sólo un año después un ingeniero chino fue secuestrado y posteriormente asesinado en las zonas tribales de Pakistán (FATA) lo que puso la relación otra vez en una situación aún más complicada.

Algunos autores han ido incluso más lejos sugiriendo que la suspensión de los trabajos de la refinería que China está construyendo en Gwadar no se deben a la crisis económica sino a una medida de presión ante los continuos y reiterados ataques que sufren los ciudadanos chinos residentes en Pakistán²³. Sea o no por eso, lo que si que es cierto es que China ha manifestado en reiteradas ocasiones su preocupación ante el desarrollo de los acontecimientos en Pakistán y el Gobierno de Islamabad ha modificado en varias ocasiones su postura ante los grupos islamistas. China tiene un poder de convicción que no tienen otros estados como pueda ser el caso de Estados Unidos a pesar de ser un actor con la boca cerrada, como han señalado algunos autores.

En enero de 2010 Robert Gates realizó su primera visita a Pakistán, visita que se enmarcaba en una gira por Asia en la que además visitó también a la India. Por contra, en ese mismo mes el número dos del Estado Mayor Chino –General Ma Xiaotian- realizó una visita monográfica a Pakistán en la que además se firmó un acuerdo de producción de defensa conjunta que se une a otras muchas ya citadas anteriormente.

Precisamente la postura de China respecto del problema terrorista en Pakistán ya se vio en 1999 con la denominada Guerra del Kargil o Cuarta Guerra Indio-Pakistaní²⁴. En esta ocasión China mostró una posición de neutralidad e incluso de tibio rechazo con respecto a los islamistas que tomaron este collado indio. Aunque oficialmente Islamabad se desmarcó de esta acción, la sombra del ISI era alargada y todo el mundo señaló al servicio secreto pakistaní como inductor del asalto. Algo similar ocurrió con los atentados de Mumbai de 2008 que aunque China no se vio afectada directamente no quiso poner en peligro sus excelentes relaciones económicas con la India y condenó con dureza los hechos de Lashkar –e-Toiba²⁵.

Desde hace años los ejércitos chino y pakistaní llevan a cabo una importante cooperación en materia de lucha contra el terrorismo. Sin ir más lejos en junio de 2010 se llevaron a cabo la tercera edición de los ejercicios antiterroristas “Friendship 2010” que se celebraron con anterioridad en 2004 y 2006. Todos estos esfuerzos militares chino-pakistaníes están relacionados con el acercamiento norteamericano a la India quien además de firmar un acuerdo sobre transferencias nucleares también está transfiriendo equipamiento militar de última generación como aviones P3C Orion para lucha antisubmarina.

Otro de los puntos de fricción entre China y Pakistán ha sido el conocido como doctor Khan que ha sido acusado de tráfico de material fisible. En buena lógica a nadie, y a las potencias nucleares menos aún, le interesa un mundo con más armas nucleares y sobre todo que éstas caigan en manos de grupos terroristas. Por ello, el tema de la red de material fisible creada por el doctor A.Q. Khan ha sido uno de los puntos de fricción entre China y Pakistán, punto en el que además Estados Unidos y China han estado de acuerdo.

²² Para este tema ver Priego, Alberto: “Musharraf en la Encrucijada”, UNISCI, *UNISCI Discussion Papers*, no. 15 (Octubre 2007), en http://www.ucm.es/info/unisci/revistas/UNISCI15_Priego.pdf.

²³ Fazl-e-Haider, Syed: “China calls halts to Gwadar refinery”, *Asia Online*, 14 August 2009, en http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/KH14Df02.html.

²⁴ Blank, *op. cit.*

²⁵ Lashkar-e-Toiba es un grupo vinculado al ISI y que ha actuado en la Cachemira . Ver Synnot, *op. cit.*



4. Conclusión

Lo primero que tenemos que decir es que se trata de una relación poco estudiada pero de gran importancia para el equilibrio regional de la zona. De hecho de no mantenerse probablemente Pakistán no existiría como Estado. Por ello, China actúa como principal aliado pakistaní y equilibrador regional frente a la India ya que Estados Unidos si bien sigue siendo un importante socio de Islamabad no ha mostrado su compromiso con Pakistán en momentos clave como en la 2ª y 3ª Guerra Indio-Pakistaní.

La propia relación ha ido evolucionando al mismo tiempo que los actores han ido alterando su posición en la escena internacional. Así, al principio la posición de la recién creada República Popular de China era muy limitada debido a su escaso reconocimiento internacional. En ese momento fue Pakistán quien defendió su candidatura al Consejo de Seguridad y por ello el gobierno chino mantuvo una relación privilegiada desde el primer momento con Pakistán. En ese momento para China las relaciones políticas eran las más importantes y las económicas pasaban a un segundo plano. Sin negar que las relaciones políticas para China siguen siendo importantes las económicas han cobrado mayor peso.

En cambio es ahora Pakistán quien necesita ese apoyo político ya que su falta de acierto en la lucha contra el terrorismo y las implicaciones de grupos pakistaníes en atentados terroristas más allá de sus fronteras ha puesto a los diferentes gobiernos de Islamabad en la picota internacional. Por ello, ahora China es quien presta apoyo político a Pakistán en cuestiones como “*Friends of Pakistan*” o restando importancia al paradigma norteamericano AfPAK²⁶.

Ha sido el auge económico chino lo que ha provocado que las relaciones económicas chino-pakistaníes sean hoy más importantes que en 1950. Prueba de ello ha sido la firma en 2008 de un nuevo tratado económico-comercial. Sin embargo, la India que ha emergido como gigante económico en las últimas décadas es un duro competidor para Pakistán ya que India se muestra como un mercado más amplio y carece de la inestabilidad que sufre Pakistán. No obstante Pakistán ha ido ganando peso en las carteras de negocios chinos, sobre todo gracias a las infraestructuras que el gobierno de Beijing están construyendo en Pakistán (centrales hidroeléctricas, carreteras, puertos....) Si finalmente se confirman las previsiones energéticas de Baluchistán la relación comercial entre China y Pakistán va a cobrar más peso específico.

Sin embargo, es precisamente la tercera pata de esta relación la que pone más trabas a una expansión de las relaciones económicas entre China y Pakistán, me estoy refiriendo a la seguridad. La inestabilidad reinante en Pakistán ha provocado más de una fricción entre China y Pakistán. El gobierno chino se ha quejado en alguna ocasión de la falta de celo a la hora de controlar a los grupos radicales que operan en Pakistán y que mantienen contactos con radicales de Xingjian. En este punto, es donde China ha expresado su pesar especialmente con Zardari, tanto que ha llegado a afirmar de forma clara que se sentía más cómoda con un gobierno militar como el del General Musharraf.

²⁶ Small, *op. cit.*



FUTURE OF INDIA – CHINA RELATIONS: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract:

The ongoing debate on India-China relations among the members of strategic and academic community has raised a number of issues including the future prospects and the major challenges confronting the bilateral relationships. The last six decades of India-China relationships have seen more of mutual mistrust and suspicion than friendliness and cordial atmosphere. Such mutual mistrust and suspicion grew over the years and have gone beyond proportions in the current context. The challenge has always been to bridge the differences of opinion from both sides and reach to a common understanding on a number of sensitive issues including Sino-Indian border issues. At the same time, one should not come to the conclusion that both India and China have always been at loggerheads. A series of serious attempts have been made by both India and China to bridge the differences more particularly on the border issue. India and China relations are expanding and deepening despite several divergences on many pertinent issues impacting the bilateral relations. The deepening of relations was reflected when the two countries established the Strategic and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in 2005 and also signed A Shared Vision for 21st Century in 2008. Undoubtedly, India and China have emerged as the two rapidly growing economies and their bilateral relationship to a greater extent has assumed global and strategic relevance. It would be important to introspect India – China experience in the past and then explore the mechanisms by which the bilateral cooperation can take a robust shape. The objective of this paper will be to assess and analyze the broad contours of India-China relations and explore the areas on which both the countries can work together on mutual interests. The trajectory of bilateral relationship has many positive as well as negative connotations. It would highlight both the convergences and divergences and then suggest ways by which the existing divergences can be bridged. It would also try and explain the rationale for a robust and constructive engagement.

Keywords: India-China relations, mutual intereses, constructive engagement.

Resumen:

El debate en curso sobre las relaciones India-China entre los miembros de la comunidad estratégica y académica ha planteado una serie de cuestiones en las que se incluyen las perspectivas y los mayores desafíos que afrontan las relaciones bilaterales. Las últimas seis décadas de las relaciones India-China han sido testigo de más desconfianza y suspicacia que amistad y cordialidad. El desafío ha sido siempre el de superar las diferencias de opinión por parte de ambas partes y alcanzar una comprensión común sobre una serie de cuestiones delicadas incluyendo las cuestiones fronterizas. Al mismo tiempo habría que evitar la impresión de que las relaciones mutuas siempre han sido negativas. Una serie de intentos han sido realizados para superar las diferencias con respecto a los problemas fronterizos. Las relaciones entre la India y China se están expandiendo y profundizando a pesar varias divergencias sobre numerosos asuntos que afectan a las relaciones bilaterales. La profundización de las relaciones se reflejó en la Asociación Estratégica y de Cooperación para la Paz y la Prosperidad y la Visión Conjunta para el siglo 21, del 2005 y el 2008 respectivamente. Sin duda alguna, la India y China están emergiendo como dos economías de rápido crecimiento y su relación bilateral en gran medida ha asumido relevancia global y estratégica. Sería importante considerar la experiencia de la India y China en el pasado y entonces explorar los mecanismos por los cuales la cooperación bilateral puede reforzarse. El objetivo de este artículo será el de evaluar y analizar el perfil de las relaciones India-China y explorar las áreas en las cuales ambos países pueden trabajar por sus intereses mutuos. La trayectoria de la relación bilateral tiene muchas connotaciones tanto positivas como negativas. Se destacarán tanto las convergencias como las divergencias y se sugerirán modos para superar las divergencias existentes así como para establecer mecanismos efectivos de implicación.

Palabras clave: Relaciones India-China, intereses mutuos, implicación constructiva.

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1. Introduction

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The current debate on India-China relations among the members of strategic and academic community has raised a number of issues including the future prospects and the major challenges confronting the bilateral relationships. The last six decades of India-China relationships have seen more of mutual mistrust and suspicion than friendliness and cordial atmosphere. Such mutual mistrust and suspicion grew over the years and have gone beyond proportions in the current context. The challenge has always been to bridge the differences of opinion from both sides and reach to a common understanding on a number of sensitive issues including Sino-Indian border issues. At the same time, one should not come to the conclusion that both India and China have always been at loggerheads. A series of serious attempts have been made by both India and China to bridge the differences more particularly on the border issue.

It must be emphasized here that India and China relations are expanding and deepening despite several divergences on many pertinent issues impacting the bilateral relations. The deepening of India-China relations was reflected when the two countries established the Strategic and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in 2005 and also signed A Shared Vision for 21st Century in 2008. Undoubtedly, India and China have emerged as the two rapidly growing economies and their bilateral relationship to a greater extent has assumed global and strategic relevance. It would be important to introspect India – China experience in the past and then explore the mechanisms by which the bilateral cooperation can take a robust shape. There is certainly a very important element guiding India-China relations and that is the growing shared interests on a number of issues including trade and commerce. China and India have become important trade partners.

The objective of this paper will be to assess and analyze the broad contours of India-China relations and explore the areas on which both the countries can work together on the areas of mutual interests. The trajectory of bilateral relationship has many positive as well as negative connotations. It would highlight both the convergences and divergences in India-China relations and then suggest ways by which the existing divergences can be bridged. It would also try and explain the rationale for a robust and constructive engagement in the evolving new world order with realigning regional equations.

2. Evolution of India-China Relations

India and China perhaps are the only countries in the world, which have a legacy of ancient culture and civilizations. Both also share a similar heritage of colonization. Both are two most populous countries in the world. India and China are still underdeveloped Asian countries. Despite a number of similarities, both have many times found themselves at different poles especially on bilateral contentious issues. There have, however, always been cooperative attempts on a number of sectors other than contentious sectors. The past 60 years of India-China relations have obviously signaled that both the countries have been seeking mutually acceptable solutions to the main contention relating to boundary issue. It is also generally believed that both countries never allowed the differences to come on their way of bilateral cooperation and engagement.²

² Chinese President Hu Jintao has emphasized that ‘the good neighbourly friendship and cooperation between China and India and their common development not only benefit our two peoples but also serve the peace and development of Asia and the entire world.’ It was reflected during Hu Jintao’s visit to India in November 2006.



The major challenge confronting India-China relations has been to build mutual trust and confidence. The trust deficit created by both the sides has decimated the robustness of bilateral relationships. The element of trust is an essential component in forging a sustained bilateral cooperation. Somehow, the lack of trust and confidence between the two countries created lots of misunderstanding on a number of bilateral issues.

Despite the fact that India was one of the first few countries, which recognized the People's Republic of China³, the bilateral relationship saw a number of downs than ups. The history of initial years of India-China relations more particularly during 1949 – 1958 depicts an era of friendliness.⁴ Both India and China were able to reach to a consensus and signed the Panchsheel Agreement, which basically dealt with Trade and Intercourse between India and Tibet region of China in Beijing.⁵ Panchsheel became the guiding principles of India-China bilateral relationship. Zhou Enlai's trip to India in June 1954 was a symbolic messaging about China's intent and philosophy. It was historic in the sense that a communist head of government was making a peacetime visit to a non-communist state.

The animosity and hostilities grew during the decade of 1959 - 1976, which saw the bad patch in the relationship during the war in 1962. The best possible assumptions – Hindi-Chinni bhai bhai period got changed into Hindi-Chinni bye bye period. The period during 1976 - 1988 has been characterized as an era of dispelling doubts and misunderstanding. The year 1988 was a landmark year because India-China relations took a new turn after India's Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's visit to China. Undoubtedly, the period during 1988 - 1998 saw a new atmosphere and a new bonhomie in India-China relations. The post 1998 scenario after India detonated a nuclear device, China emerged as one of the greatest critics and hence the relationship deteriorated. However, the situation changed after both the nations realized about each others' contribution in the global economy and to a greater extent started broadening the then existing bilateral ties. The strain in the relationship was replaced by friendliness. The era during the first decade of the twenty first century has been an era of cooperation in economic sphere and also a mix of misunderstanding on political fronts.

2.1. Historical Overview

It must be reiterated here that India recognized China immediately after it came into existence as People's Republic of China in 1949. After establishing diplomatic relationships, both India and China shared a number of common concerns and challenges confronting their relationships. Both the countries, India and China had also reached to a common understanding on number of major international issues. The signing of Panchsheel Agreement in 1954 was a move towards achieving the confidence but somehow this confidence did not last long. The Preamble of the Agreement reflected the growing consensus between the two countries. India accepted Tibet as part of China and also relinquished the British responsibilities and obligations in Tibet through the Panchsheel Agreement.

The bonhomie created a very positive atmosphere and it paved the way for the then Chinese Premier Chou En-lai to visit India thrice during the period 1954-1957. The Prime

³ India recognized the People's Republic of China as the legitimate government of China on April 1, 1950.

⁴ During September 1959, India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru tabled the First White Paper on India-China relations. It contains notes, memoranda and letters exchanged between India and China between April 1954 and August 1959.

⁵ Both India and China entered into Panchsheel Agreement based on the following principles: a) Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; b) Mutual non-aggression; c) Mutual non-interference in each other's affairs; d) Equality and Mutual Benefit; and e) Peaceful co-existence



Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru visited only once in October 1954. Nehru's visit to China was a landmark event because China accorded a warm and red carpet welcome. The euphoria and optimism created for the future of India-China relations was unprecedented. However, such euphoria and optimism were definitely short lived.

Undoubtedly, India was aware of the China's intention in drawing their bordering zone with India. Nehru had brought this topic for the discussion with the Chinese about the incorrect border lines and somehow it was ignored and not taken seriously by Chou En-lai. The Chinese view of the MacMohan Line was absolutely different and had discarded India's view. Chou En-lai successive visits to India saw a decline in mutual understanding on some of these pertinent themes including the border. China's intentions and their designs were reflected when a report appeared in the Chinese media that Sinkiang province of China had been linked to Tibet by road in the Aksai Chin area.

As far as the evolution of international dimensions of India-China relations were concerned, India from the day one was very clear in its approach. India had appealed at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) forty times by sponsoring resolutions during 1950 – 1958 that the People's Republic of China should represent China at the United Nations. India also showed a great sense of maturity in taking a stand on the Korean War (1950 – 53). India had openly voted against the United Nations draft resolution which declared China as an aggressor and abstained from voting for putting embargo on China.

Despite India's consistent and persistent efforts in reaching to a mutually acceptable position from each side on border issue, it failed in convincing China.⁶ It must be emphasized here that the Indian stand on the boundary issue was largely a reflection of its stand on the issue of Tibet. The 1959 Tibetan crisis became a turning point in down sliding India-China relations. It happened only because of India's sympathetic approach towards Tibet and providing political asylum to Dalai Lama. China since then has changed its approach towards India. The track one level (Government to Government) meeting between India and China on the border issue during 1960 – 1961 had not produced any positive and desired result. The suspicion grew further. The bonhomie created by the two countries was really short – lived.

