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Security Dilemma in U.S.-China Relations: A Non-traditional Security Studies Perspective

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Abstract

Since Former President Barack Obama's announcement of the Pacific Pivot in 2011, the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations have worsened considerably. Under President Donald Trump's administration, the shifting of U.S. military focus to the Asia-Pacific region is expected to continue. As the U.S. moves forward with increasing its military presence in the Pacific to counter a perceived "aggressive" China, it may lead to serious consequences. This thesis presents the argument that China's conception of national security includes the defense of the state from both foreign and domestic threats. Therefore, China's military developments and policies are not strictly in response to international state threats, because internal security issues also shape China's construction and practice of military policies. China's domestic issues contribute considerably to the development of their foreign and military policies, which in turn, affects their relations with other state actors. This thesis argues that the CCP's securitization of China's slowing economic growth leads to foreign and military policies that exacerbate the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations. Particularly, China's actions to defend their economic interests in the South China Sea have heighten tensions between China and the U.S. and her Asia-Pacific allies. While the U.S. is not misreading the potential inter-state danger of China's increasing military developments and modernization, they may be misreading the driving motives behind it.

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List of Acronyms

PRC – People's Republic of China
CCP – Chinese Communist Party
USDOD – U.S. Department of Defense
TPP – Trans-Pacific Partnership
USAID – U.S. Agency for International Development
ECS – East China Sea
SCS – South China Sea
TPP – Trans Pacific Partnership
SIPRI – Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
NPC – National People's Congress
CMC – Central Military Commission
PLA – People's Liberation Army
PAPF – People's Armed Police Force
PLAGF – People's Liberation Army Ground Force
PLAN – People's Liberation Army Navy
PLAAF – People's Liberation Army Air Force
PLARF – People's Liberation Army Rocket Force
CMI – Civil-Military Integration
ASEAN – Association of Southeast Asian Nations
UNCLOS – United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

Chapter One: Introduction

A prominent element of U.S. foreign policy under President Barack Obama's administration was the Pacific Pivot—an initiative to refocus U.S. military, economic, and diplomatic resources to the Asia-Pacific region in order to fortify U.S. hegemonic influence against a rising China. In this thesis, the term, "China," denotes the People's Republic of China (PRC) under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The U.S. Department of Defense (USDOD) 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review presents a strategy that supports Obama's initiative. Directly identifying China, as well as North Korea, as pressing security threats to regional stability, the report states a prioritization of the Pacific Pivot and a plan to rebalance U.S. military resources from the Middle East to the Asia-Pacific region. The plan includes a shifting of 60% of U.S. naval forces to bases in the Pacific by 2020, in addition to the strengthening of military alliances with Asia-Pacific countries (i.e. Japan, South Korea, Australia, the Philippines, and Thailand). On the economic front, the Pacific Pivot also consists of the negotiation of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement. The massive trade deal would have included 12 Asia-Pacific countries and encompassed one-third of the global economy. In response to China's emergence as a global power, Obama's initiative assumed a military and economic approach to maintaining U.S. influence in the region.

Under President Donald Trump's administration, the U.S. focuses more on a military approach to the perceived threat of China. First, TPP negotiations have halted indefinitely, and instead of developing one enormous regional trade bloc, the U.S. will pursue bi-lateral trade talks with Asia-Pacific countries. Second, the Trump administration's 2018 budget proposal suggests ending Obama-era USDOD sequestration requirements and increasing the department's budget by 10% to $639 billion. At the same time, it proposes cutting the Department of State and U.S.

Agency for International Development's (USAID) budget by 28% to $25.6 billion. Furthermore, in early 2017, Senator John McCain proposed a $7.5 billion increase of defense spending for the Asia-Pacific region (Lubold 2017). Referred to as the Asia-Pacific Stability Initiative, the proposal is supported by Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and head of U.S. Pacific Command, Admiral Harry Harris. The budget adjustments and McCain's proposal provide strong indications that U.S.-Asia foreign policy under the Trump administration will focus predominately on military defense rather than diplomacy.

Obama's Pacific Pivot includes both economic and military components to countering China's growing regional and global influence. On the other hand, Trump's security policies regarding the Asia-Pacific region, thus far, have mainly centered on increasing U.S. military strength in the region. Whether paired with economic and diplomatic components, like Obama's initiative, or stripped down to a more hawkish stance, like Trump's approach, both administrations support the need to increase U.S. military presence in the Pacific in order to defend her interests and allies against China. The security trend under both administrations demonstrate an increasing exacerbation of the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations, an argument this thesis makes.

Aside from China's immense economic influence, the U.S. and her Asia-Pacific allies' perception of insecurity stem from three primary factors: 1) China's escalating military modernization and accumulation in the last 30 years, 2) territorial disputes with China over the Daoyutai/Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea (ECS) and Spratly Islands in the South China Sea (SCS), and 3) China's non-transparency in regards to their military policies and capabilities. The three factors represent the predominant justifications for the shifting of U.S. military focus

to the Pacific. The U.S. cite China and their aggressive behavior as a serious threat to regional stability.

On the other hand, U.S. military rebalancing initiative, public displays of alliance strengthening with countries surrounding China, overt military cooperation and drills in the Pacific, and lastly, arms sales to Taiwan also aggravate China's perceptions of insecurity. It leads the CCP to interpret (and express) the maneuvers as U.S. attempts to contain their self-described peaceful rise as a global power. These factors and resulting (mis)perceptions on both sides have been large contributors to the security dilemma occurring in the Asia-Pacific region between China and the U.S. and her allies.

However, it is possible that the U.S. is misinterpreting China's intentions; China currently faces many internal security issues. The first includes sovereignty or separatist conflicts with Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang. The conflicts are ongoing issues that stem from China's history of foreign imperialism during the early 19th to mid-20th century. Since the establishment of the PRC in 1941, the CCP has struggled with fully reconciling the conflicts with each respective regions and its leaders. This is due to the CCP's aggressive interventions into what are historically autonomous regions of the country. Currently, China is attempting to address the conflicts by leveraging its economic power to develop and further integrate Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang with the mainland. By fostering greater economic dependency, the CCP hopes it will help to quell separatist sentiments.

China's period of extraordinary, double-digit economic growth started slowing in 2012, however, and it is another significant contributor to its internal security issues. Slowing economic growth raises alarms for the CCP, because their political legitimacy—in both the mainland and autonomous regions—rests heavily on a booming economy and growing middle

class. Already facing burgeoning social discontent due to widening inequality and still-pervasive poverty, a slowing economy could prove detrimental to the CCP. Thus, it is quite conceivable that the security of the state from domestic threats is also a significant driving factor in the formulation of Chinese military policy.

Several questions then arise: Are China's military developments and policies purely in response to international pressure to balance against other state powers (namely the U.S.), or is it also driven by the internal security issues they currently face? How much of their security infrastructure is set up/allocated in response to foreign threats versus domestic threats? What are the security issues that China currently faces and how are they prioritized? Are China's military developments contributing to the security dilemma in the Asia-Pacific region, and is there a misinterpretation of their intentions? Ultimately, this thesis seeks to understand the domestic drivers to the construction and practice of China's recent military policies that may in turn contribute to the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations.

This thesis presents the argument that China's conception of national security includes the defense of the state from both foreign and domestic threats. Therefore, China's military developments and policies are not strictly in response to foreign state threats, because internal security issues also shape China's construction and practice of military policies. An analysis of China's central budget reveals that they spend about the same for national defense as they do for public security. In other words, Chinese state expenditure on security against foreign and internal threats are relatively similar, revealing that China's prioritization of the two security items are about the same. In addition, China's armed forces include both their national defense forces (i.e. army, navy, air force, and missile defense) and armed police force under one central military leadership. They have a standing militia that may support either division as needed. China's

security infrastructure is organized in such a way that their national defense forces and public security force are not easily separable, because they are intricately integrated and act as extensions of one another; they can be mobilized in unison in response to either foreign or domestic state threats. Lastly, China's armed forces are also utilized to serve other functions of the state. One major function includes their support of economic development projects, which is repeatedly referred to as the state's primary priority throughout China's white papers. An attempt to understand China's military intentions would be incomplete without taking into consideration China's domestic security issues.

China's domestic issues contribute considerably to the development of their foreign and military policies, which in turn, affects their relations with other state actors. This thesis argues that the CCP's securitization of China's slowing economic growth leads to foreign and military policies that exacerbate the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations. Particularly, China's actions to defend their economic interests in the SCS have heightened tensions between China and the U.S. and her Asia-Pacific allies. Since 2012, China's economy has started to slow from its breakneck pace over the last thirty years. As economic growth largely forms the basis of the CCP's political legitimacy, the party fears widespread social discontent that may worsen in the event of an economic downturn. Already dealing with separatist/sovereignty issues with Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang, the CCP could face legitimacy crises throughout both Mainland China and its special administrative regions. Therefore, pressure to maintain economic growth drives China's aggressive actions in the SCS conflict. Here, a domestic security issue significantly influences China's foreign and military policies, which has negatively affected U.S.-China relations.

While China does face many pressing internal security issues and those issues do considerably shape their military policies, it does not negate the U.S. and her Asia-Pacific allies' perception of insecurity regarding China. China's search for security from both foreign and domestic state threats is demonstrated by their military developments and modernization. While the U.S. is not misreading the potential inter-state danger of China's increasing military developments and modernization, they may be misreading the driving motives behind it. China is not looking to expand its influence abroad, whether militarily or economically, purely out of want for greater power or because of an innate drive to compete against other global powers. They are looking abroad to stimulate slowing economic growth—with the backing of their military forces—in their attempts to maintain domestic peace and social stability. China is leveraging their global influence to help address serious domestic issues at home.

Organization of Thesis

The thesis is organized into 2 main sections: the literature review and case study section. Chapter two is the literature review; it provides an outline of the current literature regarding security studies and then more specifically, the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations. Chapter three opens with the methodology section before continuing to the China case study. The case study can be further divided into three main sections. They analyze China's security infrastructure and central budget; China's expressions of existential threats; and China's securitized issues and those impacts on inter-state relations.

Chapter two first familiarizes readers with the changing nature of security studies to include wider conceptualizations and analytical approaches to the idea of security. It takes readers through the debate between traditional and non-traditional security studies, because the study and practice of U.S. foreign policy is largely dominated by analytical approaches

stemming from the former. This thesis attempts to contribute to the discussion by presenting an analysis that utilizes non-traditional security studies perspectives. However, there is much contention on how the term, "security," is conceptualized and studied within the broad field of non-traditional security studies. Therefore, the next section includes a review of "wideners" and "deepeners" in conceptions of security. The two fundamentally different approaches to security represent a major division within the field, providing an insight into some of the debates over the idea, study, and practice of security. The chapter ends with a review of the literature on policies regarding U.S.-China relations and analyses of China as it pertains to the security of the U.S. In addition to outlining the major points of discussions in this topic area, this portion mainly serves to highlight the bias towards the use of traditional security studies perspectives in analyzing U.S. relations with China. It serves to highlight the need for more holistic approaches to understanding security, particularly U.S. national security in relation to China.

Chapter three comprises the bulk of the thesis where the analytical approaches discussed in Chapter two are applied to China as a case study. It first presents the methodologies used in this thesis to study the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations; it makes clear the ways in which data is collected and on what basis conclusions are made. Next, the chapter dives into the China case study, which is divided into three parts. The first section presents an analysis of China's security infrastructure. It then looks at Chinese spending on security to counter both foreign and domestic security threats. This portion serves to show readers how China may be prioritizing its security agenda by looking at how state resources—structurally and monetarily—are allocated towards addressing foreign threats compared to domestic threats. Section two is a discourse analysis of Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping's National Congress speeches. The discourse analysis focuses on identifying perceived existential threats to the Chinese party, state, and

people. It is the first criteria for successful securitization and acts as red flags for particular issues that China is particularly concerned with. After identifying the most pressing issues China currently faces in section two, section three narrows the issues to those that are successfully securitized by identifying Chinese emergency actions and those impacts on inter-state relations . This last portion demonstrates to readers how domestic issues shape China's foreign and military policies.

The U.S. shift in military focus from the Middle East to the Asia-Pacific region is a serious change in U.S. foreign policy. History proves that U.S. involvement in any foreign security issue causes serious, global repercussions. Specifically regarding issues of international security, the last time the U.S. was heavily involved in the Asia-Pacific region was during the height of the Cold War with the Soviet Union, which was expressed in the proxy wars fought on the Korean peninsula and in Vietnam. Needless to say, U.S. involvement in these areas resulted in truly devastating consequences. Therefore, as the U.S. shifts its security focus to the Asia-Pacific region again, it necessitates analytical approaches that deviates from Cold War mentality—from traditional security studies. This thesis attempts to promote the use of more diversified approaches to understanding the international security system, specifically how the local influences global forces, in hopes that it may result in different approaches to U.S. foreign policy.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Traditional security studies—the focus on external military threats and the state as the primary referent object—has long dominated the field of international relations and U.S. foreign policy. An idea stemming from 17th century Western Europe with the signing of the Peace of Westphalia, the idea of the state (and state sovereignty) as the principal unit of global societal organization has held an iron tight grip on theories about security. However, a trend to look more critically at the epistemological and ontological assumptions of the field have led to the proliferation of scholarship deviating from the canon. This faction will broadly be denoted here as non-traditional security studies. While scholarship within this particular field ranges widely concerning the analytical approaches and conceptualization of the term "security," they can all agree on one point—that traditional security studies is too narrow of an approach to address current global and humanitarian issues.

Non-traditional security studies perspectives have gained much traction in academic scholarship over the past 30 years. However, the practice of security within the realm of U.S. foreign policy remains entrenched in traditionalist perspectives. This includes analytical approaches to understanding political dynamics in U.S.-China relations. As such, many analyses and reports that inform U.S. security policies regarding the Asia-Pacific region tend to assume Cold-War era or neorealist perspectives, which may result in miscalculated actions due to incomplete or misleading information.

The literature review is divided into two main sections: the first consists of the discussions occurring within the field of security studies, and the second consists of the discussions occurring on the topic of security relations between the U.S. and China. First, a brief outline of the debate between traditional and non-traditional security studies is presented. Then,

it moves into the various debates occurring within non-traditional security studies, highlighting particularly the contention between wideners and deepeners in conceptions of security. Arguments in analytical approaches between the Welsh and Copenhagen schools of thought is compared, and the section ends with an assessment of the analytical usefulness of each school. The second section begins with a review of the literature concerning the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations. It highlights the bias towards traditionalist analytical approaches in understanding and prescribing U.S. foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region. Finally, the chapter concludes with how this thesis will contribute to the discussion on U.S.-China security relations, using non-traditional security studies perspectives.

Traditional and Non-Traditional Security Studies Debate

Steve Smith (1999), previously a staunch realist, plots out major developments of security studies from the early 1980s to late 1990s. He presents a series of scholars within the traditional versus non-traditional security studies debate on the dominance of neorealism in international relations and U.S. foreign policy. According to Smith, they include: Richard Ullman (1983), who argues that a narrow focus on military security leads to the failure of recognizing other forms of national threats; Joseph Nye and Sean Lynn-Jones (1987), who point out U.S. ethnocentrism in security studies and its dearth of theoretical developments since the 1960s; Jessica Mathews (1989), who argues for the need to broaden security to include environmental issues; Stephen Walt (1991), who argues that broadening the term "security" to other non-military sectors will render the discipline incoherent; and Edward Kolodziej (1992), who critiques Walt's argument, arguing that his biased definition will continue to restrict scholars to a positivist framework of analysis and support elitist systems of power (Smith 1999, pg. 77-79). The dissatisfaction with traditional security studies (specifically, neorealism) is

heavily stressed here, as Smith depicts the increasing problemization of the field in understanding international conflict and security in the post-Cold War era.

