

**The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the People's Republic of China:
Security Function Growth is Occurring Along Anti-Terrorism Lines.**

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Abstract:

I will argue that the SCO is not failing as security organization (as many have claimed) but is in fact pivoting towards security and intelligence functions aimed at repressing subversive elements and domestic threats under the auspices of the Chinese *three evils* doctrine of separatism, extremism and terrorism. This paper identifies significant developments within the SCO and analyzes their security, intelligence and human rights implications. The SCO's normative documents show extensive security designs, and recent diplomatic information and quantitative media analysis data suggest these goals are bearing fruit. Realities on the ground over the SCO's lifespan indicate collective security cooperation that aligns with self-described goals for the organization as well as major players like the PRC. I argue that such development in security functionality is the result of shared domestic insecurity across SCO member-state territory and security functions are increasingly emphasized by Beijing.

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The SCO in Transition:

“(the member states of the SCO) Firmly believe that against a background of the rapid development of the process of political multipolarization and information globalization in the 21st century, it is conducive to the member states [to] more effectively jointly making use of the opportunities and replying to the new challenges and threats; [...]”¹

In 2009 a Uyghur teacher from China’s Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region named Ershidin Israil² fled across the border to Kazakhstan. Israil had reported for Radio Free Asia on the massive riots that had shaken Xinjiang’s largest city, Urumqi, to its core. The riots had terrified Han Chinese administrators and civilians and Uyghurs alike, and had resulted in at least 197 deaths.³ Following his reportage Israil’s brother and several friends were arrested by Chinese special services, prompting his flight to Almaty. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees granted Israil refugee status in 2009 and prepared for his resettlement in Sweden starting in 2010. However, shortly thereafter Israil was detained by Kazakh migration police officers and placed in house arrest. Kazakhstan refused to recognize his refugee status and extradited him to China the day after his lawyer filed an appeal in his defense. Another of Israil’s brothers was disappeared in Xinjiang in June of 2011.⁴ His brother Enver Israil, now residing in Istanbul lamented “For Uighurs, we are only happy when we are all together. Brothers, sisters, parents, lots of children. How can we live like this, like our arms and legs are pulled off our bodies?”⁵

¹ SCO Whitepaper. "APPENDIX A: Key Normative Documents of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization." Accessed at: <http://www.hrchina.org/sites/default/files/oldsite/PDFs/Reports/SCO/2011-HRIC-SCO-Whitepaper-AppendixA-SCO-Docs.pdf>. Accessed Dec. 10th, 2011. 129.

² Also spelled Arshidin Israil.

³ Yan Hao, Geng Ruibin and Yuan Ye "Xinjiang riot hits regional anti-terror nerve". Xinhua. Chinaview.cn. 18 July 2009.

⁴ Beech, Hannah. China's Uighur Problem: "One Man's Ordeal Echoes the Plight of a People." Time Magazine, July 28th, 2011. Accessed at: <http://world.time.com/2011/07/28/chinas-uighur-problem-one-mans-ordeal-echoes-the-plight-of-a-people/>

⁵ ibid

Israel's refoulement to China⁶ demonstrates a developing attitude towards security issues in Central and East Asia. Personal cases like the one above demonstrate the lengths to which the SCO and its member states will go to regulate civil society, discourse and organization in the pursuit of regional stability. This personal case is the result of Shanghai Cooperation Organization agreements on the *three evils* of "extremism, separatism and terrorism"⁷ and agreements for extradition of subversive individuals to their home states.⁸ It also provides a concrete example of the motivations for the continued security and intelligence growth of the SCO itself. The SCO is growing security functions that are proactive/preventive, anti-terrorist, anti-reformist, and information based. I argue this growth is occurring because SCO member states have a pressing need to repress *three evils* elements like Israel that they perceive as threats to their legitimacy. To demonstrate how the SCO is developing several steps must be taken: First, I will outline the SCO and describe the three broad security functions that make up its new approach. Then I will review the extant literature on the group to contextualize new evidence. Third I will outline my hypothesis as it relates to SCO growth resulting from internal state security concerns. This process will also include a review of normative internal documents to demonstrate what roles the SCO itself prioritizes. Finally I will present new qualitative and quantitative evidence to demonstrate how the SCO has applied its preventive security values. In

⁶ *Regarding my focus:* This work clearly seeks to demarcate the growing boundaries of SCO security/intelligence operations and capacity. It also seeks to explain this growth through regional realities of instability, ethno-religious conflict, democratic uprising, labor unrest and military conflict. While various examples and case studies can help us in this regard, I will primarily focus on the People's Republic of China and its recent experiences with domestic security issues to elucidate my points. I do this for several important reasons: (a) I am a student of Chinese politics and institutions. (b) China is a principle player and creator of the SCO. Chinese elites consider the "Three Evils" to be rampant in Central Asia and their own Xinjiang province the SCO is considered critical as an insulator to allow free application of what many external observers would see as controversial policy measures (see Du, Yan and Qi, Bin. "Xiong Guangkai Says Shanghai Cooperation Organization Has Bright Future," from *Beijing Zhongguo Xinwen She* in Chinese, 17 August 2004, FBIS Document ID: CPP20040817000197). See my "Functional Approach and China Focus" section for more details.

⁷ Kissenkoetter, Michelle. Knaute, David. Rizk, Vanessa . "Shanghai Cooperation Organisation: a vehicle for human rights violations." International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH). August, 2012. http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/sco_report.pdf. 5

⁸ Ibid.

light of these security developments it is important to explain (1) how an organization can be fundamentally/primarily security oriented but repeatedly “fail” in this regard according to a Western rubric, (2) problematize this “failure” viewpoint with normative documents and new data from the SCO, and (3) speculate as to what SCO behavior implies regarding the future of its member regimes. This will allow for a re-visioning of the SCO as an organization linking member states to provide security activities designed to prevent the *three evils* of Separatism, Extremism and Terrorism in the region. The SCO provides an important case study into both Chinese foreign policy and Asian internationalism through its unique design and obligations.

A Regional Watchdog with Prevention Functions:

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is a relatively young grouping of states in Europe, Central and East Asia. The SCO began life as the Shanghai Five in 1996, providing an avenue for shared security cooperation between China, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. With the addition of Uzbekistan in 2001 the modern-form SCO was born. The SCO is a critical institution to the global system for demographic and structural reasons. Its member states account for 60% of the land mass of Eurasia and a quarter of the world population.⁹ Including observer states the SCO accounts for half the world population. Formed to normalize and securitize border relations, the grouping has served as a forum for dialogue since its creation. The defining doctrinal security focus is on addressing the *three evils* of Separatism, Terrorism and Extremism. Formational documents of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization indicate a shared security regime that is highly concerned with both religious extremism and popular unrest.

⁹ Ed: Zhang Jingya. "Backgrounder: SCO Anti-Terror 10 Years." CCTV English. June 15th, 2012. <http://english.cntv.cn/program/newshour/20110615/107321.shtml>

The Organization has tried to cast a wide net, incorporating Mongolia as an observer state in 2004 and Iran, Pakistan, and India the following year. The SCO signed a memorandum of understanding with ASEAN and the Commonwealth of Independent States in 2005. Cooperative war games have also been a part of the SCO from an early period. 2003 marks the first cooperative war game in Kazakhstan and China. In 2004 the Regional Antiterrorism Structure (RATS) was established to combat the *three evils*. In 2005 Russia and China teamed up for the first "Peace Mission" war game. These are repeated and 2007 saw another cooperative war game designed to fight terrorism and reverse a "color revolution". War games were repeated in 2009, and Peace Mission 2010 had participation from all members except Uzbekistan.

From the outset an ostensible driving motivation for the Organization has always been shared security.¹⁰ Interventionist legacies between Russia and the smaller member states and conservative doctrine within SCO states on intervention have molded a grouping reticent to engage in state building or regime change. This trend is quickly spotted within SCO foundational literature.¹¹ The membership of the SCO clearly value international sovereignty norms. Tacking down what the SCO *is not* will show that doctrinally the Organization is concerned with prevention over intervention, anti-unrest over cooperative intervention. The intelligence paradigm within the Organization has changed significantly since the middle 2000's.¹² The focus of these efforts elucidates much of the intention of the group. Economic growth is certainly an important part of any regional framework, but it is important to remember existential threats are

¹⁰ SCO Whitepaper. "APPENDIX A: Key Normative Documents of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization." <http://www.hrichina.org/sites/default/files/oldsite/PDFs/Reports/SCO/2011-HRIC-SCO-Whitepaper-AppendixA-SCO-Docs.pdf>. 129.

¹¹ SCO Whitepaper. 130.

¹² See: Allison, Roy 479 for claims that intelligence sharing was quite low initially.

prioritized by states. Such threats also demonstrate the motivation for increasing capacity. As Jefferson Turner points out:

*The SCO communiqués contain the tenets of Chinese foreign policy expression, which reflects its large contribution to its leadership within the SCO. Beijing's actions within the SCO framework should be considered as part of an overall long-term strategy supporting its economic security. In this vein, the stability, security and development of the Central Asian states are prerequisites for its overall national security strategy.*¹³

Stability, security and development can also be posited as central to the security strategy of the Central Asian states and Russia as well. All member states in the grouping share concerns over internal security threats. In one sense trans-border groups, arms/drugs trading, ethnic tensions and other issues all pose real threats to regimes involved in Central Asia. These problems clearly interface with domestic issues but are not necessarily contained within one set of borders. Simultaneously states in the SCO face myriad challenges to legitimacy and are therefore reticent to cede sovereignty to a supranational. Thus, it is clear that the SCO largely prefers a "soft" emphasis of fighting terrorism over any attempt at true multilateral intervention over traditional strategic objectives.¹⁴

Literature review:

Existing literature on the SCO can be collated into three broad categories. First amongst these is the neoconservative-policy camp exemplified by Ariel Cohen and Fredrick Stakelbeck. These analyses emerged in the mid to late 2000's from think tanks and policy groups like the Heritage Foundation and purport to convey the underlying geopolitical threat of the SCO. It is

¹³ Turner, Jefferson. "Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Paper Tiger or Regional Powerhouse?" Naval Postgraduate School Thesis, September 2005. Monterey, CA. 77.

¹⁴ Allison, Roy. "Regionalism, regional structures and security management in Central Asia." *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), Vol. 80, No. 3, Regionalism and the Changing International Order in Central Eurasia (May, 2004). Published by: Blackwell Publishing on behalf of the Royal Institute of International Affairs. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3569020>. 479.

from this camp the ubiquitous “NATO of the East”¹⁵ and “New Warsaw Pact”¹⁶ memes have emerged to describe the grouping. This perspective shows an “inside the beltway” military/policy approach concerned with geopolitical balancing issues in Central Asia. Focus on security largely takes a heavily military approach instead of a broad-based conceptualization of security issues. Stakelbeck primarily utilizes the Pentagon’s 2005 report on the Chinese military, extrapolating this information to imply a growing threat to US forces in Central Asia and the Middle East. His work demonstrates a grand strategy/military conflict approach and conceptual framework:

*If an attack by the SCO on U.S. forces stationed in Central Asia and the Middle East did occur, the combined armies of China, Russia, and Iran would provide a formidable adversary. Add India, Pakistan and several smaller Central Asian states into the fray and you have all the necessary ingredients of an unparalleled military conflict.*¹⁷

While such unsupported speculation is of limited social science value, “A New Bloc Emerges” demands inclusion here due to its relative popularity and accessibility. This article is still high on the list of results that emerges when a curious individual searches for the SCO. Such gray literature also plays a critical role in establishing the dominant strain of U.S. discussion of the SCO. This paradigm of analysis begins with unrealistic military/security claims, and is then followed by dissection of how the SCO has actually failed to realize such lofty goals. Finally, work dismissing the SCO as a “security failure” can be promulgated. A central goal of my work here is to problematize the original unrealistic claims that have emerged in SCO scholarship;

¹⁵ Cohen, Ariel. “The Dragon Looks West: China and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Heritage Lectures.” Heritage Foundation. No. 961 Delivered August 3, 2006 September 7, 2006. 1.

¹⁶ Stakelbeck, Fredrick W. Jr. “A New Bloc Emerges?” The American Thinker, August 5, 2005. http://www.americanthinker.com/2005/08/a_new_bloc_emerges.html.

¹⁷ Ibid.

these claims have not come from within the SCO/SCO member states. Ariel Cohen takes a slightly more rigorous approach to applying Neoconservative ultra-Realism to the subject, but still largely falls into the first “unrealistic claims” stage of this process. Cohen speaks of a “vast” security agenda for the SCO and a Chinese policy focused on “creating a new Eurasian order to reduce U.S. military power and limit America’s democracy promotion abroad.”¹⁸ Sourcing for such claims is still sparse but “The Dragon Looks West” goes further in providing logical foundation for concern. Cohen makes some salient claims for concern regarding Sino-Russian cooperation in maritime war games, but even here fails to truly connect such operations to the SCO itself. Overall these works are excellent examples of narratives designed to set the boundaries of discussion on the SCO in perplexingly polarized terms and within very traditional ideas of security.

Progressing to more nuanced items in the literature demonstrates not all domestic policy-oriented work has been neoconservative in outlook. I will classify this literature as the academic-policy perspective. This perspective differs from the neoconservative-policy camp largely in its reticence to approach the issue from a prearranged theoretical conclusion. Work in this modality attempts to build theory based on a wide array of measurable economic data and includes a more rigorous examination of internal processes. Jefferson E. Turner’s Thesis from the Naval Postgraduate School is an example of this more nuanced approach that aims to outline broad functions of the SCO in the region. Turner is concerned primarily with the degree to which the real picture of the organization is different than the abstract conceptualization pushed by others. He classifies the SCO as a dysfunctional regime concerned with putting down revolutionary upheaval (but does so primarily by examining domestic realities in member states). Turner also

¹⁸ Cohen, Ariel. 1–2.

argues China's participation in the organization is "driven" by long term energy needs.¹⁹ This perspective does much to enlighten us as to the great power relations driving policy in Central Asia, but fails to acknowledge the frequent emphasis on security and cooperative defense from within member states.²⁰ Turner's work contributes more to our current understanding by demonstrating that the security needs of the SCO may not be what the neoconservative camp claims; however, Turner still regards the SCO as fundamentally a security failure or underperformer. Despite these concerns, the academic-policy perspective grants a more nuanced perspective on security functionality in the SCO while introducing economic data on the grouping as a key metric for analysis. Analysis like that conducted by Turner allows for a broader conceptualization of security that may include economic and soft power variables as well.

Turner also notes that the SCO "in its totality" should not be considered a defensive alliance oriented towards the US.²¹ Here he departs significantly from the neoconservative-policy camp's high awareness of security threats vis a vis the United States. Turner's thesis was generated from within the Naval Postgraduate School and he was a Major in the United States Air Force at the time it was written. Despite this, the thesis is a strong example of the academic-policy mode because of its increased rigor and objectivity. This perspective rejects knee-jerk reactions in favor of a careful unpacking of discursive sources from multiple parties. Scholars such as Roger McDermott also seem to fall somewhat into this perspective. McDermott's analysis in "The Rising Dragon: SCO Peace Mission 2007" has significantly more social science value than contemporary neoconservative work. However, he still maintains the discussion

¹⁹ Turner, Jefferson. "Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Paper Tiger or Regional Powerhouse?" Naval Postgraduate School Thesis, September 2005. Monterey, CA. Pg. V.

²⁰ Support of this can be found through Turner. On page 103 he notes: "China views the SCO as more of an international economic regime rather than a defensive alliance or a 'concert' system."

²¹ Turner, Jefferson. 105.

should primarily concern the SCO's potential to "challenge the West" and focuses largely on the degree to which the 2007 war games may indicate an increased desire to counter NATO and Western forces in Central Asia. Turner and McDermott are both limited by a lack of normative analysis and do not take their security claims perhaps as far as is necessary. However, both are able to compile a comparatively thorough look at the SCO at a time when the Cohen/Stakelbeck model was quite popular. Even partially unpacking regional issues demonstrates the likelihood of a true NATO-style military alliance to be quite low. In this sense much of the value of the academic-policy perspective is that it simply dispels the exaggerated claims of its contemporaries. Its primary limitations are the lack of analysis of why and how such an organization still performs security functions and is primarily seen as a security grouping in its region. Such a discussion entails examination of normative frameworks and data to a greater degree.