2.2. India-China Schism and the Conflict of 1962

The signs of deterioration of India – China bilateral relations became very prominent during the early part of 1962. The growing mistrust and suspicion led to a brief India – China conflict in October 1962. For China, it was a very easy victory over India. It happened also because of India's miscalculations and its inherent capabilities. The post 1962 India – China conflict also saw an emergence of a very special relationship between China and Pakistan, which to a larger extent was based on countering India in the subcontinent. India's suspicion about the intentions of China and India's mistrust in China further grew because of some of these China's actions.

The anti-India policy adopted by China was not only in the form of encouraging and inciting Naxal violence in India but also provided training to Nagas and Mizos in China to fight against India and keep fomenting trouble by sending them back after the training was over. The implications of India – China conflict of 1962 were also reflected on China's policies towards India during India – Pakistan Wars of 1965 and 1971. China had already signed a friendship treaty with Pakistan in 1963.

⁶ In 1958, Chou En-lai formally laid China's claim to Arunachal in Eastern Sector and Aksai Chin in the Western Sector. It was a great surprise for India.



The border row brought significant changes in China's approach towards India. China's nuclear test on 1964 added additional fear among Indian minds and key policy makers. Both the nations had lost mutual trust and confidence and since then it has been a great challenge to leave misunderstandings behind and forge a new relationship. Such process of forging friendly ties requires a strong determination and greater initiative to promote their friendship.

It is obvious that the India – China border conflict in 1962 brought about serious damage to the friendship between the Chinese and Indian Peoples and that led to a long term termination of friendly exchanges between the two countries. The shadow of the 1962 conflict has still not been vanished. Hence, it had really been one of the greatest challenges to change the mindset and look for zenith in India – China relations, which had reached to nadir in the aftermath of 1962 conflict.

As mentioned earlier, relations between China and Pakistan had dramatically and drastically improved and got strengthened over the years and decades and especially during the aftermath of 1962 conflict. Under these circumstances, India had to evolve a dual strategy to deal with the crisis in such an unfavourable strategic environment. Hence, the period during 1959 – 1976 in India – China relations has been characterized as a period of mutual mistrust, suspicion and unfriendliness.

3. An Era of Dispelling Doubts and Misunderstanding: 1976-1988

India and China have undergone and seen an important era during 1976 – 1988 where both the nations made maximum efforts in dispelling doubts and misunderstanding. These efforts were again in terms of understanding each other mainly to create a very positive atmosphere. The year 1976 was a land mark year in India-China relations because both the countries had been able to restore their diplomatic ties by restoring their ambassadors. It was also important from a very different angle. The annexation of Sikkim with India in 1975 had jolted Chinese authorities. China had refused to accept and continued with its policy of denunciation. Despite such negativism on the part of Chinese mindset, India was able to restore confidence among Chinese and reactivated its ambassadorial positions.

Chinese incursions in Vietnam during 1979 especially at a time when India's then Foreign Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee was in Beijing had lots of negative repercussions on India – China relations. However, the attempt was made once again by the officials of both the countries to resolve the unsettled boundary issue. It could not reach to a bilateral consensus and did not yield the desired result.⁷

The first visit to India by a very prominent Chinese leader took place in June 1981 after almost two decades. The Chinese foreign minister Huang Hua visited India and this visit became not only remarkable but also very significant because there was an agreement and consensus reached during the deliberations that both sides, India and China would exchange official delegations at track one level to resume bilateral talks on the issues impacting India-

⁷ Despite the nine rounds of talks from 1981 to 1988, it became impossible for both the countries India and China to reach to a conclusion. There was a consensus that the border question should not become a hindrance in the development of relations in a number of other domains including trade and commerce.



China relations.⁸ India to a greater extent had changed its position and agreed to the resumption of bilateral talks. Earlier, India had always stressed on one fact that unless and until China would vacate Indian Territory, which it had occupied.

There was certainly a quantum shift in India's approach towards China during the aftermath of Huang Hua's visit. It was agreed during mid 1980s' by both India and China that the border problem needed to be tackled on priority basis and it would be in their interests. After the granting of statehood to Arunachal Pradesh in 1986 by India, China openly protested and denounced India's action. Once again, the situation got worsened but high level discussions from both sides were able to restore normalcy at the bilateral level. Both the nations resumed and renewed the bilateral exchanges to discuss on almost all the contentious issues. The later part of eighties saw an improvement in terms of understanding and this was possible only because of the ongoing track one dialogues.

3.1. An Era of Creating New Atmosphere and Trust in Bilateral Relations: 1988-1998

The period during 1988 – 1998 has been characterized as a period of creating new atmosphere and trust in India – China bilateral relations. The ice in the relationship was broken when the then Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi visited China in December 1988. It was historic because the Prime Minister of India was visiting China after more than three decades.⁹ Both sides, India and China agreed to cooperate for mutual development on a number of areas.

Rajiv Gandhi's visit was also significant because it happened after the famous Sumdurong Chu Valley event.¹⁰ The five day visit proved to be of great significance because both the nations agreed to promote bilateral cooperation on a number of areas including science and technology, civil aviation and cultural exchanges. The hallmark of the visit was the creation of Joint Working Group (JWG) for resolving the boundary issue. The larger objective of the JWG was to articulate each others' concerns and analyse the options available before both the countries. At the same time, the objective was also to ensure the maintenance of peace and tranquility across the border during the negotiations process.

Since the creation of JWG in the year 1988, 13 rounds of border talks have been organized so far. But, unfortunately nothing concrete has happened in terms of resolving the border issue. The bilateral momentum has, however, been built but of no great significance and impact. What has happened in the last more than two decades that both the countries have been talking routinely not only on border issues but also exploring the mechanisms by which both economic and cultural engagement takes a robust shape and the bilateral relationship is given a broader base.

There was a reciprocal visit to India by Chinese Premier Li Peng in 1991. It was again a historic one because a Chinese Premier had not visited in the last more than three decades. Both India and China signed five agreements during Li Peng's visit to India. These five agreements were relating to the Consul treaty between India and China, Agreement on Restoration of Consulate General in Bombay and Shanghai, Memorandum on the Restoration

⁸ Five sub-groups were set up in a number of fields including scientific, technological, cultural and economic during Huang Hua's visit. It was done mostly to improve the atmosphere and inculcate positive mindsets in both the countries so that the process of economic interaction and exchange can soften the process of bilateral relationships.

⁹ In the meeting with Rajiv Gandhi, the then Chairman of China's Central Military Commission Deng Xiaoping remarked "Let us forget the unpleasant phase in our past relations and do everything with an eye on the future".

¹⁰ The reports appeared in Chinese media that the Chinese had built a helipad in the Sumdurong Chu valley in Arunachal Pradesh inside Indian Territory. It created lots of tension in India. It was reported in August 1986.



of Border Trade, India – China Trade Protocol for the year 1992 and Scientific and Technological Cooperation in Outer Space for the Peaceful use by the aviation ministries of India and China.¹¹

The bilateral relationship got a new boost and also further strengthened when the then President of India R. Venkatraman visited China in May 1992. China conducted a nuclear test on the arrival of R. Venkatraman and it had paved a very difficult signaling towards India. However, it was handled by both India and China with maturity.

The signing of India-China accord on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) during India's Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's visit in September 1993 brought a new thaw in the bilateral relationship. The Agreement on Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility along the LAC in the India – China border areas signified that the border issue would be resolved amicably through peaceful and friendly negotiations. It was inherent in the Agreement that neither side should use force or threaten to use force against the other. The two sides should strictly respect and observe the LAC before the border issue is settled and each side should keep its military forces in the areas along the LAC to a minimum level. It was certainly an entry into a new era of India – China relations.

The other signs of improvement in India – China relations came when Chinese President Jiang Zemin visited India in 1996. It further boosted the bonhomie and created a very positive atmosphere in thinking and approach. During Jiang's visit, India and China had signed four important agreements – a) The agreement on confidence building measures (CBMs) in the field of military deployment along the LAC in the India – China border areas; b) The agreement relating to the maintenance of the Consulate General of India in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the PRC; c) The agreement on cooperation for combating illicit trafficking in drugs and other related issues; and d) the agreement on maritime transport.

The agreement on CBMs gained lots of salience because it was pronounced that the suggested measures would aim at a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement of the boundary question. It was also significant because it was agreed that neither country shall use its military capability against the other side.

4. Post 1998 and Evolving Trends in India-China Relations

The detonation of nuclear device by India in May 1998 to a greater extent received lots of criticism from China. Hence, the process of normalization, which had been built over the years got derailed. China was vocal opponent of India's nuclear test and made a strong point that the nuclear tests were against the international trend. The nuclear issue featured as an irritant in India-China relations for some time, which really put the bilateral relationship in a limbo. However, both the sides were able to resume talks once again in a span of nine months. The visits made by the then Minister of External Affairs Jaswant Singh in 1999 and Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee in 2003 opened a number of new vistas for cooperation. The boundary issue which had always been an obstacle in building trust and confidence was overshadowed by the issues relating to trade and commerce. The opening of the border regions for trade including the Nathu La in Sikkim really signaled a quantum shift in India's

¹¹ It was agreed that the Indian and Chinese army commanders would meet every June and October at fixed points on the western and eastern sectors. An India-China consular connection was also established with the opening of consulates in Bombay and Shanghai in April 1994.



approach towards China. This shift also in a way recognized Sikkim as a part of India. The re-opening of border trade through Nathula Pass has certainly helped in forging greater economic ties between these two emerging economic powers of Asia. Historically, Nathula has been a very important border from time immemorial in respect of trade. It is well known fact that Nathula was closed after Sino-Indian War of 1962. The border trade through Nathula Pass formally got resumed on 6 July 2006.

By then, both the nations had experienced phenomenal growth rate in the bilateral trade. The trade relations have improved substantially and the bilateral trade until now has crossed the \$ 50 billion US dollar figure. There was a downslide in the volume of trade marginally in between especially during the global economic meltdown.

However, China has been insisting from day one that Mac Mohan line is not acceptable to them and all of Arunachal Pradesh belongs to them. It has always been objected by India. India has the problems from Tsangpo which rises in Tibet and flows into Arunachal Pradesh as Dihang and becomes Brahmaputra when it enters Assam. India has the lingering problem in Ladakh where one third of its territory Aksai-Chin is occupied by China and claimed by them as the legitimate part of their country. Hence, there are certainly serious problems and issues between India and China. Many of these lingering issues certainly require attention from both sides in the current international security environment.

The first decade of twenty first century has seen many high level visits from both sides. It has also signaled that many of the lingering issues would be given paramount importance by both the countries. The visit of the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao to India in April 2005 recognised India's inherent strength in Software industry. It was felt that China can help India in strengthening its hardware industry and India can help China in strengthening software industry. India and China also announced the establishment of a Strategic and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity. By then, both the nations had experienced phenomenal growth rate in the bilateral trade. The trade relations have improved substantially and the bilateral trade until now has crossed the \$ 50 billion US dollar figure. There was a downslide in the volume of trade marginally in between especially during the global economic meltdown.

It must be emphasized here that Chinese President Hu Jintao's visit to India in 2006 and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to China in 2009 could not make much impact on the bilateral relationships because of the deepening of mistrust from both sides. However, a 10-point Roadmap was drawn up to enhance the Strategic Partnership. Over the last few years, China has been both overtly and covertly engaging itself across India – China borders and making a number of anti-India gestures. The growing China-Pak nexus, opening of a number of China Study Centres in Nepal and its tacit support to the Maoists in the ongoing imbroglio in Kathmandu and its wider ramifications on Indian national security has added to the growing mistrust in India.

The first decade of the twenty first century also saw lots of cooperation in the field of defence. A bilateral dialogue mechanism has been established to forge greater ties in defence cooperation. As a part of larger confidence building exercise, both the countries have been conducting joint military training and army exercise. Since both the countries have been the victims of piracy, India and China have also agreed to cooperate jointly on the anti-piracy efforts.



India certainly has not been much influenced by the ongoing China's military and strategic modernization programmes. China's requirements are different than India's one. And hence, India understands the current developments in China with great maturity. China's actions with regard to its current strategic capabilities are mostly guided by the developments in the United States. The only worry which India always has is the magnitude of growing Sino-Pakistan nexus. There is, however, certainly a fear that Pakistan will gain from the ongoing strategic modernization programme in China and it will then certainly have negative repercussions and wider ramifications for India's national security.

With the increase in China's force structure, it may also become easier for Pakistan to increase the size, sophistication and overall capability of its strategic force. Therefore, it is anticipated that China will keep colluding with Pakistan and using it as a counterweight to ensure that India is kept distracted by a proxy war. Hence, in the current regional security settings, India will never agree to forego its strategic options.

The current China's posture towards India suggests otherwise. India's security concerns have been widening. It is certainly not "Pakistan-specific", and that it will have to take into account the environment and strategic considerations in its neighbourhood. The all weather Sino-Pakistani relationship will thus be one of the main hitches when one envisions India-China relations in 2020. China certainly benefits more from close ties with Pakistan by extending its influence in South Asia.

Undoubtedly, China perceives itself to be a dominant military power in the whole of Asia and has henceforth systematically and consistently modernized and acquired strategic capabilities. The current trend suggests that nuclear weapons are going to stay in Southern Asia for different missions. The trend also suggests that modernization of strategic weapons will continue and grow in foreseeable future. Looking to the future, it is most likely that due to the Sino-Pakistan nexus, India might put more emphasis on nuclear weapons for its defense because its conventional weaponry is inferior to China in most respects.

China has also been maintaining a strong military presence in the Tibet Autonomous Region. It has also been making its presence felt in the Indian Ocean, North West Afghanistan and countries on India's periphery. Despite a number of existing misunderstandings, potential exists for both the countries to work together on a number of key international security issues including counter-terrorism and drug trafficking. More recently, both India and China have shown a great amount of understanding on a couple of very pertinent issues of global nature. This was apparent in almost all the G-20 summits to deal with the global economic meltdown since 2008 and the Copenhagen Summit in December 2009.

The recent visit of India's National Security Advisor Shiv Shankar Menon in July 2010 who is also India's Special Envoy on China is again an indication of shifting interests and ignoring the real issue, which is mostly to do with the border. Both the countries are aware about the importance of resolving the bilateral irritant but somehow it has lost the direction. During Menon's visit to China, the two countries had discussed opening up of new areas of economic cooperation. It was mainly to do with working together in Afghanistan on infrastructure projects and also in developing the country's mineral resources.

It was made obvious by both the countries that they would work jointly in Afghanistan. Afghanistan has shown interest in both of them for taking help in developing its vast mineral resources. India has already invested more than \$1.3 billion in infrastructure



projects and in other areas in Afghanistan. China has already spent a far greater amount in tapping the mineral deposits of Afghanistan.

5. Conclusions

There is no doubt in saying that the levels of engagement between India and China have increased certainly to a greater extent. India, at the same time, requires to adopt sophisticated approach to deal with the emerging Strategic challenges being emanating from China. Despite the fact that China has become increasingly assertive not only at the regional level but also at the global level, India has not shown any displeasure so far in strongest terms. The border dispute with China will not be resolved in near future.

In the current circumstances, it is obvious that trade has come to be viewed as an increasingly important driver of relations by both sides; especially in the light of lingering political mistrust on a number of wide ranges of issues spanning from the long running border dispute to China's all weather relationship with Pakistan. The regular reports of incursions by Chinese troops and more aggressive patrolling in disputed areas have certainly created strain on India-China relations.

It is high time that both India and China should start emphasizing on resolving the real border issues so that the relationship gets a boost and which ultimately would forge a greater and friendly cooperation. India also requires taking pro-active measures in countering China across its borders. A new pragmatism with a combination of both realism and neo-realism would shape their view of each other. The neo-realist perspective of international relations, where maximization of interests becomes the key factor would guide India – China relations in the future. The emergence of China as India's biggest trading partner in the year 2008 signals that both the countries have been ushering into a new phase of relationship mostly guided by economics and commerce factor.

The signing of an Agreement on "Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the Border Dispute", by both India and China has shown that both the countries, India and China are moving ahead in terms of reaching to a consensus on this major irritant. It has been also agreed that both sides would maintain peace and tranquility on the border. But, at the same, it requires careful assessment especially on the intent and declarations.

China has also been following the tenets of the 'Monroe Doctrine'. The attempt has always been to deny access to other powers in the region that it perceives as exclusively within its sphere of influence. Such Chinese actions have been damaging the interests of other regions especially to the countries in the East and South East Asia. Many of China's actions in this part of the world would require very careful handling by India. It may be important for India in the current context to understand China's intentions and fundamental goals. India will always promote constructive engagement with China and avoid any direct confrontation. It would also be in China's interest if it forges greater and robust partnership with India in the twenty first century.