Similarly, Annick Wibben (2011) acknowledges the varied proliferation of scholarship that challenges traditional security studies in the early 1980s onward. She also cites Richard Ullman (1983) and Jessica Mathews (1989) as those who argue for expanding the security agenda to include a greater range of issues; Jef Huysmans (1998) and Emily Rothschild (1995) as those who probe the concept of security; Barry Buzan and Eric Herring (1998), Jef Huysmans (2006), and Ole Wæver (1995) as those who examine how security is or should be practiced; and lastly, Pinar Bilgin, Ken Booth, and Richard Wyn Jones (1998), Ann Tickner (1992, 1995), and Wyn Jones (1995, 1999) as those who are concerned with the actors and subjects for whom security practices affect (or not) (Wibben 2011, pg. 5). The increased interest in exploring security from different analytical, theoretical, and epistemological approaches appear to come about as the Cold War was coming to an end. Non-traditional security studies perspectives gained momentum with the breakdown of the bipolar security order, because it exposed a need to understand a new one.

However, Booth (1997) and Wibben (2011) both argue that this prevailing viewpoint can be misleading, because feminists and other scholars studying war, peace, and violence have been producing academic work that illustrates traditional security studies' limitations long before the end of the Cold War. While fundamentally concerned with security issues, many types of work that did not fit conveniently into the dominate conceptual structure were (and still are) often marginalized as too radical and irrelevant.

Currently, there is an overall consensus amongst critical security scholars that neorealist theoretical frameworks are largely inadequate in making sense of contemporary security issues;

they recognize the fallacies that riddle it. Smith states, "[N]eorealism is now far less influential both in security studies and in the discipline of international relations more generally…The range of actors dealt with, and the range of issues covered in the study of international relations, is now far broader than 20 years ago" (Smith 1999, pg. 76-77). Although with varying degrees and approaches to the question of security, there is a definite shift away from utilizing and defending strictly traditionalist perspectives in international relations across American, Canadian, and European security scholars (Wibben 2011). Christopher Browning and Matt McDonald (2013) support those claims. In delineating three central themes of critical security studies, they argue that the first theme is the surge of critiques that challenge traditionalist perspectives over the past two decades, which have fundamentally undermined the field's integrity in terms of its practice and study within international relations. In sum, regardless of the vast differences amongst security scholars regarding what security is, what it should do, and how it should be studied, they converge at the point of argument that rejects narrow conceptions of security as the only approach to understanding international or global security.

"Wideners" vs. "Deepeners" in Conceptions of Security

While security scholars can broadly agree that an issue with traditional security studies exists, there is still much debate on the analytical, theoretical, and epistemological approach to addressing the inadequacies of the academic field. This includes the tension between the Copenhagen and Welsh schools of thought in the re-conceptualization of security. The tension between the two schools represent the debate playing out between those who subscribe to either a widening or deepening analytical approach in the discourse. According to Keith Krause and Michael Williams (1996), those who subscribe to a widening approach maintain its position within a traditionalist, positivist framework but seeks to expand it by including more analytical

units of focus to encompass a greater range of actors and subjects. In contrast, those who subscribe to deepening approaches seek to answer whose security is being threatened and argues for the shifting of analytical focus to actors other than the state (Krause and Michael 1996). Utilizing the Copenhagen and Welsh schools as the starting points of analysis in this thesis do not mean to imply that they encapsulate the entirety of either side of this debate. However, they represent two opposing analytical frameworks that can prove helpful in understanding the discussion between widening security studies or deepening it.

Buzan, Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde (1998) of the Copenhagen School broaden the security analysis to include not only the military sector, but also environmental, economic, societal, and political components. They argue that while there needs to be an analytical widening to include a greater range of subjects and units (outside of the usual state and military actors), it is also problematic when the field is too inclusive in classifying various phenomena as security issues (Buzan et al. 1998). Thus, Wæver's concept of (de)securitization is used as a sort of filter mechanism when considering what is and is not a security issue; it is an idea where the phenomenon of interest may be considered a security issue when normal political processes are abandoned and extraordinary measures are taken (i.e. state of exception) due to a perceived existential threat to the collective unit or referent object (Wæver 1995). Wæver (1995) argues for a process of de-securitization, because rendering a security issue into a political one also means de-militarizing it. When an issue is de-securitized, it provides the opportunity for the utilization of political and nonviolent processes to address the conflict.

Concerned with the field's intellectual coherence, Buzan (1991) promotes a distinction between strategic studies and security studies, because the former maintains traditionalist epistemological and theoretical structures, while the latter creates a space to broaden security

studies beyond state and military issues. The Copenhagen School scholars "…take seriously the traditionalist' complaints about intellectual incoherence but disagree that the retreat into a military core is the only or the best way to deal with such incoherence. [They] seek to find coherence…by exploring the logic of security itself to find out what differentiates security and the process of securitization from that which is merely political" (Buzan et al. 1998, pg. 5). Their framework for analysis maintains the intellectual coherence of the field by constructing a limited (but wider) definition of security. They start from a traditionalist perspective but expands on it. While state actors and the military sector are still viewed as significant factors in the idea of security, they argue that those should not be the only factors that constitute security units of analysis.

On the other hand, Booth (1991) and Richard Wyn Jones (1999) of the Welsh School argue that a widening approach to reconciling the issues surrounding traditional security studies does not go far enough. They are interested in the question of what security is, what it should do, and for whom. Skeptical of an analytical framework that continues to uphold traditionalist tendency to favor statist perspectives, they contend that analytical focus should be concerned with the idea of human emancipation and its relation to security. It is an idea that prioritizes human individuals as the primary referent object with the political objective to remove violence (both conventional and structural) that impedes an individual's freedom to be secure (whether economically, socially, physically…etc.). "Emancipation means freeing people from those constraints that stop them carrying out what freely they would choose to do, of which war, poverty, oppression, and poor education are a few. Security and emancipation are in fact two sides of the same coin. It is emancipation, not power and order, in both theory and practice, that leads to stable security" (Booth 1991, pg. 539). The Welsh school provides an alternative lens

through which one can practice politics. In their reconceptualization of security, they place the idea of human emancipation at the center of analysis with the rationalization that security agendas may prioritize it as an urgent issue to address.

Additionally, Booth (1997) argues against creating a distinction between strategic and security studies as Buzan proposes. He is concerned that strategic studies will enable technocrats or politicians to uphold violent systems of power based the misconception that security can be empirically studied and discovered as social truths. Booth argues that security is a fluid, deeply political concept that varies widely according to the analyst, time, and place.

Ayoob (1997) critiques Booth's deepening approach to security, contending that a collective unit's achievement of emancipation does not always equate to individual security and the same vice versa. Utilizing an ethnic group's right to self-determination as a significant example of human emancipation, Ayoob argues that ethnic groups are rendered insecure as opposed to more secure when they endeavor to establish their own nation-state. This is because by declaring independence, it plunges the existing state into a civil war and brings about greater disorder to the region. Moreover, even with the successful establishment of a new nation-state, the newly-formed government institution is generally weak, making it more susceptible to anarchy due to an inability to provide the public good of law and order. As Ayoob's area of focus is the "Third World" where a majority of the nations are relatively young and in the process of state-building, he argues that the development of a stable state with both the ability to maintain law and order and politically process its citizens' concerns are important prerequisites to individual and collective security. For these reasons, he maintains a state-centric focus in his analysis of security issues, but widens the definition to include internal conflicts.

Ayoob shares the same concerns with scholars within the Copenhagen school regarding the expansion of security studies to the point of intellectual incoherence. He describes the need for a balance between expanding the definition of security to include more relevant actors, subjects or units, but limiting it to retain its analytical usefulness. "[D]ebt burdens, rainforest decimation, or even famine do not become part of the security calculus for our purposes unless they threaten to have political outcomes…that either affect the survivability of state boundaries, state institutions or governing elites" (Ayoob 1997, pg. 130). For Ayoob, problems that threaten human life may only become security issues when it enters the political realm. He advocates for this filter mechanism in the classification of security issues so as to make it relevant to state actors who, in his view, are the overseers of law and order within a particular region. This idea also fits in Wæver's concept of (de)securitization, which also defines issues within the political realm and utilizes a filter mechanism to determine what issues are relevant to the field.

While broadly considered part of the Copenhagen school, Alex J. Bellamy and Bryn Hughes (2007) cite problems with Ayoob's argument. They assert that the approach's preoccupation with the preservation of the state serves to legitimize regimes who may be the primary contributor to individual or societal insecurity. An example of such includes an authoritarian government that dispatches its military to suppress internal opponents, which can include non-violent political dissidents, in the name of state order or regime survival. They state, "our concern here is not with the validity of the threats but the effects of this discourse on human security: the security issues it omits and the concerns and practices it legitimizes" (Bellamy and Hughes 2007, pg. 45). Great power lies in the ability to determine what constitutes a security issue. And when the institution that creates sources of human insecurity possess that power, it problematizes Ayoob's (as well as Buzan et al.) assumption of the state as principled executors

of security. Also, in maintaining a state-centered approach to security, it prioritizes the security of the state over that of the individual. Bellamy and Hughes remain apprehensive of a widener and state-centric analytical approach, because it may serve to uphold current systems of power that contribute to the insecurity of society, both individual and the collective.

Anthony Burke and Matt McDonald (2007) would agree with Bellamy and Hughes' argument that state utilization of unjust security strategies demonstrates a need to interrogate long-held assumptions that sustain problematic and state-centric theoretical approaches. As such, they also align with the Welsh school by advocating for, not only a human-centered policy approach, but also a *critical* approach to security. This method of analysis comes from Krause and Williams' 1997 theorization of critical security studies, where their use of the term, "critical," is derived from Robert Cox's (1981) work on the difference between problem-solving theories and critical theories. "Cox distinguishes between problem-solving theories—which take the world, its power structures, ideas, and social relations, as givens—and critical theories which are more concerned with questioning the way problems are framed prior to their solution and for whom theory works" (Burked and McDonald 2007, pg. 4). Wibben (2016) also advocates for a critical approach to security, directly citing issues with the Copenhagen school's securitization method of analysis. Wibben argues that a focus on authoritative speech acts performed by state actors overlooks the security of those who do not have power to perform those acts. Rejecting a positivist methodological approach, Burke, McDonald, and Wibben contend that there must be a critical perspective in attempting to understand how security knowledge is produced and to whom/what it serves. Through this process, one can address the question of security in a way that prioritizes individuals and communities.

All sides of the debate recognize that politics play a crucial role in the study of security, particularly in terms of regulating what issues are placed on security agendas and how it is practiced. For both the Copenhagen and Welsh schools, it is within the political realm of the collective unit that the discourse of security derives its power and thus, produce profound impacts on society. However, as indicated through the discussion between wideners and deepeners, there are fundamental disagreements with what security does politically. In arguing for a process of de-securitization in order to reduce an issue from a state of emergency to normal political processes, it suggests that the Copenhagen school views security in politics as potentially dangerous (i.e. militarization of the environment). In contrast, the Welsh school holds a more idealist view of security in politics, because their human-centered policy approach essentially securitizes various issues that impede the process of human emancipation. Their use of securitization as a way to generate urgency for pressing humanitarian problems displays their optimistic view of how security can be practiced in politics.

Christopher Browning and Matt McDonald (2013) point out limitations to both analytical frameworks. Browning and McDonald argue that the Copenhagen analytical framework tends to universalize the idea of security and how it is practiced. Therefore, it fails to recognize that security is understood and performed in a variety of different ways through various circumstances, times, and locations. They present a series of scholars that demonstrate various practices of security and its effects, including Stefan Elbe (2006) who shows how the securitization of HIV/AIDS in different states has resulted in significantly different approaches to the issue. In some cases, it led to the creation of violent policies that marginalized those infected by the disease, and in others, it stimulated governmental action into seriously addressing the issue. In contrast, the Welsh school's optimistic perception of what security does in politics

ignores "the possibility of negative implications flowing from an association of a particular issue with the language and logic of security" (Browning and McDonald 2013, pg. 242). For Browning and McDonald, the use of security as a tool to impart meaningful change in benefit of humanity necessitates the recognition that problems also exist in classifying circumstances as security issues.

Moreover, they point out that a specious binary has developed between the two approaches within the discourse of non-traditional security studies. They "suggest the need…to better recognize these variegated security logics, and to come to terms with the (albeit complex) relationship between sedimented and dominant security discourses on the one hand, and the possibilities for change and difference on the other" (Browning and McDonald 2013, pg. 242-243). In other words, there needs to be a recognition that ideas and practices of security ranges across a broad spectrum. A focus on an either-or analytical binary restricts one's perception in the study of security and produces problematic consequences that can have real-life impacts.

There are advantages and disadvantages to utilizing either the Copenhagen or Welsh schools' analytical methods. This thesis acknowledges the critiques surrounding the widening approach and the issues that arise when "interpreting in ways that make sense to foreign policy elites" (Bellamy and Hughes 2007, pg. 41). It also acknowledges the issue with not addressing a third axis of inquiry in non-traditional security studies. In addition to widening and deepening, there is also a discussion on the "opening" of security studies (Wibben 2016) to include other forms of security conceptualizations and narratives. However, going back to Browning and McDonald's (2013) argument that security is a varied concept that is practiced in multiple ways depending on the context, timing, and location of the situation, I argue that referent objects, sectors, and subjects are more relevant than others depending on the research question posed. In

studying U.S. foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific, specifically its increasing militarization of bases in the Pacific, state actors are highly relevant—particularly when one is attempting to critique a state's foreign policy.

Sarah Tarry (1999) provides a comparative analysis of the methodological efficacy between widening and deepening approaches to security. She outlines 3 criteria for "methodological soundness" and applies it as a method of measurement to compare six different analytical frameworks. The three criteria include: 1) a clear definition between what does and does not constitute a security issue, 2) mutual exclusivity between the two distinctions, and 3) applicability in the real world. Specifically regarding Wæver's idea of securitization and Booth's human emancipation, she argues that both analytical frameworks fail to to meet the first two criteria, as their respective conceptualizations broadens the definition of security to be too inclusive and thereby, "virtually impossible" to distinguish what exactly falls under their categorization of security issues. She concludes that Ayoob's conceptualization of security is the only one (of the 6 she analyzes) that meets all 3 criteria and therefore, the most practical and clear in terms of methodology.

Ultimately, the choice to use the widening approach (particularly a combination of Wæver's idea of securitization and Ayoob's inclusion of internal security threats) in this thesis comes down to analytical usefulness. While I agree that there should be a prioritization of individuals in the creation of policy, there also needs to be a clear and practical entry point for scholars to contribute work in hopes of imparting progressive change. This includes producing analytical work that makes sense to foreign policy elites. Rather than running the risk of being dismissed due to "irrelevance," it can be impactful to start within the framework of traditionalist perspectives and then point to the inadequacies within it.