I will call the third grouping the liberal-international perspective because it focuses largely on human rights and classical liberal values as they relate to the SCO. This category includes important documents released by Human Rights in China and The Hague Netherlands Institute of International Relations. These documents are grouped in the liberal-international perspective largely based on similar research design goals. This group tends towards questions of behavior, and these documents seek to understand the role of the SCO in a more inductive manner. In this regard they are similar to Turner's work, but are lacking in specific US-military or policy connections. The HRIC document provides the most polemic "liberal values" assessment of the SCO, frequently (and fairly) criticizing its role in propping up regional regimes with less-than-stellar records in governance. These works share a desire to paint a picture of the SCO as it relates to human rights and development in Central Asia. In this regard the Liberal-international grouping is ultimately concerned with demonstrating how the Organization is a tool

of powerful local elites who are nevertheless frequently challenged by domestic and trans-national threats. This grouping may also make explicit claims and recommendations for regional and non-regional actors as to how to better approach these key issues. The liberal-international perspective interfaces well with Turner and McDermott to establish a strong domestic-security focus within SCO member states. In this way they help set the groundwork for a more radical shift in understanding authoritarian regimes' views of security. This perspective has also been instrumental in my own theory-building regarding an inclusion of human rights issues into the security focus of the SCO.

The fourth categorization we will deal with briefly is the native or emic Chinese-policy modality. This perspective is highly interesting for its window into the formation and operation of the SCO. Study of the Organization has taken on a more institutionalized role in China, and several elite Chinese universities have programs dedicated to studying the group. As far as discerning the functions of the Organization, these types of sources offer some advantages over Western perspectives. This disparity is particularly notable when juxtaposing Chinese scholarship to the neoconservative grouping. Obviously, often the drawback with these sources is the often explicit pro-Party bias. Du Yan and Qi Bin's "Xiong Guangkai Says Shanghai Cooperation Organization Has Bright Future" from 2004 falls in this mixed category. Work by Pan Guang, the Director of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Studies Center in Shanghai is perhaps a more nuanced pro-China example. In his section of SIPRI Policy Paper No. 17 Pan opines that the SCO must facilitate "cooperation in the struggle against trans-border menaces", "deepening security cooperation", and finding "breakthroughs in economic cooperation".²² Scholars from the liberal-international school would certainly take issue with Pan classifying democratic-leaning mass movements as trans-border menaces, but these proposals are worth

²² SIPRI 50, 56.

noting in light of their intended audience and policy goals. Pan's proposals stand out because they are emic or internal recommendations on how to facilitate improved roles for the Organization. This type of literature is valuable because it can shed some light on where the SCO wants to "go next". Needless to say, domestic journalistic sources from the PRC (People's Daily, etc.) also obviously fall into this category but are of significantly less utility. Perhaps the most interesting "take away" from this category is the overt concern Chinese sources convey for trans-national terrorism, further supporting a non-conventional understanding of security issues.

The fifth and most interesting division is what I will term the theory building-perspective. This generation of literature falls somewhat later than the previous two and comprises much of the research currently being undertaken in the field. The theory builders are also the beneficiaries of the conflicts and debates of the previous groupings outlined. Stephen Aris is perhaps the most compelling example of this element of the field. Aris' work finds a middle ground between multiple policy polarities and rejects both overly supportive and hyper-critical viewpoints. Aris starts his analysis from a more inductive space and his work attempts to make more nuanced and careful comparisons to preexisting institutions. For example, he eschews a "NATO of the East" metaphor for one comparing RATS to Interpol.²³ This grouping also places high value on Chinese normative beliefs and distinguishes between security and military functions. The theory-building perspective has so far provided the most fulfilling analysis of the SCO.

Emilian Kavalski's "Shanghaied into Cooperation: Framing China's Socialization of Central Asia" is exemplary of another pole in the literature that is more inclusive of normative provisions and influences but does not focus exclusively on the SCO itself. Kavalski's departure from other research comes largely by way of emphasis on the PRC's increasing normative power

²³ Aris, Stephen. "The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation: 'Tackling the Three Evils'. A Regional Response to Non-traditional Security Challenges or an Anti-Western Bloc?" *Europe-Asia Studies*. Vol. 61, No. 3, May 2009. 470.

in the Central Asian region. His analysis unpacks the “sphere of influence” of the Chinese state and convincingly argues that Beijing has made inroads into formerly Soviet territory. He uses the SCO to exemplify this process of expansion. Kavalski also claims there has been extensive adoption of Chinese norms in Central Asian states since the fall of the USSR. Like Aris, his addition to the literature is fundamentally positing SCO activity based on observation (as opposed to pure “case study” comparative work like the neoconservative school or overarching survey of SCO history as in the academic policy group). Kavalski utilizes the SCO as an example of a theoretical approach regarding Chinese policy that stresses holistic soft power and economic interdependence. Kavalski is interested in constructively looking at Chinese influence growth in Central Asia and uses the SCO as a part of his argument. His work represents significant steps forward in the field due to its nuanced analysis of subjective and normative issues that had slipped under the radar. I assign such work the subset of the theory-building perspective for the simple reason that it seeks to induce more accurate explanations built on a more rigorous case study approach. It also eschews ideology for inductivity and is open to incorporating data from a variety of non-english sources.

Summarizing this diverse work is necessary for developing a practical baseline for a state of the field in SCO studies. Scholarship on the SCO, especially in the West, is still inchoate and underdeveloped in critical ways. The corpus of literature on the SCO is comparatively quite small. This is especially true in security studies where the lion’s share of US scholarship revolves around maritime disputes. Academic observation of the intersection between China and Central Asia is still in many ways having its boundaries set. Even the preceding overview of foci and method in the discussion of the SCO has yet to be fully articulated. Within China there has been more institutional investigation of the organization; yet, this analysis does largely exhibit a

corruption-relevance bias that makes it difficult to discern what is actually occurring within the SCO. My interest in exploring the organization is informed by a desire to more fully understand exactly what this slightly enigmatic group has accomplished so far. The discourse has oscillated between the polarities I have outlined exactly because of the degree of obfuscation present in SCO activities. Methodology is also typically limited to unpacking a standard list of normative documents and established authors. Further exploration of primary sources and data aggregation are necessary for clarity on SCO related issues. The relative paucity of information on the SCO is a significant explanation for the varied perspective on its functionality.

Comparing this study to the extant discourse illustrates several departures. Differences from neoconservative analyses are relatively obvious and primarily stem from a fundamental difference in reading of SCO functions. This grouping is the most explicit in its theory-proving bias and seeks to fit a square SCO peg into a round NATO/Warsaw pact hole. My functional model is concerned with real behavior and is uninvolved with military planning or U.S. grand doctrine in Asia. This model also departs from the academic-policy perspective in several critical respects. Primarily I argue the SCO is not as generally dysfunctional as this grouping asserts. I also see Chinese participation as driven first and foremost by security concerns, not economic ones. There has yet to be a satisfactory China-centric analysis that focuses from the appropriate normative foundation and seeks to infer what the SCO means for Chinese policy more broadly. Nor is there satisfactory analysis of how the PRC/CCP views the SCO vis a vis security.

The liberal-international perspective contributes valuable information thanks in large part to its skepticism of SCO member-state claims. The lens of human rights and governance failure is an important connector to what SCO policies may engender in the lives of people in the region. However, writing in this grouping certainly has its own overt agenda and focus. Analysis in this

group often ends up more as a working paper broadly outlining the SCO than an academic analytic piece. Liberal-international publications seek to demonstrate that the normative foundational documents of the SCO indicate it will become/has become an abuser of human rights. This addition to the literature is critical to my own assertions regarding security because it is in many respects these (human rights infringing) functions I wish to co-opt into security performance. In other words I believe the academic-policy/neoconservative camps and the liberal-international camp both miss the significance of human rights infringing behavior for opposing reasons. The academic-policy/neoconservative camps see security as exclusively grand strategy and *military* based. Liberal-internationalists see these functions as falling solely into *human rights* territory. I have observed that to the authoritarian/insecure states that comprise the SCO, human rights issues are largely indistinguishable from security issues.

Differences between the functional model and Chinese policy oriented work are more self-evident. Although I place high relative value on these Chinese language sources (especially compared to many American security oriented approaches) I also reject their explicit proscriptive advice supporting the Chinese state. In this sense much of the internal discussion and method of such work is highly valuable while the conclusions and analysis are deeply suspect.

I differ from Aris and the theory-builders in more subtle ways. This grouping seems thus far to be comprised almost solely of this author, and I have found little else that approaches his viewpoint. Aris critiques the SCO in a more pragmatic manner and seems to carry less observation bias perhaps due to his relatively objective position in Western Europe. As mentioned previously his work is in some ways the most helpful of any grouping listed here. Critically I believe new source material can counter Aris' claims that the SCO has yet to prove it is an "effective tool" for addressing non-traditional threats in Central Asia (but I believe he is on

to something in focusing on this kind of security threat). The primary documents I have reviewed here seem to strongly indicate that the SCO has demonstrated effectiveness. Likewise claims that the SCO has primarily only engaged in “goal setting” and has not applied funding to concrete objectives are becoming less accurate. I differ from Kavalski’s work through utilization of the SCO as the main object of my study in the hopes of understanding more about the organization and Chinese foreign policy in general. I am more interested in unpacking security performance in the SCO and Chinese influence in the region as a whole is a related but tangential issue. More simply, Kavalski’s work focuses on the SCO growth as a case study of Chinese soft power in Central Asia while the functional model looks at organizational security growth. More broadly, work that focuses on Chinese diplomacy in an objective manner has often missed the connection between the *three evils* doctrine and the PRC/CCP.²⁴ Diplomatic sources are now available to add improved clarity to the discussion of SCO behavior. Finally, large N studies of member state treatment of the SCO provides another unexplored route for exploration.

Defining the Functional Model and a Chinese Focus:

Despite claims of a "NATO of the East"²⁵ or an "Eastern Warsaw Pact"²⁶ the SCO is of course its own organization. Inductive study of the SCO on terms related to the culture and politics of its member states, instead of a Western rubric, illuminates the potential successes of its proactive, preventive approach. As Jörg Friedrich's states in his work on ASEAN: "It will be worthwhile, for a change, to try and see how regionalism works for East Asian elites, rather than stretching Western analytical frameworks and normative commitments to fit a regional political

²⁴ See the SIPRI analysis, 49–50.

²⁵ Cohen, Ariel. “The Dragon Looks West: China and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Heritage Lectures.” Heritage Foundation. No. 961 Delivered August 3, 2006 September 7, 2006. 1.

²⁶ Stakelbeck, Fredrick W. Jr. “A New Bloc Emerges?” The American Thinker, August 5, 2005. http://www.americanthinker.com/2005/08/a_new_bloc_emerges.html.

context where they hardly apply."²⁷ This perspective is one I mirror when asserting that the SCO is growing in security, intelligence and legal modalities. By denoting specifically the means by which the SCO is growing, real security agendas are illuminated. To facilitate this discussion it is important to define the three modes of security behavior mentioned above, as they are somewhat outside traditional definitions of military security studies. (a) The SCO has demonstrated an overarching interest in *security functions*, in this context functions by which an international institution can promote state security and stability. This updated definition of security takes into account developments in media, communication, warfare and unrest to suggest that states are concerned with a broad portfolio of state-strengthening activities. Such functions in my perspective run the gamut from training or arming troops or militarized police to full-scale Libya-like operations between multiple vested actors.²⁸ The SCO has demonstrated a growing interest in and ability to conduct such *functions of a specific and limited type*. These functions within the SCO seem to fall almost entirely within a Chinese anti-terror (*anti-three evils*) paradigm.²⁹ This growth demonstrates real production from the SCO vis a vis security, and this specific type of outcome should logically be connected to pressing security issues within SCO states. Since SCO states face ethno-religious, labor, human rights and democratic/popular unrest, much of the security posture of the grouping is towards these issues. Abandoning the search for a fully-mature security bloc we are free to examine real claims and behaviors of the group. These are overwhelmingly directed at grassroots action in a preemptive, preventative mode.

²⁷ Friedrichs, Jörg. "East Asian Regional Security." *Asian Survey*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (July/August 2012), University of California Press. Accessed at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/as.2012.52.4.754>. 756.

²⁸ An initial catalyst for my research on this organization is the oft-repeated assertion that because the SCO lacks such large-scale operational capabilities (or has not conducted such operations in the past), it is a "failure" regarding security issues or lacks security functions entirely. I would refute such a claim by pointing to the large spectrum of security functions available to an international organization.

²⁹ See Cable: 08Tashkent763.

(b) The second critical category of growth within the grouping is one regarding *intelligence functions*. By this I refer to the capacity for an organization to collect, analyze and share data but also to produce and distribute information. Intelligence functions interface with security functions, and as such data on individuals and actors deemed threatening by the SCO (the Ershidin Israills of the world) must also be considered securitized from the SCO perspective. SCO member states view access to information as fundamental to state viability and sustainability, and actions focused on information are equally subject to international oversight. Intelligence functionality has fittingly seen extensive growth since the founding of the Organization. Primarily it is important to note how the SCO has continually sought to coordinate information across borders to prevent subversive groups and individuals from goal achievement and organization.

(c) Finally, the legal (or extra-legal) framework being constructed by the SCO is of some interest here as it interfaces with both security and intelligence modes. Increasingly human rights groups and third parties have decried the SCO's disregard for standard international law regarding refugees and political dissidents.³⁰ To a western observer such issues would fall squarely inside human rights research and relate little to security studies. However, increased focus on refolement and extra-legal extradition are part of a larger SCO-wide strategy to focus on elimination of domestic unrest and subversive activity. These actions are not simply conducted to retard human rights in the region; they represent attempts at mitigating existential threats to SCO states. Through the *three evils* paradigm first constituted by the PRC to address its own domestic concerns in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region human rights issues have become inseparable from security issues within the SCO. The security function of the grouping

³⁰Kissenkoetter, Michelle. Knaute, David. Rizk, Vanessa . "Shanghai Cooperation Organisation: a vehicle for human rights violations." International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH). August, 2012. Accessed at: http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/sco_report.pdf. 4–8.

inevitably includes human rights issues as they are conceptualized in the West. Connecting security and human rights is an initial step to understanding how the SCO has continued to focus and grow its security and intelligence functions. Reassessing the border between human rights and security studies plays a fundamental theoretical role in this project. In the case of the SCO, such distinctions are largely irrelevant and represent another projection of Western values. By assuming the role of a regional government we can see such human rights issues are fundamentally questions of stability.

Table 2:
Design and Goals

	<i>Domestic Security Co-op</i>	<i>Economic Growth</i>	<i>Information Sharing (Military)</i>	<i>International Legal Framework</i>	<i>Cooperative Counterterrorism Strikes</i>	<i>Cooperative Conflict Engagement</i>	<i>Shop Talk/Trust Building</i>
SCO	+	+	+	+	+/-	x	+
CSTO	+	x	+/-	x	+/-	x	+
ARF	+	x	+	x	x	x	+
NATO	+	x	+	+	+	+	+

x = no emphasis; +/- = modest emphasis or emphasis claimed but unclear; + = emphasis

Growth in the SCO's ability to accomplish security and intelligence goals would be an important development for several reasons. (a) Perhaps most important amongst these is the reality that such growth would be occurring outside of more established organizations. As I argue here, growth in anti-terror activities, information, training, secret police cooperation and strikes would represent significant evolution for the security realities of the Central Asian region. (b) SCO security/intelligence growth would represent new realities in the legal realm. Extra-legal extradition and refoulement of political refugees has already been set as precedent within the SCO framework.³¹ Such growth shows a shift in how SCO states interact with international law.