CHINA'S ENERGY STRATEGY IN CENTRAL ASIA: INTERACTIONS WITH RUSSIA, INDIA AND JAPAN

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Abstract:

China's energy strategy and its overseas investments are subjects of an intense debate. Central Asia is a neighbour region, rich in oil and natural gas reserves, which seems the most likely to play an important role in the Chinese strategy to reduce its dependence on energy supplies from the Middle East. Therefore, this paper will try to assess China's energy strategy towards Central Asia, analysing the following issues: China's interests in the region; its energy security strategy, respectively the energy diplomacy and its investments in Central Asia, and the interactions with Russia, India and Japan in the energy field. The paper will finish with conclusions and comments regarding: the influence of the geopolitical and geo-economic factors, respectively the efficiency, the durability and the potential developments of China's energy strategy in Central Asia.

Keywords: China's Energy Strategy, Central Asia, Energy Security Strategy, Interactions with Russia, India and Japan.

Resumen:

La estrategia de seguridad energética de China y sus inversiones en ultramar son el sujeto de un intenso debate. Asia Central es una región colindante, rica en reservas de petróleo y gas, que parece ser la más susceptible de jugar un papel importante en la estrategia china de reducción de la dependencia de suministros de Oriente Próximo. Por tanto, este artículo va a intentar evaluar la estrategia energética china hacia Asia Central, analizando las siguientes cuestiones: los intereses de China en la región, su estrategia de seguridad energética con respecto a su diplomacia energética y sus inversiones en Asia Central, y las interacciones con Rusia, la India y Japón en el campo de la energía. Este artículo finaliza con conclusiones y comentarios sobre: la influencia de los factores geopolíticos y geo-estratégicos con respecto a la eficiencia, durabilidad y desarrollos potenciales de la estrategia energética de China en Asia Central.

Palabras clave: *Estrategia energética china, Asia Central, estrategia de seguridad energética, interacciones con Rusia, la India y Japón.*

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1. Introduction

In the 1990s, China had not yet built up an integrated foreign policy towards Central Asia. The Chinese government had mainly focused on the political-military issues, such as: borders' settlement, reduction in the level of military presence in border areas, fight against Uyghur separatism, instability in Afghanistan, strengthened United States' presence in Asia, etc.

Since 2000, the economic growth and the domestic energy demand-supply gap had increased the importance of energy imports. In 2004, China surpassed Japan, the second largest consumer of oil in the world after the United States of America. Additionally, the lessons received from the Angarsk struggle and the Iraq War determined China to diversify its energy supplies. In this context, the economic relations with the Central Asian republics, mainly in the energy field, have been developing faster.

We will motivate that, although the production costs in Central Asia are higher than those from the Middle East, Beijing considers them safe investments in the long term. The energy supply, from Central Asia to China, can be easily secured from extraction to terminal. Consequently, China used different instruments: acquisition of equity stakes in oil and gas fields, projects and corporations; diversification of oil and gas suppliers and transport routes, bilateral agreements, investments in hydroelectricity, minerals and transport infrastructure, domestic reforms in Xinjiang, etc.

The investments of the Chinese national oil companies (NOCs), in the Central-Asian energy sites, were often perceived as aggressive and back up by the PRC's government. China seems to become a strong competitor for Russia, regarding the number of deals in the energy sector, while India and Japan appear less successful than China in pursuing their energy interests in this region.

2. China's Foreign Policy in Central Asia

The collapse of the Soviet Union represented a threat, but also an opportunity for China in Central Asia. Firstly, China wanted to resolve the problems regarding the borders and territories. On the diplomatic stage, China recognized the sovereignty of the Central Asian states in December 1991. Also, in January 1992, China established diplomatic relations with the five countries.² From the first half of that year, China had bilateral consultations over its borders with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Later, China agreed to Russia's proposal of border negotiations on a multilateral basis. Consequently, in September 1992, a working group was set up in Minsk, known as the "4+1 formula" and including Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan versus China.³ Within the Shanghai Five Group (1996), the actors negotiated faster. Excepting the agreements reached in Shanghai Five or Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's framework, China signed agreements of good neighbourhood, friendship and cooperation with Russia (2001), Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (2005), as well as a strategic

² Umarov, Adiljan and Pashkun, Dmitriy (January 2006): "Tensions in Sino-Central Asian Relations and their Implications for Regional Security", Conflict Studies Research Centre, *Central Asian Series*, p. 4.

³ Paramonov, Vladimir and Stolpovsky, Oleg (2008): *Chinese Security Interests in Central Asia*, Shrivenham, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, p. 3.



partnership with Kazakhstan (2005), and agreements on borders' demarcation with Kazakhstan (2002), Kyrgyzstan (1996, 1999) and Tajikistan (2002).⁴

The political relations were firstly clearly defined in April 1994, during Prime Minister Li Peng's visit in Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan. The four principles, proposed for political cooperation, were: peaceful coexistence and maintenance of good neighbourly relations; mutual cooperation and promotion of economic prosperity; non-interference in the Central-Asian internal affairs, and respect of territorial integrity and sovereignty.⁵

But the late 1990s brought new threats for China concerning the security of its western borders: the intensifying of the Uyghur separatism in Xinjiang and the instability in Afghanistan. In the first case, China increased the number of border posts, controlled the commercial routes, and got the support of the Central Asian countries, inclusively within Shanghai Five. In the second case, China obtained the *Convention on the Fight against Terrorism, Extremism and Separatism* in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, in 15 June 2001, transferred military-technical resources and equipments towards its neighbours and launched joint exercises.

Since 2001, the military presence of the United States of America in Central Asia, as a result of the antiterrorist campaign in Afghanistan, as well as China's economic expansion, needed new policies in this region. China does not want the strengthening of the American position in Central Asia because this is perceived as a complete containment of China by the United States. The Chinese nightmare is the alignment Washington D.C.–New Delhi–Jakarta–Hanoi–Tokyo. Consequently, China promoted the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and enhanced the economic cooperation with the Central Asian republics.

The economic links have grown rapidly. Between 2001 and 2005, China's trade grew with 429% in Kazakhstan, 718% in Kyrgyzstan, 1368% in Tajikistan, and 1067% in Uzbekistan.⁶ As we observe, the balance of trade is clearly in favour of China. Kazakhstan is the most important commercial partner in the region. The Central Asian states export mainly raw materials towards China, such as: energy (Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan), metals (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan), and textiles (Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan).⁷

China has not expressed yet its interest for an exclusive sphere of influence in Central Asia. Recently, Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan signed up to a customs union in the margin of a EURASEC meeting (5 July 2010). The documents establish a single market for goods, labour and investments to enter into force at the beginning of 2012.⁸ Additionally, the rapprochement with Kyrgyzstan, after the violent events of this year, may also attract Uzbekistan to Russia. This international context is favourable to new energy investments and military relations between Russia and the Central Asian countries.

But China can become a strong competitor for Russia because it is an attractive political model for the Central Asian regimes, it has a similar economy with these states, it is

⁴ Dwivedi, Ramakant: "China's Central Asia Policy in Recent Times", *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol. 4, no. 4, (2006), pp. 145-147; 149.

⁵ Garnett, Sherman W. (2000): *Rapprochement or Rivalry? Russia-China Relations in a Changing Asia*, Washington D. C., Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, pp. 392-393.

⁶ Szadziewski, Henryk: "How the West was Won: China's Expansion into Central Asia", *Caucasian Review of International Affairs*, vol. 3, no. 2 (Spring 2009), p. 214.

⁷ Paramonov, Vladimir: "China and Central Asia: Present and Future of Economic Relations", Conflict Studies Research Centre, *Central Asian Series* (May 2005), pp. 3-7.

⁸ Cutler, Robert M.: "Russia tries a menage a trois", *Asian Times On-line* (08 July 2010).



a large market for their exports, it has the financial resources for loans and investments, and it can offer access to the Pacific Ocean, the Far East and the South-East of Asia.

3. China's Energy Security Strategy

The economic development is considered extremely important for the maintenance of the political and social stability in China. Its economic security depends on the equilibrium of three variables: economic growth, energy security, and environmental protection. In this context, the energy security has become an issue of the "high politics" of national security.

3.1. Energy Balance

Self-sufficient in oil in 1993, China has been the world's second largest consumer, since 2003. Also, in 2004, it has been the number three importer of oil after the United States and Japan. Additionally, China has begun to import LNG in May 2006.

According to Xuecheng Liu, "China's oil demand doubled from 1.7 to 3.4 million bpd between 1985 and 1995. It doubled again, reaching 6.8 million bpd by 2005, with the result that in 2005 China imported 2.46 million bpd – or about 40 percent of its oil needs."⁹ Yue Zhang asserts that the import volume of crude oil exceeded domestic production for the first time in 2009, resulting in an import dependency of more than 50 percent.¹⁰

Between 2001 and 2005, oil demand grew by 9% annually and natural gas demand grew by 15% over the same period. In 2005, oil met 21,1% of Chinese energy needs, up from 17% in 1990, while natural gas played a much smaller role than oil (2,7%). China's oil demand will continue to grow through 2020, the projections varying from 10 million to 13.6 million bpd.¹¹ The Chinese government plans to increase natural gas consumption to 8% of total energy demand by 2010.¹²

The industry accounts for over 70% of final energy consumption in China. It has realized 48% of global cement production, 49% of global flat glass production, 35% of global steel production, and 28% of global aluminium production.¹³ Therefore, the Chinese energy production struggles to keep up with domestic demand. Currently, China imports more than 40% of its energy consumption. However, the International Energy Agency considers that China's energy imports will reach 77% in 2030.¹⁴

⁹ Liu, Xuecheng: "China Energy Security and Its Grand Strategy", Stanley Foundation, *Policy Analysis Brief* (September, 2006), p. 3, at <http://www.stanleyfoundation.org/publications/pab/pab06chinasenergy.pdf>.

¹⁰ Zhang, Yue: "Strategic Change in China's Oil Policies to Further Strengthen Energy Security", *Institute of Energy Economics of Japan* (June 2010), at <http://eneken.ieej.or.jp/data/3219.pdf>.

¹¹ Downs, Erica: "China", Brookings, *Foreign Policy Studies, Energy Security Series* (December 2006), p. 9, at <http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2006/12china/12china.pdf>.

¹² Rosen, Daniel H. and Houser, Trevor (2007): "China Energy. A Guide for the perplexed", Center for Strategic and International Studies and Peterson Institute for International Economics, p. 17, at <http://www.iie.com/publications/papers/rosen0507.pdf>.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁴ "World Energy Outlook", *International Energy Agency* (2006), p. 101, at <http://www.iea.org/textbase/nppdf/free/2006/weo2006.pdf>.



3.2. Energy Security Concept

In a simple definition, energy security means securing adequate and reliable energy supplies at stable prices. The Chinese definition became broader, through the introduction of concepts such as “conservation-minded society” and “scientific development”, beginning with 2000. According to them, energy security means guaranteeing access to the energy resources needed for economically and socially sustainable development, while ensuring that the production and use of these resources do not impact negatively on the environment.¹⁵

The 10th Five-Year Plan of Economic and Social Development, from 2001, proposed: to encourage the use of advanced technologies, to increase national production, to develop gas industry, to improve the competitiveness of the NOCs on the international markets, to build up the national strategic oil reserves, to improve the conservation and efficiency level of oil consumption, to improve the regulatory and overseeing framework of the industry, and to deepen the reforms of oil industry.¹⁶

Additionally, *Medium and Long Term Energy Development Program from 2004 to 2020* as well as *Medium and Long Term Energy Conservation Plan* promoted energy conservation and energy intensity reduction. They also included provisions regarding: recentralization of control over energy policy, energy security, diversification of oil supply, regional energy cooperation, and the need to build a Strategic Petroleum Reserve.¹⁷ Some of these documents' targets were included in the 11th Five Years Plan for National Economic and Social Development, from March 2006.

Finally, *The 12th Five Year Plan* (2011-2015) will be deliberated and passed at the Fifth Plenary Session of the 17th CCP Central Committee meeting scheduled for the fall of 2010.¹⁸ Regarding oil and natural gas industries, the plan focuses on the following points:

1. It will continue to implement resource strategies to accelerate the pace of oil and gas exploration and development, to expand international oil and gas cooperation;
2. It will seize favourable opportunities for the development of the low-carbon economy;
3. It will accelerate the optimal adjustment of the downstream business structure, and speed up business integration and production base construction;
4. It will speed up the construction of strategic oil and gas channels, marketing networks and storage facilities;
5. It will quicken the pace of technological progress and break the bottleneck of resource development and that of clean development;
6. It will vigorously carry out mutually beneficial international cooperation.¹⁹

¹⁵ Zhongwei, Lu (ed.) (2003): *Feichuantong anquan lun [On Non-Traditional Security]*, Beijing, Shishi Chubanshe, p. 166.

¹⁶ Constantin, Christian (2005): “China’s Conception of Energy Security: Sources and International Impacts”, Centre of International Relations, *Working Paper*, no. 43 (March 2005), p. 11, at http://www.ligi.ubc.ca/sites/liu/files/Publications/Constantin_WP43.pdf.

¹⁷ Christoffersen, Gaye: “The Dilemmas of China’s Energy Governance: Recentralization and Regional Cooperation”, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol. 3, no. 3, (November 2005), p. 67.

¹⁸ Hsiao, Russel: “Major Reforms in the 12th Five Year Plan?”, Jamestown Foundation, *China Brief*, vol. 10, no. 13, (June 2010), pp. 1-2.



Concluding, China's energy security compresses the following elements: diversify the sources of energy imports and increase the share of oil and natural gas imports from Russia and Central Asia; increase overseas investments by state oil companies; broaden ways of trade to avoid transactions risk; enhance the investments in oil and gas infrastructure and open more channels to imports; establish government controlled strategic petroleum reserves; adjust energy consumption and production structure; liquefaction and development of nuclear power; and establish a regional energy system.²⁰

The international investments strategy is driven by the following characteristics: acquiring stakes in high-potential exploration blocks, proven reserves or asset holding companies; government support through diplomatic and economic initiatives; integration, versatility and cooperation between the big three NOCs; low profile approach of investments; minimize public disclosure of acquisition details, after the failed Unocal deal; modernize the naval forces in order to protect the sea lanes; develop continental oil and gas pipelines; promote and strengthen regional and bilateral energy cooperation; participate in the Energy Charter Treaty.²¹

3.3. Government Institutions

China's energy policies have been shaped by government institutions and national oil companies (NOCs). On the eve of China's transition to a net oil importer, Premier Zhu Rongji abolished the Ministry of Energy in 1993. The recentralisation of the energy sector, developed since 2000, has brought new institutions, which have been trying to improve the management of energy policy.

The National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) is the successor to the State Planning Commission. It is the most powerful agency, responsible of planning long-term energy development, setting energy prices, and approving investments in domestic and international energy projects.²²

Within the NDRC, there are many offices. Before 2008, the Energy Bureau approved energy projects of any meaningful size, the Price Bureau had control over what firms can charge for gasoline, diesel, natural gas and electricity, and the Industry Bureau set industry policy affecting the firms. The Bureau of Resource Conservation and Environmental Protection was responsible with achieving the energy efficiency targets.²³

Other institutions, with a decreased role in energy policy making, are: the Ministry of Land and Resources, which manages resource extraction licensing; the Ministry of Commerce, which oversees energy import and export licenses; the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the State Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA); the Rail Ministry. Additionally, the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC), representing "the people" who are majority shareholders in the large state-owned energy enterprises, and the Ministry of Personnel (MOP) are informal channels in the energy policymaking process.

¹⁹ "Report on Domestic and Overseas Oil and Gas Industry Development in 2009", *CNPC Research Institute of Economics and Technology* (2010), pp. 20-21.

²⁰ See Dwivedi, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

²¹ Liyan, Hu and Ter-Shing Cheng: "China's Energy Security and Geo-Economic Interests in Central Asia", *Central European Journal for International and Security Studies*, vol. 2, no. 2 (November 2008), p. 47.

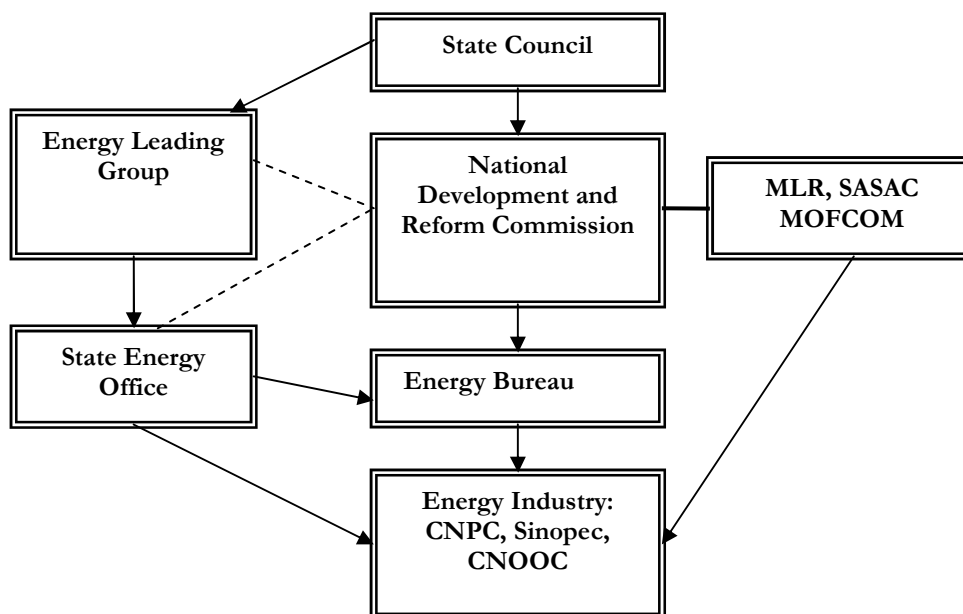
²² See Downs, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

²³ See Rosen and Houser, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

The energy crisis of 2003-2004 determined other changes in China’s energy bureaucracy. Widespread power shortages contributed to a substantial increase in oil demand and imports. In May 2005, the State Council created the Energy Leading Group (ELG), headed by Premier Wen Jiabao, and composed of ministers and vice ministers, along with the State Energy Office (SEO), its administrative body.