Although security studies have developed significantly since the early 1980s, traditional neorealist perspectives continue to dominate the field of international relations. This includes analyses and prescription of foreign policy regarding U.S.-China relations. The circumstance is understandably so, considering the history of military conflicts in the Asia-Pacific region that preoccupied U.S. foreign affairs for a greater part of the 20th century. First, the 1941 Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor plunged the U.S. into the Second World War. Then, its conclusion marked the beginning of the Cold War where an arms race and struggle for ideological hegemony against the Soviet Union ensued. Then, extensions of the Cold War expressed themselves in the proxy wars fought in Korea and Vietnam. Emerging from an era rife with interstate conflicts, analytical frameworks that position states as primary actors within an anarchic global system are thus deeply ingrained in the practice of U.S. foreign policy. It is ingrained in the way security is conceptualized and practiced in the Asia-Pacific region. In short, while the nature of armed conflicts has changed significantly since the end of the Cold War, theories used to inform foreign policy remain stubbornly based on traditionalist perspectives. Discussions regarding the recent rise of China as a world power and U.S. anxiety surrounding its potential impacts on regional security also has a bias towards the utilization of traditionalist perspectives.

Security Dilemma in U.S.-China Relations

Utilizing the Copenhagen school's widening approach and Ayoob's argument to recognize internal security threats to the state, this thesis seeks to broaden the security dilemma lens in evaluating current U.S.-China relations. More specifically, it seeks to understand the security dilemma in the context of the Pacific Pivot, which proposes the increase of U.S. militarization of the Pacific as a rebalancing initiative against China. From the U.S. perspective,

the emergence of China as an economic, political and military power on the global stage poses a serious threat to U.S. interests and allies in the region. From China's perspective, U.S. increasing militarization and alliance building with neighboring Asia-Pacific countries demonstrate attempts to contain their peaceful rise as a global power. The perception on both sides, whether real or not, set into motion a never-ending search for security against one another. As one side acquires more power over the other in an attempt to be more secure, the opposing side responds in the same way; tensions continue to escalate until it finally results in an outbreak of armed conflict or the decline of one side.

This pessimistic outlook in international relations describes the essence of John Herz's (1951) idea of the *security dilemma*. Positing it as an explanatory concept behind causes of interstate conflicts, he first theorizes two types of political thought—Political Realism and Political Idealism—which stem from the basic human instinct of fear for one's safety from the dangers of fellow men, while at the same time, guilt and compassion for them. The struggle to reconcile these two poles illustrates one's attempt to rationalize what is inherently an irrational world (Herz 1951, pg. 8-9). While groups may endeavor to act with Political Idealism to appease one's conscience or ego, Herz argues that Political Realism is the "true" reality of the natural world, as conflicting groups face security and power dilemmas in an anarchic international community:

> "Politically active groups and individuals are concerned about their security from being attack, subjected, dominated, or annihilated by other groups and individuals. Because they strive to attain security from such attack, and yet can never feel entirely secure in a world of competing units, they are driven toward acquiring more and more power for

themselves, in order to escape the impact of the superior power of others" (Herz 1951, pg. 14).

Herz offers a grim perspective of the world where groups live in a perpetual state of insecurity, because one's accumulation of power to feel more secure in turn drives opposing groups to acquire relatively greater power; the predicament sets all actors on an endless and inescapable quest for security. Aligning with the traditionalist approach to security in that it assumes states as rational actors in a world characterized by anarchy, Herz's security dilemma informs the theoretical groundwork for Robert Jervis's (1976) work on threat (mis)perceptions and amelioration in international relations, as well as Robert Gilpin's (1981) distinction between status-quo and revisionist states. The work of Herz, Jervis, and Gilpin represent some of the main theorists behind the idea of security dilemma, which some scholars (e.g. Christensen 2002; Zhang 2011; Johnson 2017; Liff and Inkenberry 2014) argue is occurring in the Asia-Pacific region between the U.S. and China. More recently, it is exemplified by the U.S. pivot to Asia.

First, there is the debate on whether China is a status-quo (security-seeking) state (e.g. Zhang 2011; Katsner 2012; Zhe 2015; Johnson 2017) or a revisionist ("greedy") one (e.g. Christensen 2002; Liff and Inkenberry 2014). The distinction warrants attention, because a core issue behind the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations includes interpreting particular Chinese actions/policies as either defensive or revisionist. This, in turn, significantly affects how the U.S. perceives China in terms of regional security. In theory, a status-quo state would only acquire power up to the preservation of the self; a state would only accumulate enough power to defend its current territorial boundaries and citizens. On the other hand, revisionist or "greedy" states seek to expand beyond its territorial boundaries or change the established international order by engaging in outright conflict with other states.

Depending on the context of the situation or the approach taken, China has been characterized across the board as security seeking, revisionist, both, or unknown. For example, China is framed as mostly security seeking in circumstances involving competing U.S. or China military policies (Zhang 2011; Johnson 2017), China's threat perception regarding the U.S.-Japan alliance (Christensen 1999), U.S. involvement in Cross-Strait relations (Christensen 2002), or China's foreign diplomacy prioritization (Katsner 2012). Additionally, Sun Zhe (2015) makes the argument that China is not a revisionist state by underscoring their extensive engagement and adaptation to the established international system; "China has signed over 23,000 bilateral treaties and agreements, 400-plus multiparty treaties, and joined almost all international intergovernmental organizations" (Zhe 2015, pg. 284). However, China's conflict in the South China Sea with 6 neighboring Asia-Pacific countries, Diaoyutai/Senkaku Islands with Japan, and Cross-Strait relations with Taiwan could also be interpreted as foreign policy with revisionist intentions (Liff and Ikenberry 2014; Christensen 2002). Ultimately, many conclude that it is difficult (if not impossible) to discern with absolute certainty a state's true intentions behind foreign relation strategies, including whether specific military procurements are for offensive or defensive purposes (Johnston 2003; Liff and Inkenberry 2014; Mearsheimer 2010).

Second, there is the discussion on how the security dilemma is expressed in U.S.-China relations. Due to the uncertainty of state intentions (as highlighted above) and the insecurity it creates, many scholars broadly agree that a security dilemma exists in U.S.-China relations. Christensen (2002) illustrates China's anxiety over U.S. involvement in Cross-Strait relations by describing their increasing military buildup; their procurement of "conventional theater ballistic missiles, antiship cruise missiles, land-attack cruise missiles, submarines, surface combatants, air defense systems, and fighter aircraft all seem designed to pressure Taiwan and dissuade prompt

and effective intervention by Taiwan's friends" (pg. 15). Zhang (2011) also describes an arms race occurring between the U.S. and China. He argues that U.S. development of missile defense weapons that can counter China's nuclear capabilities drives the security dilemma, which has expanded to the weaponization of outer space. Additionally, Johnson (2017) presents three case studies in which the U.S. misperceives China's military intentions, leading to the exacerbation of a security dilemma that harmed U.S.-China relations under Barak Obama's first term in office. On the other hand, Liff and Ikenberry (2014) make the case that the security dilemma is fueled not only by quantitative increases of military capabilities on either side, but also by 1) issues of non-transparency between the U.S. and China and 2) U.S. strengthening of alliances with countries surrounding China. In one form or another, each scholar illustrates potentially dangerous circumstances that must be carefully managed in U.S.-China relations. They are concerned with identifying military-related sources of tension that may worsen the security dilemma and inadvertently trigger armed conflict between the two global powers.

Third, in identifying dangerous sources of tension in U.S.-China relations, scholars also provide policy recommendations that may help to mitigate those tensions. One debate includes whether U.S. military presence in the Pacific acts as a stabilizing or exacerbating force to regional stability. Christensen (1999) focuses on the security dilemma in Sino-Japan relations and argues that the U.S. needs to be mindful about expanding Japanese security role in the region. He advises that the U.S. pursue development of theatre missile defense on their own, so as to not abandon Taiwan but also avoid fueling misperceptions of threat between China and Japan. More importantly, he highlights U.S. military presence as a stabilizing force in the region whose sudden withdrawal can propel the region (mainly Japan and China) into interstate armed conflict. In a follow-up article, Christensen (2002) continues the discussion by arguing that U.S.

policy on the Cross-Strait relations necessitates both deterrence to prevent the outright invasion of Taiwan, but at the same time, reassurance that U.S. involvement is not a means to subvert China's political legitimacy over the island. However, Kang (2003) argues against the U.S.-as-regional-stabilizer viewpoint, positing that a strong China has historically coincided with extended periods of peace and stability in the region. Therefore, withdrawal of U.S. military presence in the Pacific will not inevitably lead to catastrophe. Additionally, U.S. military rebalancing could actually prove counterproductive. Zhang (2011) similarly points to U.S. demilitarization and less-hawkish political rhetoric as important methods to moderating the security dilemma with China.

Scholars predominantly call for greater cooperation, military diplomacy exchanges, multilateral talks, and transparency between the U.S. and China in order to reduce misperception and misinterpretation of one another's intentions (Liff and Ikenberry 2014; Zhang 2011; Zhe 2015; Christensen 2002). Johnson (2017) proposes that a more nuanced understanding of the difference between military capabilities and military intentions are vital in avoiding miscalculation of threat. Liff and Ikenberry (2014) argues that recognition of the security dilemma occurring in interstate relations by practitioners can help states to evade it. "The United States must avoid being unnecessarily provocative in its strategic moves and rhetoric, more proactively explaining the comprehensive (not military-specific) nature of its growing focus on the Asia Pacific and linking it explicitly to a stable regional status quo that serves the interests of all" (Liff and Inkenberry 2014, pg. 89). Scholars highlight the importance of projecting benign intentions, promoting greater transparency, and obtaining more accurate information to form correct perceptions and thus, more effective U.S. foreign policy.

China as a Threat and U.S. Foreign Policy in the Asia-Pacific

The discussion regarding the security dilemma in U.S-China relations can also be situated in the broader China-as-a-threat discourse. Moreover, the U.S. pivot to Asia under Obama's administration exemplifies a recent example of a U.S. foreign policy response to the China-as-a-threat perception, as it pushes for the shifting of military focus from the Middle East to bases in the Pacific. In other words, it is a significant example of a U.S. response to the security dilemma with China, and thus, has generated much discussion in both mainstream media and academia.

A portion of the China-as-a-threat literature includes assessments and cost-benefit analyses of the Pacific Pivot, which outlines U.S. economic and military objectives, challenges, and strategic propositions in order to facilitate a successful rebalancing initiative (Manyin et al. 2012; Futter 2015; Nguyen and Hang 2016; Campbell 2016). They argue that the policy is necessary in maintaining security in the Asia-Pacific region and frame China as a military and economic threat that must be addressed. Other articles take more critical positions, as they analyze the Pacific Pivot's potential impacts on U.S.-China relations, as well as China's reaction to the increase of U.S. militarization of the Pacific; they argue that increased military presence will exacerbate already high tensions in the region, especially following ongoing issues surrounding the SCS conflict (Swaine 2012; Ratner 2013). Furthermore, Robert Ross (2012) contends that the "new U.S. policy unnecessarily compounds Beijing's insecurities and will only feed China's aggressiveness, undermine regional stability, and decrease the possibility of cooperation between Beijing and Washington" (pg. 71). In essence, he states that the Pacific Pivot will worsen the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations. In this discussion, scholars address and problematize U.S. increasing militarization of the Pacific and high-profile displays of military alliances with countries surrounding China.

Another significant portion of the debate also includes U.S. responses to a "Rising China." Within the past three decades, China's extraordinary growth to become the second largest economy in the world now poses a threat to U.S. long-established role as the hegemonic power of the Asia-Pacific region. Due to China's rise as a world power, discussions relating to changes in international order, the transition from unipolarity to multipolarity, and the impacts of those changes to U.S. role and strategic interests abroad constitute a large portion of the discussion (McDonough 2013; Ratuva 2014; Bukhari 2016; Saunders 2016). Mearsheimer (2010) presents a fatalistic view of the situation. Mearsheimer argues that China's peaceful rise is not possible, because the U.S. will act to contain them in order to protect their status as regional hegemon. If China continues its economic growth and military proliferation, it will inevitably lead to conflict with the U.S. and her allies—a situation no amount of amelioration will help to assuage. Buzan (2010) disagrees with Mearsheimer. He argues that based on historical data from the past 30 years, China's rise has been relatively peaceful compared to, for example, the rise of Nazi Germany, Imperial Japan, or the Soviet Union. While it will be difficult for China to avoid threat misinterpretations or conflicts of interest with the U.S. and Japan, Buzan asserts that armed conflict due to the rise of China is not inevitable. In sum, each of the scholars in this discussion are concerned with how a China-led, Post-Western world order will look like and the impacts of that on the security of regional states.

Throughout each of the different debates discussed above, traditional security studies perspectives are the dominant analytical lens utilized. This is problematic, because while traditionalist perspectives are useful in understanding state foreign policies and their motives in relation to one another, it does not provide a comprehensive picture to the question at hand, because different forces below state level also significantly influence the way states act in the

international community. A core tenet of IR theory is that states are rational, amoral actors in a community of other states. It assumes a disconnection between the state and its society when in fact, the state and society informs and influences one another; they are intricately connected in such a way that looking at one without the other could only provide partial answers to questions of a very complex issue. For example, Ross (2012) argues that increasing U.S. militarization of the Pacific will enable Chinese nationalist hardliners to justify more hawkish foreign policy against the U.S. in order to obscure growing social unrest at home. In Ross's analysis, regional stability is not considered only at the international level, but also at the domestic level where social issues influence the state's foreign policy.

Kang (2003) questions the use of realist analytical frameworks to study China relations with the U.S. and other regional states. He argues that there need to be alternative perspectives to studying security in the Asia-Pacific region, because the way international relations is understood and practiced there varies from Western international relations. "East Asian international relations emphasized formal hierarchy among nations while allowing considerable informal equality…This contracts with the West…which has consisted of formal equality between nation-states, informal hierarchy, and near-constant interstate conflict" (Kang 2003, pg. 67). Ultimately, that is the issue throughout the debate—the predominance of neorealist or traditionalist perspectives in analyzing the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations. In assuming that the state is a rational actor in an anarchic international community, it also assumes that the state is a coherent whole, made up of individuals working in tandem for the security of all within the nation. What it misses are internal security issues that also threaten the state and that also drive a state's military policies. The theory behind the security dilemma assumes that a state's military policies can only be in response to external threats. With the use of the Copenhagen

school's widening approach, as well as Ayoob's argument to include internal security threats to the state, the thesis will look at Chinese domestic drivers of military and foreign policies that contribute to the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations.

Chapter Three: Case Study

A security dilemma exists in U.S.-China relations. While political and military tension between the two states has been an ongoing issue since the Cold War, perceptions of insecurity from both sides have escalated over the past decade. This has led to an accelerated increase of U.S. militarization of the Asia-Pacific region. The escalation in tension is, in part, due to China's emergence as a formidable global power in a region previously dominated by U.S. influence; the announcement of China's massive economic development strategy called the "Belt and Road Initiative;" and Chinese aggressive actions concerning the territorial disputes in the ECS and SCS with U.S. Asia-Pacific allies. Thus, U.S. perception of threat due to the rise of China has led to a realignment of U.S. economic and military focus from the Middle East to the Asia-Pacific region.