³¹Kissenkoetter, Michelle. Knaute, David. Rizk, Vanessa . "Shanghai Cooperation Organisation: a vehicle for human rights violations." International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH). August, 2012. Accessed at: http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/sco_report.pdf. 4–8.

(c) Data from within the SCO indicates greatly increasing trans-national cooperation between state security services (so called “Special Services” in SCO literature).³² Such cooperation does not represent an international collusion of militaries (as has often been fretted over), but it does demonstrate a desire by SCO states to internationalize policies addressing unrest, terrorism, and narco-trafficking. (d) Increasingly it appears the SCO is involved in some hands-on capacity in strikes against “terrorist” groups. Wording from within the Organization has been vague, but SCO officials mention anti-terror operations as a high priority and a point of pride. Such engagement would indicate another important growth area and further confirm internationalization of cooperation. (e) A related area of growth is security/military cross-training between states. This often takes the form of Central Asian states being trained and supplied by the People’s Republic of China. This Chinese-led training and security mentorship is indicative of growing PRC soft power in Inner Asia. (f) Finally, the much scrutinized Peace Missions and cooperative war games conducted under SCO auspices must also be mentioned. Again, while many western observers have been quick to lament these operations as harbingers of a new world order/ a complete waste of time, a more realistic goal is likely. These operations have in recent years often taken the form of explicitly “anti-color revolution” control operations as well as anti-terrorism campaigns.³³ SCO membership is clearly quite concerned with asymmetric warfare, and pressing domestic security concerns exist for practically all its membership.

The SCO security discourse seems to fall very much in the early stages of data collection and theory development. Finding longitudinal data of all types on the grouping seems a

³² See Cable: 08Tashkent763 and SCO Whitepaper. "APPENDIX A: Key Normative Documents of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization." Accessed at: <http://www.hrichina.org/sites/default/files/oldsite/PDFs/Reports/SCO/2011-HRIC-SCO-Whitepaper-AppendixA-SCO-Docs.pdf>. Accessed Dec. 10th, 2011. 129–134.

³³ See Zhao Huasheng (Director of Fudan University's Center for Russia and Central Asia Studies and concurrently Director of Fudan's own separate Center for SCO studies) in 09Shanghai329, and Kucera, Joshua. “Russia ‘Increasingly Distrustful’ of SCO” <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/66643>. March 5, 2013, for examples of how these Peace Missions have shifted towards anti-terrorism.

frustrating but critical next step. Bennet and George refer to this early period of field development as critical because it “refines concepts” and can help “identify relevant variables.”³⁴ Part of my intention in forming this research project is to help elucidate further these critical concepts and variables that appear increasingly to come into play on the SCO issue. In the sense of security I believe the data sources I have analyzed help in this variable identification process. What do we mean when we speak of SCO security issues? What does the SCO see as its security purview? What do critical member states like China see as the SCO’s security role? It is clear such questions can only be answered by first establishing a working definition of how the SCO/SCO member states appear to define security. To do this I have chosen to use an inductive, functional approach that is formed from the groupings normative/foundational documents. My observations of data have consistently corroborated this broader definition of security as being of interest to the organization and its membership.

This variable identification process must arise from inductive use of available data and not from convenient ideological appeal. In this sense the theory-building school has done commendable work in discerning some of the factors really influencing the group, but more can be added. The SCO has received little large N statistical analysis in regards to security behavior, and much of the qualitative work is heavy on recycling old data. I have endeavored to remedy this using qualitative work on new information and a relatively large N quantitative media analysis. Observation of these sources fits well with using a working definition of security. The qualitative and quantitative data I outline in the following sections all lead to a conclusion that to the SCO, and to China, security concerns are in a practical sense extremely fluid, adaptable and

³⁴ George, Alexander. Bennett, Andrew. “Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences.” The MIT Press, 2005. 20.

ad hoc. This functional security model is established thoroughly by the SCO's foundational literature and corroborated by both qualitative and quantitative findings.

This functional security model has also emerged out of analysis on existing "theory proving" papers. Much of the previous work on the SCO can be typified by a strong desire to fit the SCO within existing conceptual boundaries for international organizations.³⁵ This desire is to some extent present across the literary spectrum. While the most flagrant of these approaches is epitomized by the "neoconservative" camp, it is by no means confined to that grouping. Much of the previous literature also concerns itself with a comparative mode of questioning how the organization "stacked up" to Western or global expectations for institutions. While such questions are important forays into understanding they restrict how readers conceptualize the SCO. This perspective ultimately leads an observer to wonder why the grouping does not behave in accordance with its foundational expectations (as conceptualized by Western scholarship). Through the three types of observation I have conducted quite different realities appear more likely. My observations indicate that the SCO is in fact performing well *in accordance with its own design*. A simple reading of the foundational documentation of the group quickly gives a shortlist of goals and functions to look for. By actually using these goals as a judgment metric it is possible to remove much of the *apparent* dissonance between claims and behavior in the organization. In other words my objective is to eschew convenient preexisting models of institutions for the functional working model based off the SCO itself. This functional model seeks to explain how an organization can be fundamentally/primarily security oriented but repeatedly "fail" in this regard according to a Western rubric. It answers this conundrum by problematizing the false equivalency of comparison between the SCO and western institutions,

³⁵ See: "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Towards a full-grown security alliance?" for The Hague Netherlands Institute of International Relations, are salient examples of this literature.

as well as traditional definitions of security. Self-interested and insecure states would not engage in a security framework without positive security results. As such it is logical to inductively assess how these states *define* security and thus how they define security outcomes. Using this theoretical base I provide value added to the field through new qualitative data and quantitative coincidence analysis from official media. This illuminates that SCO officials and the powerful PRC/CCP focus on counter terrorism and corroborates both the normative documents of the organization and current scholarship on the group.³⁶ Importantly the Chinese state shares a similar view of the security utility of the grouping. With this established a redefinition of security in an SCO context becomes critical to understanding the organization.

Here a discussion of my focus on China is also necessary. I have chosen to approach the SCO and security through a Chinese lens for several reasons. First and foremost it is critical to focus methodologically from a pole inclusive of emic SCO political norms. Work in an exclusively strong Realist vein largely ignores important regional factors within the organization that clearly impact its behavior. Much has been made of the importance of China to the SCO (and vice versa) and I would agree with these assessments that China is a prime player in the group.³⁷ Ideologically the security policy of the SCO follows Chinese norms centered on the *three evils*. Scholars have also noted China is increasingly a key state within the SCO for pragmatic reasons.³⁸ Analysts like Joshua Kucera approach the SCO as strongly dominated by

³⁶ Kucera, Joshua. "Russia 'Increasingly Distrustful' of SCO" <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/66643>. March 5, 2013.

³⁷ Emphasis on the Chinese perspective is apparent across the spectrum of SCO scholarship. Importantly, I am not interested here in descending the rabbit hole of just how important China is to the grouping. Clearly delineating the distribution of influence between China, Russia and the smaller states strikes me as an interesting arena for discussion, but also a question without an answer at this juncture of SCO history. For my purposes it is enough to note that the PRC is one of the most influential actors in the grouping, and is arguably the most influential. For this reason alone I believe a Chinese approach is justified.

³⁸ See: Turner, Jefferson. "Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Paper Tiger or Regional Powerhouse?" Naval Postgraduate School Thesis, September 2005. Monterey, CA. 74. and Haas, Marcel. Ed., "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Towards a full-grown security alliance?" The Hague Netherlands Institute of

China, but often these claims seem hard to corroborate.³⁹ It is difficult to parse out whether China and Russia is “more dominant” in the SCO, and debate without an answer is one I will largely avoid here. However, critical leadership, resources and normative information are of Chinese origin. The group’s secretariat is located in China, much of its foundational language is lifted wholesale from Chinese Communist Party doctrine, and the Secretary General of the group has always been Chinese (and hailed from high within the Chinese Communist Party). China has been instrumental in all conversations about SCO security policies and donates the most money to the Organization.⁴⁰ The PRC has also promised 10 billion dollar loans to other member states, and has proposed creating a technological and economic fund for the SCO region.⁴¹ China has also (to my knowledge) participated in all the Peace Missions conducted by the SCO. In short the PRC is a prime mover behind the institutional development of the SCO.⁴² At the very least China is one of the two most important members of the group, while at most it is a member without equal. It is also important to note that the creation of a Beijing Secretariat in 2004 is also often noted as the “institutionalization” of the group, and this office acts as a locus for SCO activity and organization.⁴³ This was also the year the Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS) office was formed in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

There is also evidence within the SCO that China has a desire for increased international intervention capacity. A salient example is China’s attempt at using the SCO to respond to the

International Relations. Clingendael Institute, P.O. Box 93080, 2509 AB The Hague, The Netherlands. November 2007. 31.

³⁹ See: Kucera, Joshua. “Russia ‘Increasingly Distrustful’ of SCO” <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/66643>. March 5, 2013.

⁴⁰ Haas, Marcel. Ed., “The Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Towards a full-grown security alliance?” The Hague Netherlands Institute of International Relations. Clingendael Institute, P.O. Box 93080, 2509 AB The Hague, The Netherlands. November 2007. 31.

⁴¹ See “Wen proposes prioritizing SCO regional infrastructure connection” http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-12/05/c_132021646.htm. 2012-12-05

⁴² B. Yu, ‘China and Russia: Normalizing Their Strategic Partnership’ in: D. Shambaugh (Ed), *Power Shift: China and Asia’s New Dynamics*, Berkely. University of California Press, 2005. 236.

⁴³ Ibid.

2004 Kyrgyzstan crisis. A deeper inspection of SCO activity during the unrest demonstrates an attempt at heightened multilateral security involvement. While no definitive multilateral action emerged from the SCO (or the CSTO) in 2004 or 2008, a closer reading of the events establishes that the PRC was interested in using the organization for such purposes.

The fall of the Akayev regime in 2004-2005 elicited concern amongst both Russia and China. However, the response from each state took a markedly different direction. At the highest levels the Tulip Revolution exacerbated the divisions in policy, doctrine and ideology between China and Russia. This conflict is largely responsible for the organization defaulting to taking no action. As it became clear that Akayev regime was falling in the spring of 2005 the SCO/RATS met in Tashkent to discuss options. On March 30th the member states attempted and failed to reach an agreement and no steps forward could be conclusively agreed upon. China and Russia in particular were unable to reach a decision on how to progress. The conflicting camps each had differing ideas of how the SCO and RATS should be involved in such a conflict.⁴⁴ Jefferson Turner notes that the PRC camp in the discussion wished to intervene in the crisis and rescue Chinese nationals from the chaos.⁴⁵ The meeting never coalesced and the revolt continued unabated. The 2005 case seems to demonstrate potential Chinese desires for increased intervention abilities, and perhaps anxiety on the part of Russia at such functions developing. If there were calls from the Chinese contingent to intervene it would represent a real desire on the part of Beijing to see the SCO realize more security functions. Although SCO infrastructure is geared towards addressing terrorism (not rescuing failed states) China still sought to use the

⁴⁴ Tuner. 112-120.

⁴⁵ One Japanese newspaper article cited by Jefferson Turner claims this process was sabotaged by Russia, and that China desired intervention to rescue Chinese nationals. By the 2010 unrest the Chinese were solidly "back" in their anti-intervention position with regards to Kyrgyzstan (where they presumably still had nationals). In depth research into the failure of intervention in 2005 provides an interesting avenue for further study institutional weakness of the organization.

organization for intervention in this circumstance. The first Kyrgyzstan crisis has in retrospect become referred to as the "first test" of the SCO and RATS infrastructure to deal with a real crisis on the ground.⁴⁶ Undoubtedly the result of this test is an organization that has thus far stayed within the bounds of its preventative, anti-*three evils* mandate.

Increasingly Russia seems to prioritize its own Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) over the SCO for military issues in the region.⁴⁷ This kind of split focus would seem to indicate the PRC has more at stake in the SCO project. Russia has pursued bilateral hub and spoke agreements on security/energy/economy goals in Central Asia, while some observers believe China has been more multilateral in its usage of the SCO.⁴⁸ The recent history of military intervention in Central Asia also seems to lend itself to downplaying the Russia role in the SCO (and thus opening space for the PRC). Much of the regions post-Soviet experience is marked by unilateral use of force in lieu of concerted regionalized and shared security projects. This is especially noticeable in how the Russian state has utilized the CSTO and its rapid reaction force. Reaction amongst smaller Central Asian states to the use of the CSTO's use of this force has seemingly not been positive.⁴⁹ This "multilateral" force has fallen to the former hegemon of Russia for implementation, and such intervention (while limited) has not been popular amongst smaller states. A history of such action has left the states wedged between Russia and China in a precarious balancing act of strategy, alignment and bandwagoning. It obviously also impacts the SCO in interesting ways. Anxious of a re-expansionist agenda from Moscow, many smaller state actors in Central Asia are focused on walking the line between two nuclear powers. Events in Tajikistan during Russian "peace keeping" operations there may also influence SCO players to

⁴⁶ Turner, Jefferson. 112.

⁴⁷ Kucera, Joshua. "Russia 'Increasingly Distrustful' of SCO" <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/66643>. March 5, 2013.

⁴⁸ Turner, Jefferson. "Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Paper Tiger or Regional Powerhouse?" Naval Postgraduate School Thesis, September 2005. Monterey, CA. 73.

⁴⁹ Allison, Roy. 467.

push for a framework that downplays true multilateral interventionism. The manner in which Russia dominated and controlled the Commonwealth of Independent States intervention in the Tajik civil war creates a strong bias towards distrusting supposedly regionalized intervention.⁵⁰ A Realist would also quickly conclude such a history would push smaller states closer to China for balancing. For capital poor economies in land-locked Central Asia, picking one state to bandwagon with is typically not an option. As has been widely noted in the discourse the unique balancing and bandwagoning within the SCO leaves open space for smaller states to push their own agendas and objectives, but also indicates the overall ideological and structural weaknesses of the group vis a vis intervention.⁵¹ In terms of my focus, this history also makes important contributions. It demonstrates Russia has multiple institutional investments in the region while China seems to work primarily through the SCO (thus further supporting a Chinese lens on the grouping). Additionally, this recent troubled history, along with China's astronomic rise to world power, would seem to open space for Chinese doctrine and financing.

China's involvement in the grouping mandates a PRC-centric approach. Additionally more technical research motivations for this focus exist. Any current approach to the SCO must be limited in its conceptual focus. The inchoate nature of SCO literature often means analysis takes on an all-encompassing quality. Often scholarship attempts to cover security, energy, economic, and social themes. I will avoid this pitfall by reducing my level of analysis to security behavior and the Chinese perspective in the hopes of digging deeper in a limited scope. Once a focus on security is established the PRC's emphasis on eliminating the "Three Evils" of terrorism,

⁵⁰ Allison, Roy. 470.

⁵¹ Allison, Roy. 478.

separatism and extremism becomes critically important.⁵² Mirroring FIDH, Human Rights in China and Joshua Kucera I accept that much of the anti-terror pressure on SCO policy is China-derived.⁵³ In this sense a China lens seems natural. Thus, my focus centers on Chinese influence in the organization and ramifications as they relate to the PRC.

H1 and Alternative Explanations:

The most salient issue driving the expansion of the SCO in security and intelligence functions is the continued pressure applied by domestic security threats across the organization. *Critically, security and intelligence abilities within the SCO are growing; this growth is both necessitated and demonstrated by domestic security issues across the group's domain.* There are three alternative explanations that I have found unsatisfactory. (a) Some will claim (reasonably) that organizations grow or die; once funding and personnel appropriations are made bureaucracies often continue to amass resources in order to survive. Indeed the primary strength of this argument in this case is the reality that it cannot be fully debunked from any group. Certainly the SCO, like any bureaucratic organ, has gained some measure of self-awareness and will continue to fight for relevance (for relevance-sake). Simultaneously, the weakness of such a position is that it is not mutually exclusive to my claim. Realistically we must view those at the helm of the SCO as three-dimensional human actors with a variety of motivations. Some concerns are for the survival of the SCO and by extension a livelihood. Perhaps these basic considerations are overlaid with complex philosophical, political and even spiritual goals and aspirations for the SCO and its work. None of this particularly rules out domestic security issues

⁵² Haas, Marcel. Ed., "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Towards a full-grown security alliance?" The Hague Netherlands Institute of International Relations. Clingendael Institute, P.O. Box 93080, 2509 AB The Hague, The Netherlands. November 2007. 8.