There were several critics regarding these institutions. The Energy Bureau, established in March 2003, lacked manpower, financial resources and coordination authority among more politically powerful stakeholders. The Energy Leading Group did not formulate concrete policies, it made proposals to the State Council over the energy development and saving policies, energy security and external cooperation. Secondly, its effectiveness depended of its office. The State Energy Office had an unclear mandate, sometimes comparable with that of the Energy Bureau.

Figure 1: China’s energy policy decision-making process in 2007



Therefore, China’s government has made new reforms since March 2008: it dissolved National Energy Leading Group and Energy Bureau, and approved two new bodies: National Energy Administration (NEA) and National Energy Commission (NEC).²⁴

Firstly, the National Energy Administration (NEA) was formed within National Development and Reform Commission, institution which is responsible for developing and implementing energy industry planning, industrial policies and standards, and assuming the responsibilities of the Office of the National Energy Commission.

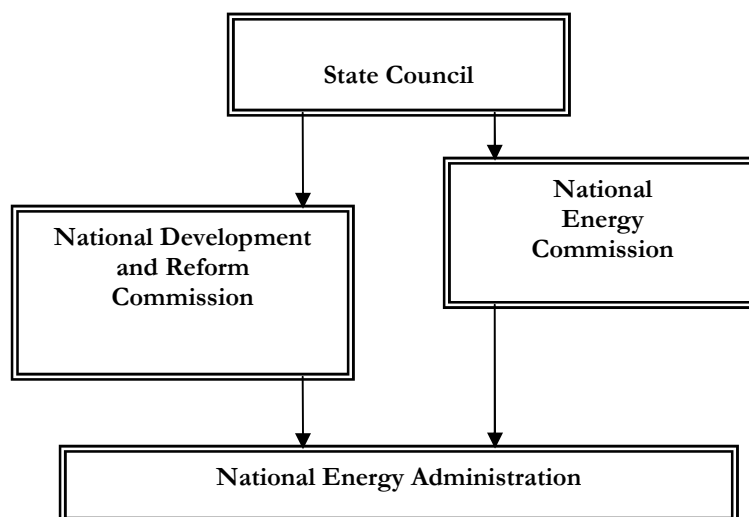
²⁴ Downs, Erica: “China’s “New” Energy Administration”, *China Business Review* (November-December 2008), p. 43.

Secondly, in May 2008, the National Standardization Technical Committee for the Oil and Gas Industry was set up. The committee is mainly responsible for petroleum geology, oil exploration, oil drilling, logging, oil and gas field development, gas production, storage and transportation, oil and gas measurement and analysis, oil pipes, offshore oil engineering, production safety and environmental protection.

In July 2008, the National Energy Bureau was set up. Its decisions are examined by the National Development and Reform Commission and submitted to the State Council for approval. Also, it will serve under China's National Energy Commission.

Fourthly, the National Energy Conservation Centre was formed in 2009. It is responsible for giving technical support to the government to implement energy efficiency and conservation management initiatives.²⁵

Figure 2: China's energy policy decision-making process in 2010



Finally, on 28 January 2010, the Chinese government officially announced the formation of the National Energy Commission (NEC). This is headed by Premier Wen Jiabao over 22 high-level government officials (vice premier Li Keqiang, top leaders of the NDRC and the ministries of finance, environmental protection, land and resources, and foreign affairs). The National Energy Commission formulates energy development strategy, reviews energy security policies and coordinates international cooperation, but it still needs the approval of the State Council. The National Development and Reform Commission initially resisted the attempt to set up an authority as powerful as the National Energy Commission. The fact it took nearly two years to formally announce the formation of the NEC illustrates the depth of the power struggles at play.

3.4. National Oil and Gas Companies

The relationship between Chinese government's institutions and national oil companies (NOCs) is characterized by internal friction and improved coordination abroad. The Chinese

²⁵ "APEC Energy Overview 2009", *Asia Pacific Energy Research Centre* (2010), pp. 42-44, accessible at <http://www.iadb.org/intal/intalcdi/PE/2010/04945.pdf>.



corporations exert tremendous influence in the energy policy decision-making process because of their political, financial, and economic resources. For example, general managers have direct access to senior leadership. The major reorganisation from 1998 enhanced the financial and administrative autonomy of China's NOCs. The state still controls them, through the appointment and dismissal of CEOs, respectively through the approval of any substantial investments by the National Development and Reform Commission and the State Council.

The most important Chinese energy corporations are: China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation (Sinopec Corp.), China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC), National Oil and Gas Exploration and Development Corporation (CNODC).

China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), set up in 1988, is China's largest oil and gas producer and supplier, providing services in 49 countries around the world.²⁶ China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation (Sinopec Corp.), founded in 2000, is China's largest producer and supplier of refined oil products and the second largest crude oil producer.²⁷ CNOOC Limited, created in 1982, is China's largest producer of offshore crude oil and natural gas.²⁸ PetroChina Co. Ltd., founded in 1999 as part of the restructuring of CNPC, occupied the position 13 in 2007, considering its reserves in oil.

The Chinese NOCs have traditional areas of operation: CNPC tends to dominate upstream and in the north and west, Sinopec - downstream and in the south, and CNOOC in the offshore regions.²⁹ CNPC has focused mainly on oil and gas exploration and production, while Sinopec has been engaged in downstream activities such as refining and distribution.

The level of overseas investments by Chinese NOCs has grown significantly in recent years. They have been present in over 30 countries around the world, such as: Kazakhstan, Russia, Iran, Sudan, Angola, Nigeria, Vietnam, Venezuela, Brazil, Canada, etc. With no real shareholder pressure and low interest rates from the domestic banks, they have strong incentives to invest their earnings in overseas projects.

China's energy strategy becomes more coherent every day. But the reform of energy policy is not sufficient. It must be complementary with other macroeconomic reforms. The Chinese government demonstrated that, in a short period of time, was capable of fast reactions to the challenges brought by the transition from an energy producer country to an energy importer country.

4. China's Energy Strategy in Central Asia

The instability of the Middle East and the American presence, the passage of about 80% of China's oil imports through Malacca Strait, with its security problems, the need to diversify

²⁶ China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), at www.cnpc.com.cn/en.

²⁷ China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation (Sinopec), at <http://english.sinopec.com>.

²⁸ China National Offshore Oil Corporation Limited (CNOOC), at www.cnooc.com.

²⁹ Houser, Trevor: "The Roots of Chinese Oil Investment Abroad", *Asia Policy*, no. 5 (January 2008), pp. 145-147.



its energy suppliers, and the necessity to develop the north-west China, all these factors determined the reorientation of China's foreign energy policy towards Central Asia and Russia. Here China has the possibility to secure its energy imports from extraction to terminal, through continental pipelines.

4.1. Energy Diplomacy

The Chinese government has involved in the energy geopolitics from Central Asia through political, military and financial instruments. The political support of the Chinese NOCs was pursued bilaterally and multilaterally. China has agreements of good neighbourly relations with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, and a strategic partnership with Kazakhstan. It supported Kazakhstan's bid to join the World Trade Organisation, respectively it sustained Uzbekistan in the Andijan episode. The exchange of visits at the highest level backed up various energy deals, the Chinese pursuing to obtain long-term agreements. Although China preferred to negotiate bilaterally its energy investments in Central Asia, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation contributed a lot to build mutual trust and to balance Russia's historical influence in the region: "The purposes of the SCO are: strengthening mutual trust and good-neighbourly friendship among the member states; encouraging effective cooperation among the member states in political, economic and trade, scientific and technological, cultural, educational, energy, communications, environment and other fields; devoting themselves jointly to preserving and safeguarding regional peace, security and stability; and establishing a democratic, fair and rational new international political and economic order."³⁰

Secondly, China's military support to Central Asian republics meant conventional arms transfers, trainings and joint military exercises, especially with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.³¹ Within the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, common military exercises took place in October 2002, August 2003, August 2006, September 2007, etc.³²

Finally, the Chinese financial support was represented by investments in different sectors of the local economies, loans with low interest rates and aid packages, given by China Eximbank and China Development Bank. China made investments in: hydroelectricity sector (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan); mineral industry, especially gold (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan), aluminium (Tajikistan), and uranium (Kazakhstan); infrastructure sector – roads, tunnels, and railways, both in Central Asia and Afghanistan, in order to develop a new Silk Road and to connect itself with Iran and Pakistan; and in the telecommunications market.

4.2 Investments in Oil and Gas Sector

The Chinese corporations arrived late on the Central Asian energy market, but they tried to develop a methodical strategy of acquisitions. In 1997, China produced a great surprise when China National Petroleum Corporation acquired 60% in AktobeMunayGas (Kazakhstan). It got a twenty-year user license for the Zhanazhol gas site and the Kenkiyak oil site. The CNPC should have invested \$ 4 billion until 2010. In 2003, CNPC bought other 25% in that

³⁰ "Declaration on Establishment of SCO", *Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)* (20 April 2006), at http://english.scosummit2006.org/en_bjzl/2006-04/20/content_85.htm.

³¹ Cornell, Svante E.: "The United States and Central Asia: In the Steppes to Stay?", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol. 17, no.2 (July 2004), p. 249.

³² Plater-Zyberk, Henry: "Who's Afraid of the SCO?", Conflict Studies Research Centre, *Central Asian Series* (September 2007), p. 4.



company, with \$ 150 million. China National Petroleum Corporation also obtained a participation in Uzen oil field, in 1997, but it withdrew from the project in 1999.³³

Since 2002, China has launched new acquisitions in Central Asia. At the end of 2002, China National Petroleum Corporation bought 50% in Salejan field (Kazakhstan).³⁴ In August 2003, CNPC bought 35% of the North Buzachi oil and gas field and acquired the remaining 65% from Chevron two months later.³⁵ Sinopec acquired American First International Oil Company (FIOC) in 2004, with more than \$ 160 million, obtaining its user licenses of small fields like Fedorov, Mezhdurechensk, Sagiz, Begaidar, Sazankurak.³⁶ In August 2005, CNPC outbid ONGC and Lukoil, in the auction for PetroKazakhstan, with a tender of \$ 4.2 billion.³⁷ In the same month, CNOOC and KazMunayGas signed a joint exploitation agreement for Darkhan oil field, in the Caspian Sea. But CNPC and Sinopec failed in their 2005 bid for British Gas's 16.67% stake in Agip KCO International Consortium, because the Chinese participation was refused by the other members of the consortium - Shell, Exxon Mobil, TotalFinaElf, Conoco Phillips and Agip.³⁸ In December 2006, CITIC Group (China) purchased Nations Energy (Indonesia), getting the exploitation rights in Karazhanbas field.³⁹ Also, in November 2007, CNPC and KazMunayGas signed an export agreement for 5 bcm of gas annually to China. Both companies also confirmed the two-phase construction of Kazakhstan-China gas pipeline, part of the great Sino-Central Asia gas pipeline.⁴⁰ In April 2009, CNPC teamed with KazMunayGas to purchase MangistauMunaiGas for \$ 3.3 billion, which also included CNPC extending a \$5 billion line of credit to KazMunayGas.⁴¹ China National Petroleum Corporation and KazMunayGas acquired 100% of MangistauMunaiGas shares in November 2009.

In Turkmenistan, China National Petroleum Corporation and Mitsubishi proposed the export of the Turkmen gas to China in 1992. Three years later, CNPC, Mitsubishi, and Exxon agreed to conduct a feasibility study, which was completed in 1996.⁴² In 2004, China Petroleum Technology and Development Corporation and Turkmengas signed a \$ 14.5 million contract to supply equipment, while, in April 2006, China and Turkmenistan signed an agreement regarding the delivery of 30 bcm of Turkmen gas to China in 2009.⁴³

In July 2007, CNPC signed a production sharing agreement to develop and extract gas from the Bagtiyarlik field in eastern Turkmenistan. China National Petroleum Corporation has

³³ Sébastien Peyrouse: "The Economic Aspects of the Chinese-Central Asia Rapprochement", Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, *Silk Road Papers*, (September 2007), pp. 50-51, at

http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/Silkroadpapers/2007/0709China-Central_Asia.pdf.

³⁴ Blank, Stephen J.: "China, Kazakh Energy and Russia: An Unlikely Ménage à Trois", *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol. 3, no. 3 (November 2005), p. 103.

³⁵ Ziegler, Charles E.: "Competing for Markets and Influence: Asian National Oil Companies in Eurasia", *Asian Perspective*, vol. 32, no. 1 (2008), p. 146.

³⁶ Peyrouse, "The Economic Aspects...", *op.cit.*, p. 55.

³⁷ Guo, Xuetao: "The Energy Security in Central Eurasia: the Geopolitical Implications to China's Energy Strategy", *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol. 4, no. 4 (2006), p. 131.

³⁸ Peyrouse, "The Economic Aspects...", *op. cit.*, p. 52.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

⁴⁰ Peyrouse, Sébastien: "China's recent advances in Central Asia", *CACI Analyst* (12 November 2008), at www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/5001; China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), at www.cnpc.com.cn/en.

⁴¹ Seaman, John (2010): *Energy Security, Transnational Pipelines and China's Role in Asia*, Paris, Institut Français des Relations Internationales, p. 24.

⁴² Tønnesson, Stein and Kolås, Åshild: "Energy Security in Asia: China, India, Oil and Peace", International Peace Research Institute (April 2006), pp. 31-32.

⁴³ See Peyrouse, "The Economic Aspects...", *op.cit.*, pp. 64-65.



since won development contracts in Turkmenistan's South Yolotan onshore gas field. The deal was announced in June 2009.⁴⁴

During President Hu Jintao's June 2004 visit, China National Petroleum Corporation concluded several oil and gas contracts with Uzbekneftegas. In June 2006, CNPC signed an agreement with Uzbekistan to invest \$ 210 million in oil and gas exploration until 2011.⁴⁵ Also, in August 2006, CNPC entered into two contracts with Uzbekneftegas, to explore and develop natural gas deposits in the Aral Sea.⁴⁶ Furthermore, in October 2008, CNPC and Uzbekneftegas signed a cooperation agreement to develop a joint venture in the Mingbulak oil field.⁴⁷

Finally, in June 2010, CNPC and Uzbekneftegas have signed a framework agreement on the purchase of 10 Bcm per year of natural gas. Also, in cooperation with Korean companies, CNPC has discovered a new field of natural gas in the Aral Sea area. They will make other test wells in August 2010.

4.3. Oil and Gas Pipelines

The idea of an **oil pipeline between Kazakhstan and China** was launched in 1993. Later, in September 1997, China National Petroleum Corporation and KazMunayGas signed the memorandum of understanding to build an eastward oil pipeline to China. The costs of the project were estimated at \$ 3.5 billion.

Due to the competition with the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan's project and the low level of oil prices, China postponed its construction. However, the first visit of President Hu Jintao in Kazakhstan, from June 2003, renewed China's commitments to building the oil pipeline.⁴⁸ The main arguments for this decision were: the increase of Kazakhstan's oil production, the increase of world oil prices and the Angarsk failure.

Having more than 3000 kilometres, the pipeline should have a capacity of 800000-1000000 barrels of oil per day. The first stage, between Atyrau and Kenkiyak, of 448 kilometres length, was completed in 2003. The second phase, Atasu-Alashankou, with the length of 988 kilometres, has been functioning since July 2006. Finally, in 18 August 2007, Kazakhstan and China signed the agreement for the third sector. The route Kenkiyak-Kumkol, with the length of 793 kilometres, was finished in 11 July 2009, reaching its full capacity in 2011.⁴⁹

The **Central Asia-China gas pipeline** was prepared by Beijing since 2000, through agreements regarding the development of infrastructure and loans with low interest rates.⁵⁰ KazMunayGas and CNPC made the feasibility study in February 2005. Then, in 3 April 2006,

⁴⁴ See Seaman, *op cit.*, p. 24.

⁴⁵ See Dwivedi, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

⁴⁶ See Ziegler, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

⁴⁷ China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), at www.cnpc.com.cn/en.

⁴⁸ Handke, Susann (August 2006): *Securing and Fuelling China's Ascent to Power - The Geopolitics of the Chinese-Kazakh Oil Pipeline*, Clingendael Institute of International Relations, *Energy Programme* (August 2006), pp. 43-44, at http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2006/20060900_ciep_paper_handke.pdf.

⁴⁹ Peyrouse, "The Economic Aspects...", *op.cit.*, pp. 56-59.