Obama's announcement of the Pacific Pivot in 2011 marks the official shift in U.S. foreign policy. He states that despite defense budget cuts and USDOD sequestration requirements, security in the Asia-Pacific region would remain U.S. top priority ("Barack Obama says," 2011). In 2012, international condemnations and intense media coverage of China's strong-arm tactics in the SCS conflict dominated the U.S. political scene. It was also dominated by a fierce debate over a legislative bill that would have fast-tracked the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP), a massive economic trade deal that included the U.S. and eleven Asia-Pacific countries—roughly 40% of the global economy. During the same period, the USDOD (2014) Quadrennial Defense Review affirms President Obama's 2011 pledge to prioritize security in the Asia-Pacific region. The report presents a strategy in which the U.S. would shift 60% of its naval assets to bases in the Pacific by 2020.

Meanwhile, the announcement of the Pacific Pivot, increase of U.S. military presence in the Pacific, and overt reaffirmations of military cooperation between the U.S. and several Asia-Pacific countries, have also elevated Chinese perception of threat from the U.S. China perceives their own actions as defensive in nature and U.S. shift in foreign policy as a strategy to challenge China's economic and political success on the global stage. China's 2014 white paper specifically cites U.S. military rebalancing strategy to the Pacific, in addition to "'external countries' busy meddling" in the SCS conflict, as critical issues within their national security situation. China's 2012 accelerated installations of military capabilities on islands in the SCS and modernization of naval assets could conceivably be attributed to Chinese perception of threat due to Obama's Pacific Pivot announcement in 2011.

Currently, under Trump's administration, the realignment of military focus to address security issues in the Asia-Pacific region is expected to continue, even as TPP negotiations remain indefinitely suspended. Trump's proposal to increase the U.S. defense budget by 10% to $639 billion and decrease the State Department and USAID budget by 28% to $25.6 billion indicates that his approach to foreign policy will focus on military defense rather than diplomacy. Furthermore, Trump's national security strategy identifies China as 1of 3 main sets of challenges to U.S. national security. The document uses strong language to describe the threat of China: "China expanded its power at the expense of the sovereignty of others. China gathers and exploits data on an unrivaled scale and spreads features of its authoritarian system, including corruption and the use of surveillance. It is building the most capable and well-funded military in the world, after our own" (US Executive Office of the President 2017, p.25). Trump's national security strategy characterizes China as a revisionist country with malicious intentions towards other state actors. It provides an insight of U.S. perception towards China and how it helps to

shape U.S. foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region. Ultimately, a misunderstanding of intent between two global powers can lead to devastating consequences.

Methodology

This thesis utilizes a case study as the primary methodology to develop broader understandings of the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations, particularly concerning the territorial conflicts and naval arms race occurring in the Pacific. It aims to explain how China's responses to domestic security issues may also contribute to the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations.

The case study is broken down into three sections to address the research questions posed above. The first section analyzes China's state and security infrastructure, in addition to their military spending, to understand how they organize governmental and military resources to address both foreign and domestic security threats. The second section is a discourse analysis of Hu Jintao's speech in the 18th National Congress of the CCP in 2012 and Xi Jinping's speech in the 19th National Congress in 2017. By drawing out major themes of the speeches, the discourse analysis focuses on pinpointing the issues Chinese state leaders are securitizing. Lastly, the third section traces security complexes based on the securitized issues from section two. In other words, the securitized issues are used as starting points within the analytical framework of section three. It delineates how China's securitization of certain issues—and resulting military policy—contribute to the insecurity of the U.S. and thus, exacerbate the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations.

Methodology: China's Security Infrastructure and Military Expenditure

The first section draws from Ayoob's (1997) argument to expand security studies analysis to include internal state threats. It utilizes data drawn from quantitative and qualitative

primary and secondary sources, which include think tank databases and analytical reports. It also includes publicly-available government publications, such as the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission's Annual Report to Congress and China's bi-annual National Defense white papers. In order to understand how China's resources are allocated in response to foreign state threats compared to domestic state threats, this section first presents an analysis of China's security infrastructure.

A brief outline of China's security infrastructure is presented by describing Chinese state structure regarding civilian governmental control over its military forces. Then, it utilizes primary and secondary qualitative sources to outline China's military organs and its organization in defense of national security. For example, paramilitary forces with the ability to reach any part of mainland China within two days were established in order to maintain domestic order. Meanwhile, there have been extensive developments of a blue water navy to navigate the disputed territories of the ECS and SCS. The ways in which China's security infrastructure is set up provide important insights to what security issues they face and how they may be prioritizing them.

Understanding China's security infrastructure constitutes just a portion of understanding how China's resources are allocated in response to foreign versus domestic state threats. Understanding China's military expenditure and budget allocations also play important roles in discerning how Chinese leaders prioritize perceived state threats. Trends in military expenditures and federal budgetary allocations provide the most straightforward indication of governmental priorities regarding national security. However, China's track record of non-transparency when it comes to disclosing information about their military capabilities or the breakdown of their defense budget raises significant issues. As release of state military expenditures are self-

reported and voluntary, Chinese official estimates are often inconsistent with international

reporting standards. For example, what may be considered a military expenditure in the U.S. may

not be categorized in the same manner as China. Additionally, Chinese federal estimates do not

reflect a complete picture of their military spending, because regional state budgets also

contribute to military expenditures (i.e. paramilitary forces or regional garrisons). Therefore, in

addition to Chinese official estimates, data from Stockholm International Peace Research

Institute (SIPRI) and the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission's Annual

Report to Congress are also used in the analysis of China's military spending. By providing data

from three different sources—the state of interest, a research organization, and a U.S. federal

commission—this case study provides a more holistic analysis of Chinese military spending.

Methodology: China's Expressions of Existential Threat

The second and third sections of the case study utilize the Copenhagen school's

widening analytical framework to expand the security dilemma perspective. Specifically, the

securitization analytical framework is employed, which outlines 3 criteria for successful

securitization: 1) expression of existential threat; 2) emergency actions taken; and 3) effects on

inter-unit relations due to emergency actions taken (Buzan et al., 1998). The units of analysis

include the Chinese state as the *referent object* and state leaders of the Chinese central

government as the *securitizing actor*. The decision to focus on states and state actors rests on the

research interest to elucidate political dynamics surrounding the increasing militarization of the

Pacific. In other words, the research attempts to understand how interstate tensions leading to

increased militarization can be mitigated or maneuvered. Therefore, taking a constructivist

approach in studying military policies, states and state actors are important components to

addressing the research questions posed in this thesis.

The content of the second section identifies point 1 of the 3 criteria for successful securitization—the expression of an existential threat (Buzan et al., 1998). It consists of a discourse analysis of Hu's speech in the 18th National Congress of the CCP in 2012 and Xi's speech in the 19th National Congress in 2017 to distinguish prevailing security issues that China currently faces. Using primary sources that include translated, nationally televised speeches of Hu and Xi, the discourse analysis aims to tease out major themes that highlight perceived state threats by identifying two particular securitizing moves in the speech acts: the expression of an existential threat to the Chinese state and the identification of the object threating the state.

The discourse analysis focuses on speeches made by the Chinese president during the 18th and 19th National Congress of the CCP, because the event receives major national and international media attention. The party meeting occurs every five years and is essentially China's version of the U.S. primaries, election, and state of the union address within the span of two weeks. It is the reshuffling of leadership within China's central government, including the National People's Congress (NPC), which is its highest state governing body. Made up of 2,924 members representing all provinces, municipalities, and regions of China, it is a parliamentary body that oversees all state functions and elects state leaders. Additionally, the 18th and 19th National Congress speeches in 2012 and 2017 respectively were chosen for this case study, because they fall around the timeframe of Obama's Pacific Pivot announcement in 2011.

Delivered by China's paramount leader, National Congress speeches represent the CCP's most commanding mouthpiece in their expression of party policies, national accomplishments since the last plenary gathering of the NPC, current state of the nation and future national goals. According to Miller (2017), the content of National Congress speeches is not solely under the direction of the Chinese paramount leader. Rather, the speech is the culmination of hundreds of

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people's contributions and at least one year's work. First, a high-ranking party committee appoints a drafting group and specialized research teams to assemble a preliminary draft. Then, it undergoes several rounds of comments, revisions, and edits through both central and provincial levels of government organizations, party committees, groups, and various high-ranking officials. "The lengthy and laborious process of its composition underscores that the political report is a consensus document reflecting compromise and negotiation among competing leaders and party constituencies…it will be delivered in the name of the outgoing Central Committee and will reflect a broad leadership consensus behind it" (Miller 2017, pg. 2). The speech is a carefully worded and comprehensive expression of China's ruling political party that meticulously describes pressing state issues and future party policies, including those relating to security and threats to the state.

Until the mid-1990's, the CCP National Congress was prohibitively inaccessible to foreign audiences. However, in 1997, the CCP allowed some foreign media limited access to the 15th National Congress in an attempt to be more transparent (Baum 1998). Since then, the event has evolved into a highly publicized fanfare with intentions of reaching both domestic and foreign viewers. The 3.5-hour-long 19th National Congress speech, for example, can be found on YouTube with English subtitles. It is published by China Global Television Network (CGTN), which belongs to China's network of centrally-controlled television channels. Additionally, the Chinese government releases full texts of Hu and Xi's respective speeches online with translations in English. Chinese efforts in making the National Congress speeches exceptionally accessible to English-speaking audiences demonstrate that the CCP are not speaking only to domestic and party viewers but also to foreign viewers—particularly Western nations.

Methodology: China's Securitized Issue

The content of the third section identifies the remaining two points of the three criteria for successful securitization—emergency actions taken in response to the expression of existential threat and those effects on inter-unit relations due to emergency actions taken (Buzan et al. 1998). It aims to discern primary drivers of China's military policies and its translation into the development of their security infrastructure. This portion of the case study traces security complexes to distinguish how securitized issues influence regional and international security; it traces how Chinese military response to its securitized issues contribute to the insecurity of other states, namely the U.S. and her Asia-Pacific allies.

China's white papers are analyzed from 2012 to 2017 in order to determine actions or policies made in response to the securitized issues as identified in section two. Then, it focuses on those that can be categorized as "emergency actions" (any action that deviates from normal governmental practice). Next, drawing from the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission's Annual Report to Congress and the USDOD 2014 Quadrennial Review, U.S. security issues and points of military contention with China are identified and cross examined with Chinese emergency actions. By connecting Chinese securitized issues to its military policies to the resulting U.S. perception of threat, this section maps out a security complex in U.S.-China relations.

In dividing the case study into 3 differing analytical approaches, it also serves to address the research questions in 3 parts. The first section—an analysis of China's security infrastructure and national defense spending—tackles the question of whether China's recent military developments and policies are purely in response to international pressure to balance against other state powers. It seeks to illuminate how China's security infrastructure is organized in

response to both foreign and domestic state threats. The second section—a discourse analysis of Hu & Xi's National Congress speeches—reveal the security threats China is currently facing and the prioritization of those threats on their security agenda. And lastly, the third section—a cross examination of China and U.S. government documents regarding securitized issues—addresses the question of how China's recent military development and policies, in response to both foreign and domestic state threats, affect U.S.-China relations. In sum, the sections come together to illustrate how domestic influences also contribute to the security dilemma in U.S.-China Relations.

Case Study Section One: China's Security Infrastructure and Military Expenditure

An analysis of China's security infrastructure and central budget, from 2000 to 2015, demonstrates that Chinese military developments and policies are not entirely influenced by perceptions of insecurity due to foreign threats. Rather, domestic security and economic matters, such as the maintenance of social stability and economic development, also shape Chinese military policies. A comparison of China's military expenditure with neighboring Asia-Pacific countries only provides surface indications of relative inter-state military strength. The ways in which China's security infrastructure is organized shows a more complicated picture. Western conceptions of security view national defense (military armed forces) and public security (police force) as two completely separate matters. In contrast, this case study finds that China's military and armed police force are highly integrated under a centralized command; this indicates that Chinese conception of national defense includes defense of the state from *both* foreign and domestic security threats. In addition, the varied responsibilities of China's armed forces to support internal security and economic development projects provide further indications that other factors, other than defense of the state from foreign threats, shape China's military

strategies. A look at China's national defense strategy without also considering their public or economic security would result in incomplete information when attempting to understand Chinese threat perception and military strategic response.

The CCP is the ruling political party of the PRC, exercising complete leadership over the state's political and government system. Figure 1 illustrates the state structure of China's central government and armed forces.
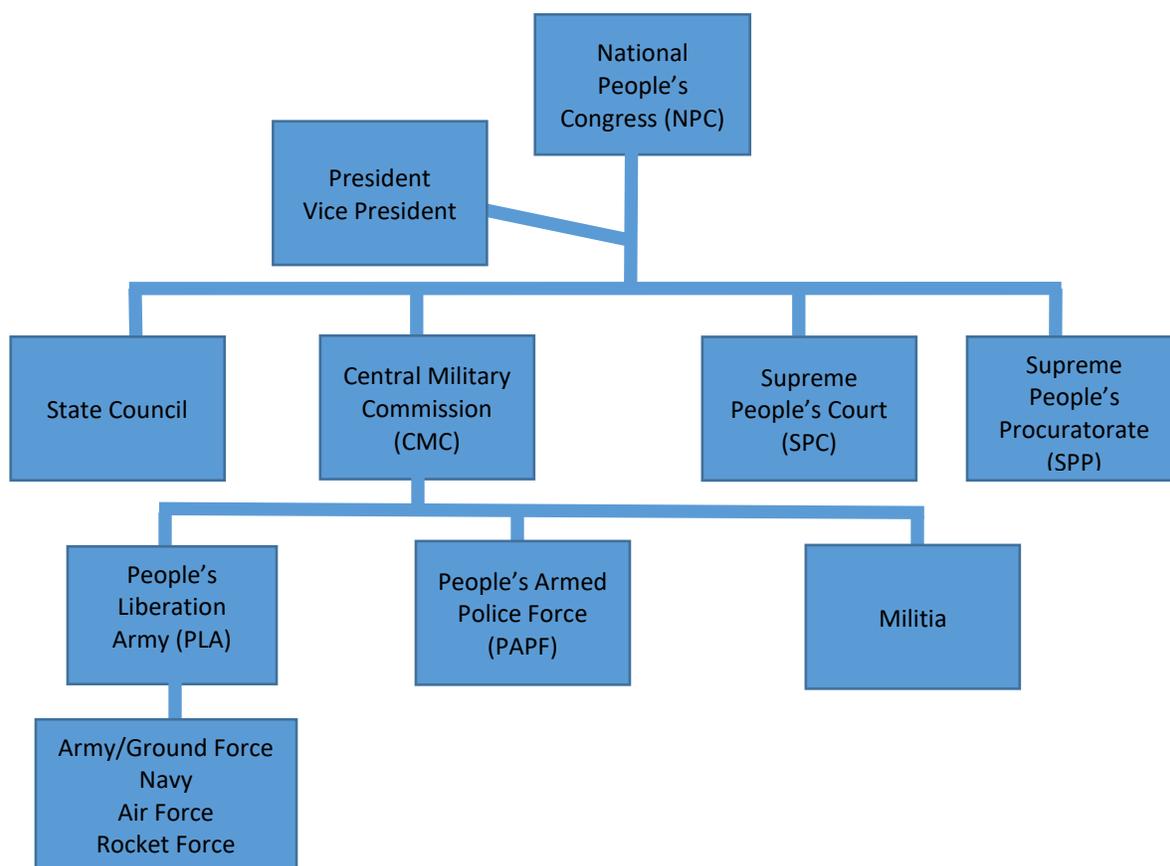

Figure 1. China's Central State and Military Structure. The graph shows the organization of China's central government and military structure. Source: White Papers: China's Defense in 2006 and http://english.gov.cn/archive/china_abc/2014/08/23/content_281474982987300.htm

Ultimately under the leadership of the CCP, the NPC is the highest state organ and unicameral legislative body made up of 2,924 representatives from across China's provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities. They elect the president and vice president of China who, in turn,

appoints the premier, vice-premier, state councilor members, ministers, and commissioners across all major governmental departments. The Central Military Commission (CMC) is a set of military leaders who command and determine the military strategy of China's armed forces. The NPC elects the Chairman of the CMC who appoints all other members of the CMC. Currently, Xi Jinping is the General Secretary of the CCP, President of the PRC, and Chairman of the CMC; he holds the highest leadership position in the political party, state government, and military as his predecessor, Hu Jintao, did before him. As such, Chinese media outlets generally refer to Xi as the "paramount leader."