⁵³ Kucera, Joshua. "Russia 'Increasingly Distrustful' of SCO" <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/66643>. March 5, 2013.

in respective SCO states as a motivation for growth. These institutional factors are also by definition somewhat unknowable in an academic context. (b) A second competing explanation for SCO security/intelligence growth is a perceived weakness of other Organizations in the region. Again, even if we take this at face value there is no mutual exclusivity here. In fact, overall power dynamics in the region are in some sense exactly the conditions I am positing are growing the Organization. The Collective Security Treaty Organization has seemingly been unable to consolidate power and in recent years has even lost membership.⁵⁴ Regional power dynamics seem to have limited this Russian-centric effort but prior to these problems the CSTO seems to have had similar security goals.⁵⁵ Clearly fighting unrest, subversive elements, terrorism, color movements and ethno-religious separatism is a challenge big enough to create responses from multiple organizations.⁵⁶ This would further strengthen an argument proposing it as a security function growth-catalyst within the SCO.

(c) SCO expansion could also presumably be attributed to Chinese economic designs in the region. Again, mutual exclusivity is an assumption in this argument that does not hold. Setting this aside, it is important to examine how the SCO has continually maintained security as a primary goal of the group. From the outset a prime driving motivation for the Organization has always been shared security.⁵⁷ Diplomatic cables and testimony from multiple state perspectives

⁵⁴"Uzbekistan Suspends Its Membership in CSTO". *The Gazette of Central Asia*. 29 June 2012.

⁵⁵ Indeed both organizations signed a cooperation agreement to focus on security, crime, and drug traffic issues in 2007. See: Security alliances led by Russia, China link up, *The Daily Times*. October 06, 2007. http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2007%5C10%5C06%5Cstory_6-10-2007_pg4_3

⁵⁶ Uzbekistan's aversion to Russian designs for "CSTO" troops stationed in Kyrgyzstan under the auspices of a CSTO Collective Rapid Reaction Force could also represent a strong motivation for the SCO to stay away from such an organ at this juncture. See: Tashkent Throws Temper Tantrum over New Russian Base in Kyrgyzstan, *EurasiaNet*, August 3, 2009.

⁵⁷ SCO Whitepaper. "APPENDIX A: Key Normative Documents of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization." Accessed at: <http://www.hrchina.org/sites/default/files/oldsite/PDFs/Reports/SCO/2011-HRIC-SCO-Whitepaper-AppendixA-SCO-Docs.pdf>. Accessed Dec. 10th, 2011. 129, 140.

all assert security to be the primary deliverable expected to emerge from the SCO.⁵⁸ From the creation of the SCO superstructure there have been strong political and security challenges throughout the member-states' territory. These challenges have run the gamut from riots and civil unrest to full blown revolutions. Both prime organizers behind the SCO (China and Russia) face pressing internal security concerns as well. In the PRC there have been mass incidents (of more than 100 people) of 58,000 in 2003, 74,000 in 2004, and 87,000 in 2005.⁵⁹ The Chinese have carried out increasingly brutal campaigns in Xinjiang and Tibet to quell unrest there. These domestic realities give significant insight into the importance Beijing places in combating insurgencies labeled "splittism", "terrorism", etc. and represent the kinds of simmering security threats of concern to SCO member states.^{60 61}

(d) Finally, one could ascribe SCO security/intelligence growth as a reaction to the intrusion of US/NATO forces in Central Asia. While such a thesis would seemingly only augment my own arguments, I will address this concern briefly. Often SCO literature and staff persons mention Afghanistan as a central security concern of regional governments. Apart from the destabilizing effects and border problems caused by Afghanistan's turmoil, neighboring states also have concerns regarding terrorism and drug cartelism jumping borders. Perhaps most critically there is a region-wide concern that the country will become a new base location for American forces long term. Such a development would certainly qualify as a departure from the status quo most obviously enjoyed by Russia and China. Instability in the Central Asia has demonstrated states can and do fail in the region. Popular ethno-religious identity movements

⁵⁸ See Cables 09Beijing973, 08Shanghai413, 09Beijing3252.

⁵⁹ Bovingdon, Gardner. *The Uyghurs, Strangers in Their Own Land*. Columbia University Press, New York. 2010. 111.

⁶⁰ "People's Daily Online - 'Peace Mission 2007'", n.d., Accessed at: <http://english.people.com.cn/90002/91620/91644/6225832.html>.

⁶¹ McDermott, Roger. "The Jamestown Foundation: 'The Rising Dragon: SCO Peace Mission 2007'", n.d., Accessed at: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=32. Oct 19th, 2007. 3-8.

(terrorism, separatism, etc.) have proven competitive with nationalist narratives, and have shown transformative political power. Such movements have the ability to cross borders, incite unrest against central governments, overthrow weak governments and (most nervous-making for Beijing) create an opening for outside powers to exert military power in the name of human rights, democracy and anti-terrorism. In this sense the US/NATO presence in Afghanistan is not necessarily a separate security issue from a Chinese strategic perspective. My argument posits that SCO security/intelligence growth is a growing region-wide concern that trans-national ethno-religious unrest poses an existential threat and must be addressed trans-nationally. One could hardly ask for a better case study than the Taliban's continued success in the Pakistan/Afghanistan border region to demonstrate how this fear is a realistic one for SCO governments. It must also be noted that the roots of the SCO precede current NATO involvement.

The SCO on Its Own Terms- Normative Documents:

Only a very small (and new) subset of SCO literature acknowledges the group as growing in the security realm. This analysis starts by recognizing that shared security is the most difficult function of any supranational. Additionally, the existence of shortcomings in shared security does not necessarily imply zero net security functionality. The expectation that the SCO should be conducting complex interdependent interventions and peacekeeping a dozen years into its existence is perhaps an overbroad and overeager one. This kind of analysis appears to originate primarily from Western authors concerned with the SCO as a military rival. I have already demonstrated how such a position creates inaccurate bias and extrapolation. It is important to look to normative documents and emic assessments to discern how the SCO is living up to realistic standards of security behavior.

Contrasting western scholastic assertion, officials involved with the SCO maintain security as a primary function of the grouping.⁶² The normative documents of the SCO make it immediately clear that the grouping is fundamentally concerned with security issues.⁶³ Regional stability in Inner Asia is increasingly tied to the SCO and its Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) because the Organization has adopted these roles as critical to its mission.⁶⁴ A careful reading of the SCO Charter and major resolutions indicates specific security objectives for the group. Invariably these security goals are focused on addressing low-level violence (violence below full-scale insurgency or civil war), “grassroots” unrest and crisis management. In other words, the SCO claims it is concerned with *preventing* these levels of conflict from escalating into existential threats to its member states. Thus, actors who “threaten the territorial integrity and security of SCO member states and their political, economic, and social stability”⁶⁵ are seen as the prime targets of SCO/RATS security and intelligence operations. The “Concept of Cooperation Between SCO Member States in Combating Terrorism, Separatism, and

⁶²SCO normative documents stress this focus repeatedly. Early on the Declaration for the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization opines: “that the two agreements signed by the five heads of state of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People’s Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan respectively in Shanghai in 1996 and in Moscow in 1997, on confidence-*building in the military sphere* in border areas and on mutual reduction of military forces in the border areas, and the summary documents signed during their meetings in Alma-Ata (1998), Bishkek (1999), Dushanbe (2000), have made important contributions to preserving regional and world peace, *security and stability*, greatly enriched contemporary diplomatic and regional cooperation practices and exerted extensive and positive influence in the international society;” [italics my own].

SCO Whitepaper. "APPENDIX A: Key Normative Documents of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization." Accessed at: <http://www.hrichina.org/sites/default/files/oldsite/PDFs/Reports/SCO/2011-HRIC-SCO-Whitepaper-AppendixA-SCO-Docs.pdf>. Accessed Dec. 10th, 2011. 129.

⁶³ “Firmly believe that against a background of the rapid development of the process of political multipolarization and information globalization in the 21st century, it is conducive to the member states more effectively jointly making use of the opportunities and replying to the new challenges and threats;”

SCO Whitepaper. "APPENDIX A: Key Normative Documents of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization." Accessed at: <http://www.hrichina.org/sites/default/files/oldsite/PDFs/Reports/SCO/2011-HRIC-SCO-Whitepaper-AppendixA-SCO-Docs.pdf>. Accessed Dec. 10th, 2011. 129.

⁶⁴ “SCO member states proceed on the basis that combating terrorism, separatism, and extremism on SCO territory using their own forces has a priority significance.” Ibid.

⁶⁵Ibid.

Extremism”⁶⁶ speaks of a “joint strategy and system of measures for combating terrorism, separatism, and extremism” *as defined by the SCO*.⁶⁷ This supports a conceptualization of security, intelligence and human rights as belonging to a single central principal for the group. Critically, the SCO’s own normative documents show us clearly that the grouping is fundamentally concerned with this type of security/intelligence action, not the type of operations conducted by NATO and others. Critically, “The SCO member states view combating terrorism, separatism, and extremism within the framework of the SCO as a foreign policy objective of the *greatest importance* and consider that the development of additional mechanisms of international cooperation in this area must become an appropriate step in *increasing and modernizing the capacity for swift anti-crisis reaction [...]*”.⁶⁸ I propose that a fair judgment of whether or not the SCO is growing or succeeding in security/intelligence affairs can only be established by examining specifically the values set forth in such documentation. If the SCO claims it is interested in increasing its ability to react to crisis it would behoove us to look at its ability to react to crisis over time. Doing so clearly shows the grouping is becoming more capable.

The “Concept of Cooperation” normative document notes (in a section entitled “Fundamental Forms of Cooperation”) that the first and most critical type of cooperation is

⁶⁶ A resolution passed by the SCO heads of state in 2005, the Concept can be found at: SCO, Концепция сотрудничества государств – членов ШОС в борьбе с терроризмом, сепаратизмом и экстремизмом { *Concept of Cooperation Between SCO Member States in Combating Terrorism, Separatism, and Extremism* }, June 5, 2005, http://www.echrts.com/ru/normative_documents/1558. Unofficial translation from the original Russian by International Federation for Human Rights.

⁶⁷SCO Whitepaper. "APPENDIX A: Key Normative Documents of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization." Accessed at: <http://www.hrichina.org/sites/default/files/oldsite/PDFs/Reports/SCO/2011-HRIC-SCO-Whitepaper-AppendixA-SCO-Docs.pdf>. Accessed Dec. 10th, 2011. 166.

⁶⁸ SCO Whitepaper. "APPENDIX A: Key Normative Documents of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization." Accessed at: <http://www.hrichina.org/sites/default/files/oldsite/PDFs/Reports/SCO/2011-HRIC-SCO-Whitepaper-AppendixA-SCO-Docs.pdf>. Accessed Dec. 10th, 2011. 167.

“1. *Conducting concerted preventive activities*”.⁶⁹ This type of claim supports Stephen Aris’ assertions that the SCO is in fact relatively active in the Central Asian region at large in that it is approaching systemic weaknesses within member states. The realities are stark; many Central Asian states have existed for only a few decades, several regional regimes have recently qualified as “failed”, and the region as a whole has seen once-in-a-century great power shifts *twice* in the past 20 years.⁷⁰ From this viewpoint the assertion that the SCO is solving problems of importance to the region holds significant weight. Looking for unrealistic multilateral behavior and declaring failure when no such evidence is found is a meaningless exercise derived from a flawed comparative model. The SCO’s own design clearly specifies a series of non-military security and intelligence behaviors.

Unsurprisingly, Chinese scholars involved with studying the SCO affirm the conclusion that the SCO has a security future. Yuan Peng (Director of the Ministry of State Security-affiliated China Institute of Contemporary International Relations) has said that China views the SCO as “important for combating the *three evils* and for creating a ‘buffer zone’” in Central Asia.^{71 72} This type of assessment is common amongst Chinese scholars and shows the strong support for securitizing the region via the SCO.⁷³ Policy advisers and intellectuals increasingly stress security threats in Central Asia are a top priority. CICIR scholar Fu Xiaoqiang considers China’s “greatest security concern,” Uighur terrorist groups in Xinjiang.⁷⁴ At least for China a

⁶⁹SCO Whitepaper. “APPENDIX A: Key Normative Documents of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.” Accessed at: <http://www.hrichina.org/sites/default/files/oldsite/PDFs/Reports/SCO/2011-HRIC-SCO-Whitepaper-AppendixA-SCO-Docs.pdf>. Accessed Dec. 10th, 2011. 170.

⁷⁰The fall of the USSR and the rise of the PRC.

⁷¹ Please see the “methodological disclaimer” section for a discussion of my choice to use Wikileaks cables. I would briefly note here that cable data is not presented as inherently objective information, merely inherently insider information.

⁷² See Cable: 09BEIJING287.

⁷³ Similar language within the SCO also demonstrates the strong PRC/CCP ideological influence within the group.

⁷⁴ See Cable: 09Beijing3347.

primary function of the SCO is as a tool with which its western environs can be stabilized. By placing security functions under a banner of cooperation this type of status quo stability is perhaps easier to sustain diplomatically.

The Center for American Studies Deputy Dean of Fudan University Ren Xiao mirrors this opinion when he describes China's preference for using the SCO to counter "terrorism and instability in its northwest border areas."⁷⁵ Ren places this effort inside the *wending zhoubian* ("stabilizing the surrounding areas") policy designed to manage relations with neighbors and preempt cross-border crises that could threaten domestic stability.⁷⁶ This Chinese-influenced conceptualization of security affairs has been largely ignored in the West but has gained traction in all SCO member states. Critically, these scholars and formative documents indicate an existential purpose for the SCO which is fundamentally different than many western explanations.

New Qualitative Data:

Tangible output of SCO in security functionality is still highly guarded, but there are signs the group is becoming more effective. Newly available diplomatic cable data is helpful in elucidating this process. Bakhram Auanassov, SCO/RATS "Senior Expert" and member of the "International Contact and Cooperation Department" of the SCO gave information indicating increased competency as early as 2008.⁷⁷ The short list of such developments includes several critical assertions. Auanassov begins by detailing a series of cooperative efforts he vaguely associates with the SCO. This includes "well-coordinated work of the special services of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan [that] permitted a series of successful operations

⁷⁵ See Cable: 08Shanghai413.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ See Cable: 08Tashkent763.

terminating cells that belong to these [terrorist] organizations.”⁷⁸ The involvement of the SCO in these operations is vague, but Auanassov was delivering a speech on the SCO’s role in Central Asian security and the implication is SCO involvement. Auanassov also mentions RATS/SCO as being responsible for preventing a number of terrorist attacks.⁷⁹ His speech alludes to strikes against the "Islamic Party of Turkestan" and “Jamiyat of Mujahideen of Central Asia”. Members of the former were allegedly detained while recruiting and preparing terror attacks. The National Security Service of Uzbekistan, in contact with the SCO, destroyed a cell of the "Jamiyat of Mujahideen of Central Asia".⁸⁰ Auanassov asserts all of this in the context of SCO security activity and coordination. This can be seen as further support an argument recognizing SCO/RATS increasing security functions in the region.

Auanassov goes on to mention that “coordination and mutual action” are showing positive outcomes for regional security in concrete ways. The Senior Expert described “joint operational measures” in the Fergana Valley as having been assisted by the SCO/RATS⁸¹. He goes on to label these measures as having been against “negative processes [...] capable of influencing the situation in the SCO.”⁸² Clearly this individual has a stake in the Organization appearing healthy and active. At the same time these claims are not particularly dramatic or far-fetched. The Fergana Valley has been a central concern for Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan for its potential to foster revisionist groups. As such it is a fitting focus for the SCO/RATS infrastructure. Auanassov’s claims of coordination and joint measures also fits easily within the *three evils* security modality. In short, this is exactly the type of security activity the group has spoken time and again about addressing. If we recognize emic SCO claims the real

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

security/intelligence question regarding the SCO is how this transnational proactive prevention approach functions.