⁵⁰ Paik, Keun-Wook; Marcel, Valerie; Lahn, Glada; Mitchell, John V. and Adylov, Erkin (2007): "Trends in Asian National Oil Company Investments Abroad: An update", Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House, *Working Background Paper* (March 2007), p. 6, at http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/6427_r0307anoc.pdf.



China and Turkmenistan signed a framework agreement concerning the construction of the pipeline and its supply in the long term. Additionally, in April 2007, China and Uzbekistan signed an agreement over the construction and the exploitation of the pipeline in Uzbekistan. Turkmenistan brought other confirmations in June, respectively in July 2007. China National Petroleum Company, TurkmenGas and the State Agency for Management and Use of Hydrocarbon Resources signed an agreement in August 2007, while KazMunayGas and CNPC signed an agreement in 8 November 2007.

The pipeline was inaugurated in December 14, 2009, and it follows the route Turkmenistan- Uzbekistan- Kazakhstan- Erdos- Urumqi- Lanzhou- Xian- Shanghai, reaching 4350 miles. The project's costs are nearly \$ 10 billion, and the pipeline should transport annually 30-40 Bcm of natural gas for thirty years, beginning with 2012.⁵¹

A second section, **Beyneu-Shymkent pipeline** will provide 10 Bcm of Kazakh gas annually to China. The protocol was signed on October 14, 2009, in Beijing, and ratified by Kazakhstan in June 2010. KazMunayGas and CNPC have also signed, in June 2010, an agreement on the design, financing, construction and operation of this pipeline.

China has several concerns regarding its energy supply from Central Asia. Firstly, the internal instability in Xinjiang has caused frequent disruptions. Therefore, China adopted the Great Western Development Drive, in January 2000, focusing on five priorities: quest for equality, foreign investments, infrastructure investments, sustainable development, tackling the nationalities issues.⁵² The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation should remove the threats of terrorism, separatism and extremism both in Central Asia and Xinjiang. Secondly, the Central Asian countries have their own domestic problems. The suspicious perceptions of China and the energy nationalism can endanger the Chinese investments in this region. Finally, the great power competition, the multiple energy transport routes, the growing number of Asian NOCs and also the IOCs, or the Russian and American military presences represent new challenges for China's interests in Central Asia. The balance between all these problems will need diplomacy, increased coordination and substantial financial resources. However, China succeeded, in just a decade, to put its mark in the Central Asian energy industry.

5. Interactions with Russia, India and Japan

The quest for energy security has transformed the foreign policies of China, Russia, India and Japan. Their competition for energy resources and regional dominance can be easily observed in Central Asia.

5.1. Analysis of the Energy Strategies

Despite the fact that Russia is an energy producer country, while China, India and Japan are, in different degrees, energy importer countries, their energy strategies have common characteristics in the recent years.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁵² See Szadziwski, *op. cit.*, p. 212.



Russia's energy policy has the objective "to maximize the effective use of natural energy resources and the potential of the energy sector to sustain economic growth, improve the quality of life of the population and promote strengthening of foreign economic positions of the country".⁵³ The main strategic guidelines of the long-term state energy policy are as follows: energy security, energy efficiency of the economy, budget efficiency, and environmental safety of the energy sector.⁵⁴ Russia's approach of energy security is a strategic one: "Energy security is one of the most important components of the national security. Energy security is the country's security, that of its citizens, society, state and economy from the threats to reliable supply of fuel and energy. These threats are determined by external (geopolitical, macroeconomic, market) factors, as well as by the condition and operation of the country's energy sector".⁵⁵

Russia's international activities, from the energy sector, compresses: the development and exportation, at reasonable prices, of other states' energy resources; an enhanced participation on the international energy markets and the control of their energy resources and infrastructures; the cooperation with the neighbour energy corporations; the transit of energy exports, and the technical cooperation.⁵⁶

As a producer country, Russia exports energy to the European Union, China, Korea, Japan and India. In order to fulfil its commitments, Russia intends to create a common energy space between the CIS countries. The need to use the Central Asian energy resources is visible in the great number of agreements regarding the strategic energy cooperation, signed especially after 2000. In 21 January 2002, President Vladimir Putin proposed a single export channel for the Central Asian natural gas, respectively the setting of Eurasian Gas Producers Alliance (EGPA) by Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.⁵⁷

The Russian energy strategies, in the post Cold War era, reflect an increased capacity to adjust to different challenges of the international system as well as a coherent vision in the long term.⁵⁸ In 13 November 2009, the government of the Russian Federation approved "Energy Strategy of Russia for the Period Up to 2030". To facilitate international cooperation on energy security, Russia has adopted the following initiatives: modernisation and development of energy infrastructure; development of a closed nuclear fuel cycle and expansion of nuclear power generation; development of new hydrocarbon provinces in remote

⁵³ "Energy Strategy of Russia for the Period Up to 2030", *Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation* (2010), p. 10.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁵⁶ Fredholm, Michael: "The Russian Energy Strategy and Energy Policy: Pipeline Diplomacy or Mutual Dependence?", *Conflict Studies Research Centre, Russian Series* (September 2005), p. 4.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁵⁸ *Concept for Energy Policy under New Economic Conditions* (1992-2010) - September 1992; *Energy Strategy for Russia* - November 1994; *Energy Strategy of Russia. Major Provisions* - 7 December 1994; *On the Main Directions of Energy Policy and Restructuring of the Fuel and Energy Industry of the Russian Federation for the Period up to the Year 2010* - 7 May 1995; *Main Provisions of the Russian Energy Strategy* - 13 October 1995; *Main Provisions of Structural Reform in the Field of Natural Monopolies* - 28 April 1997; *Programme of Means for Structural Reconstruction, Privatisation and Reinforcement of Control in the Field of Natural Monopolies* - 7 August 1997; *Main Provisions of the Russian Energy Strategy to 2020* - 23 November 2000; *Elaboration of the Main Provisions on the Energy Strategy of Russia to 2020* - 28 May 2002; *Energy Strategy of the Russian Federation to the Year 2020* - 23 May 2003; *Russia's Energy Strategy as Current Development Program for the Fuel and Energy Complex* - 7 September 2006. See Fredholm, *op cit.*, pp. 2-3.



areas and offshore; accelerated energy exports to the Asia-Pacific regional international market.⁵⁹

In conclusion, Russia has tried to get as many agreements as it could with all the Central Asian republics. These agreements deal with the acquisition of equity stakes in oil and gas fields, companies (KazRosGas, KyrgyzNeftegas) and pipelines (Tengiz-Novorossiysk pipeline of the Caspian Pipeline Consortium⁶⁰) or the (re)construction of new pipelines, such as Central Asian Center-3 pipeline⁶¹ or Caspian Coastal Pipeline⁶².

India is the fifth largest consumer of energy in the world, with a GDP growth rate around 8%. According to *India's Hydrocarbon Vision – 2025*, a report presented by the Indian Prime Minister in 27 March 2000, the country's hydrocarbon demand will almost triple by 2025, from 2.5mb/d in 2005 to 7.4mb/d in 2025, while the domestic production will be around 1.6mb/d.⁶³

The Planning Commission of India provided a comprehensive and official Indian definition of energy security to date: “the country is energy secure when we can supply lifeline energy to all our citizens as well as meet their effective demand for safe and convenient energy to satisfy various needs at affordable costs at all times with a prescribed confidence level considering shocks and disruptions that can be reasonably expected”.⁶⁴

Consequently, the government of India took several energy policy initiatives, such as: greater autonomy for the public sector enterprises, a participation of nearly 30% of the private sector in refineries, New Exploration Licensing Policies (NELP), the division of the Oil Coordination Committee into two entities, Petrofed and the Petroleum and Natural Gas Authority, establishment of a Bureau of Energy Efficiency, etc.⁶⁵

In fact, there are a number of ministries involved that are responsible for policymaking related to various energy sources: Department of Atomic Energy, Ministry of Coal, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (which includes the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH)); Oil Industry Development Board (OIDB); Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC)); Ministry of Nonconventional Energy Sources, Ministry of Power, others ministries, and the Planning Commission (Commission's Power and Energy Division).⁶⁶

The strategy of the Indian NOCs' international investments consists of: competition or cooperation, on a case by case basis, with Chinese, Russian and Japanese corporations;

⁵⁹ “APEC Energy Overview 2009”, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

⁶⁰ In 2009, Russia has bought out Oman's and BP PLC's shares in the Caspian Pipeline Consortium, which means other 9% of the shares.

⁶¹ Central Asian Center-3 pipeline, representing the western branch of the Central Asian Center System, was built between 1972 and 1975. In December 2007, Russia, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan announced signing an agreement to renovate and expand it.

⁶² Caspian Coastal Pipeline project should be parallel with Central Asian Center-3 pipeline. In December 2009, Russia and Turkmenistan agreed to go ahead with the project.

⁶³ Paik, Marcel, Lahn, Mitchell and Adylov, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

⁶⁴ “Draft Report of the Expert Committee on Integrated Energy Policy”, Planning Commission (New Delhi), *Expert Committee on Energy Policy* (2005), p. 56.

⁶⁵ Srivastava, Leena, Mathur, Riru: “India's Energy Security”, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, *Briefing Paper* no. 14 (September 2007), p. 4, at <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/global/04809.pdf>.

⁶⁶ Madan, Tanvi: “India”, Brookings, *Energy Security Series* (November 2006), pp. 24-25, at http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2006/11india_fixauthname/2006india.pdf.



governmental support with diplomatic and economic initiatives; supply of integrated packages in bids; cooperation with IOCs and choosing more expensive producing ventures.⁶⁷

For overseas investments, Cabinet officials approved an increase in ONGC's and IOCs investments limits to \$ 75 million in 2005. For investments over that limit, the government established an approval process. A single committee of senior bureaucrats - from the Ministries of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Finance, and External Affairs, the Planning Commission, the Department of Public Enterprises and the Department of Legal Affairs, clear investments over \$ 75 million.⁶⁸

Japan has very limited domestic oil and natural gas reserves. In 2004, Japan covered more than 95% from its energy demand through imports.⁶⁹ Japan is the third largest petroleum consumer in the world, behind the United States and China, and the largest importer of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the world. Nearly 90% of its crude oil imports originate in the Middle East, while most of its LNG imports come from Indonesia, Australia and Malaysia.⁷⁰ Japan is currently looking towards Russia, Central Asia, and Africa in order to diversify its energy imports.

Energy policy in Japan has three dimensions: energy security, environmental protection, and economic efficiency (3Es). Ken Koyama, from the Institute of Energy Economics, gave a concise definition of energy security, which means "to secure sufficient energy supply at reasonable prices for the achievement, pursuit and maintenance of maximising economic and social welfares and sustainable development of national economy and citizens".⁷¹

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) is responsible of formulating Japan's energy policy. Within METI, the Agency for Natural Resources and Energy is responsible for the rational development of mineral resources, securing stable supplies of energy, promoting efficient energy use, and regulating electricity and other energy industries, while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs formulates international policies.⁷²

Since 2002, Japan's *Basic Energy Law* has established the energy policy. In 2005, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry established two advisory committees on energy security policy: Energy Security Study Group, reported to the director of the Agency for Natural Resources and Energy, and General Advisory Panel on Resources and Energy.

The *New National Energy Strategy*, from 31 May 2006, proposed the following policies: strengthen its resource diplomacy and its overseas direct involvement and investment in oil and gas projects; strengthen comprehensive relations with resource supply countries by using a combination of technological assistance, economic aid and soft power; strengthen support for Japanese oil and gas development companies, both financially and diplomatically;

⁶⁷ Paik, Marcel, Lahn, Mitchell and Adylov, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-21.

⁶⁸ Herberg, Mikkal E.: "The Rise of Asia's National Oil Companies", The National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR), *Special Report*, no. 14 (2007) p. 11, at <http://www.nbr.org/publications/element.aspx?id=226>.

⁶⁹ "JOGMEC Business Report", Japan Oil, Gas and Metal National Corporation (2005), p. 1.

⁷⁰ "Japan Country Analysis Briefs", Energy Information Administration (EIA) (2008), pp. 2-8, at <http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/Japan/Background.html>.

⁷¹ Liao, Janet Xuanli: "Perceptions and Strategies on Energy Security: the Case of China and Japan", in: Len, Christopher and Chew, Alvin (eds) (2009): "Energy and Security Cooperation in Asia: Challenges and Prospects", Institute for Security and Development Policy (2009), p. 113, at http://www.isdp.eu/images/stories/isdp-main-pdf/2009_len-chew_energy-and-security-cooperation-in-asia.pdf.

⁷² "APEC Energy Overview 2009", *op. cit.*, p. 80.



promote diversification of oil supply regions; strengthen its supply strategy for natural gas; promote the transparency and stabilisation of energy markets; accommodating rapid demand growth for energy from Asia, primarily of China and India.

In March 2007, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry proposed a new *Basic Energy Law*, which incorporated the new emphasis on energy security.⁷³ Finally, in April 2010, METI proposed a draft for triennial revisions to the Basic Energy Plan, which aims at reinforcing energy security and counter global warming in harmony with the economic growth.⁷⁴

In conclusion, Russia and China have aggressive energy policies and strong national oil companies. They perceive Central Asian energy resources as vital for their economies and they give great importance to their defence policies. India and Japan are in a transition process towards integrated energy policies, while their NOCs are relatively strong. Also, they consider that Central Asia should become more important in their energy strategies.

5.2. Competition and Cooperation between the Asian NOCs

The Asian national oil companies are seeking and acquiring assets in Central Asia, in competition with international oil companies (IOCs) and with one another. Their influence depends on: the type of investment, the number of NOCs employees, the host country economy, the domestic political stability and the international alignment of forces in the region.

Russian NOCs. In 2003, Russia concluded an agreement with KazMunayGas for the joint exploitation of three sites – Kurmangazy (Rosneft), Tsentralnoye (Gazprom) and Khvalinskoye (Lukoil). Then, in January 2004, Lukoil got an exploration contract with KazMunayGas to develop the Tiyub-Karagan structure. Also, in 2005, Gazprom and KazMunayGas agreed to a joint venture to exploit the Imashevskoye gas fields in the Caspian Sea. In September 2006, KasRosGas, created in May 2002, set up the Orenburg gas processing plant.⁷⁵ On December 2007, the governments of Russia, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan entered into the Agreement on the Pre-Caspian gas pipeline construction.

Gazprom and the government of the Kyrgyz Republic signed agreements and memoranda of understanding in May 2003, January 2006, and October 2008. It has also obtained, in February 2008, two subsurface use licenses for Kugart and Eastern Mailu-Suu IV areas.⁷⁶

Thirdly, Gazprom signed agreements with Turkmenistan in 2003 and 2005. The latter contract allowed Gazprom extensive rights over the Turkmen natural gas exports until 2028.⁷⁷ But from April 2009, there were some tensions in Russia-Turkmenistan relations. Considering the Central Asia-China natural gas pipeline, Russia worked hard to reach a new Russian-

⁷³ Chrisstoffels, Jan-Hein (2007): “Getting to Grips Again with Dependency: Japan’s Energy Strategy”, Clingendael Institute of International Relations, *Energy Programme* (August 2007), pp. 1; 19; 43-47, at http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2007/20070830_ciep_paper_chrisstoffels.pdf;

“New National Energy Strategy (Digest)”, *Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan* (2006), at www.enecho.meti.go.jp/english/newnationalenergystrategy2006.pdf.

⁷⁴ The Institute of Energy Economics, *Japan Energy Brief*, no. 7 (May 2010), pp. 1-4.

⁷⁵ Laruelle, Marlène and Peyrouse, Sébastien (2009): *China as a Neighbor: Central Asian Perspectives and Strategies*, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, p. 42.

⁷⁶ Gazprom, at <http://gazprom.com/production/central-asia>.

⁷⁷ “Russia and Central Asia”, *Russian Analytical Digest*, no. 29 (16 October 2007), pp. 2-3.



Turkmen gas agreement in December 2009, which renewed Turkmen gas exports to Russia (two thirds of the volume over the past several years).⁷⁸

In December 2002, Gazprom signed an agreement with Uzbekneftegas to buy 10 bcm of Uzbek gas per year until 2012. In 2004, another contract confirmed Gazprom's participation in the development of gas resources on the Ustyurt Plateau. Two years later, a 25-year production sharing agreement was signed for the Urga, Kuanysh, and Akchalak deposits.⁷⁹ In 21 September 2006, Gazprom, Uzbekneftegas and KazMunayGas signed a supply and transit agreement with natural gas (3.5 bcm). Gazprom also showed its interest to acquire 44% from Uzbektransgas.⁸⁰ Also, in January 2009, Gazprom agreed on the terms and conditions of gas supply from Uzbekistan and signed an addendum to the Uzbek gas supply contract stipulating a pricing formula based on average European gas prices.⁸¹

Lukoil has 15% in Karachaganak, 50% in Kumkol, 5% in Tengiz and 12.5 % in Caspian Pipeline Consortium.⁸² In 2004, Lukoil and Uzbekneftegas obtained rights to exploit the gas fields of Khauzak, Shady, and Kandym. In February 2007, Soyuzneftegas and Uzbekneftegas reached an agreement to exploit fields located in Ustyurt and in the Hissar region.⁸³

Indian NOCs. In Central Asia, the Indian corporations, such as Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Oil India Ltd. (OIL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL), GAIL India Ltd., tried to adapt to the Chinese competition.