China's armed forces are divided into three main branches: the active and reserve forces of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), People's Armed Police Force (PAPF), and militia. The PLA consists of the traditional components of national defense, including a ground force (PLAGF), navy (PLAN), air force (PLAAF), and missile defense force (PLARF). The PAPF provides additional support to the PLA during wartime. However, during peacetime, their primary role is to maintain "social order and ensure that the people live and work in peace and stability" ("China's National Defense in 2010" 2011 para. 66). The militia provides additional backup to the PLA and PAPF. Consisting of eight million members, they take part in operations relating to "counter-terrorism, stability maintenance, emergency rescue, disaster relief, border protection and control, and joint defense of public security…" ("China's National Defense in 2010" 2011, para. 100). China's 2010 white paper descriptions of the PAPF and militia indicate that the armed forces play significant policing roles in China. Therefore, referring back to Figure 1, military leaders of the CMC also oversee matters of public security and policing, as they preside over the PAPF and militia forces.

From the year 2000 to 2015, China's military expenditure has risen from 14.52 to 138.28 billion USD (or 852%), increasing at an average of 14% each year. The numbers are adjusted for inflation and based on official Chinese estimates, which represents the more moderate data set compared to those presented by SIPRI and USDOD. The latter two sources estimate that China actually spends approximately 54% to 189% more than Chinese official reportings, depending on the year. However, each source depicts consistent increases of annual Chinese military spending, as well as a significant difference in total defense expenditure over the span of 15 years (see Figure 2). From 2000 to 2015, China's self-reported numbers estimates an increase of 123.76 billion USD; SIPRI estimates an increase of 191.16 billion USD; and USDOD estimates a minimum increase of 138 billion USD.
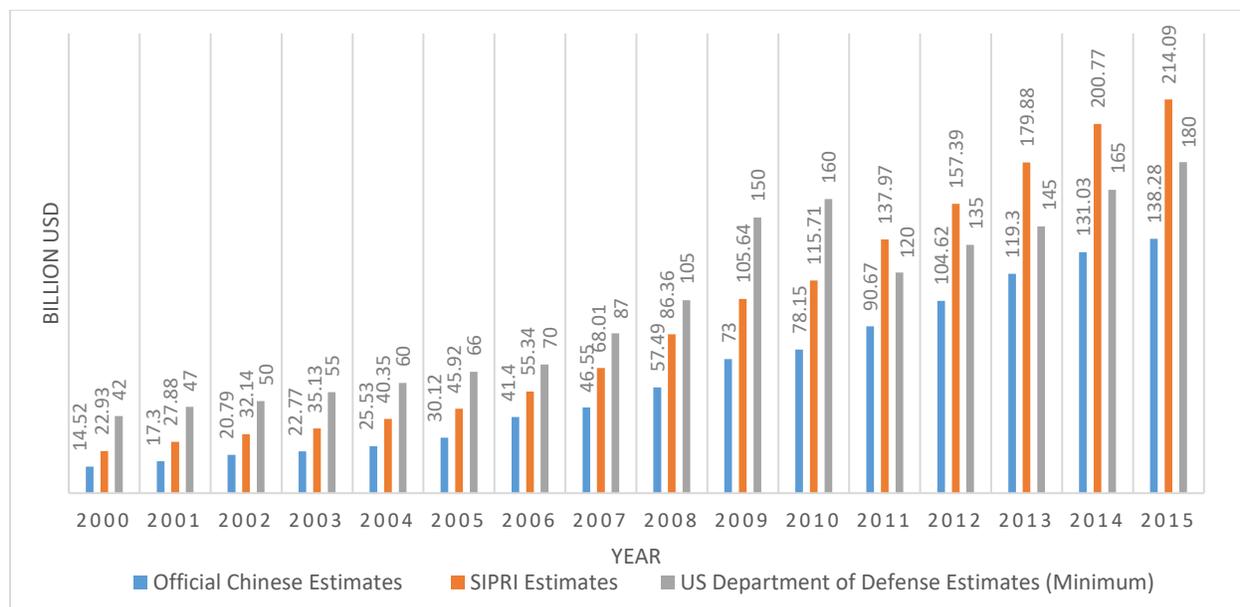
Figure 2. China's Total Military Expenditure based on Official Chinese, SIPRI and US Department of Defense (Minimum) Estimates for 2000 to 2015. The figure shows estimates of Chinese military spending from three sources: a Chinese central department, a Stockholm-based research organization and a U.S. federal department.

China ranks second in the world in terms of national defense budgets. While the U.S. still maintains the number one position in military expenditure and outspends China by 178% in 2015, China's military expenditures overwhelmingly surpass those of their neighboring countries. Japan, South Korea, Australia, Taiwan, and the Philippines are U.S. allies in the Asia-

Pacific region with whom they have military relations or agreements with. A combined total of military expenditures of the 5 listed countries would still only add up to about 50% of China's national defense budget (see Figure 3).
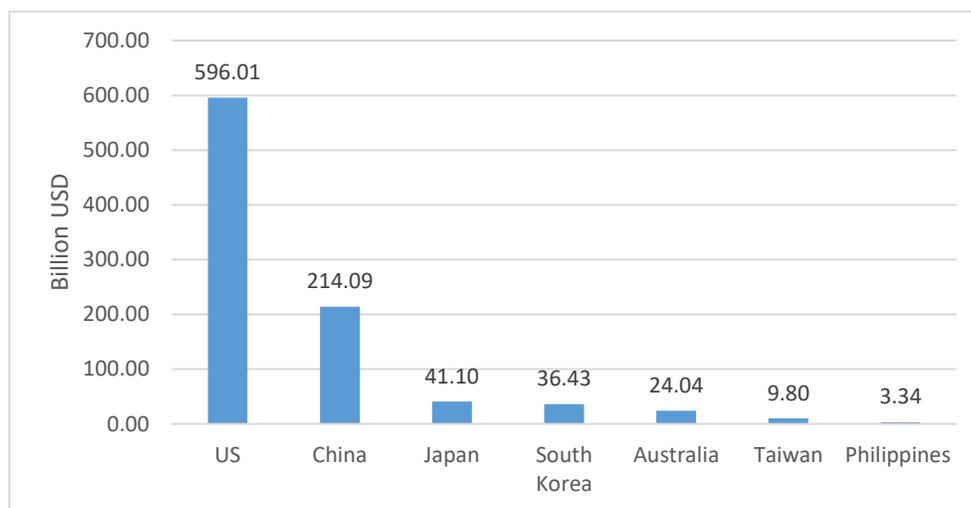

Figure 3. U.S., China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, Taiwan, and Philippines 2015 Military Expenditure. The figure illustrates a comparison of state military expenditure between China, the U.S., and U.S. Asia-Pacific allies. Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database.

Figures 2 and 3 show increases in Chinese spending on national defense from 2000 to 2015 and how those numbers compare regionally. However, these first 2 figures do not show Chinese national defense spending in response to both foreign and domestic state threats.

Expanding the perspective on national defense spending to include both, Figure 4 shows China's overall spending on state security against both foreign and domestic state threats. They are itemized as "National Defense" and "Public Security" in China's breakdown of their 2015 total state expenditure. From 2002 to 2009, China allocates approximately 2% to 27% more money towards national defense than public security. With the passing of each year, the gap in spending between national defense and public security narrows. Finally, in 2010, Chinese expenditure on public security exceeds that of national defense, as they spend 533.59 billion RMB on public security and 515.76 billion RMB on national defense. In 2015, China spends 924.85 billion RMB on public security and 896.05 billion RMB on national defense. While

annual percentage increase of public security expenditures is generally greater than the

percentage increase of national defense expenditures, Chinese spending on the two security items

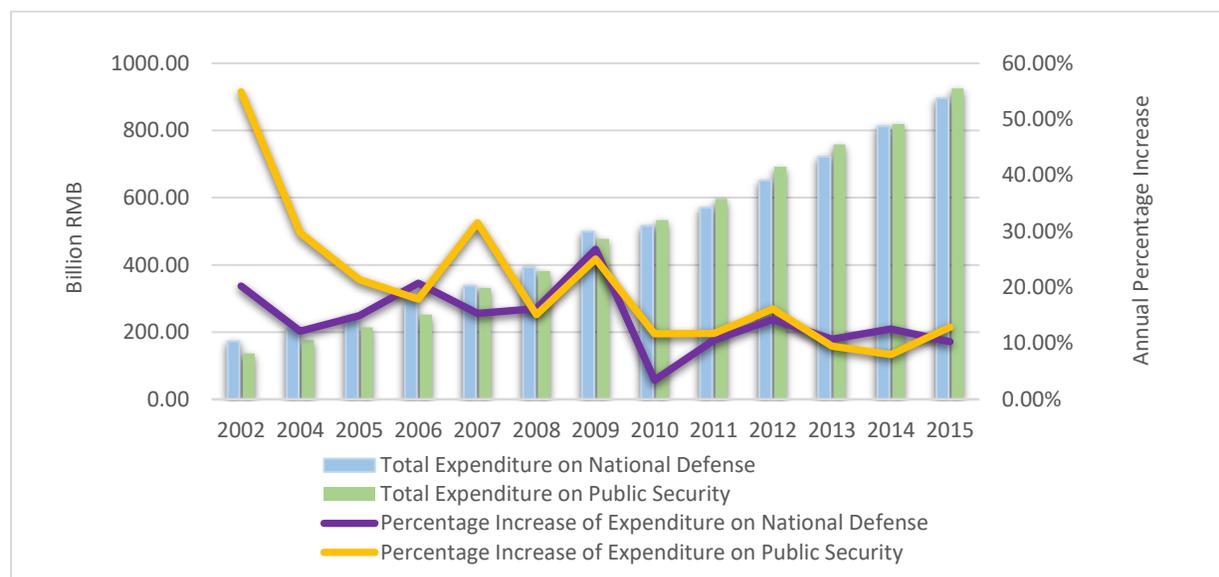are about the same from year to year (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. China's Total Expenditure and Annual Percentage Increase on National Defense and Public Security in 2002 and 2004 to 2015. The graph shows a comparison of China's spending between National Defense and Public Security. Source: National Bureau of Statistics of China 2003-2016 Statistical Yearbook.

China's expenditure on national defense and public security are fairly proportional—each

represents about 5% of its total state expenditure in 2015. In comparison, for the same year, U.S.

expenditure on national defense and public security (including law & order) represents 18% and

2%, respectively, of their total state expenditure; and Russian expenditure on national defense

and public security represents 20% and 13%, respectively, of their total state expenditure (see

Figure 5). To put another way, at the federal or central government level, the U.S. spends about 8

times more on national defense than public security, Russia spends 1.62 times more on national

defense than public security, and China spends .03 less on national defense than public security

in 2015. However, if we use SIPRI and USDOD significantly higher estimates of Chinese

national defense spending, then China spends 1.26 to 1.51 times more on national defense than

public security, which is similar to Russia but must smaller than the U.S.

China

National Defense 5% • Public Security; Law & Order 5% • Human Services 33% • Other State Organs 51% • Debt Payments 2% • Other 4%

National Defense: Defense
Public Security; Law & Order: Public Security, including Armed Police Force
Human Services: Social Safety Net & Employment Effort; Medical and Health Care, and Family Planning; and Education
Other State Organs: General Public Serivces; Foreign Affairs, Financial Affairs, Science & Technology, Enviornment & Natural Resource Management Organizations; Commerce & Services, Transportation; Housing Security; and Urban & Rural Community Affairs
Debt Payments: Interest Payments on Debts; Issuing Debts
Other: Culture, Sports and Media; Other Regional Assistance; and Other

Russia

National Defense 20% • Public Security; Law & Order 13% • Human Services 35% • Other State Organs 23% • Debt Payments 3% • Other 6%

National Defense: Defense
Public Security; Law & Order: National Security and Law Enforcement
Human Services: Health Care; Social Policy; and Education
Other State Organs: State Administration; National Economy; Environmental Protection; Housing and Utilities Infrastructure
Debt Payments: Public and Municipal Debt Service
Other: Culture and Cinematography; Sport; Mass Media; and General Inter-budget Transfers to the Regional Budget

US

National Defense 18% • Public Security; Law & Order 2% • Human Services 68% • Other State Organs 6% • Debt Payments 6% • Other <1%