My H1 posits the SCO is in fact growing its security and intelligence functions and that such functions are increasing because of shared domestic security threats within member states. Increasingly scholars are seeking to develop an inductive approach to SCO studies and in this regard the functional model mirrors these previous efforts.⁸³ When internal data is assessed, sources within the SCO opine that anti-*three evils* activity has been positive for stability in the region.

*[...] thanks to the measures that have been taken, we have been able to not only localize negative processes in the SCO region, but also to control them. As a result of this, the situation remains stable and predictable, and this facilitates integrational processes and also the expansion of social-economic and cultural cooperation, i.e. solving those tasks that were determined by the Charter of the SCO.*⁸⁴

SCO official Auanassov is also clear that information sharing within the SCO has led to the prevention of terror attacks within the group's territory. He mentions that in 2006-2007 "we managed to prevent a considerable number of terrorist acts".⁸⁵ Evidently this information sharing mechanism was only increasing in effectiveness as of 2008. The effectiveness of the "Single List of Wanted Persons" collaborative effort may also intersect here. Auanassov mentions this multilateral undertaking between SCO member state Special Services has increased the Organization's effectiveness and given it a "more clear and purposeful character".⁸⁶ Legally there has also apparently been a step forward in how to organize cross-border identification and

⁸³ Emilian Kavalski, Stephen Aris and work from the Hague Netherlands Institute of International Relations exemplify this cluster of research:

Kavalski, Emilian "Shanghaied into Cooperation: Framing China's Socialization of Central Asia". *Journal of Asian and African Studies*. April 2010 vol. 45 no. 2 131-145.

Aris, Stephen. "The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation: 'Tackling the Three Evils'". *A Regional Response to Non-traditional Security Challenges or an Anti-Western Bloc?* *Europe-Asia Studies*. Vol. 61, No. 3, May 2009.

"The Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Towards a full-grown security alliance?" for The Hague Netherlands Institute of International Relations, are salient examples of this literature.

⁸⁴ See Cable: 09Beijing1148

⁸⁵ See Cable: 08Tashkent763

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

prosecution of terrorists. He implies that previously there has been no standard about how states should recognize terrorists/terror organizations that have been classified by another state.

Auanassov seems to imply that the increased centralization of information within the SCO itself is allowing for real solutions to these problems. Agreements on combating illegal weapons ammunition and explosives trafficking also fall under this increased legal framework. Such developments are not outright cooperation in “hot” exercises, strikes or operations, but also cannot be divorced from security issues as a whole.

Possible "real joint action" with Afghan authorities is also contained within the Senior Expert’s speech. This apparently includes an SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group working to limit production of opiate material, suppression of transmission of this material, and destruction of bases and training centers within the country.⁸⁷ How exactly this group has gone about such activities is not elaborated, but would present a significant development in on-the-ground security behavior for the SCO. It remains to be seen how the regional powers and SCO member states will deal with the planned US pullout from Afghanistan. It is unlikely however that the organization would see less responsibility for security affairs during the shakeup.

Table 1: SCO Function Growth	<i>t</i> (2001)	<i>t</i> +1 (2012)
<i>Coordinating Special Services</i>	<i>x</i>	+
<i>International Crime Database</i>	<i>x</i>	+
<i>Strikes Against "Three Evil" Groups</i>	<i>x</i>	+/-
<i>Cooperative Exercises (Military)</i>	<i>x</i>	+
<i>three evils Int'l Legal Framework</i>	<i>x</i>	+
<i>Challenges to UN Law</i>	<i>x</i>	+/-
<i>Dedicated Counterterrorism Organ</i>	<i>x</i>	+
<i>Information Sharing (Terrorism Prevention)</i>	<i>x</i>	+
<i>Media Campaigning</i>	<i>x</i>	+/-
<i>Regional Counter-narcotics Network</i>	<i>x</i>	+/-
<i>Combating Terrorist Financing</i>	<i>x</i>	+/-
<i>Extradition of Terrorists and Criminals</i>	<i>x</i>	+

⁸⁷Ibid.

Regional Recognition of Terror Groups
Prohibition of Extremist Literature

<i>x</i>	+/-
<i>x</i>	+

x = no apparent existence; +/- = modest development or development claimed but unclear; + = significant development.

HRIC's SCO Whitepaper from 2011 also presents evidence of the SCO as a security organization. The Whitepaper report notes that three of the joint security exercises carried out by the SCO have been staged in part in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Prefecture.⁸⁸ The report also notes the PLA has timed its own exercises to use momentum from SCO games. Critically, these operations often take the form of domestic *counterterrorism* exercises in Uyghur areas in the XUAR.⁸⁹ China sees significant security possibilities in the SCO for its preemptive and anti-unrest potential. The SCO was obviously formed with concrete military goals, and I do not aim to downplay these in my discussion of preemptive prevention. Indeed, the Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization notes that confidence-building and reduction of military forces in the complex border zones of Central Asia was a central impetus in the creation of the group.⁹⁰ However, in the same normative document we can see an early and direct commitment to counterterrorism under the Chinese model.⁹¹ Article 6 of The Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism also gives an excellent idea of how the group plans to proceed with proactive cooperation. This includes: 1) information exchange, 2) "operational search actions", 3) developing measures to suppress "Three Evil" acts, 4) prevention and identification of such activities, 5) prevent/identify/suppress financing and

⁸⁸ Counter Terrorism and Human Rights: The Impact of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. A Human Rights in China Whitepaper. March 2011. 327.

⁸⁹ HRIC Whitepaper, Pg. 327. The operation the Whitepaper refers to here appears to be a counter-terror exercise in a "mountainous area" of the XUAR. The exercise appears to have been conducted eleven days after the conclusion of the Coalition 2003 multilateral exercise. Details on the strike can be found at: <http://english.chinamil.com.cn/special/5army/txt/65.htm>

⁹⁰ Declaration on the Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. WebDocument. http://www.ecrats.com/en/normative_documents/2006

⁹¹ See Section 8's references to Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism, illegal weapons and narcotics smuggling, illegal immigration and other criminal activities mentioned on page 6 of this document.

arming of such activities, 6) prevention of training for such activities, 7) exchange of regulatory and legal information for the suppression of such activities, 8) “exchange of experience” in prevention of such activities, 9) training, retraining and upgrading of prevention “experts”, 10) agreement to further cooperation including practical assistance in suppressing *three evils* acts.⁹² These types of activities demonstrate where observers should look for security-related behavior within the SCO and where growth has occurred. Activities like those conducted in the PRC border regions shows a clear connection between domestic insecurity and expanded roles for the SCO.

The RATS infrastructure has similar normative documentation detailing security concerns and due to its monetary importance further strengthens the transnational proactive prevention argument. Article 6 of the Agreement Between the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure specifically speaks to several points of interest here:

[...] 2. assistance to the competent agencies of the Parties at the request of one of the Parties in combating terrorism, separatism, and extremism, including in accordance with the provisions of the Convention; 3. collection and analysis of information received by RATS from the Parties regarding issues of combating terrorism, separatism, and extremism; 4. formation of the RATS database, [...] 5. providing information upon requests by the competent agencies of the Parties; 6. assistance in preparing and executing anti-terrorist command and staff exercises and operational and tactical exercises upon request by the Parties concerned; 7. assistance in the preparation and execution of operational search and other actions in combating terrorism, separatism, and extremism upon the request of the Parties; 8. assistance in conducting international searches for individuals alleged to have committed activities set forth in Article 1 [...] [Emphasis my own].⁹³

Fittingly RATS mirrors similar proactive security goals. The outline presented here points to an organization concerned with information data-basing, assisting local agencies (often

⁹²The Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism. Web document. June 15, 2001, <http://www.sectso.org/EN/show.asp?id=68>. Article 6.

⁹³Agreement Between the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure. June 7, 2002, http://www.ecrats.com/ru/normative_documents/1557. Unofficial translation from the original Russian by International Federation for Human Rights. Article 6.

special services), and a somewhat murky dedication to operational and tactical exercises and searches. As has been noted by the HRIC and others the reality of such functions is limited by the guarded nature of the organization and its membership. However, information from cables and recent work done by the International Federation for Human Rights back up exactly these types of normative SCO claims.

Russia's UN ambassador Vitaly Churkin has also announced that the SCO plans to expand its role in counterterrorism.⁹⁴ Countering *three evils* and countering narcotics operations, especially in relation to Afghanistan, appear to be a growing priority. The SCO/RATS apparently wants to approach this issue with an inter-state network geared towards something of a social information blitz. The network's top priority would be to prevent "radical ideology" from spreading, and it would liaise with "governments, civil society, the media, and the private sector to advance this goal."⁹⁵ This effort seems to aim at creating an information or public relations campaign focused on public sentiment towards radicalized Islam. Such reports interface in interesting ways with the increasing importance of counterterrorism within the SCO. Chen Yurong, Director of the Center for SCO Studies at the China Institute for International Studies, has noted that this unrest opened up a "new chapter" in member state security cooperation.⁹⁶ The SCO is now seen as a key tool for the PRC to reach out to Uyghur and other Muslim ethnic groups in the region to dispel "rumors" from the XUAR. Communication on security issues also comes in one-to-one interactions, and relationships like the one between Kazakhstan and China

⁹⁴See Cable: 08Moscow3184.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶See Cable: 09Beijing3252.

This report is also interesting because of its support of a China-centric SCO security theory. While unrest had occurred throughout the member states, it may have taken massive rioting in the PRC to motivate evolution on security issues. Obviously bias must also be factored in to this assessment as Chen Yurong may be prioritizing Chinese security issues unfairly. However, the prompt SCO statement of support of the PRC's actions in Xinjiang certainly supports a strong Chinese influence.

are apparently “increasingly active” in dealing with “trans-national criminals”.⁹⁷ Soft power projects and media information blitzes do not fit typical conceptualizations of security behavior, but in states with deep domestic unrest concerns such policies are of real importance. The SCO is concerned with downplaying and disrupting the *three evils* and promoting central state actors in restive areas. To divorce such social projects from security seems increasingly short sighted and illogical. The first page of the formational documents of the SCO declares that we have arrived in a new age of “multipolarization and information globalization” and that these “new challenges and threats” must be collectively addressed. Clearly, to the SCO member states information, political affiliation, religious belief and ethnic background can all qualify as existential threats to a state.

Coincidence Analysis and Methodology:

In addition to unpacking internal documents and regional case studies some large N observations also support security growth conclusions regarding the SCO. Qualitative analysis of documents clearly has much to elucidate in regards to the SCO as the subject is documentation-rich. However, I believe a consistent quantitative approach over the lifespan of the organization is also useful. Chronological observation of the history of the grouping from multiple perspectives is in many ways the next step to be taken in SCO studies. This type of method is a crucial step away from the policy-driven polemic gray literature that has often guided inquiry into the organization. By comprehensively sampling the regional discourse on the SCO additional social science rigor can be applied to critical questions on the grouping. How do governments within the SCO view its functionality? How are member-government expectations

⁹⁷ See Cable: 09Beijing1148 quoting Central Asia Affairs Department Central Asia Division Deputy Director Wu Changhong.

presented to outside actors and actors within the organization? What can differences here tell us about the uses for the SCO? How do important SCO member states view the success and failure of the grouping? Students of the SCO are fortunate that the authoritarian nature of important member states like the CCP allows for exploration of these questions through state sponsored media.

In the PRC centralized and state controlled media is a thriving and increasingly profitable sector, and the People's Daily newspaper lies at the center of this market.⁹⁸ This paper has obvious economic reach and influence as well as a reputation of being the defining example of an "official paper" within the country.⁹⁹ Its web portal People's Net (人民网) is "the most visible of the main media sites" according to Allen Carlson and Hong Duan.¹⁰⁰ Under the control of the CCP since its inception in 1948 the paper gained international readership during the chaos of the 1960's and 1970's as a window into CCP policy. As an official mouthpiece for the party state the People's Daily provides a unique government approved narrative that can be mined. In regards to the SCO security function debate the People's Daily data is supportive of changing current attitudes. Shifting our current understanding relating to SCO security functions is corroborated by evidence emerging out of this official source.

To conduct this data mining and determine how the CCP relate to the SCO I collected information on the Shanghai Five/SCO from the People's Daily from 1996 to 2012.¹⁰¹ Using a comprehensive Chinese language database of the People's Daily I ran a coincidence observation

⁹⁸ For the increasing profitability of the People's Daily see: Caixin Online via the Wall Street Journal, <http://www.marketwatch.com/story/china-peoples-daily-profit-doubles-in-four-months-2012-08-22>. August 22, 2012.

⁹⁹ Stockmann, Daniela. "Information Overload?" In "Contemporary Chinese politics: new sources, methods, and field strategies." Allen Carlson; et al. New York : Cambridge University Press, 2010. 114.

¹⁰⁰ Carlson, Allen. Duan, Hong. "Can Cyberspace Shed New Light on China's Approach to the World?" In "Contemporary Chinese politics: new sources, methods, and field strategies." Allen Carlson; et al. New York : Cambridge University Press, 2010. 90, 91

¹⁰¹ A breakdown of my collection results can be found in *Chart 1*.

for the terms “security” (安全) and “Shanghai Five/SCO” (上海五国/上海合作组织). This research allowed me to observe how often the SCO was connected to security issues in official media discussion in a given year. Following this strategy for each year of the Shanghai Five/SCO’s existence I was able to reach several observations. Most importantly the data makes clear that the People’s Daily (and by extension the CCP) is talking more about security and the SCO at the same time.¹⁰² These articles have shown a consistent rise over the lifetime of the organization (*fig 1*). Over the lifespan of the group (including both Shanghai Five and SCO configurations) the official mouthpiece of the CCP has shifted its related coverage and reportage considerably. We can observe that since 1996 the Shanghai Five/SCO (上海五国/上海合作组织) has appeared with increasing frequency alongside the term “security” (安全) in People’s Daily articles. This emphasis rises from zero to a consistently increasing coincidence level between these years. As such it is possible to note that the SCO is growing as a part of the official security discourse in the PRC. To make a one to one claim that this indicates security growth would be extrapolating from the data. However, even avoiding a one to one conclusion we are left with interesting implications. My observations of the People’s Daily data demonstrate that the SCO is *viewed* by the CCP as becoming more interrelated to security issues. This view could include a real *belief* in security growth, a desire to *convey* security growth, or a combination of these two options by the CCP. While I am currently unable to conclude which of these options is best supported by the data, my coincidence observation is extremely unlikely to support an opposing conclusion of lowered security functions/relevance. Even a hypothetical scenario where all security/SCO emphasis by the People’s Daily is simply to convey fictitious

¹⁰² Interestingly a similar trend seems less present in other papers less affiliated with the CCP. For example, I attempted a similar coincidence analysis with the paper Southern Weekend (南方周末) and Southern Daily (南方日报) and found only a handful of mentions of the SCO or SCO security issues.

involvement in security would still result in interesting conclusions about soft power and the utility of the organization as a blustering tool. Thus, this “worst case scenario” for my argument of increased security functionality is still one that would add to the state of the field. This noted I find such a scenario extremely unlikely and countered by the qualitative data already presented here. Ultimately because the People’s Daily has policy relevance as an indicator of what strategy the party wishes to take on certain issues. Unpacking this data is therefore relevant beyond standard media analysis and gains policy clout.

Secondarily, data mining makes it possible to observe the total number of articles on any subject published by the People’s Daily since 1996. Counter initial expectations this total has remained remarkably stable despite advances in information technology and the growth of mass media in China (*fig 2*). Collecting this gross total allows a reduction of the possibility that security/SCO coincidence growth is simply a product of overall growth in publication or the number of articles produced in a given year. *It can be said with some certainty that the People’s Daily is publishing more on the SCO, and more on security and the SCO together while maintaining a relatively stable total number of articles per year.* Whatever the beliefs of the central leadership as to the effectiveness of SCO security functions the official party mouthpiece is increasingly pushing this topic to the public.