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation has 15% in the oil field Alibekmola (Kazakhstan). It announced an investment of \$ 1.5 billion in the Kurmangazy oil field, with Russia and Kazakhstan, but it also received exploration or exploitation rights in Darkhan, Karzahanbas and Aktyubinsk.⁸⁴

Negotiations between ONGC Videsh and KazMunayGas to develop oil and gas blocks in the Caspian region began in 2005. Also, in 2006, Kazakhstan offered ONGC-Mittal Energy Ltd. a 25% stake in the Satpaev offshore exploration block.⁸⁵ In April 2007, Mittal Investments acquired 50% from Lukoil's stakes in the Caspian Investments Resources (Kazakhstan), with \$ 980 million.

India signed agreements with Tajikistan (August 7, 2006) and Uzbekistan (April 26, 2006) in the field of energy, providing exploration rights to Indian companies without bidding

⁷⁸ Rosner, Kevin: "China Scores Again in Energy: Russia and Central Asia", ENSEC, *Journal of Energy Policy* (12 January 2010), at http://www.ensec.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=230:china-scores-again-in-energy-russia-aamp-central-asia&catid=102:issuecontent&Itemid=355.

⁷⁹ Laruelle and Peyrouse, "China as a Neighbor...", *op. cit.*, p. 42.

⁸⁰ Anand, Vinod: "Politico-military developments in Central Asia and Emerging Strategic Equations", *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol. 4, no. 4 (2006), p. 168.

⁸¹ Gazprom, at <http://gazprom.com/production/central-asia>.

⁸² Rutland, Peter: "Russia's Response to US Regional Influence", in MacDonald, Juli A.; Rutland, Peter and Stephen J., Blank: "Regional Power Plays in the Caucasus and Central Asia", *NBR Analysis*, vol. 14, no. 4 (November 2003), p. 49.

⁸³ Laruelle and Peyrouse, "China as a Neighbor...", *op. cit.*, p. 43.

⁸⁴ MacDonald, Juli A.: "Rethinking India's and Pakistan's Regional Intent", in MacDonald, Rutland and Blank, *op. cit.*, p. 16; Monsonis, Guillem: "Les limites et contrecoups du rapprochement Indo-Américain dans le domaine de la sécurité", *Géostratégiques*, no. 19 (L'avenir géostratégique de la puissance indienne) (April 2008), p. 66.

⁸⁵ See Ziegler, *op. cit.*, p. 148.



in return for an equal share in revenue from any discovery.⁸⁶ GAIL India also signed a memorandum of understanding with Uzbekneftegas for joint exploration and production of oil and natural gas.⁸⁷

Additionally, OMEL - a joint venture of ONGC and Mittal Energy Ltd. since October 2007, Maersk and Wintershall won an exploration and production agreement in Turkmenistan's Block 11-12 from the Caspian Sea.⁸⁸ India has also expressed its interest for the TAPI pipeline (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India).⁸⁹ A Gas Pipeline Framework Agreement signed by the representatives of the four participating nations, on April 25, 2008, in Islamabad, envisaged construction to start in 2010, supplying gas by 2015.

Usually, the Indian corporations suffered defeat in competition with the Chinese corporations. This thing happened in: Angola, Nigeria, Ecuador, Kazakhstan and Myanmar. But they have already cooperated in Russia, Sudan and Iran. The Indian proposal for joint bids was accepted by Beijing in 13 January 2006 and it was consolidated in five memoranda on energy cooperation. Additionally, a joint bilateral working group is monitoring progress of cooperation with the focus on four main regions: the Caspian Sea region, Central Asia, Africa and Latin America. Furthermore, CNPC and ONGC, respectively Sinopec, CNOOC, Beijing Gas, and GAIL signed deals covering exploration and production.⁹⁰ Recently, in 2009, ONGC Mittal Energy signed an agreement for the joint exploitation of the Satpayev offshore block, in the northern Caspian Sea, but the project still needs to be finalised.⁹¹

Japanese NOCs. Mitsubishi, Mitsui, Itochu, Marubeni, Sumitomo, Nissho Iwai, etc., once they arrived in Central Asia, were relatively slow to conclude large business contracts.

In March 1993, Japan National Oil Corporation launched a study regarding oil and natural gas productions in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Also, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry published a white charter about Japan's energy policy, which emphasized the opening policies of the Central Asian republics and the potential of the Tarim Basin, suggesting the construction of oil and natural gas pipelines on the route Central Asia-China-Japan.⁹²

Inpex Corporation obtained 8.33% stake in Kashagan oil field consortium (Kazakhstan), in 1998.⁹³ Itochu and Inpex are involved in the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan consortium and the TAPI pipeline consortium. Inpex also entered in the KTI pipeline consortium (Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran), together with KazMunayGas, Total, and Japan National Oil Corporation, signing an agreement for common studies.⁹⁴ During Ryutaro

⁸⁶ See Dwivedi, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

⁸⁷ Sachdeva, Gulshan: "India", in S. Frederick Starr (ed.) (2007): *The New Silk Roads. Transport and Trade in Greater Central Asia*, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, p. 351.

⁸⁸ Paik, Marcel, Lahn, Mitchell and Adylov, *op. cit.*, pp. 7; 21.

⁸⁹ Schaffer, Teresita C. and Haté, Vibhuti: "India's "Look West" Policy: Why Central Asia Matters", *South Asia Monitor*, no. 110 (05 September, 2007), p. 1.

⁹⁰ Holslag, Jonathan: "Fuelling Competition? China and India's Need for Natural Resources and the Options for Cooperation", *BICCS Asia Paper*, vol. 3, no. 3 (09 January 2008), pp. 6-7.

⁹¹ Fu, Jen-Kun: "Reassessing a "New Great Game" between India and China in Central Asia", *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol. 8, no.1 (2010), p. 19.

⁹² Len, Christopher: "Japan's Central Asian Diplomacy: Motivations, Implications and Prospects for the Region", *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol. 3, no. 3 (November 2005), pp. 130-131; 133.

⁹³ King, Amy and Townsend, Jacob: *Is Japan's Interest in Central Asia Stagnating?*, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, *CACI Analyst* (09 May 2007), at <http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/4685>.

⁹⁴ Maleki, Abbas: "Energy Supply and Demand in Eurasia: Cooperation between EU and Iran", *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol. 5, no. 4 (November 2007), p. 108.



Hashimoto's government, there was created a delegation, called the *Energy Mission on the Silk Road*, formed by ten governmental experts, business men and researchers, for the visits in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.⁹⁵

Although there were examples of cooperation between the Chinese and Japanese NOCs in Turkmenistan in the 1990s, the Angarsk struggle determined strong competition between them. The Japanese government restructured several NOCs, in 2001 and 2004, in order to be successful in its international acquisitions. The new Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corporation (JOGMEC), established on February 2004, is a governmental investment and technical support vehicle.⁹⁶

Chinese corporations have had greater success than other Asian NOCs in securing energy assets in Central Asia, although their efforts have been constrained by strong competition from an increasingly nationalistic Russian energy policy, the established position of IOCs, and by energy nationalism within Central Asia itself.

5.3. Bilateral and Multilateral Energy Initiatives

China has methodically pursued cooperation with other regional powers. Firstly, it has strategic partnerships with Russia (1996) and India (2003).⁹⁷ China and Russia signed a *Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation*, in 16 July 2001, which includes provisions on energy. They are close partners in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, too. Secondly, China and India have sporadic tensions over the border and the status of Tibet, respectively regarding the Chinese military presence in the Indian Ocean. Thirdly, China and Japan have disputes over the Senkaku Islands, respectively over the Chunxiao gas fields, known as Shirakaba in Japanese. In 2004, China surpassed the United States as Japan's largest trading partner. Therefore, there were several bilateral visits beginning with 2006.⁹⁸

Russia and India are rarely antagonistic toward each other, because they have no shared border. The Delhi Declaration, from 4 December 2002, wanted to improve their relation towards the common neighbourhood, Afghanistan and Central Asia. Russia supported India in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and it is also India's largest defence partner. Russia and Japan have border disputes in the Kurile Islands, but work together in the Sakhalin 1 and 2 projects or in the Angarsk-Nakhodka oil pipeline. India and Japan cooperate often against China, inclusively at the NOCs level. Finally, Russia, China and India have had many trilateral meetings.

Bilateral energy cooperation

China-Russia. Firstly, Gazprom concluded a strategic partnership with CNPC in October 2004. Secondly, Rosneft signed a memorandum with Sinopec seeking to establish a joint venture in the exploration of the Venin mining field of Sakhalin-3, in July 2005. Thirdly, Rosneft and CNPC established a joint venture - Vostok Energy in October 2006. Fourthly, in

⁹⁵ See Len, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-141.

⁹⁶ Mitchell, John and Lahn, Glada *Oil for Asia*, Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House, *EEDP Background Paper* (March 2007), p. 5, at http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/6350_bp0307anoc.pdf.

⁹⁷ Saunders, Phillip C.: "China's Global Activism: Strategy, Drivers and Tools", Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense Industry, *Occasional Paper*, no. 4 (October 2006), p. 15.

⁹⁸ Dumbaugh, Kerry (2008): *China's Foreign Policy: What Does It Mean for US Global Interests?*, CRS Report for Congress, pp. 17-18.



October 2009, Gazprom and CNPC signed a framework agreement on gas supplies and construction of a gas pipeline. Finally, the opening of the new oil terminal at Kozmino, near Nakhodka, in 27 December 2009, was partially facilitated by a \$ 25 billion in loan package from China. In return China will receive Russian oil supplies over the next twenty years.⁹⁹

China-India. During Premier Wen Jiabao's visit to India, in April 2005, the two governments issued a joint declaration. They agreed to cooperate in energy security and energy savings. In December 2005, oil companies from China and India teamed up to purchase 37% of oil assets in Syria belonging to the Canadian Oil Co. at a cost of \$ 573 million. Furthermore, in August 2006, they worked again to buy 50% of the shares of an oil field in Colombia.

China-Japan. The cooperation between CNPC and the Japanese government, business community and petroleum sector began in the 1960s, after the signing of a long-term agreement between the two countries. In April 2007, the first energy policy dialogue took place. A joint statement by METI and NDRC, on fostering cooperation between Japan and China in the energy field, was signed on that occasion.¹⁰⁰ Next year, PetroChina signed a letter of intent in Tokyo with Nippon Oil Corporation (NOC) to set up a joint venture refinery. Then, in June 2008, China and Japan agreed to conduct joint development in oil and gas in the disputed East China Sea.¹⁰¹ Finally, the 3rd edition of a China-Japan Energy Conservation Forum, in November 2009, finalised with 19 contracts between government institutions and companies from both countries.

Russia-India. India is Russia's second largest export market for arms.¹⁰² India's ONGC Videsh Ltd has held a 20% stake in Sakhalin-1 of \$ 1.7 billion, since 2001. It also looked to invest in the Sakhalin-3 project, without success, as well as in the joint Russian-Kazakh Kurmangazy oil field in the Caspian Sea. ONGC and Gazprom agreed to study the possibility of building an LNG project in Yamal. They also cooperate in the nuclear energy sector: Rosatom will assist India in the development of nuclear energy capabilities for peaceful purposes.

Russia-Japan. Despite a considerable potential for Russian-Japanese energy cooperation, presently there are only a few feasible projects and initiatives: Sakhalin 1 and Sakhalin 2. Also, in May 2009, a nuclear energy cooperation agreement was signed, when minister Putin visited Japan.

India-Japan. The India-Japan Energy Cooperation summit of April 2005, in New Delhi, prepared few joint statements regarding their partnership in September 2005 and December 2006.¹⁰³ India-Japan Energy Forum had the third meeting in 15-16 February 2010. The earlier editions of the Forum, held in December 2006 and February 2008, focused on issues related to their national policies on energy, energy conservation and climate change. The 3rd India-

⁹⁹ See Rosner, *op. cit.*

¹⁰⁰ Niquet, Valérie (2007): *Energy Challenges in Asia*, Paris, Institute Français de Relations Internationales, pp. 11-12.

¹⁰¹ Choo, Jaewoo: "Northeast Asia Energy Cooperation and the Role of China and Japan", in: Len and Chew, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

¹⁰² Norling, Nicklas: *India and its Neighbors: Development Scenarios 2009-2029*, Institute for Security and Development Policy, *Asia Paper* (September 2009), p. 34.

¹⁰³ Itoh, Shoichi: "Is there a Solution? Obstacles to and Prospects for Multilateral Energy Cooperation in Asia", in: Len, Chew, *op. cit.*, p. 329.



Japan Energy Forum has focused on the theme of technology cooperation. Additionally, India is the largest recipient of development loans from Japan.¹⁰⁴

There are several **multilateral economic and energy cooperation initiatives** in Central, South-East and North-East Asia: Eurasian Economic Community (EURASEC), Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Programme (CAREC), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Greater Tumen Initiative (GTI), North East Asia Petroleum Forum, Intergovernmental Collaborative Mechanism on Cooperation in North East Asia (ECNEA), Boao Forum for Asia (BFA), Association of Southeast Asian Nations plus China, Korea, and Japan (ASEAN+3), East Asian Summit (ASEAN+3+India, Australia, and New Zealand), Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), etc.

Table 1: China, Russia, India and Japan in regional energy initiatives

	CHINA	RUSSIA	INDIA	JAPAN
EURASEC		X		
CAREC	X			
SCO	X	X	x (observer)	
GTI	X	X		X
ECNEA		X		
BFA	X			X
ASEAN+3	X			X
East Asia Summit	X		X	X
ACD	X	X	X	X
SAARC			X	
BIMSTEC			X	
APEC	X	X		X

¹⁰⁴ Curtis, Lisa: "India's Expanding Role in Asia: Adapting to Rising Power Status", The Heritage Foundation, *The Heritage Foundation's Backgrounder*, no. 2008 (February 2007), p. 8.



Some of these regional energy initiatives are more successful than others. Within **EURASEC**, energy is one of the priority areas of cooperation. The **Eurasian Economic Community** adopted few energy policy resolutions, such as: “*Fundamentals of Energy Policy of the Eurasian Economic Community Member States*” (2003), and “*Concept on formation of common energy market in countries-members of EURASEC*” (2008). The recent EURASEC Summit, from July 5, 2010, in Astana, has had on its agenda the issue of the formation of a common energy market.¹⁰⁵

During the Shanghai Summit of 15 June 2006, Russia publicly announced the intention of founding an “Energy Club” within the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation**. The proposal aroused concerns at international level, because the organisation would control more than 50% from the world energy reserves.¹⁰⁶ The project of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), initiated by Russia, Iran, and India, could become a competitor for the Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA). Several states have already added to this initiative: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Oman, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, etc.¹⁰⁷

The **Association of Southeast Asian Nations plus China, Korea, and Japan (ASEAN+3)** created four forums of experts on: energy security, natural gas, oil markets, oil stockpiles, as well as ASEAN Plus Three Energy Security Communication System. Within the **East Asian Summit**, there are few declarations on energy policy: “*Cebu Declaration on East Asian Energy Security*” (15 January 2007), and “*Singapore Declaration on Climate Change, Energy, and the Environment*” (21 November 2007). Additionally, the EAS Energy Ministers have met in 2007, 2008 and 2009. The relationship between ASEAN plus Three and the East Asian Summit is still not clear.¹⁰⁸

India is an active supporter of the energy cooperation within **SAARC** and **BIMSTEC**. The **South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation** established: a Technical Committee on Energy (2000), a Working Group on Energy (2004), the SAARC Energy Centre (2006), four new Experts Groups (2009), and it approved “*The Concept of Energy Ring*” (2009). The government of India organised “*The First BIMSTEC Energy Ministers’ Conference*” (2005), “*South Asia Energy Dialogue*” (2007), and “*Fifth Asia Gas Partnership Summit*” (2008).¹⁰⁹ The **Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)** launched up to present: the Energy Working Group (1990), APEC Energy Cooperation (2000), Joint Oil Data Initiative (JODI, 2001), Asia-Pacific Network for Energy Technology (2007), Energy Trade and Investment Task Force (ETITF, 2008).¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Eurasian Economic Community (EURASEC), at www.eurasian-ec.com.

¹⁰⁶ Mihalka, Michael: “Not Much of a Game: Security Dynamics in Central Asia”, *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, vol. 5, no. 2 (2007), p. 25.

¹⁰⁷ Maleki, Abbas: “Iran”, in Starr *op. cit.*, pp. 185-186.

¹⁰⁸ Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), at www.aseansec.org.

¹⁰⁹ South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), at www.saarc-sec.org; Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), at www.bimstec.org.

¹¹⁰ Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), at www.apc.org.



6. Conclusions

China's energy strategy in Central Asia was influenced both by geopolitical and geo-economic considerations. Although it has had several weak points, it has succeeded to achieve its goals. Therefore, we consider China's energy strategy in Central Asia one of the most efficient, in comparison with other competitors' energy strategies.