National Defense: Defense; Overseas Contingency Operations; Veteran's Affairs; and National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA)
Public Security; Law & Order: Homeland Security; Emergency Funding for Disaster Relief; and Justice Department
Human Services: Mandatory Programs, including Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid; Health & Human Services; and Education
Other State Organs: State, Energy (excludes NNSA), Treasury, Labor, Agriculture, Interior, Commerce, Housing & Urban Development and Transportation Departments; National Aeronautics and Space Administration; Corporation of Engineers; and National Science Foundation
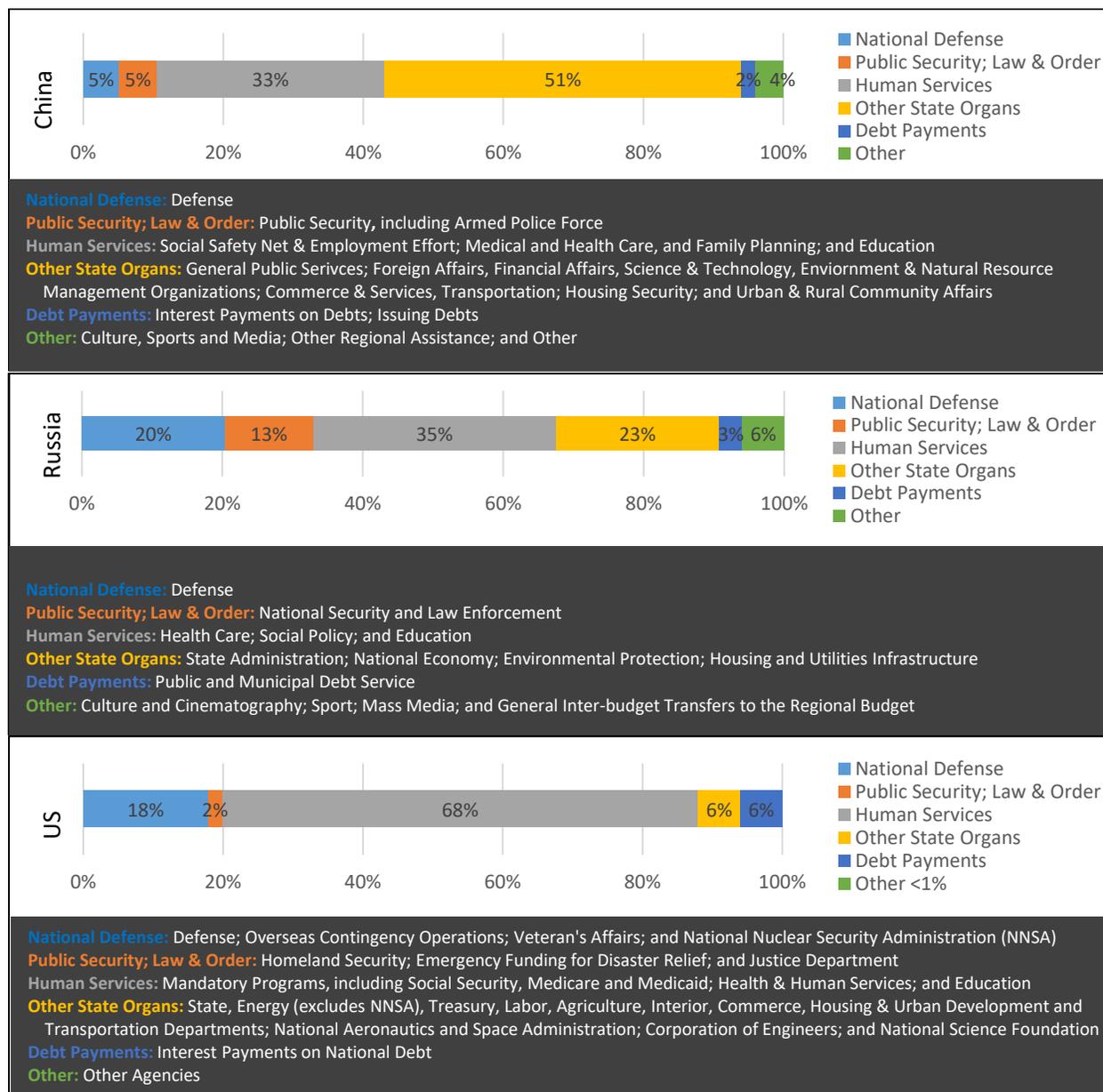**Debt Payments:** Interest Payments on National Debt
Other: Other Agencies

Figure 5. China, Russia, and U.S. 2015 Budget Expenditure Breakdown and Itemized Expenditure Groupings. The figure shows a breakdown of China, Russia, and U.S. 2015 federal budget expenditures. Itemization of state expenditures correlates with China, Russia, and U.S. respective budget categorizations. They are grouped into six general categories as listed above for greater state-to-state comparison. Source: National Bureau of Statistics of China 2016 Statistical Yearbook, Russian Ministry of Finance Federal Expenditure Budget Year, and U.S. Budget for Fiscal Year 2017.

China's budgetary allocations suggest that their prioritization of national security against foreign state threats and public security against internal state threats are rather similar, in comparison to the U.S. whose national defense budget overwhelmingly exceeds their federal budget allocation towards domestic security.

With that said, China's national defense budget includes both central and local expenditures, while the U.S. federal budget does not include local expenditures, such as state-level law enforcements, courts, jails, and prison systems. This is because China's central government maintains control over major budgetary allocations through both central and local (provincial) levels. In brief, China's Ministry of Finance assumes responsibility for consolidating central and local budget plans and revenue estimates into an aggregate state budget. Then, the aggregate budget must first receive approval from the State Council and NPC at the central level before it is submitted to NPC representatives at the local level for review (Jin 2003). In contrast, the U.S. federal government do not play a role in approving local (state) budgets, leaving most local affairs—including public security—to state level authorities. In short, there is more central government oversight and less local autonomy regarding public security in China compared to the U.S. where there is less federal oversight and more local autonomy regarding public security.

Figure 5 illustrates central or federal governmental priorities by looking at a comparison of national defense and public security spending to total state expenditure. Therefore, based on the *proportion* of state expenditure on public security to national defense, Figure 5 indicates that China is also particularly concerned with domestic security threats, in addition to foreign security threats.

The idea that a state's national defense and public security spending can be neatly divided into two separate categories can be misleading, particularly regarding China. In the traditional—

or Western—sense, national defense generally denotes military defense of a state against foreign threats, while public security denotes a state's police force and justice system that maintains domestic law and order. Figure 5 shows that China spends about the same for both types of security items. However, China's military and police force do not partition neatly into the traditional roles of national defense and public security. Instead, their armed police force is deeply integrated into China's national defense armed forces under military leadership (see Figure 1). Additionally, while the PLA appears to be traditional components of national defense, their role also includes maintaining social stability and helping to develop China's economy. China's 2010 white paper defines the tasks of the PLA to include: 1) safeguarding national sovereignty, security and interests of national development; 2) maintaining social harmony and stability; 3) accelerating the modernization of national defense and the armed forces; and 4) maintaining world peace and stability.

China's 2012 white paper, "The Diversified Employment of China's Armed Forces," provides further details on the varied functions of their armed forces. Concerning the roles of China's armed forces, the document shows that national defense and public security are perceived as two sides of the same coin. During wartime, the PLA, PAPF and militia are all mobilized in military defense of the state. However, during peacetime, the three divisions of the armed forces are integrated to maintain state sovereignty, security, and territorial integrity, whether they are foreign or domestic security threats. The following provides a brief description of the roles of each armed forces in each area of defense:

1. *Border and Coastal Security*: The PLAGF, PLAN, PLAAF, and militia all have roles in defending China's land and maritime boundaries, as they have stations and post duties all along China's border and coastal areas. They guard against foreign threats, terrorist

threats, and cross-border criminal activities. Additionally, a border security force under the PAPF acts as another facet of China's border and coastal security network. Their role includes the monitoring of entry and exit ports for illegal goods (i.e. drugs or weapons); conducting border inspections; deploying maritime patrols; guarding against illegal immigration; and subduing separatist or terrorist activities.

2. *Territorial Air Security & Traffic*: The PLAAF has the primary role of maintaining China's air security and monitoring air traffic. The PLAGF, PLAN, and PAPF are also listed as having roles in maintaining China's territorial air security. However, it is not specified in the white paper exactly what those responsibilities are.

3. *Maintaining Social Stability/Counter-terrorism*: With support from militia and local police force of the particular area when needed, the PAPF has the primary role of maintaining social stability and carrying out counter-terrorism operations at the state, province, municipality, and county levels in response to emergency situations or major criminal activity. They also provide security guard services for major national events with support from the PLAGF, PLAAF, and PLAN (i.e. the 2008 Beijing Olympics or PRC 60th Founding Anniversary). Moreover, PLA troops stationed in Hong Kong or Macao garrisons may be called upon to maintain social order or provide security guard support for major events when needed.

4. *Maritime Security*: The border security force under the PAPF and PLAN both play a role in providing maritime security, both coastal areas and seas. For example, China's coast guard also patrols the SCS where they currently have territorial disputes with neighboring countries.

5. *Domestic Disaster Relief*: The PAPF, with support from the militia, has the responsibility of carrying out domestic disaster relief or rescue operations.

6. *International Disaster Relief and Humanitarian Aid*: The PLA has the responsibility of providing international disaster relief and humanitarian aid.

7. *Protecting Overseas Interests and Participating in Joint Military Exercises*: The PLA has the responsibility of carrying out foreign security operations or international security agreements, such as UN peacekeeping missions or inter-state joint military exercises.

While China's military focuses on international security and the armed police force focuses on domestic security, many of their roles overlap. Their roles overlap particularly in the maintenance of border and coastal security where China faces separatist issues in Xinjiang, Tibet, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, as well as territorial disputes in the ECS and SCS. While the militia's role is to provide defensive support to the PLA during wartime, their peacetime role is to support the PAPF in maintaining social stability.

China's military and armed police force work as extensions of one another under a central military leadership, sharing the primary task of maintaining state security in general. In other words, China's security infrastructure is organized with the ability to alternate between wartime and peacetime roles—between defending the state from foreign threats or maintaining social stability. This enables the central government to quickly mobilize the full strength of their armed forces to counter any threats to the state, whether it emanates from abroad or within territorial boundaries.

In comparison, the USDOD oversees the U.S. armed forces and is concerned with defending the state from foreign threats. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security oversees issues relating to illegal immigration, customs and border patrol, coastal patrol, transportation

security, emergency preparedness, cyberspace security and counter-terrorism efforts. The most senior leaders of each department, the Secretary of Defense and Secretary of Homeland Security, hold equal political power and serve as advisors in the U.S. President's Cabinet. The role of the U.S. military and domestic security agency is clearly separated, not only in terms of organizational structure but also in terms of leadership.

China's armed forces also have the unusual role of participating in national and economic development. According to China's 2012 white paper, in addition to providing security services for national events, the PAPF and militia are also tasked with guard duties for various economic projects or structures of economic importance. They include guarding bridges, tunnels, railways, gold mines, forests, and hydroelectric or transportation facilities. Second, the PLA, PAPF, and militia participate in economic or social development by supporting national infrastructure projects, including the construction of airports, highways, railways, bridges, or hydroelectric units. The paper reports the contribution of 15 million work days and over 1.2 million military vehicles and equipment to support more than 350 national development projects. They are also tasked with supporting local projects by digging wells, building roads, or constructing farming irrigation in order to develop rural areas. The use of military resources for economic development is clarified in China's 2014 white paper, "China's Military Strategy." It states that the military follows a principle of Civil-Military Integration (CMI), a policy that pursues military development and strategy in coordination with civilian use and economic development.

China's military development and policies are not only in response to foreign security threats or attempts to project power to other state actors, because domestic security and economic development also play significant roles in shaping them. China's armed forces serve many other state functions, such as infrastructure and economic development, because economic

development is considered the highest priority of the state. According to China's white papers, it

is a goal towards which all state functions should support, including China's armed forces.

Another significant takeaway from an analysis of China's security infrastructure and

central budget is that their conceptualization of national defense includes the defense of the state

from both external and internal security threats. Chinese leaders prioritize domestic security as

much as they do international or regional security. Several points support this assertion: China's

armed forces includes an integrated military and armed police force under one centralized

military leadership; the militia may be mobilized to support either the military or armed police

force; the military and armed police force's dual wartime and peacetime roles give Chinese

military leaders the ability to mobilize the full strength of their armed forces against either

foreign or domestic state threats; and lastly, state expenditure on national defense and public

security are comparatively the same. It is difficult to separate the idea of national security

(defense of the state from foreign threats) and public security (domestic law and order) in China,

because they are considered two sides of the same coin. Additionally, many of their defense roles

overlap. Therefore, it is difficult (if not impossible) to pinpoint exactly how much of China's

security infrastructure and state resources are allocated towards national defense against

perceived foreign threats and public security against domestic threats.

China's recent military developments and policies may not strictly be in response to

foreign state threats, however, it does not negate the insecurity that the U.S. or other regional

countries feel due to military developments that have the ability to impact regional security and

thus, contribute to inter-state security dilemmas (i.e. development of China's blue water navy or

missile defense system). Because China's security infrastructure is set up in a way in which the

military and armed police force are extensions of one another, the fact can still contribute to the

security dilemma in U.S.-China relations, depending on the perspective taken. Ultimately, attempts to understand state security priorities and level of threat perception are conjectures at best. Having said that, the proceeding case study sections attempts to shed light on China's most pressing security issues and how they may be prioritizing them.

Case Study Section Two: China's Expressions of Existential Threat

China's white paper description of their national security situation are generally short and vague. In particular, their 2014 white paper provides a list of security threats they currently face. They include both foreign and domestic sources: 1) U.S. military rebalance to the Pacific; 2) Japan's military reforms and departure from its World War II concession to only participate in armed conflict for self defense; 3) "meddling of external countries" in the territorial disputes of the SCS; 4) instability on the Korean Peninsula; 5) Taiwan separatist conflict; 6) East Turkistan separatist conflict in Xinjiang; 7) Tibet separatist conflict; 8) terrorism; 9) piracy; 10) national disasters and epidemics; 11) security of overseas interests regarding energy and other natural resources; and 12) a shifting of theaters of war from combat to technological warfare, such as cyber or outer space. The listed national security threats are very general and at most, one-line descriptions. The white paper fails to disclose how those threats are prioritized, how the threats specifically impact China's security concerns or how China are responding specifically to each of those threats.

For those reasons, this case study utilizes a discourse analysis of Hu Jintao's 18th National Congress speech in 2012 and Xi Jinping's 19th National Congress speech in 2017 in an effort to discern China's securitized issues. The analysis looks for expressions of existential threats, the first criterion for successful securitization (Buzan et al., 1998). In each of their respective speeches, Hu and Xi's expressions of existential threat include a focus on economic

development as a vital component to the survival of the Chinese state. Additionally, separatist issues (specifically regarding the conflict with Taiwan), as well as corruption within the CCP and the government, are identified as acute threats to the state.

Hu expresses an existential threat when he hinges China's survival on its continuing economic and cultural development, particularly based on a governing system characterized by "socialism with Chinese characteristics." Hu states in his speech:

> Looking back at China's eventful modern history and looking to the promising future of the Chinese nation, we have drawn this definite conclusion: We must unswervingly follow the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics in order to complete the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects, accelerate socialist modernization, and achieve the great renewal of the Chinese nation. *The issue of what path we take is of vital importance for the survival of the Party, the future of China, the destiny of the Chinese nation, and the wellbeing of the people* [emphasis added]. Exploring a path to national renewals in China that was economically and culturally backward is an extremely arduous task. Over the past 90-plus years, relying firmly on the people and adapting the basic tenets of Marxism to China's conditions and the underlying trend of the times, our Party has pursued its own course independently. It has, enduring untold hardships and sufferings and paying various costs, achieved great success in revolution, development and reform, and created and developed socialism with Chinese characteristics, thus fundamentally changing the future and destiny of the Chinese people and nation" (Hu 2012 para. 29-30).

First, Hu identifies what is at stake: the survival of the Party, the future of China, the destiny of the Chinese nation, and the wellbeing of the people. While the Chinese political party, state, nation, and people are fundamentally different concepts, they are generally bundled together and referred to as simply "China" throughout the remainder of the speech. This suggests that there is a recognition that each of the listed social units are distinct in theory, however they are viewed as ultimately inseparable. In other words, the endurance of one rests on the endurance of the others, including the CCP as an inextricable component to the endurance of the state and people's wellbeing. In the excerpt above, Hu makes the announcement that China's survival, future, destiny, and physical wellbeing remain in precarious conditions as of 2012.