Once this overall total established, it is possible to determine a percentage of articles with coincidence out of the total articles on the SCO in the People’s Daily. This quick calculation yielded a consistent and significant percentage of 65.64% of articles on the SCO deal with security (*fig 3*).¹⁰³ Additionally it is possible to run an analysis of this percentage over time. I found that since 1999 (the first year excluding percentage outliers) the percentage of People’s

¹⁰³ This percentage is 65.64% from 1999-2012 as these are the years with any data on the SCO within the People’s Daily.

Daily articles on the SCO focused on security has remained steady (*fig 4*). This consistency problematizes western literature claiming the CCP/PRC has lowered its expectations of the SCO in security in favor of economic issues. Official party discourse suggests security still makes up the majority of the discourse on the SCO. Certainly the leadership in Beijing has not markedly decreased its emphasis on security vis a vis the SCO. Again, this could indicate a series of expectations and objectives on the part of the central government. However, none of the logical conclusions in this series of scenarios would include a decrease in security emphasis. The consistency of reportage from this official source is certainly a strong indicator that the CCP has found one or several beneficial security outcomes with the SCO.

People's Daily analysis also supports my thesis as it relates to anti-terrorism security functions. Data mining the newspaper for the *three evils* of separatism, terrorism and extremism produces interesting results. Broadly speaking the anti-terrorism *three evils* terminology has seen relatively rapid usage increases since 1996 (*fig 9*). This rise of general usage of the term seems to occur in three large leaps in 2000-2002, 2006 and 2009. Critically, *three evils* usage vis a vis the SCO has seen a similarly rapid increase in official usage (*fig 10*). Both data sets indicate that the *three evils* terminology is growing in popularity. Interestingly, we can also observe that for much of the history of the usage of the term (up until ~2009) usage of the three evils terminology in general closely mirrored its usage in an SCO context. Such a pattern could suggest that at least for the *three evils* terminology the SCO discourse served as a kind of testing ground or incubator for the concept. Three main conclusions emerge from this data subset. 1.) Overall the PRC/CCP seems increasingly focused on anti-terrorism in a general sense. Recognizing this focus is critical in obtaining an accurate picture of PRC military/security concerns. Again, problematizing the western scholarly focus on multilateral intervention and military operations is an important

outcome here. Moreover, as the PRC plays a central role in the SCO this data supports an inductive process to discern of real security goals. An increase in anti-terror focus compliments an honest reading of the normative documents of the SCO and corroborates the ideas contained therein that the *three evils* are an important threat to be addressed. 2.) We can observe that in an official sense the SCO and anti-terrorism are increasingly connected. Anti-terrorism is an increasingly important strategy for the PRC, and the SCO is an increasingly important part of this strategy. 3.) The idea of the *three evils* was for its formative years intimately connected to the SCO. Since 2009 the terminology appears to have become more independent, but still finds the majority of its usage in an SCO context. Even as the *three evils* has gained its own independent usage, usage overall is still tied to the SCO. The *three evils* are important to the focus of the SCO, and the SCO appears to be important to the popularization of the *three evils* terminology. This mutualism could indicate powerful discursive and informational (soft power) strengths of the grouping. All of these conclusions help confirm that the SCO is increasingly part of a specific anti-terrorism/anti-*three evils* security regime in the PRC. They also strongly problematize the idea that the SCO does little vis a vis security.

The next data observations I conducted were to establish similar baselines for the total People's Daily usage of the terms "security" (安全) and "international security" (国际安全).¹⁰⁴ In collecting these results I wanted to test whether or not the increasing usage of the term "security" (安全) in conjunction with the SCO was part of a broader trend or was isolated to the SCO. Results here also indicate the SCO is unique in certain regards. As opposed to usage of the

¹⁰⁴ Here I decided to also run "international security" (国际安全) because without the SCO as a co-term "security" (安全) struck me as too broad a term. In other words, when security and SCO coexist the type of security involved is of the type I wish to examine. Without this security could include a much broader set of issues. However, I have not discussed the results for SCO and "international security" (国际安全) here (although they can be found in *fig 8*) because the sample size is small. However, this small sample does still demonstrate an increase in usage.

three evils terminology (which have seen drastic increases in both a general and SCO-specific context) the usage of the “security” (安全)/“international security” (国际安全) terms have not significantly risen in general. This indicates that overall the SCO holds a unique place in official PRC discourse and has a unique security focus.

Determining policy desires of the PRC/CCP is often a frustration for China observers. The oblique and private Politburo Standing Committee is extremely difficult (if not impossible) to mine for information. As such the CCP is often noted as comparatively unpredictable when compared to more open (or at least more vocal) governments. In an attempt to explore the international policy desires of the CCP it is useful to examine the People’s Daily due to its high connectivity to the central government and its role as a distributor of government objectives. In this way the People’s Daily (and the authoritarian nature of the CCP system in general) can be used a tool rather than a constant frustration. Utilizing the heavily centralized policy space of the PRC instead of merely bemoaning the difficulty of obtaining information is another exciting area of progress for SCO studies and international institution studies. These findings have a high level of significance because of CCP emphasis on the importance of the People’s Daily as a messaging vehicle for party policy.¹⁰⁵ This leads to several interesting conclusions. Taking the coincidence of 上海五国/上海合作组织 and 安全 as the dependent variable and time as the independent variable we can see the CCP has increasingly emphasized security in relation to the SCO. From 1996 until 2012 security has remained a significant part of coverage of the SCO, always over 50% in years with data. The SCO ultimately receives the majority of its CCP attention with a focus on security issues. Understanding that to the Chinese government’s prime organizational aim is

¹⁰⁵ People's Daily. "人民日报基本情况", "Basic facts about the People's Daily", 2003-05-14 states that the People’s Daily is the “official newspaper of the Communist Party” and is “China’s most authoritative, most influential national newspaper” and is the “mouthpiece of the party”. For an academic look at the value of the People’s Daily see:

concerned with security does much to weaken academic arguments hoping to paint the SCO as a security failure. The CCP continually connects security and the SCO thus making it impossible to reconcile analysis disregarding the SCO as a security group. We must conclude the group is either symbolically and/or materially concerned with security, at least as far as China is concerned.¹⁰⁶

It follows then that the People's Daily data indicates one or several beliefs on the part of the Chinese leadership. Conclusions could include any of the following 1.) The CCP believes the SCO is growing in its importance to security issues. This conclusion would also be supported by qualitative data presented here and elsewhere (especially internal SCO data). It is also corroborated by the evidence that China has pushed to expand the SCO's military security capabilities. 2.) The CCP *desires other actors* to believe the SCO is growing its importance to security issues. This would give the SCO a strong mandate to grow with regards to soft power. The People's Daily may be indicative of the strong prestige value of the SCO at home and abroad. International institutions have become an integral element in diplomacy and the international system. To ignore this avenue of organization would be to limit China's choices in the region. Furthermore, powerful connotations of modernity and influence are portrayed by a homegrown grouping, summit or mechanism. That China has been at the forefront of SCO development is undoubtedly a message the CCP is excited to convey domestically and internationally. 3.) The CCP believes each of these options to some degree. This study suggests that this synthetic option is the most likely scenario. Claims up to this point in SCO literature seem to over-exaggerate the underperformance of the SCO. SCO internal literature examined

¹⁰⁶ As stated elsewhere, I believe the most likely scenario is that the SCO is deeply concerned with both material and symbolic security functions.

here (not surprisingly) steers to an opposite polarity. Data mining allows us a perspective on a more nuanced and realistic growth pattern over time.

Methodological Disclaimers:

The methods I have utilized here certainly have limitations. I have attempted to combine several types of inquiry to augment one another and avoid over reliance on one approach. This said, I still see several limitations to my approach. First, quantitative analysis of the People's Daily certainly has its limitations. I am largely unable to claim one way or the other that information from the paper is indicative of true policy objectives or simply an attempt by the CCP to convey information to outside observers. For example, does a People's Daily article claiming Chinese ownership of the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands indicate a real deeply held CCP belief, an attempt to intimidate the Japanese government, communication with another government interested in the crisis, or a move to drive up domestic support of the issue (or any combination of the above)? In this way the conclusions drawn from such publication still remain limited. Additionally, work still remains to be done on just how these increasing numbers of articles are referring to the SCO and security. What is the qualitative direction of the publication, and (how) have references to security changed in a qualitative way? What is the distribution of articles in different parts of the People's Daily? Unpacking what percentage of articles occurs in editorials, special comments, comments, and news stories is an important qualitative step I have yet to undertake. Each of these subsections have differing amount of CCP authority and exploring further how content may differ between them could lead to enhanced understanding of party thought.

It would appear that the entire corpus¹⁰⁷ of official literature on the SCO will need to be unpacked and analyzed for a true understanding of CCP beliefs to emerge. The scale of this research goes beyond my current project but does provide a tantalizing avenue for future research. Such a project would take considerable time but would be the only route to establish real qualitative “feel” for how the treatment of the organization and the three evils has evolved. Fortunately, each additional year that elapses will allow for more data points to be incorporated into the observation of official treatment of the SCO in the PRC. The field of SCO studies is still extremely inchoate and tracking such perspectives is clearly of central value to establishing the objectives of the SCO and its member states. Basic questions about the orientation and objectives of the grouping remain contentious in the literature and unpacking the emic perspective of member states (like China) is a rigorous way to resolve this controversy. Social scientists must continue to push the boundaries of analysis regarding the SCO and find increasingly creative methods for acquiring information on this relatively secretive grouping. A lack of easily accessible information does not imply a lack of geopolitical importance or a failure of mandate. Nor does it excuse armchair “theory building” and extrapolation on the menace or impotence of the organization. Accordingly I believe demonstrating a spectrum of potential CCP security interests in regard to the SCO is a considerable step forward for understanding the real and theoretical significance of the group.

Methodologically it is also important to explain my decision to source diplomatic cables from Wikileaks. First and foremost these cables are not intended to be read or utilized as objective assessments of truth. The marginal nature of the cables is valuable for what it says about the speakers as well as the actual content of the pieces. I am not unaware of the critique

¹⁰⁷ Perhaps a statistically significant sampling of articles for in depth reading from each year would be another feasible approach.

that such data is inherently skewed by those within the SCO providing the information as well as potentially the diplomatic officers' reportage of meetings and discussions. SCO officials could be excited to demonstrate their success, perhaps to the point of exaggeration. It is also possible that such individuals would be relatively tight-lipped in conveying security information to US diplomatic officers. Both positions could skew reportage, and both are relatively impossible to discern for certain. On the US side one could predict a report containing SCO officials claiming security activity would not sit unread. Perhaps this would incentivize a bias in reportage as well. Ultimately such questions are unanswerable but cannot be ignored outright. The underlying appeal of the cables for research is also their weakness; this information is not peer reviewed, "big N" or verifiable in a traditional sense. Its insider value inherently contains bias, but it is up to the reader to determine if such bias invalidates the data or actually provides value. This cable data is also the only record of its kind on SCO security activities I know of. My decision then emerges from this conundrum of discernment, and I feel the information contained within the cables is both new and unusual enough to merit analysis. Simultaneously I would not claim the cable data is beyond critique, in fact far from it.

Undoubtedly this emic perspective will contain bias. However, one of the fundamental appeals of the cable data is that even the potential bias contained therein is useful at this juncture. Biased viewpoints from within the SCO are still a rare example of an emic viewpoint. This information also contextualizes and highlights what those involved with the grouping are attempting to do. It is my belief that both the underlying reality and the bias are useful in understanding the SCO, especially when one examines the lack of input from SCO officials in academic literature. Secondly, the cables used are not intended to highlight American policy

or viewpoints. None of the communication used herein is in reference to US policy, nor are US officials cited.