Usually, the Chinese NOCs win the bids and are quite visible on the international energy markets, but their efforts have been constrained by strong competition from an increasingly nationalistic Russian energy policy, the established position of IOCs, and by energy nationalism within Central Asia itself.

India has not been yet a strong competitor for China in Central Asia, but Japan has the potential to win bids as it demonstrated in the Angarsk struggle. There is possible cooperation between the Indian and Japanese NOCs in order to present more attractive offers and reach the Chinese gross overpayment auctions.

China has promoted and built its oil and natural gas pipelines from Central Asia faster than other actors. Through investments, China's influence and visibility grew significantly and it is perceived in a relatively positive way in the region.

In order to improve the efficiency of its energy strategy and increase the number of successful deals in Central Asia, China can develop: the bilateral relations with the host countries through loans, aid packages, trade, investments, security cooperation, education programmes; public diplomacy campaigns and improved business practices; new regional cooperation initiatives with the five republics and other actors engaged in the region (free trade agreements, energy security, environment protection), etc.

China's energy strategy in Central Asia is a durable policy. The agreements signed with the Central Asian countries demonstrate a long term vision. But the strategic competition will continue, especially with Russia. Although China and Russia are partners in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation today, they have similar interests in Central Asia, inclusively in the energy field, which can become divergent in the long term. Once the United States of America's influence can be reduced in this region, the new Great Game will be played between these two Eurasian powers.



TERRORISM AND EXTREMISM: A THREAT TO MALDIVES TOURISM INDUSTRY

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Abstract:

Terrorism coupled with extremism is a global phenomenon, which the Maldives had avoided experiencing until 2007. Sustained and repeated terrorist campaigns can derail the country's economy, which mainly depends on tourism and related industries. The review of literature and analysis of statistics establish that tourism industry is vulnerable and at the same time resilient. Incidents such as the Malé Sultan Park bomb blast and Himandhoo island mosque confrontation in the Maldives suggest that the society is losing its tolerant and moderate nature towards other cultures and ideas. These events imply a need to develop policy measures to counter the extremism in the country. For a determined extremist group the Maldives tourism industry is an easy target. It is possible to attack or take hostage tourists in a resort or onboard a cruise vessel. Such an incidence can create fear among tourists and damage the idyllic image associated with the Maldives brand. As terrorism and extremism have an international dimension, solutions can only be achieved through global cooperation. At local levels the ideology or thinking which leads to extremism should be countered and moderated.

Keywords: Terrorism, Maldives, Tourism Industry, Extremism.

Resumen:

El terrorismo unido al extremismo es un fenómeno global, del cual las Maldivas no tuvieron experiencia hasta el año 2007. Campañas terroristas sostenidas y repetidas pueden hacer descarrilar la economía de un país, que depende principalmente del turismo y las industrias relacionadas. Un repaso a la literatura y un análisis de las estadísticas muestran que la industria del turismo es a la vez vulnerable y resistente. Incidentes tales como los del atentado en el Parque Sultan Malé y el enfrentamiento en la Mezquita Himandhoo en las Maldivas sugieren que la sociedad está perdiendo su naturaleza tolerante y moderada hacia otras culturas. Estos sucesos implican la necesidad de desarrollar medidas políticas para hacer frente al extremismo en el país. Para un determinado grupo terrorista la industria turística de las Maldivas es un objetivo fácil. Se puede atacar o hacer rehenes en hoteles o a bordo de un crucero. Tal incidente puede provocar miedo entre los turistas y dañar la imagen asociada con las Maldivas. Como el terrorismo y el extremismo tienen una dimensión internacional, las soluciones sólo pueden alcanzarse a través de la cooperación global. A nivel local la ideología o el pensamiento que lleva a extremismo debería ser desafiado y moderado.

Palabras clave: Terrorismo, Maldivas, Industria turística, extremismo.

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1. Introduction

Small states heavily depend on tourism as a main economic activity to generate income. Particularly for developing countries such as the Maldives tourism is an essential source of revenue generation and therefore, a major part of economic development. Tourism as an organised economic activity began in the Maldives in 1972². Since then tourism flourished contributing a share of 27.2 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) directly in 2008³ and a higher percentage of GDP indirectly as many tertiary and secondary activities had developed to support tourism industry. Inflow of tourist arrivals to the Maldives is linked to external positive conditions such as a strong global economy and a prosperous life style in main markets such as Europe and East Asia. Tourists choose the Maldives as their choice of destination as the country is famous for its idyllic beauty accompanied with sea, sun, sand and service.

Tourism industry is highly sensitive to global events such as natural disasters, economic recession and terrorism etc... The Maldives until 2007 had been regarded as a safe destination with a clean track record on ‘tourist terrorism’⁴. The Malé Sultan Park bomb blast of November 2007, tragically targeted at western tourists, changed this perception. Attacks such as this can massively damage Maldives tourism industry and could throttle the country’s economy.

2. Tourism and Terrorism

The concept of tourism “may be defined as a service based industry comprised of several elements including transportation, accommodation, food and beverage, tours and merchandising”.⁵ The economic significance of tourism to developing economies is indisputable. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) figures suggest that international tourism arrivals reached 900 million and generated approximately \$770 billion in foreign exchange earnings for recipient countries in 2007.⁶ According to UNWTO, developing countries have led international tourism growth since 2000, with a market share of 40 percent in 2008. During the period between 2000 to 2007, international tourism arrival in developing countries increased by 54 percent to reach 360 million.

The United States Department of State defines terrorism as “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience”.⁷ Terrorism against tourists often involves international citizens making it ‘international terrorism’ and may be defined as “terrorism involving citizens or the territory of more than one country”.⁸

² Niyaz, A (2002): *Tourism in the Maldives – a brief history tourism*, Ministry of Tourism and Maldives Tourism Promotion Board, p. 7

³ “Tourism Year Book 2009”, *Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture of the Maldives*, p. 29

⁴ Essner, J.: “Terrorism’s Impact on Tourism: What the Industry May Learn from Egypt’s Struggle with al-Gama’a al-Islamiya”, *IPS 688 – Security and Development* (December 2003), at http://sand.mii.edu/research/student_research/Essner_Tourist%20Terrorism.pdf.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3

⁶ “XII United Nations Conference on Trade and Development”, *United Nations (UN)*,– Accra, Ghana (20-25 April 2008), at http://www.un.org/webcast/unctad/xii/pdf/unwto_rt2.pdf.

⁷ Essner, *op. cit.*

⁸ *Ibid.*



The impact of terrorism on a country's economy can lead to unemployment, homelessness, deflation, crime and other economic and social ills. Blake and Sinclair (2002), who have studied the impact of the September 2001 *al-Qaeda* strikes on the United States tourism industry, noted that "the contribution of tourism and travel to both industrialised and developing countries is now so great that any downturns in the level of activity in the industry are a cause for concern. The repercussions extend beyond activities directly associated with tourism, notably airlines, hotels and catering, to sectors that supply intermediate or final goods that are purchased by firms and employees in the industry, so that all sectors of the economy are affected to a greater or lesser extent"⁹.

The Maldives is no exception as many other industries such as transport, construction, fishing and complementary industries are directly or indirectly connected to tourism. In addition to its direct benefits, such as foreign exchange earnings, tourism is also a source of foreign direct investment (FDI). According to the statistics, 48 percent of the tourist resorts are operated either by foreign companies or joint ventures in partnership with foreign companies in the Maldives.¹⁰ Any negative impact to the tourism sector can have a ripple effect on the whole economy.

3. Effect of Terrorism on Tourist Arrivals and Market Share

The Malé Sultan Park bomb blast failed to produce results expected by the extremists. Tragic death of tourists could have had far more serious consequence on the psyche of tourists and world media. The direct impact of the Malé Sultan Park bomb blast on tourist arrival is difficult to judge. Based on a single incident, to draw a conclusion of its effects on tourist arrival may not be statistically accurate.

Some travel agents the author spoke to after the bomb blast highlighted cancellation of bookings by tourists, especially from the Japanese market. This may be a small segment of the market that reacted to the shock of the incident. During this decade the Maldives experienced a gradual increase in tourist arrival figures, except for the drastic decline in 2005. After the Boxing Day 2004 Asian tsunami, there was a 35 percent decline in tourist arrival numbers, in the following year.

Since then the number of tourists visiting the Maldives has gradually increased; 601,923 in 2006, 675,889 in 2007 and 683,012 in 2008.¹¹ The statistical comparison of tourist arrival figures to the Maldives after and before the 2007 terrorist bomb blast is inconclusive.

However, it is possible to draw some paradigm from neighbouring Sri Lanka, whose economy had suffered from a long war with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE or Tamil Tigers), the separatist group, which was defeated in May 2009. The conflict had taken a toll on Sri Lanka's exports sector and tourism industry in particular.

⁹ Blake, A and Sinclair, Thea M.: 2002 "Tourism crisis management Responding to September 11", *University of Nottingham* (2002), at http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/ttri/pdf/2002_7.PDF.

¹⁰ "Tourism Year Book...", *op. cit.*, p. 3.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.



When tourism was introduced to the Maldives, most of the tourists who visited the country came via Sri Lanka.¹² Sri Lanka used to have a flourishing tourism industry until the conflict between government forces and Tamil separatists escalated. Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka have been fighting for a separate homeland for minority Tamils since 1983. As a tourist destination Sri Lanka compared to the Maldives has a more diverse product to offer for holidaymakers. The country with its rich tradition, culture, wild life and tropical climate has all the ingredients to be one of the top tourist destinations in South Asia.

Tamil fighters on repeated occasions have targeted the country's main airport, the gateway for tourists to come into the country. They also have targeted other civilian targets using suicide bombers indiscriminately killing civilians. Terrorism is synonymous with Tamil Tigers.

Athukorala, an Economic Strategist delivered a speech in October 2008 at Management Club of Sri Lanka in which he pointed out that in the previous 25 years Sri Lanka had lost over 6000 billion Sri Lankan Rupees on the tourism sector due to the fear and violence that the Tamil separatists had created.¹³ The fear component or terrorism's role is evident when tourist arrival figures to Sri Lanka are compared. Sri Lanka attracted around 300,000 tourists in the 1980's and even in 2009 the country is struggling to attract more visitors. Economists such as Arthukorola believe that the decline in tourist arrival and lost tourism revenue is linked to terrorism and fear factor created by Tamil separatists in Sri Lanka.

Kenya which had a thriving tourism industry suffered from sustained terrorist attacks. The bombing of the United States embassy in Nairobi in 1998 and of a beach hotel in Mombasa in 2002, as well as an unsuccessful missile attack against an airplane used by Israeli tourists, had forced many governments around the world to issue travel warnings on Kenya. Some analysts estimated that the cost of decline in tourism revenue was costing Kenya at least one million dollars per day.¹⁴

The studies carried out on countries that enjoy a significant tourism industry but are subject to a high frequency of terrorist attacks show that there is a correlation with tourist arrival and terrorist incidents. An analysis carried out by Drakos and Kutan (2003) to test the regional effects of terrorism on market shares in the tourism sector supports this view. Their analysis used data for three Mediterranean countries, Greece, Israel and Turkey for the period from January 1991 to December 2000. The results show a significant own and spill over effects of terrorism on market shares. The researchers also documented evidence that the location (urban versus rural) and the intensity of terrorist incidents played a vital role in the decision making process of tourists when choosing destinations.

Evaluation of the effect of the 2000 to 2003 wave of terrorist attacks in Israel revealed an interesting difference between the reaction of local and international tourists. Whereas both groups showed high initial sensitivity to the attacks, many of the activities of local residents quickly rebounded. For example, a comparison of the number of nights spent in hotels a year

¹² Niyaz, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

¹³ "Does Terrorism actually Affect tourist arrivals?", *Daily Mirror* (Sri Lanka) (09 October 2008), at <http://www.hotelsmag.com/articleXML/LN865775393.html>.

¹⁴ Essner, *op. cit.*, p. 3.



after the beginning of the attacks showed an 80 percent decrease for inbound tourists and a 20 percent increase for domestic tourists.¹⁵

An initial analysis by Essner (2003) of the effect of terrorism on the Egyptian economy produces a mixed set of findings but still supported the theory that a sustainable continuous terrorism activity can harm tourism industry.

The shooting and bombing attacks across Mumbai in 2008, by *Lashkar-e-Taiba* also backs the theory that terrorism can have a transitory effect on tourist arrivals. The global economic downturn, coupled with the Mumbai terror attacks, considerably impacted the foreign tourist arrivals in India. The booming tourism industry experienced a growth of only 5.56 percent against a target of 14.56 percent in 2008.¹⁶ For an effected economy to recover to a pre-incident level analysts estimate a period of about six to 12 months would be needed.

4. Religious Extremism in the Maldives

Religious extremism is a global phenomenon that the Maldives has so far managed to escape to experience in its bloodiest form. History suggests that the country practised Buddhism until the rulers in 1153 embraced Islam as the state religion.¹⁷ Until recent times violent crimes against individuals are a rare occurrence. Moroccan traveller and scholar Ibn Battuta reported that Maldivians became unconscious when he handed a verdict to amputate an arm of a convicted thief, while he was the chief judge of the Maldives.¹⁸ According to the accounts of Ibn Battuta, Maldivians were timid and lived in a peaceful society where murder or violence virtually did not exist. Unlike countries in the South Asian region, Maldives is rarely exposed to violent crimes. Crimes committed in the name of Islam against believers of other faith hardly exist in the Maldives.

Maldives culture analyst Romero-Frias (2002) tends to suggest that the Maldivian society was deliberately radicalised by local scholars educated in Arab countries.¹⁹ Romero-Frias wrote “the intense indoctrination of the 1980s and 90s, when Islamization was imposed on the islands at a much higher gear than at any time in the nation’s history, has made Maldivians feel uncozy in their own country”. According to him the scholars graduated from Egypt and Saudi Arabia pontificated on Islam and harvested an idealised intolerant version of religion. He also suggested that “Maldivian people opposing arabization are in a very vulnerable position, because they are easily, and conveniently, singled out as opponents of Islam”. During the 1970’s the government of President Ibrahim Nasir experienced religious intolerance from his successor Maumoon Abdul Gayoom. Then Gayoom was a teacher and he challenged the authorities in his preaching stating that the government was un-Islamic. It was reported that Gayoom’s view on various religious matters forced President Nasir to convict and banish him to an island to serve his sentence. With the turn of tide Gayoom succeeded

¹⁵ Eldiad, Yechiam; Greg, Barron and Ido, Erev (2005): “The Role of Personal Experience in Contributing to Different Patterns of Response to Rare Terrorist Attacks”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 49, no. 3 (June 2005), p. 437.

¹⁶ “Meltdown, Mumbai attacks hit foreign tourist arrivals”, *IANS*, 24 February 2009, at

<http://ibnlive.in.com/news/meltdown-mumbai-attacks-hit-foreign-tourist-arrivals/86145-26.html>.

¹⁷ (1990): *Dhivehi Thaareekhah Aualikameh, Dhivehi Bahaa Thaareekhah*, Khidhumaiykuraa Gaume Marukaz, p. 132.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

¹⁹ Romero-Frías, Xavier (2002): *The Maldivian Islanders: A study of the Popular Culture of an Ancient Ocean Kingdom*, Barcelona, Nova Ethnographia Indica, p. 288.



over Nasir and he ruled the Maldives for 30 years. Some writers suggest that this was the period that the Maldivian society was radicalised and a different version of religion took hold in the society. Chandrasekharan (2007) in his paper highlighted that “many critics are quick to blame President Gayoom for past mistakes like the introduction of Arabic in schools in the late 70s and 80s, revision of text books, creation of Arabic medium schools, or letting in all dubious characters in the name of preachers and letting the youth to get disillusioned and turn to extremism and violence”²⁰. The teachings of some of the preachers educated in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia influenced minds of many people making the Maldivian society to lose its tolerance that was culturally passed on to the people for generations.

The growing extremism in the Maldives was evident from the episode of Himandhoo on 6 October 2007. A group of extremists established a separate mosque for worshiping, rejecting the communal island mosque built by the government. Following the Sultan Park bomb explosion the Maldives Police visited the island to question alleged suspects.

From Himandhoo island, about 70 masked extremists armed with swords, bricks, iron rods, catapults and wooden planks confronted the Police. During the confrontation about 34 security personals were injured and reinforcements from the Maldives National Defence Force were brought in the island to control the situation. About 100 security personnel searched every house of Himandhoo island, which had a population of about 600 and arrested about 50 extremists.²¹

Nearby island Ukulhas in North Ari atoll was also found to be an island which harboured extremists. Many of the islanders were youths who had access to extremist books and CDs to guide them in the extremist ideology and the religious congregations were also being used for a similar purpose. Even today many self-proclaimed scholars visit regularly to these islands to preach on different matters. Most of their sermons focus on the past, warn of hell, detail the punishment from God and create fear among population. The preachers’ sermons contain little substance and give no room for intellectual debate while disengaging listeners. Rationale questioning and alternative viewpoints do not exist on religious matters among the island communities.