Second, Hu describes the state of the country along a linear timeline. He describes China's past as "economically and culturally backward," China's present as "successful" and China's future as "promising." In alluding to China's "untold hardships and suffering" over the past 90 years—presumably due to the state's economic and cultural backwardness—to reach the national success seen today, Hu suggests that a return to the way things were in the past is unwanted and dangerous. There is an implication that while national conditions have improved, bad things will happen if a proper national development path is not taken. In order to ensure China's survival, Hu states that they must follow a path of "socialism with Chinese characteristics." As the PRC's ideological foundation is based on Marxism-Leninism, the term "socialism with Chinese characteristics" is the CCP's euphemism for capitalistic reforms within a Chinese socialist state. The term is used 67 times in his approximately 21,000 word speech, indicating its importance in shaping party ideology and Chinese national policy. In short, Hu indicates that China's national situation in the past is bad, the present is better, and the future has the potential to be better—but it may also take a turn for the worse. The state threat is the possibility of an economic and cultural regression to conditions of China's past. In order to overcome that threat and progress towards a better future, China must continue to adhere to a policy of socialism with Chinese characteristics. There is a strong tone of "we must do this," because China's security depends on it.

To put the timeline into context, Hu's reference of China's modern history over the past 90 years includes the establishment of the CCP in 1921, the founding of the PRC in 1949, implementation of Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms in 1978, and explosive economic growth over the past 30 years. Against the backdrop of this timeline, Hu characterizes China as economically and culturally backward in the beginning of its modern history and then

underscores the hardships the Chinese people endured in order to develop into the modern nation it is today. Hu suggests it is due to the CCP's leadership that the Chinese people achieved economic and cultural progress, and it will be the CCP's socialism with Chinese characteristics that will continue to foster that progress.

Moreover, China's period of "economic and cultural backwardness" refers to their history of national weakness under foreign imperialism during the late 19th to early 20th century. At the time, China's national weakness was largely attributed to Chinese traditional ideologies, such as Confucianism or Buddhism, which was seen as inferior and backwards compared to Western ideologies. It led to the exploration of varying isms to modernize China, and ultimately, to the establishment of the CCP in 1921. Furthermore, the "untold hardships and sufferings" Hu mentions above refers to the numerous national upheavals that characterized China's modern history throughout the 20th century. Briefly, they include the war against Japanese imperialism during World War II; the Chinese civil war between the Kuomingtang (KMT) and CCP from 1945 to 1949; the catastrophic failure of Mao Zedong's Great Leap Forward from 1958 to 1962 (a national development initiative that resulted in widespread famine and the deaths of millions of people due to malnutrition); and the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976 (a social-political movement that resulted in violent persecution and displacement of millions of people). After a particular faction within the CCP, called the "Gang of Four," were scapegoated for the failed socialist policies, Deng Xiaoping returned to his leadership position within the CCP. He became the paramount leader in 1978 and instituted gradual economic reforms—what is now referred to as socialism with Chinese characteristics—that transformed China. Therefore, by referring to China's untold hardships over the past 90 years, Hu suggests that the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics under the leadership of the CCP is vital to China's economic and cultural

development despite the setbacks. It is vital to the survival and wellbeing of the Chinese people,

because the development of China from a weak and poor nation to a strong and prosperous one

implies the prevention of volatile instability that characterized its modern past.

Hu stresses the idea further when he presents definitive statements that economic

development is an all-encompassing solution to the state's problems and the *only* course of

action to achieve social stability and national security:

> Taking economic development as the central task is vital to national renewal, and development still holds the key to addressing all the problems we have in China. Only by promoting sustained and sound economic development can we lay a solid material foundation for enhancing the country's prosperity and strength, improving the people's wellbeing and ensuring social harmony and stability. We must unwaveringly adhere to the strategic thinking that only development counts (Hu 2012, para. 60).

Again, Hu identifies the people's wellbeing as the object at risk. He then uses strong language to

underscore the importance of economic development in solving "*all* the problems [they] have in

China," and that it is "*only* development that counts." In using definitive statements, Hu presents

an undertone of critical seriousness, an image of being at the end of the line with no other

options for survival. Hu does not point to a specific security threat that poses an immediate

danger to the people's wellbeing. Rather, the tone of urgency and firmness with which Hu

emphasizes the need for economic development implies that the threat is the absence of

economic development. Hu essentially ties social stability and the wellbeing of the Chinese

people into the continued development of the state's economy, indirectly expressing an

existential threat. As such, the "central task" he speaks of refers to the beginning of Hu's speech

when he states that China must take a "holistic approach to work relating to reform,

development, and stability, to [include] domestic and foreign affairs as well as national defense,

and to running the Party, the country and the military" (Hu 2012, para 27). Economic

development is incorporated into all major governmental organs, policies and practices,

including those relating to foreign affairs and national defense. In particular, Hu lists the military

as a branch of the state involved in contributing to economic development. This provides an

important initial indicator of securitization. It demonstrates China's high prioritization of

economic development as a critical component to the state's survival, because their military

forces are involved in helping to support it.

When Hu arrives at the topic of China's national defense and armed forces, he expresses

other existential threats to the state by using security terms, such as China's "survival,"

"development security," "local wars," or "traditional and non-traditional security threats."

> China is faced with interwoven problems affecting its survival and development security as well as traditional and non-traditional security threats…We should attach great importance to maritime, space and cyberspace security. We should make active planning for the use of the military forces in peacetime, expand and intensify military preparedness, and enhance the capability to accomplish a wide range of military tasks, the most important of which is to win local war in an information age. (Hu 2012, para. 104-105).

As opposed to security threats that may occur due to the *absence* of economic development, Hu

points to security threats that are more imminent due to the *presence* of traditional and non-

traditional security threats. Hu does not specifically identify the actors involved in the traditional

and non-traditional security threats. However, he does indicate which areas of defense those

threats are located. Hu stresses points of focus for Chinese national defense in the areas of

maritime (navy), space (missile defense forces), and cyberspace security. Hu's identification of

China's most pressing theaters of war provides clear examples of the exercise of security

rhetoric.

Hu continues the identification of more tangible security threats in his speech when he

speaks about the Taiwan separatist movement: "China's territory and sovereignty have always

been indivisible and no division will be tolerated…We resolutely oppose any separatist attempt

for Taiwan independence. The Chinese people will never allow for anyone or any force to separate Taiwan from the motherland by any means" (Hu 2012, para. 114-117). Hu establishes China's territorial boundary as the object at risk, which is a traditional security threat. His choice of words, "force to separate Taiwan from the motherland," evokes an image of physical coercion of the island from its rightful, native country. It suggests a violation of a natural relationship—such as that between a mother and her child. Additionally, the definitive statement, "no division will be tolerated," implies China will intervene militarily to prevent national division. However, the security threat is only implied here; Hu stops short of explicitly identifying the Taiwan separatist movement as a security issue or using overt security rhetoric to speak out against it (i.e. "we will go to war if Taiwan tries to separate from China").

Lastly, compared to the separatist movement, a clearer existential threat is expressed regarding political and governmental corruption. Hu states, "Combating corruption and promoting political integrity…is a clear-cut and long-term political commitment of the Party. If we fail to handle this issue well, it could prove fatal to the Party, and even cause the collapse of the Party and the fall of the state" (Hu, 2012, para. 136). First, the assertion that party and governmental corruption can be "fatal," signals an existential threat, as it presents an impression of life-threatening circumstances or death. This same undertone continues when Hu warns of the dangers of not handling political corruption well. He uses dramatic statements, such as "collapse of the Party" and "fall of the state," in order to present the security issue as pressing and consequential. Political corruption is directly identified as a security threat to the survival of the party and Chinese state.

Xi's 2017 speech identifies similar threats as those in Hu's 2012 speech. Xi continues the focus on economic development as the primary factor to China's survival, in addition to

separatist/terrorist issues and political corruption as threats to the Chinese state. Xi states:

"…without the leadership of the Communist Party of China, national rejuvenation would be just wishful thinking…The path of socialism with Chinese characteristics is the only path to socialist modernization and a better life for the people" (Xi 2017, pg. 13). Like Hu, Xi makes strong, definitive statements that economic development is the "only path" to a "better life for the people." While the statement suggests an undertone of critical urgency, it falls short of being an explicit expression of an existential or security threat. Still, the tone of critical urgency concerning economic development as the central task of the party, in addition to all facets of the government, continues throughout the approximately 24,000 word speech.

Furthermore, socialism with Chinese characteristics under the leadership of the CCP is continuously presented as vital components to the wellbeing of the Chinese people—that without the CCP, social instability and pervasive poverty would have continued to afflict the nation. "*Only with socialism can we save China*; [emphasis added] only with reform and opening can we develop China, develop socialism, and develop Marxism…Development is the underpinning and the key for solving all our country's problems" (Xi 2017, p. 18). An expression of an existential threat is clearer here when Xi utilizes the term "save China," posing the state as the object at risk. Xi again uses strong, definitive statements to drive home the vital importance of economic development. This rhetorical technique is used often—and at times with exaggeration— throughout the entirety of the speech regarding other issues also. But in this particular statement, Xi heightens the tone of urgency when he suggests that China is in dire trouble and needs to be "saved."

Xi's other expressions of existential threat to the state are again similar to Hu's, which includes Taiwan separatist movements and China's internal political corruption. Xi reaffirms

Hu's resolve to reunite Taiwan with Mainland China and opposes any movement that may support Taiwan independence. He states, "We stand firm in safeguarding China's sovereignty and territorial integrity and will never allow the historical tragedy of national division repeat itself…We have the resolve, confidence, and the ability to defeat separatist attempts for 'Taiwan independence' in any form" (Xi 2017, p. 51). Unlike Hu, who stops short of directly identifying the Taiwan separatist movement as an existential or security threat, Xi clearly identifies it as a threat to the state. Xi does this when he states that the separatist attempts needs to be "defeated." The fact that something needs to be defeated indicates the presence of an oppositional force and the requirement of effort to overcome it. The oppositional force is then characterized as a security threat when Xi states that China needs "safeguarding" or protection. Additionally, the mention of a "historical tragedy" suggests that great physical or mental suffering had occurred in the past due to the failure to safeguard China's sovereignty from the threat of separatist attempts.

Xi also makes strong statements regarding corruption in the Chinese government and its role in contributing to social instability and national upheavals: "The people resent corruption most; and corruption is the greatest threat our Party faces…Only by intensifying efforts to address both the symptoms and root causes of corruption…can we avoid history's cycle of rise and fall and ensure the long-term stability of the Party and the country" (Xi 2017, p. 60). Xi plainly uses the word "threat" to pinpoint political corruption as a security issue.

Fulfilling the first of three criteria for successful securitization, the discourse analysis of Hu and Xi's National Congress speeches reveal that three main issues are expressed as existential threats to the Chinese state. They include: 1) declining or stagnating economic growth; 2) Taiwan separatist conflict; and 3) internal party and government corruption. Continuing economic growth is a major theme throughout both Hu and Xi's speeches, as both

leaders repeatedly hinge China's survival on it. By referencing China's past national tragedies, they both express critical urgency in continuing China's economic growth, because it strongly suggests that national catastrophe will follow in the absence of it. In this case, there is no direct, tangible threat which Hu and Xi directly identifies. Rather, the threat is assumed; it is when something doesn't happen that will result in life-threatening circumstances. In contrast, direct threats are identified regarding the Taiwan separatist conflict and internal party and government corruption. Security terms, such as "threat," "defend," "security," or "war," are used to describe the two issues which clearly signal expressions of existential threat. While those are certainly not the only security threats that China currently faces, they are three issues specifically identified as urgent threats to China's survival in Hu and Xi's speeches.

Case Study Section Three: China's Securitized Issue

Of the 3 issues expressed as existential threats to the Chinese state, only China's response to the threat of economic underdevelopment/stagnation fulfills both the second and third criteria for successful securitization. The second and third criteria for successful securitization include: 1) the use of emergency actions—actions where political processes are abandoned—in response to existential threats and 2) their resulting impact on inter-unit relations (Buzan et al. 1998). In this case, the inter-unit relation of interest is state-to-state relations. China's emergency actions consist of their illegal land reclamation projects, military installation, and patrol of disputed islands in the SCS to protect their economic interests there. It also includes China's refusal to recognize an unfavorable international court ruling regarding the SCS dispute. The inter-unit impacts of China's actions are the heightening of political and military tension between China and neighboring countries involved in the SCS dispute—some of which have defense agreements

with the U.S. In turn, China's actions in the SCS have also contributed to the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations.

Fulfilling the second criterion for successful securitization, China's emergency actions in the interest of economic development are demonstrated by their actions regarding the territorial disputes in the SCS. The area is an important component to China's "Belt and Road Initiative," a national economic development strategy. Xi (2017) presents a series of strategies in his National Congress speech that would help to realize the continued modernization and economic development of China. They include: 1) developing China's domestic economy by supporting manufacturing companies, investing in infrastructure and promoting entrepreneurship; 2) promoting innovation through science and technology; 3) investing in rural areas and agriculture; 4) implementing coordinated regional development strategy by redeveloping declining towns, further developing land and marine trade networks in rural areas and strengthening maritime power; 5) reforming the social market economy; and 6) prioritizing the Belt and Road Initiative. Xi lists the factors as important components to accomplishing greater economic development— because failure to do so would be detrimental to the Chinese people and state. The prioritization of the Belt and Road Initiative is included as a key part. The economic initiative is a trade strategy that aims to encompass over 68 countries, 40% of the world economy, and 4.4 billion people by investing in the development of infrastructure along historical trade routes that connects China to Southeast Asia, Central Asia, Eastern Europe, Western Europe, and East Africa (Griffiths 2017). Facing slowing economic growth and a domestic overproduction of industrial goods, China is looking abroad to generate greater demand for Chinese steel, cement, and aluminum by promoting massive infrastructure development projects across 3 continents. Moreover, the CCP constitutional amendment in October 2017 to include the Belt and Road

Initiative indicates its high priority on the state's agenda ("Resolution of the 19th National

Congress" 2017). Leading party political thought and major organs of the central government,

including foreign and military policies, are geared towards realizing the Belt and Road

Initiative—towards economic development.

The SCS plays an important role in the Belt and Road Initiative, because it is an area not

only valuable for its fishing grounds and potential oil reserves, but also for its strategic position

as a high-traffic maritime trade route for commercial vessels (see Figure 6). China's "Vision for

Maritime Cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative" white paper underscores the

importance of the SCS in accomplishing their economic development goals. They highlight the

Figure 6. China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative. The figure shows China's proposed infrastructure development projects along trade routes connecting China to Southeast Asia, Central Asia, Eastern Europe, Western Europe, and East Africa. Source: China Daily News

SCS as a main hub for the China-Indian Ocean-Africa- Mediterranean Sea Blue Economic

Passage and China-Oceania-South Pacific Economic Passage:

> Ocean cooperation will focus on building the China-Indian Ocean-Africa- Mediterranean Sea Blue Economic Passage, by linking the China-Indochina Peninsula Economic Corridor, running westward from the South China Sea to the Indian Ocean, and connecting the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIM-EC). Efforts will also be made to jointly

>build the blue economic passage of China-Oceania-South Pacific, travelling southward from the South China Sea into the Pacific Ocean…("Vision for Maritime Cooperation" 2017, para. 10).

The document also stresses the need for maritime security in order to facilitate the development of massive maritime trade networks for mutual economic benefits and common security among participating countries:

>Maritime security is a key assurance for developing the blue economy. Efforts will be made to promote the concept of common maritime security for mutual benefits. Cooperation in maritime public services, marine management, maritime search and rescue, marine disaster prevention and mitigation and maritime law enforcement will be strengthened in order to enhance capacities for minimizing risks and safeguarding maritime security ("Vision for Maritime Cooperation" 2017, para. 24).