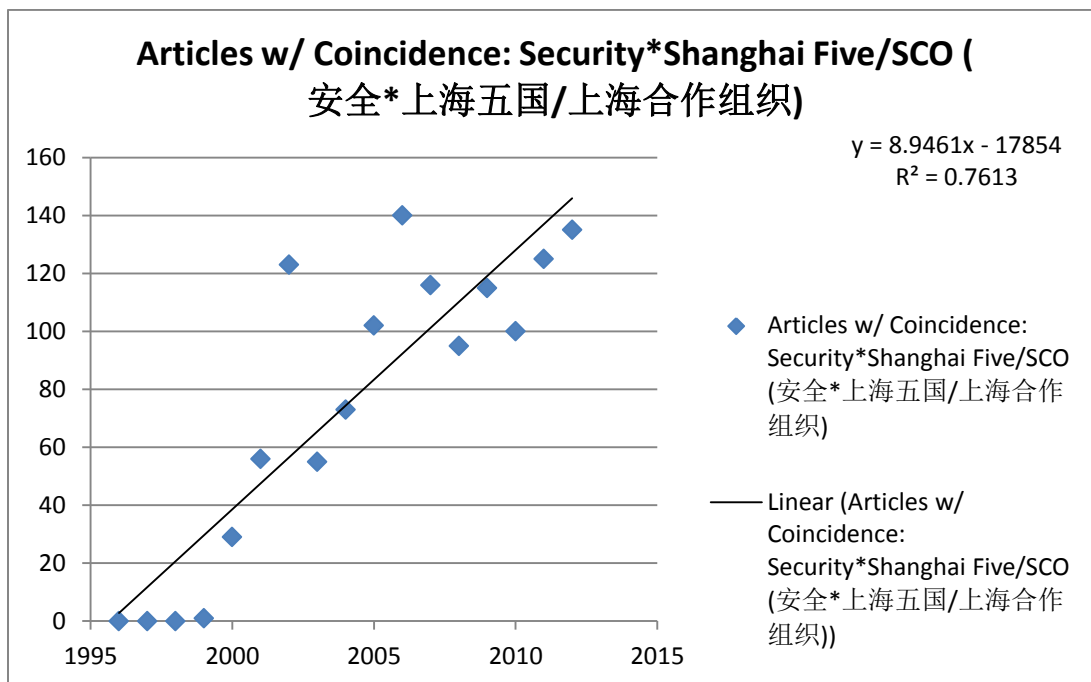


Fig 1

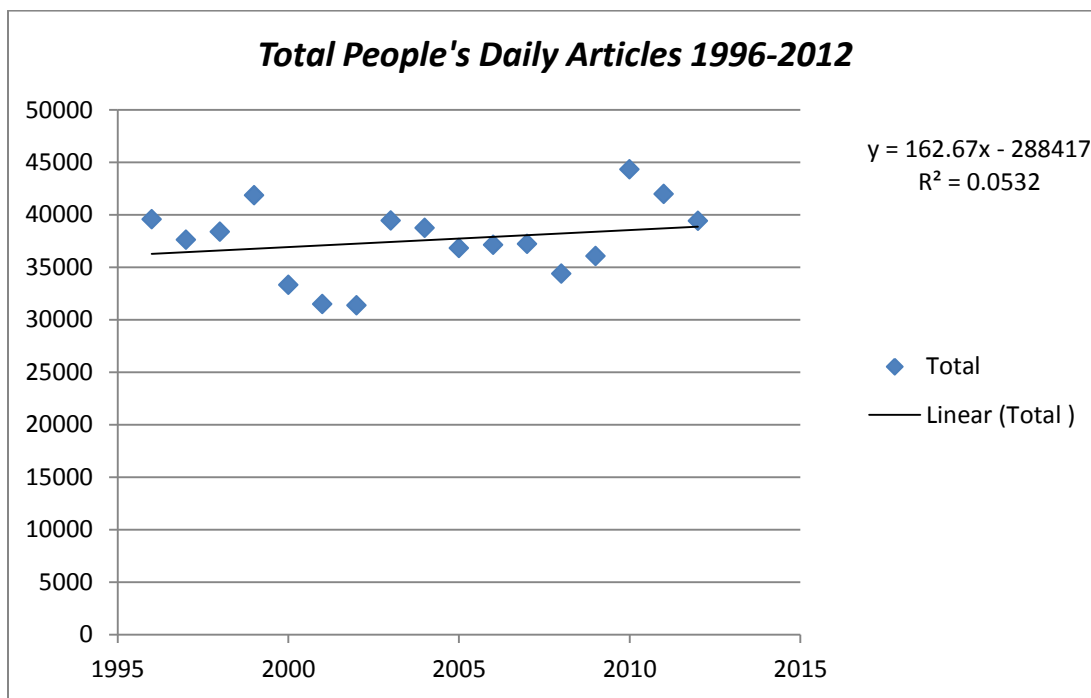


Fig 2

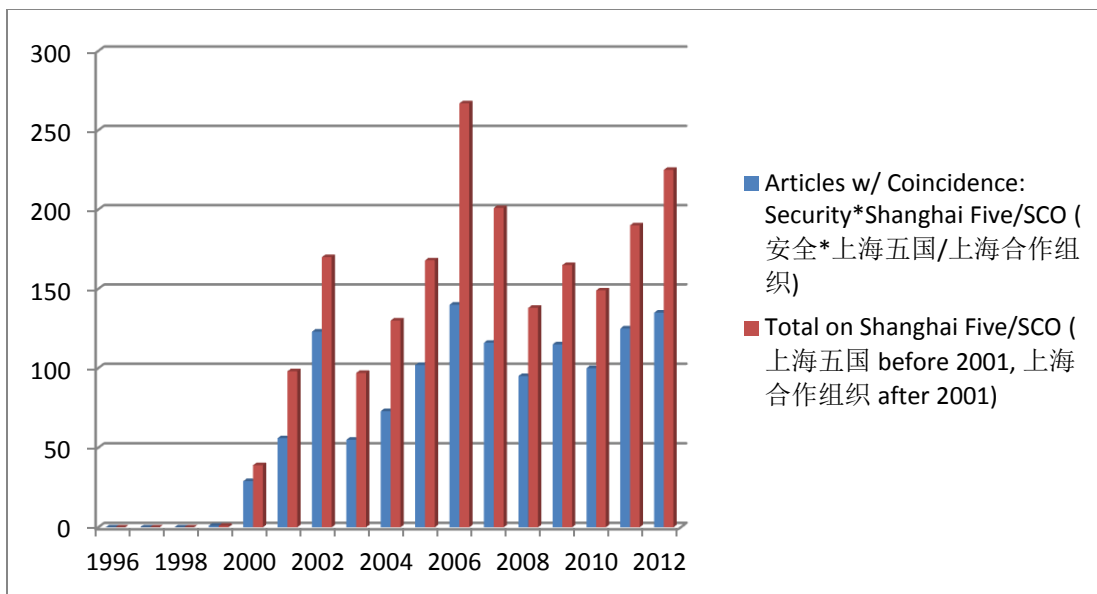


Fig 3

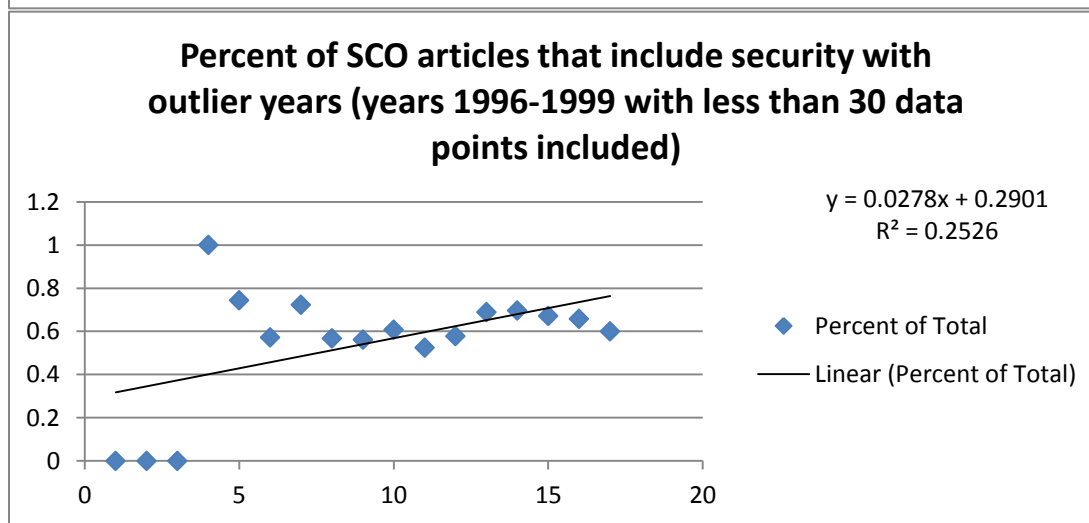
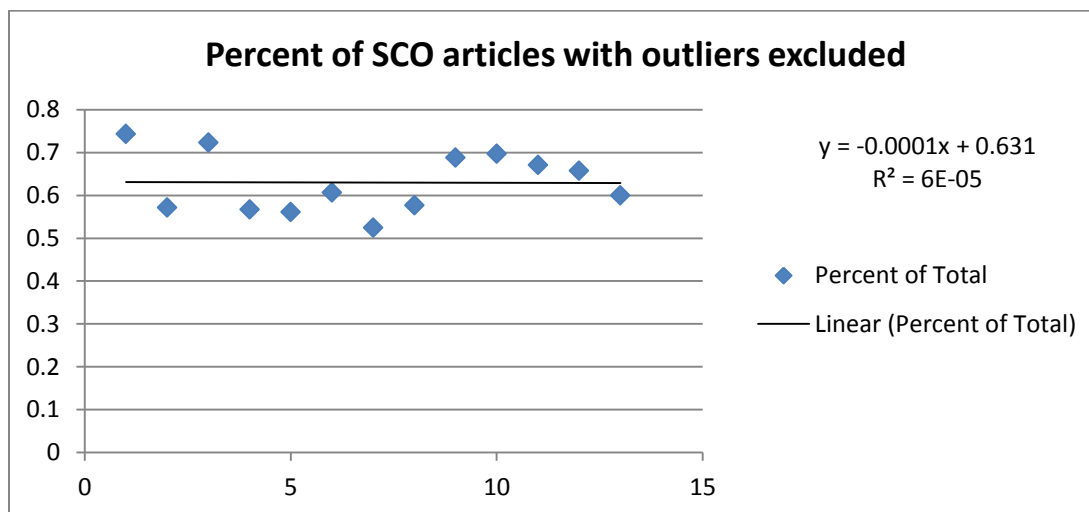


Fig 4

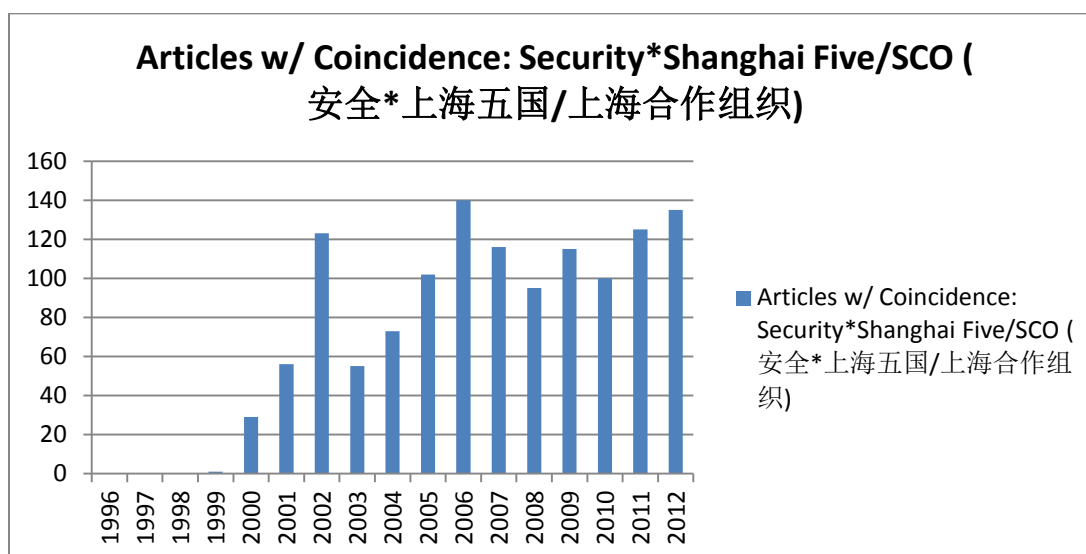


Fig 5

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Articles with Security*Shanghai Five/SCO (安全*上海五国/上海合作组织).	0	0	0	1	29	56	123	55
Total on Shanghai Five/SCO (上海五国/上海合作组织).	0	0	0	1	39	98	170	97
Percent of Total	0	0	0	1	0.74359	0.571429	0.723529	0.56701
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Total Articles/Year	39568	37588	38353	41841	33313	31483	31351	39422
2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
73	102	140	116	95	115	100	125	135
130	168	267	201	138	165	149	190	225
0.561538	0.607143	0.524345	0.577114	0.688406	0.69697	0.671141	0.657895	0.6
2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
38726	36823	37112	37216	34365	36058	44300	41970	39393