Recently acquired freedom of expression helped to make transparent, the intolerant ideology that had been concealed in the Maldivian society. In November 2009 a bill was proposed by independent MP Ibrahim Muttalib on outlawing places of worship for non-Muslims, which was sent to a committee for further review with unanimous consent of all MPs who participated in the vote.²² Fares-Maathoda MP Muttalib also submitted a bill to ban the sale of alcohol on inhabited islands, airports and uninhabited islands excluding tourist resorts.²³ In December 2009, in an act of vandalism a rock was thrown at Holiday Inn’s head office building in Male’, who recently applied for a permit to sell alcohol.²⁴ An American

²⁰ Chandrasekharan, S (2007): “Maldives: Sultan Park Explosion- Dealing with Religious Extremism”, *South Asia Analysis Group*, no. 2476, at <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/%5Cpapers25%5Cpaper2476.html>.

²¹ “Militants arrested in Maldives”, *BBC News*, 08 October 2007, at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/7034507.stm.

²² “Bill prohibiting establishment of non-Muslim worship places sent to committee”, *Miadhu*, 19 November 2009, at <http://www.miadhu.com.mv/2009/11/local-news/bill-prohibiting-establishment-of-non-muslim-worship-places-sent-to-committee/>.

²³ “Bill on banning sale of alcohol “unconstitutional”, *Minivannews.com*, 25 November 2009, at <http://minivannews.com/politics/2009/11/25/bill-on-banning-sale-of-alcohol-unconstitutional/>.

²⁴ “Rock thrown into Holiday Inn head office”, *Minivannews.com*, 23 December 2009, at <http://minivannews.com/news-in-brief/2009/12/23/rock-thrown-into-holiday-inn-head-office/>.



family, allegedly spreading Christianity, was deported from the Maldives on 13 December 2009 by the authorities on the island of Kinbidhoo in Thaa atoll, Maldives.²⁵ During November 2009 a music concert, part of Muslim festival of *Eid* celebration, was halted by a religious association in Thaa atoll Dhiyamigilli.²⁶ In the same month the ‘Islamic Foundation’, a local religious organisation called on the Maldives government to deport the editor of Minivan News website, Maryam Omid, for publishing a reader submitted letter which talked about legalising homosexuality in the Maldives.²⁷ The Constitution of the Maldives also categorically states that every Maldivian must be a Muslim.²⁸

The developments within the political sphere and in the civil society suggest that in the recent past the Maldivian society has become more intolerant towards alternative views, cultures and ways of life.

5. Malé Sultan Park Bomb Explosion

The tranquillity of the Maldives was ripped apart on 29 September 2007 when the first bomb blast specifically targeted at tourists took place. The homemade bomb exploded in the capital, Malé, at 13:30 hrs local time, at the heart of the popular tourist attraction, the Sultan Park in Malé. The park, which houses the National Museum in the remains of the former Royal Palace, is located behind the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) headquarters.

The bomb caused panic and injured 12 tourists. The injured tourists included two Japanese and eight Chinese as well as two Britons. The British couple, Christian Donelan, a security consultant from Rotherham, south Yorkshire, and Jennifer Green, both 32, suffered the brunt of the explosion and were severely burnt.²⁹

In the explosion no Maldivians were caught up, which suggested that this was the first “tourist terrorism” deliberately targeting tourists in the country.

Following the investigation by the Maldives Police three men were tried and sentenced to 15 years in jail for carrying out the bombing. Mohamed Sobah, 19, of V. Landhoo Aage, Moosa Inaz, 21, of Laamu Atoll Kalhaidhoo/Finihiyaage and Ahmed Naseer, 20, of Gaafu Atoll Kanduhulhudhoo / Saadhuna Manzil, were found guilty under the Maldives Terrorism Act 1990³⁰ of “causing bodily harm with the intention of creating fear or terror”, after they confessed to planting and detonating the bomb in the Sultan Park.³¹ According to Maldives Police these three people committed the major role in the crime.³²

²⁵ “Foreign National Accused of Missionary Work in Kinbidhoo is Deported”, *Haveeru*, 15 December 2009, at <http://www.haveeru.com.mv/?page=details&id=90980>.

²⁶ “Religious association stops music show”, *Minivannews.com*, 30 November 2009, at <http://minivannews.com/news-in-brief/2009/11/30/religious-association-stops-music-show/>.

²⁷ “Islamic Foundation calls for Minivan News website editor to be deported”, *Haveeru*, 17 November 2009, at http://www.haveeru.com.mv/english/details/28502/Islamic_Foundation_calls_for_Minivan_News_website_editor_to_be_deported.

²⁸ The Constitution of the Republic of Maldives 2008: Article 9, Section D, states that a non-Muslim may not become a citizen of the Maldives.

²⁹ “Two British tourists injured in bomb attack on Maldives”, *Independent*, 30 September 2007, at <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/two-british-tourists-injured-in-bomb-attack-on-maldives-404007.html>.

³⁰ Maldives Terrorism Act 1990 clause (a), (d), (e) and (g) of article 2.

³¹ “Maldives bomb plotters jailed for 15 years”, *Reuters*, 14 December 2007, at



The key people confessed to their crime requesting the court to judge the case as soon as possible by issuing a justified verdict. As he passed the sentence at Malé Criminal Court, Judge Abdullah Arif said, “because of the nature of the crime I cannot show leniency”.

The Maldives police revealed that, out of the 16 terror suspects charged in connection with the Malé Sultan Park bombing, 10 suspects were in hiding in Pakistan.³³ The police believe that the 10 men who masterminded the attack left for Pakistan in the days preceding the explosion. Interpol warrants were issued for the arrest of the bomb suspects.

6. A Possible Scenario – Targeting a Tourist Resort or a Cruise Boat

Most of the tourist resorts in the country are developed on self-contained islands. In 2008 there were 94 exclusive tourist resorts with a total bed capacity of 19,860 in the country.³⁴ The access to resort islands is mostly by sea. The tourists who holiday in these islands spend their holiday virtually separated from the general population of the Maldives. In a typical resort island, the staff comprise of Maldivians and migrant workers who are based in the island during their employment. Recent estimates put the number of migrant workers at around 80,000, which is equivalent to 26 percent of the Maldives population.³⁵ In a typical tourist resort expatriate staff may represent more than 50 percent of the work force. There are growing animosity between locals and migrant workers, where some locals feel they are being treated unfairly.

A disgruntled and marginalised workforce could be an ideal source to recruit extremists to commit acts of terrorism. If an extremist cell penetrates the resort workforce they can easily take hostage the island and could cause carnage. Maldives resorts lack sophisticated security mechanisms. Even if a resort had such a security apparatus, a determined terrorist is almost unstoppable, as they often circumvent security. This is evident from a recent incidence where a Nigerian man boarded a Detroit-bound flight allegedly with explosives on Christmas Day 2009.³⁶

Cruise boats, which accommodate tourists, can be another vulnerable tourist facility in the Maldives. In 2009 there were around 144 registered tourist vessels with a total bed capacity of 2135.³⁷ For a determined terrorist this is an easy target to take hostage as the boats cruise with around four to eight crews without any onboard security. Cruise routes often include islands through which the tourists come to contact with locals. No onboard security or intelligence resource may be able to halt a determined terrorist from committing a destructive act. Therefore, measures to prevent and minimise such acts should be put in place within the national security infrastructure.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSCOL3985>.

³² “Three people involved in Sultan Park bombing sentenced to 15 years” Maldives Police Services, 13 December 2007, at <http://www.police.gov.mv/?n=1816&lang=en>.

³³ “3 terrorists of Sultan Park bombing sentenced” *Miadhu Daily*, 14 December 2007, at <http://www.miadhu.com.mv/news.php?id=4606>.

³⁴ “Tourism Year Book...”, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

³⁵ “Internationally recognised core labour standards in the Maldives”, Report, *World Trade Organisation (WTO), WTO General Council review of the trade policies of Maldives*, Geneva (26 and 28 October 2009), p. 6.

³⁶ “Pressure rises on CIA after bomb plot”, *Financial Times*, 30 December 2009.

³⁷ “Tourism Year Book...”, *op. cit.*, p. 44



7. Measures to Tackle the Growing Extremism in the Maldives

In 2006, President Gayoom established a committee to seek out measures that could address and counter extremist thinking.³⁸ Gayoom's Attorney General, Hassan Saeed and the justice minister Mohammed Jameel Ahmed were made advisers. Saeed who was the main contributor of the report later accused Gayoom's government for failing to address the issues raised and ignoring the recommendations made to tackle extremism in the Maldives.³⁹

Their report recommended "an in depth study of the extent of extremism in society, changing the way the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs operated, strengthening the laws and regulations tackling extremism, making people aware of the benefits of adopting a moderate way of life, employing the media to inform people on the importance of adopting a moderate path in Islam, changes in the academic curriculums, setting up of a council that can give *fatwas* on certain issues and encourage moderate scholars to visit the rural islands to raise awareness and inculcate in students a love for the moderate path of Islam."⁴⁰

The current government of Mohamed Nasheed elected in November 2008, have so far publicly done very little to address his predecessor Gayoom's failings to address extremism. After assuming office, Nasheed's government dissolved Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs and created a separate ministry to address religious issues; the Ministry of Islamic Affairs is run by the leaders of the religious conservative "Aadalath Party".

The Maldives lacks a comprehensive legal framework to address terrorism. Matters that are related to terrorism are tried under an inadequate piece of legislation enacted in 1990⁴¹ following a series of arson attacks on shops and vehicles.⁴² This piece of legislation enacted by Gayoom's administration was often used to suppress and punish prisoners of conscience. The current president was charged using terrorism laws under Article 6 (b) with reference to 2 (g) in 2005.⁴³

Several non-governmental organisations (NGO) including Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists' panel on counter-terrorism and human rights, in the past have criticized the country's terrorism laws and accused former president Gayoom's regime of using the regulations to imprison its political opponents. This legislation is in need of urgent review and a more comprehensive thorough piece of legislation is required to address the current threat of terrorism.

Awareness and education are two important tools which can counter the extremist ideology. As suggested in Saeed's findings people should be made aware of the benefits of moderate and tolerant ways of life. Mainstream moderate media channels have to be empowered to tackle and question the thinking and ideology advocated by extremists. A culture must be created where open genuine debates and questioning foster. The political parties in the Maldives should avoid using religion as a political tool.

³⁸ Chandrasekharan, S. (2007): "Maldives: Sultan Park Explosion- Dealing with Religious Extremism", Paper no. 2476, 25 November 2007.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Law on the Prevention of Terrorism in the Maldives 1990 (Law No: 10/90)

⁴² "Maldives: Arrests of possible prisoners of conscience", *Amnesty International May*, 1991 AI Index: ASA (29 January 1991), p. 2.

⁴³ Chandrasekharan, S. (2005): "Maldives: Gayoom Uses Anti Terrorist laws to suppress opposition", Paper no. 1519, 25 August 2005, at <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/%5Cpapers16%5Cpaper1519.html>.



Root cause for the incidents such as the Malé Sultan Park bomb blast must be understood in the context of extremism. In order to address the issue extremists' ideology and why a group of youth carried out such an act should be analysed. It is widely believed that most terrorists attack a particular target to achieve a political goal or get media publicity for a particular cause. The Malé Sultan Park bombing trial revealed none of this or simply the authorities have yet to come up with any reason for the bombers' act. In most cases the terrorists choose tourist as easy targets to attack. In the Maldives tourist holiday in isolated resorts and come to contact with population only when tourists visit a local island or the capital Malé. The fact that extremists manage to target a group of tourist on a sightseeing trip in Malé suggests that, ample planning and precision had gone into the September 2007 attack. Targeting international tourists can generate a great deal of attention, causing tourists to avoid travel to that part of the world and the Maldives is no exception.⁴⁴

With growing intolerance in the Maldivian society, the terrorism problem will be a complex issue and a huge challenge for the authorities to address. In November 2009 President Nasheed affirmed the seriousness of extremism in the Maldives and confirmed the arrest of 14 Maldivians in Waziristan in Pakistan, for being on the Taliban's side. In an interview with the Financial Times he raised his concerns; "the rise of militant Islam in the Maldives and extols the island state's liberal Sunni Islamic traditions".⁴⁵ He also mentioned that around 100 Maldivians are fighting along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, and warned the people against religious extremism during November 2009 radio address. Such warnings are likely to fall on deaf ears unless the government implements a workable policy to tackle the extremist ideology that encourages and condones terrorism.

8. Conclusion

Terrorist attacks like September 2001 by *al-Qaida* and November 2008 Mumbai hostage shooting by *Lashkar-e-Taiba* have shown that tourism industries in respective countries were hard hit. A smaller country like the Maldives, with a less diversified economy, is more likely to have trouble absorbing the financial impact of a repeated or a large-scale terrorist attack.

The Maldives bomb experience, such as the Malé Sultan Park bombing, has the potential to bring the economy to a halt destroying the tourism industry. The spread of extremism can easily destabilise the country. Progress of tourism industry is quite closely related with political stability in a destination.

Terrorism and tourism have global dimensions and the best way to deal with a global terrorist threat is global co-operation. However, it is fundamental that the problem is addressed at local levels by tackling the ideology or belief that leads a group or an individual to commit acts of terrorism. In the case of Maldives building a more moderate and tolerant society that is open to alternative ideas and views will help to tackle the growing extremism.

⁴⁴ Rama, B. (2009): "Changing dynamics of terrorism and its impact on tourism", Kristu Jayanti College, Bangalore, p. 2, at http://www.mmbgims.com/national-seminar/docs/9_B_Ramya.pdf.

⁴⁵ Jacon, R.: "Afternoon tea with the FT: Mohamed Nasheed", *Financial Times*, 27 November 2009, at <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/35f6ff72-dae2-11de-933d-00144feabdc0.html>.



For the Maldives it is vital to look after the tourism industry, which is generating much needed revenue and foreign currency.





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CÓDIGO: D0037/5

Curso 2010/2011

Del 10 de abril del 2010 al 31 de mayo del 2011

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Septiembre 2010- marzo 2011

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Contents

Introducción



Mustafa Aydın

1. **Parameters of Turkish Foreign Policy under the AKP Governments**
Nur Bilge Criss
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Sinem Akgül Açıkmeşe
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Contenidos

Introducción

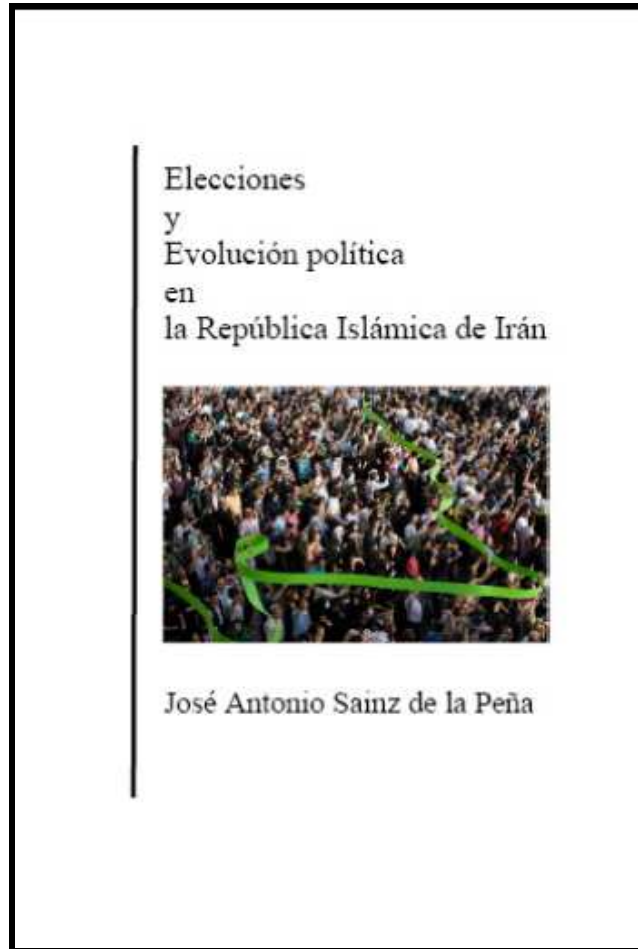
Antonio Marquina

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Rubén Herrero de Castro

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David García Cantalapiedra
3. **Las relaciones UE-Rusia durante la Presidencia Española**
Javier Morales Hernández
4. **La Presidencia española de la Unión Europea y las relaciones con los Estados del Cáucaso Sur**
Javier Ignacio García González
5. **La presidencia española de la UE y la Unión por el Mediterráneo**
Antonio Alonso Marcos
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María Isabel Castaño
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Alberto Priego
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María Angeles Alaminos Hervás
10. **El capítulo energético en las relaciones Unión Europea-Rusia en el contexto de la Presidencia española**
Eric Pardo Sauvageot
11. **El debate sobre el armamento nuclear estadounidense estacionado en Europa**
Belén Lara
12. **Una lógica continuidad: afianzamiento del espacio Schengen dentro del marco del Tratado de Lisboa**
Gloria Inés Ospina
13. **Los desafíos medioambientales y el papel de la Presidencia española**
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Contenido



1. **El sistema político iraní**
2. **La lucha entre facciones**
3. **La elección para la Asamblea de Expertos**
4. **La evolución de la Política Interior en 2007**
5. **Las elecciones legislativas de marzo de 2008**
6. **Las elecciones presidenciales de 2009**
7. **Conclusiones**



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