The SCS plays a vital role in Xi's proposed Belt and Road Initiative, a policy he identifies as a decisive factor in achieving a "moderately prosperous society;" it is viewed as crucial to the survival of the Chinese people and state. Therefore, in order to accomplish the economic initiative, maritime security to ensure Chinese access to the SCS and development of the region to fit their agenda becomes a focal point of China's defense policy.

China, the Philippines, Taiwan, Brunei, Malaysia, and Vietnam all have conflicting territorial claims and overlapping Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) in the SCS with one another (see Figure 7). The dispute has been a point of contention in Sino-Vietnam and Sino-Philippines relations for decades. According to the Asia Maritime Transparency Institute, China established 7 outposts throughout the Spratly Islands in the SCS, the Philippines 9, Vietnam 29, Malaysia 5, and Taiwan 1 ("Island Features" n.d.) in order to assert their claims and maintain continued access to natural resources and trade routes in the SCS. China employs a mixed bag of tactics to address the SCS conflicts, including participating in multi-lateral talks with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries and presenting economic initiatives to promote greater regional integration.
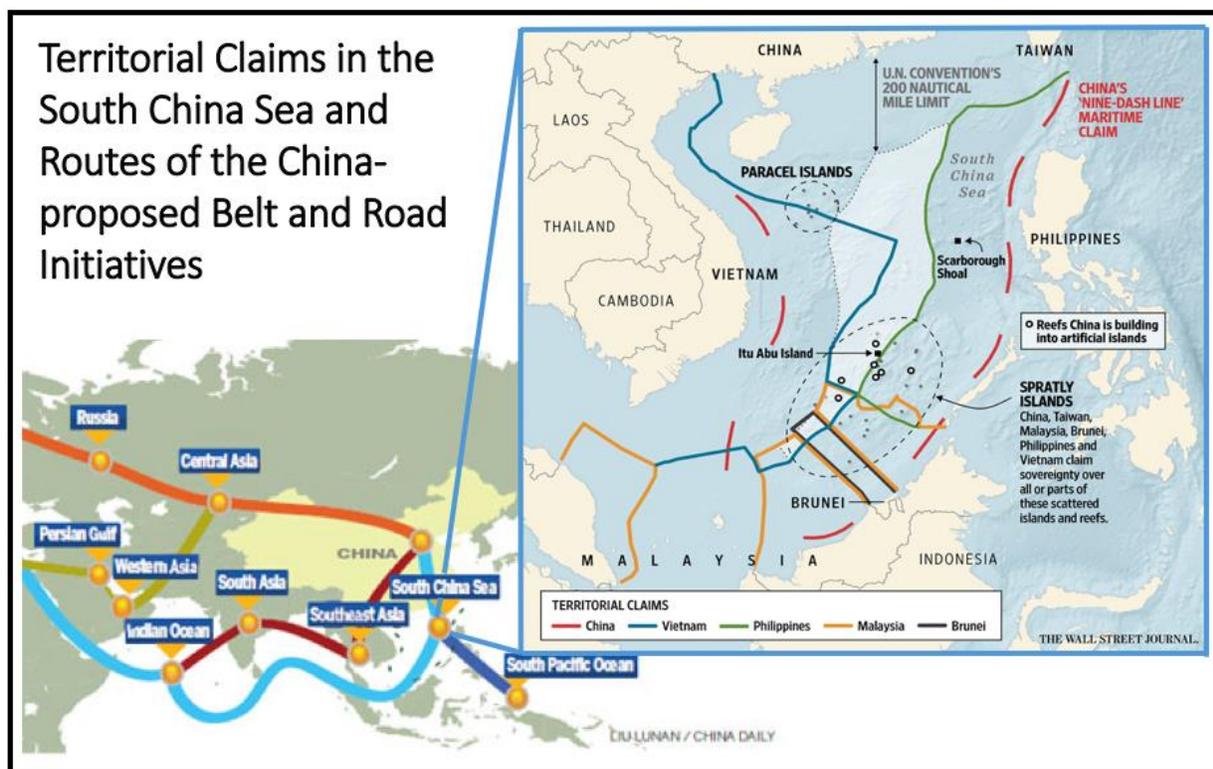
Figure 7. Map of conflicting territorial claims in the South China Sea, involving China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam. Source: China Daily News and The Wall Street Journal

However, drawing from U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission's Annual Reports to Congress from 2010 to 2017, some of China's actions regarding SCS territorial disputes can also be classified as emergency actions. The first includes China's accelerated land reclamations projects on islands also claimed by the Philippines and Vietnam in 2013. China expanded land features of the disputed territories by more than 2,900 acres. While other countries also engage in SCS land reclamation projects, the size and speed of China's projects far exceeds that of—for example—Vietnam, who has reclaimed about 60 acres of land (U.S.-China Security Review Commission 2015). Moreover, China constructed outposts on the reclaimed land and outfitted various facilities with military capabilities. A second emergency action includes China's refusal to recognize the 2016 ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, a case brought on by the Philippines against China (Perlez 2016). The

Philippines and China are both signatories of—and have ratified—the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which determines international norms regarding maritime territorial and jurisdictional zones. Following Chinese accelerated land reclamation projects in 2013 and various skirmishes between Chinese and Filipino vessels, the Philippines filed a case with the arbitrary tribunal court to challenge the legality of China's actions in the SCS ("2017 Annual Report to Congress" 2017). The ruling concludes that China's territorial claims of approximately 90% of the SCS are illegal. In addition, they find that China's policing, land reclamation, and resource exploration activities surrounding the Spratly Islands are in violation of the Philippines territorial sovereignty rights. Despite the ruling, China continues their activities in the SCS. The two emergency actions were taken in order to strengthen Chinese claims in the SCS. They represent particular actions in which China avoided the use of political processes to resolve the territorial conflict. Instead, China "broke rules," or in this case, violated UNCLOS regulations and refuse to recognize legal rulings concerning their acts in the SCS.

China's emergency actions as discussed above has had an impact on their relations with other states, such as the Philippines, Vietnam, and the U.S.—the third criteria for successful securitization. The Philippines and Vietnam perceive Chinese activities in the SCS as encroachments on their territorial sovereign rights, which have harmed Sino-Philippines and Sino-Vietnamese relations. Sino-Philippines relations declined after China refused to accept the court ruling that favored the Philippines. In Sino-Vietnam relations, tensions came to a head in 2014 when China placed an oil drilling rig in maritime territory also claimed by Vietnam. Hundreds of protestors in cities from Southern to Central Vietnam attacked, vandalized, or set fire to Chinese and Taiwanese (mistaken for Chinese) businesses. Hundreds were injured and

anywhere from 2 to 21 people were killed during the protests; China evacuated 3,000 Chinese

nationals due to the violence ("Vietnam stops anti-China protests after riots" 2014).

The emergency actions also affect U.S.-China relations, the subject of this case study.

China's actions in the SCS, among other factors, have contributed considerably to the security

dilemma in U.S.-China relations. In each of the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review

Commission's Annual Report to Congress from 2010 to 2017, China's actions in the SCS are

characterized as increasingly aggressive and dangerous. The reports present China as a

significant security threat to Southeast Asian countries involved in the dispute. Consequently,

this also causes a perception of serious implications for the U.S.:

> "If Beijing continues its incremental approach to increasing control over the East and South China seas, the United States could receive requests for additional assistance by allies, friends, and partners to improve their capabilities to defend themselves, along with calls for the United States to remain engaged in the region to maintain security and stability. If the Chinese decide to use force to resolve a crisis, the United States must be prepared to counter Chinese counter-intervention capabilities…China also is pursuing coercion to erode long-term U.S. presence in the Asia Pacific. These coercive options are intended to erode the United States' strategic position, freedom of action, and operational space in the region (U.S.-China Security Review Commission 2017, pg. 266-265).

The excerpt underscores U.S. heightened perception of insecurity because of China's actions in

the SCS. Not only does the U.S. express their obligation to defend their Asia-Pacific "allies,

friends, and partners" against China's revisionist strategy, but they also regard China's actions as

a direct attack on U.S. interests in the region. Thus, the excerpt provides an important insight of

the underlying sentiments that shape U.S. foreign policy in the Asia Pacific Region and how that,

in turn, contributes to the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations.

China's response to the threat of economic underdevelopment/stagnation is the only

issue, of the three identified in Hu and Xi's speeches, that fulfills the remaining two criteria for

successful securitization. The second and third criteria for successful securitization is the use of

emergency actions in response to the expression of existential threat and those impacts on inter-unit relations (Buzan et al., 1998). The Belt and Road Initiative is China's primary response to the state threat of economic underdevelopment/stagnation, and the SCS plays an important role in realizing the massive economic and trade initiative. In order to ensure China's access to the SCS, Chinese state leaders took emergency actions when they refused to recognize the SCS arbitration ruling. The ruling determined that China's land reclamation projects, resource exploration, and police patrols in and around disputed territories in the SCS were illegal. However, China continues their activities there despite having signed and ratified the treaty that determines international maritime rights; China continues their activities there despite facing strong international condemnation, particularly from the U.S.

China's illegal (or emergency) actions in the SCS impact inter-unit relations, the third criterion for successful securitization, because they refrain from engaging in political processes to formally settle the dispute. China's ongoing, illegal activities in the SCS indicate to neighboring countries and the U.S. that China is "breaking rules" and engaging in aggressive tactics to maintain control over the territory. The situation contributes to the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations, because the U.S. perceive the actions as revisionist and thus, a threat to regional security. However, the case study shows that China has securitized economic development and reacted by mobilizing all facets of the government to support the Belt and Road Initiative—an initiative which the SCS plays an important role. China's perception of existential threat is connected to their actions in the SCS. The case study shows that there are Chinese domestic drivers to the international conflict, not simply a greediness for greater territory.

Chapter Four: Conclusion

China's recent military development and policies are not purely in response to international pressure to balance against other state actors, because they are also driven by internal security threats and economic development efforts. An analysis of China's national defense budget in comparison to the U.S. and their Asia-Pacific allies indicates a significant increase of defense spending from 2000 to 2015. China reported an increase of $123.76 billion USD over 15 years, outspending Japan, South Korea, Australia, Taiwan, and the Philippines combined in 2015. However, China's security infrastructure reveals that their armed forces includes both the military and armed police force under a centralized command; the CMC, under CCP leadership, develops China's national defense strategy and commands the military and armed police force as a cohesive unit. The PLA, PAPF, and militia's dual wartime and peacetime roles enable China's central leadership to quickly mobilize the full strength of its armed forces against any threats to the state, whether foreign or domestic.

China's integrated military and armed police force provides a partial explanation for SIPRI and the USDOD's significantly higher estimates of Chinese defense spending. SIPRI and the USDOD are accounting for the PAPF and militia's roles in China's national defense (in the traditional sense). At the same time, the PLA and militia also has domestic security roles: maintaining public security in border and coastal areas; providing security guard services for national events and important economic development projects and facilities; and contributing technological and human resources to national infrastructure projects. To clarify, these security items would also be accounted for in other countries but with different budgetary categorizations and at different levels of government spending (e.g. central and local). All 3 branches of China's armed forces take some part in national and local economic development, as China follows a

principle of Civil-Military Integration. The Chinese central government takes into consideration economic development and civilian benefit when developing the state's military strategy, because economic development is considered an important component to maintaining social stability.

China's 2015 state expenditure on security is essentially split down the middle between national defense and public security. However, the integrated roles of China's military and armed police force—as well as a militia that can support either division—shows that the CCP conceptualizes national defense differently from that of the U.S. China's perception of national defense is defense of the state and overall maintenance of social stability from both foreign or domestic threats. Thus, their security infrastructure reflects that perception. For this reason, it is difficult to separate the idea of national defense and public security in China, and thus, difficult to determine exactly how much of China's security infrastructure and resources are dedicated towards national defense against foreign threats compared to resources dedicated towards public security against domestic threats.

Based on a discourse and content analysis of Hu and Xi's National Congress speeches, issues expressed as existential threats to the Chinese state include: 1) declining or stagnating economic growth, 2) Taiwan separatist conflict, and 3) internal party and government corruption. As such, they fulfill the first of 3 criteria for successful securitization. The idea that economic development is of critical importance to China's survival and wellbeing runs extensively throughout both Hu and Xi's speeches. It is pervasively presented as the primary task of the party and government from the beginning of the speech, which reviews China's progress in the past 5 years, to the middle and ending of speech, which outline the current state of the country and national endeavors for the next 5 years. Past national tragedies are briefly referenced to

evoke the audience's pathos, which helps Hu and Xi emphasize the threat of declining or stagnating economic development and its potential, catastrophic impacts on China. However, because the threat is the absence of something, Hu and Xi do not (or cannot) point to tangible or immediate threats in the case of economic underdevelopment or stagnation. The predominate tone is: very bad things will happen, just as it had in the past, if China does not continue its economic growth. On the other hand, the remaining two issues are direct security threats to which China can directly respond. Hu and Xi employs explicit language to express an existential threat regarding the Taiwan separatist movement and political corruption within the state. Security terms such as "threat," "defend," "security," or "war," are used to characterize those issues, thus, providing clear expressions of existential threats. The findings do not show that China is only contending with 3 security issues. Rather, economic underdevelopment/stagnation, Taiwan separatist conflict, and internal party and government corruption are specific issues posed as urgent threats to China's survival in Hu and Xi's National Congress speeches.

Of the three issues expressed as existential threats, the case study finds that only China's response to the threat of economic underdevelopment/stagnation fulfills the remaining 2 criteria for successful securitization—the second and third criteria being the use of emergency actions in response to the existential threat and its subsequent impact on inter-unit relations (Buzan et al., 1998). China's push for the Belt and Road Initiative is their response to the threat of economic underdevelopment/stagnation. Then, because the SCS is a vital component to the Belt and Road Initiative, China's strategy to maintain control of the region represents the emergency actions taken in response to the existential threat. China's refusal to recognize the SCS arbitration ruling—in conjunction with their continued illegal land reclamation projects, resource exploration, and police patrols of the conflicted territory—impact inter-unit relations. In other

words, China's emergency actions harm their relations with neighboring state actors, such as the Philippines, Vietnam, and the U.S. This is because China's actions are not perceived as defensive in nature or a response to an existential threat. Rather, they are perceived as inherently revisionist and "greedy," heightening U.S. perception of threat and thus, fueling the security dilemma in U.S.-China relations.

In sum, Chinese party and government policies heavily prioritizes economic development, because they view economic growth as a critical component to social stability and thus, domestic security. China's national defense budget and security infrastructure organization demonstrates that domestic security issues also significantly shape military development strategies. The Belt and Road Initiative, for example, is incorporated as the primary objective through all facets of the Chinese state government, including Chinese foreign policy and national defense objectives. However, in attempting to realize the economic development initiative, China has taken emergency actions that have harmed Chinese relations with other state actors, particularly the U.S. In connecting China's perception of existential threat to their coercive actions in the SCS, it does not imply that their actions are somehow justifiable. What it does reveal is just how much China hinges its survival on the territorial conflict in the SCS and how far they would be willing to go in order to secure their hold on the region. The conclusion that China has securitized the SCS conflict shows there are deeper domestic drivers of the conflict, not just a greediness for greater territory.

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