Chart 1

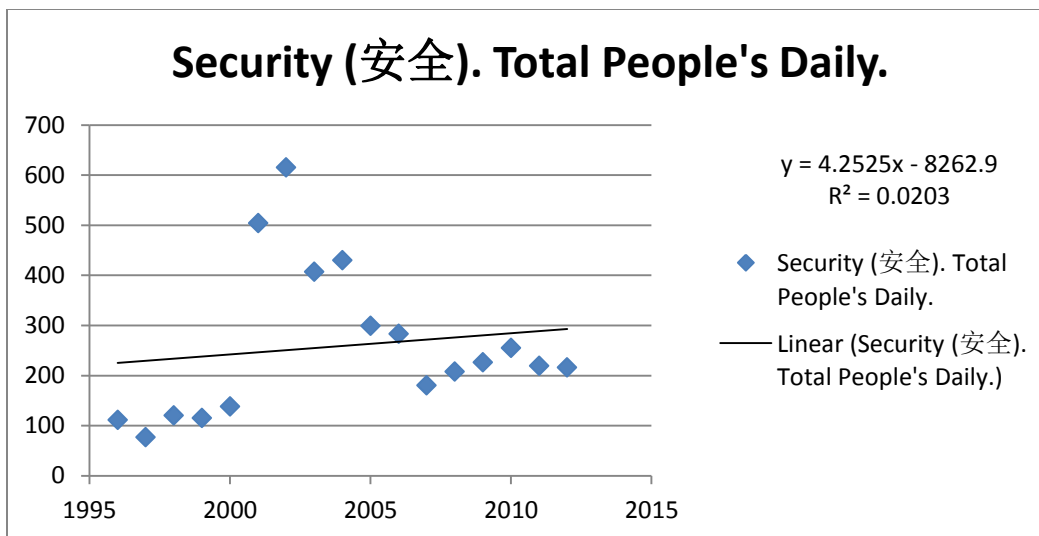


Fig 6

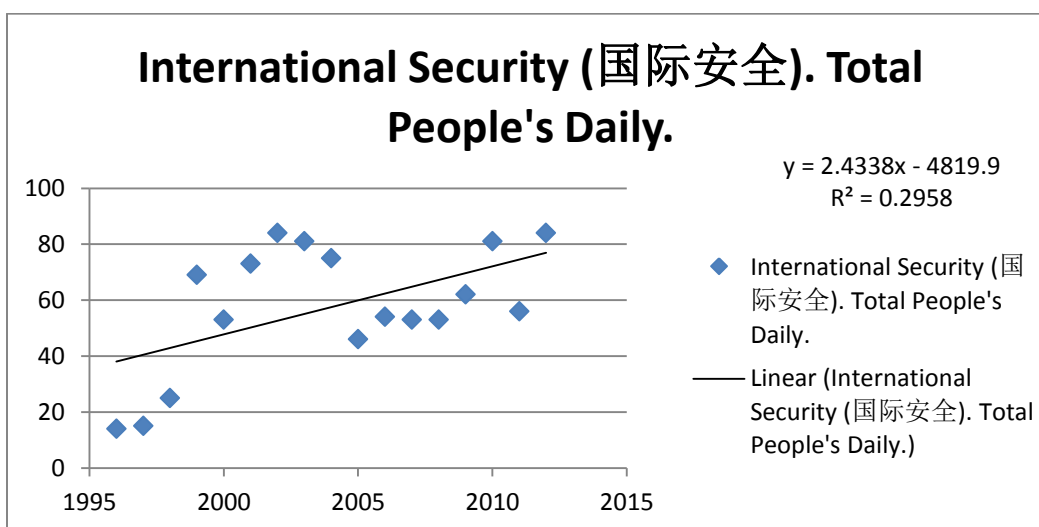


Fig 7

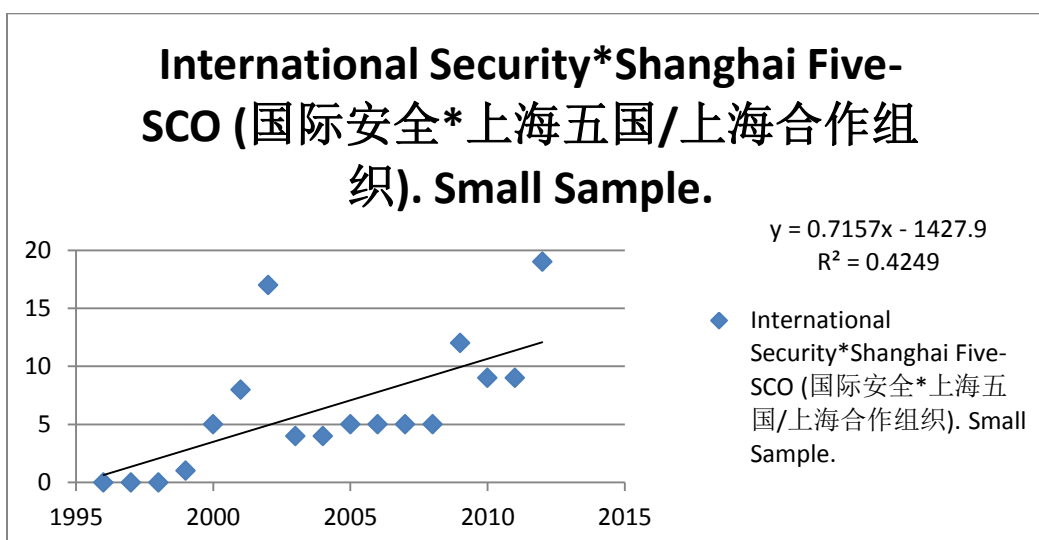


Fig 8

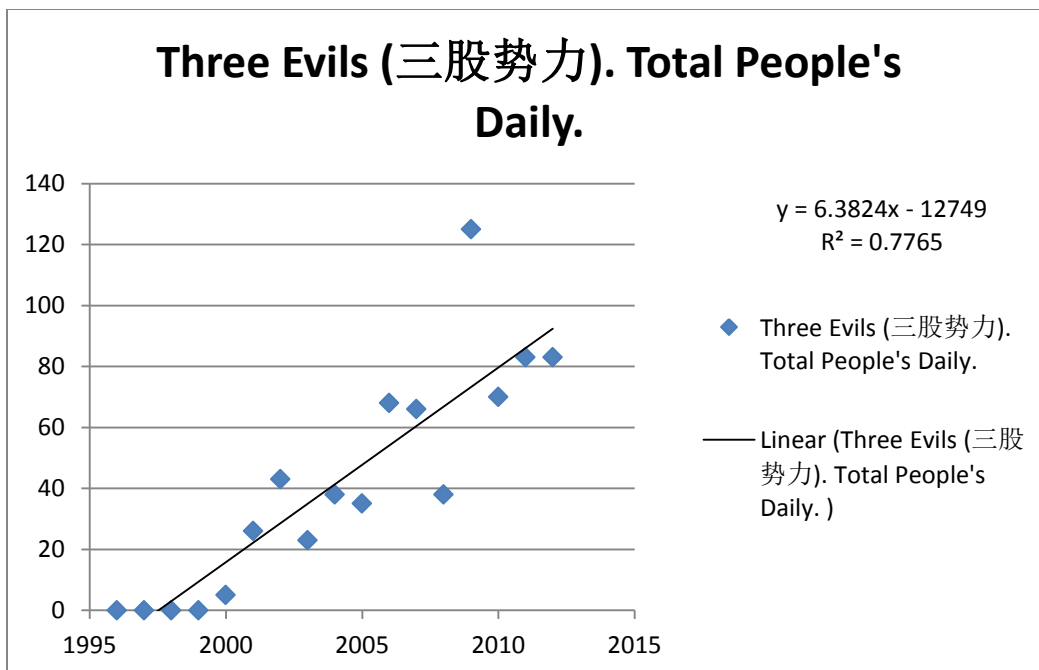


Fig 9

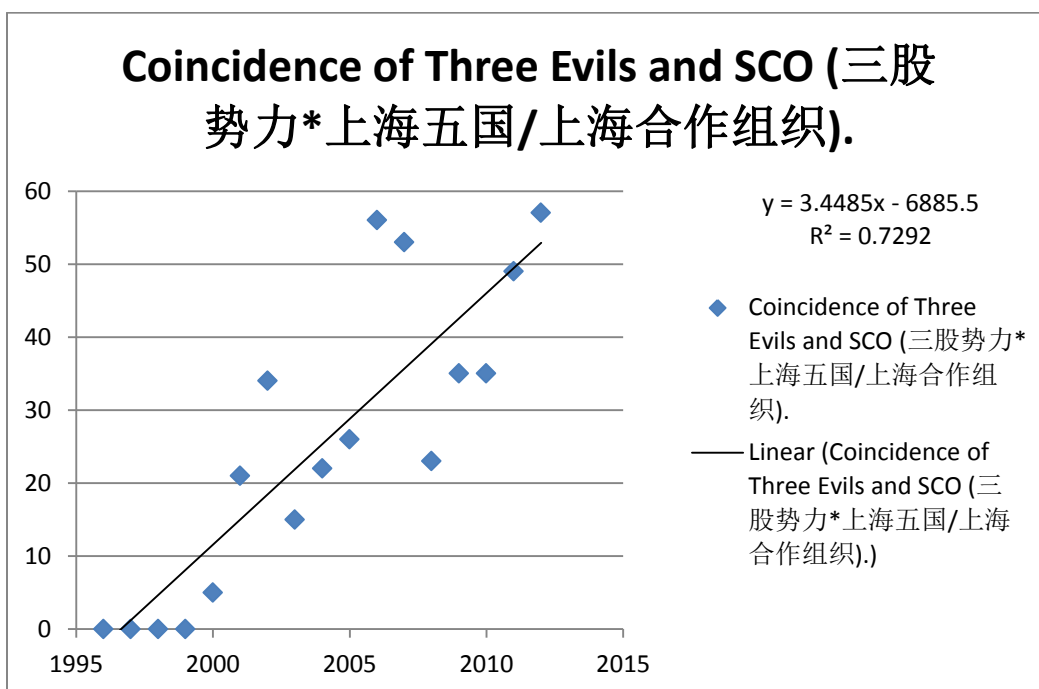


Fig 10

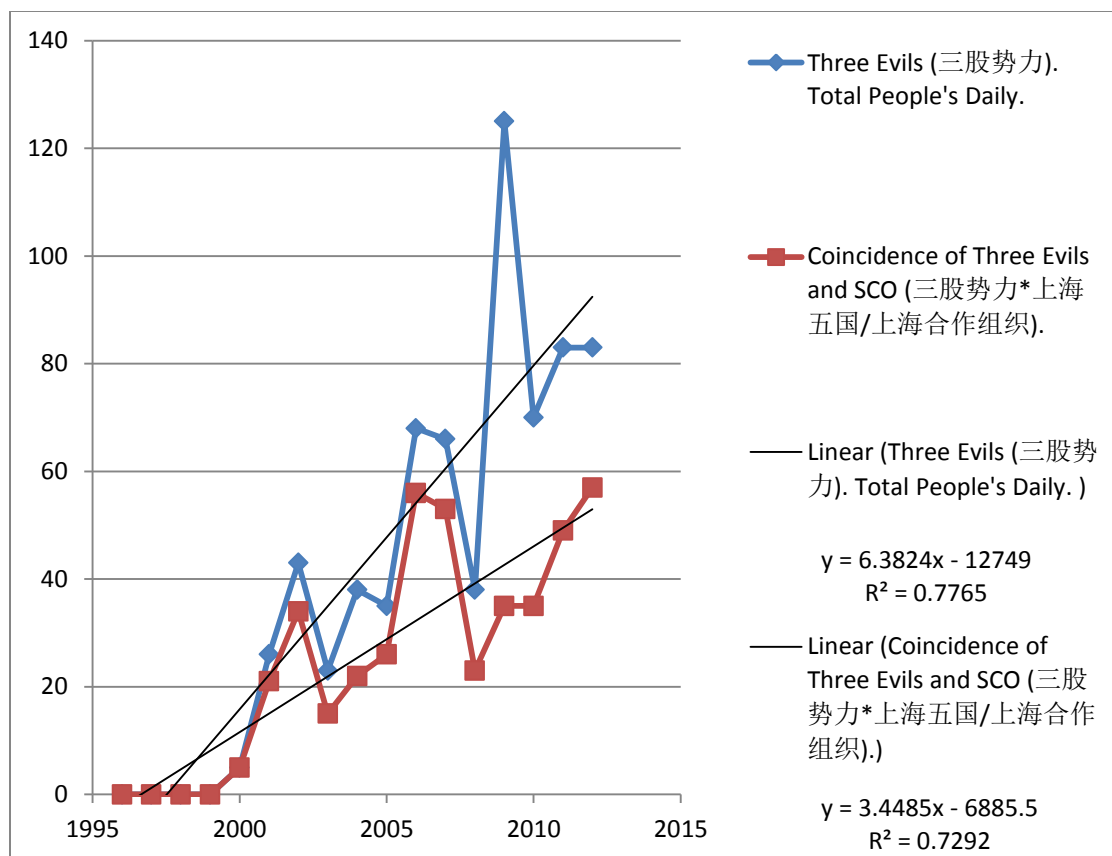


Fig 11

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Security (安全). Total People's Daily.	111	77	120	115	138	504	615	407
International Security (国际安全). Total People's Daily.	14	15	25	69	53	73	84	81
International Security*Shanghai Five-SCO (国际安全*上海五国/上海合作组织). Small Sample.	0	0	0	1	5	8	17	4
Three Evils (三股势力). Total People's Daily.	0	0	0	0	5	26	43	23
Coincidence of Three Evils and SCO (三股势力*上海五国/上海合作组织).	0	0	0	0	5	21	34	15

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
430	299	283	180	208	226	255	219	216
75	46	54	53	53	62	81	56	84
4	5	5	5	5	12	9	9	19
38	35	68	66	38	125	70	83	83
22	26	56	53	23	35	35	49	57

Chart 2

Theoretical Perspective/Implications:

By redefining the SCO in this inductive way the functional model endeavors to more clearly define the group. Additionally this project has inherent theoretical implications for the role of international institutions in authoritarian states as well. The issue of the SCO's supposed "success or failure" is important to investigate for its ability to help establish expectations and predictions. A huge component of the value of international institutions is the message they send and the expectations outsiders have of the organization. In this sense there is obvious merit in understanding the orientation of the SCO, its growth/lack of growth, and its successes and failures. However, the SCO retains value for study regardless of how such an assessment plays out. My observations of the SCO indicate a regime growing in security functionality vis a vis *three evils*-type threats. Diplomatic information and coincidence analysis all problematize the idea of an SCO that has failed to create security roles for itself. However, it is important to undergird these observations of available data with a simpler proposition: the SCO/security case study is valuable from a social science perspective whether or not this growth is occurring/is occurring effectively. Because of the inchoate nature of international institutions in Central and

East Asia, and in China in particular, even *attempt* at institutionalizing security in an international system are critical to explore. These attempts may succeed or fail¹⁰⁸ but the very existence of them being made has theoretical value. The SCO is in particular an important example of Chinese organizational goals in the international system. Goal setting and goal achieving are distinct processes, and for China both are still important discussions. The picture of the SCO painted by the data shown here is one of an organization preoccupied with asymmetric security threats and instability. It is an organization that in some way desires a greater security role in the region, but one that is stymied by geo political realities limiting multilateral intervention. Finally, the SCO is an organization seen by its most powerful and influential member state as increasingly important for regional security. Such an assessment informs us there values or foci are also important to the PRC. Even more broadly (and perhaps beyond the scope of this paper) the way in which the PRC uses the SCO forms an excellent case study for how authoritarian states utilize international institutions in general. To simply dismiss the grouping because of a lack of applied collective security action would be to limit our understanding of China, authoritarian states, and international institutionalism in general.

While the observable evidence suggests the SCO dynamic is one that skews in favor of an organization that is growing capacity in the security actions it pursues, even an SCO with limited security success would still have high inquiry value because of its Chinese roots. This grouping shows for perhaps the first time the form and function the CCP/PRC *desires* from an international institution. It also demonstrates what the CCP/PRC feels is possible at this stage of China's emergence as global power. It represents salient concerns for that state (and of course the other states involved) in a concrete and observable way. Fundamentally the SCO is an early attempt by an emergent PRC to work institutionally in an international space. Whether successful

¹⁰⁸ These outcomes being of course completely subjective.

or not the SCO shows what China wants to do in international institution building. The organization is an example of the core values of Chinese foreign policy and gives us a short list of important foci. Security, intelligence, fossil fuel access, normalization of regional disputes, securitization and opening of markets are all highly important. The undergirding philosophy of the *three evils* is a critical tool in understanding what the Chinese leadership sees as tangible outputs for an international institution. Finally, the slow, metered development of security functions shows a careful, long term approach.

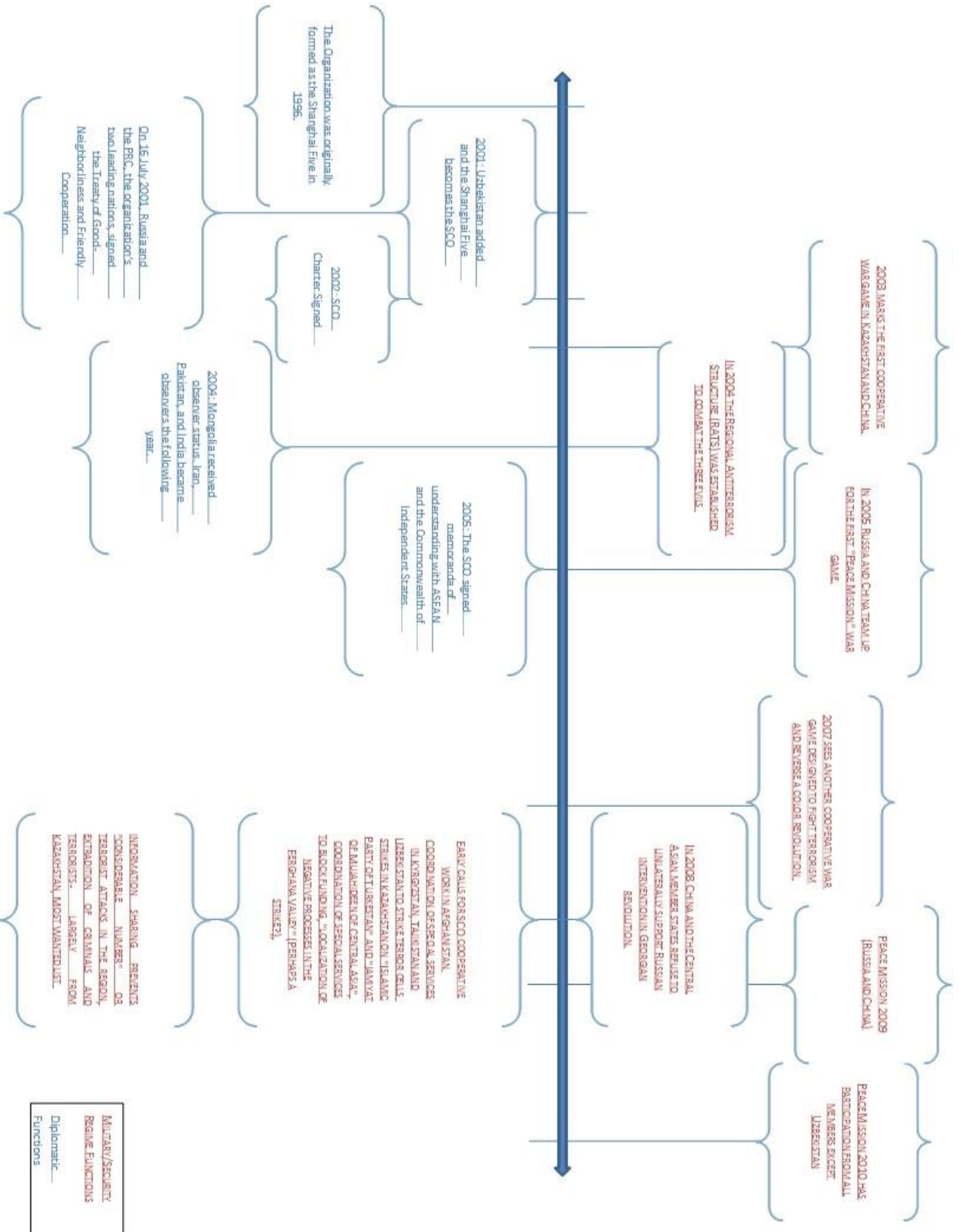
Value can emerge from SCO study because we can learn how it demonstrates security/intelligence/human rights dynamics within its region, as well as how it denotes Chinese objectives in the international system. The final step in mining SCO data involves what it might tell us in a theoretical sense. For all its faults, the SCO is undeniably a.) an organization composed of authoritarian states, b.) composed of states with internal/domestic security threats, and c.) a grouping conducted in an international space. It follows then that the SCO would provide a powerful example of how authoritarian states view international institutions. It also highlights the importance of activities that fall under the auspices of the *three evils* to SCO member states. Finally it shows the method by which these problems may be addressed by member states in the future.

Conclusions:

Why is the SCO growing security and intelligence functions, or attempting to grow such functions? Why (and how) are civilians like Ershidin Israil being refouled outside international law? While many scholars have asserted the SCO is a failed organization or has minimal security relevance, it is puzzling (in realist terms) that states would participate in a security group if this was accurate. There seems a long list of security threats in the region that require collective

action and the emic (or internal) perspective within the group is that the SCO is doing much to address such concerns. When these realities are combined with the problematic comparative literature so far dominant in SCO studies there appears a real need for more inquiry. To complicate matters there seems a similarly long list of claims from within the SCO that it is functioning well. Somewhere in the midst of this debate lies the reality of SCO functionality vis a vis security. A definitive answer to such questions remains elusive, but it does appear that regional stability is increasingly tied to the SCO and RATS. This connection comes from self-reportage within the grouping and from accounts of security negotiations between SCO member states. Increasingly we can also see official state media from China is pushing the role of the SCO in security. Claims of security function failure ignore such trends and leave readers with an inaccurate assessment of the state of this important bid at international institutionalism. These accounts also stem from unrealistic multilateral behavior expectations and when juxtaposed to actual SCO claims seem fundamentally misguided. The initial expectations that the SCO would quickly rise to rival NATO appears with even a few years hindsight to be problematized by real issues. Chief amongst these is the SCO's own design that clearly specifies a series of non-military security and intelligence behaviors. By inducing conclusions from outsider and insider evidence it is clear the SCO is moving towards a new type of supranational-- one addressing a specific set of Central and East Asian domestic security dilemmas. These security dilemmas fall more in line with traditional western thinking on human rights and should not be ignored because they are not true multilateral intervention. Ershidin Israil demonstrates there are real impacts to the preventative security style of the SCO. His case makes the abstract concrete and puts a face to the *three evils* paradigm. While the theoretical and political need to expand our understanding

of the grouping is large, the human costs of this style of security are the ultimate indicator of its effectiveness and impact in the region.



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