

GOING GLOBAL: THE CHINESE ELITE'S VIEWS OF SECURITY STRATEGY IN THE 1990S

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This article examines the relationship between security strategy and the policy of “opening up to the outside world” (the Open Policy). In contrast to most Chinese scholars and China watchers in the West who focus only on how China’s security strategy is formulated to meet its strategic interest at the systemic level, the article asks what “security” means and whose “interest” it serves in order to understand what it means to be a supporter for or an opponent of the Open Policy in China. Through a review of Chinese strategic literature in the 1990s and interviews with Chinese strategists, the article attempts to identify the elites with power to discuss the issues concerning security policy. It then compares their interests derived from the Open Policy to their perceptions of the external security environment. The article then suggests three strategic choices, all of which have supporters from the elite groups identified in the research.

Key words: security strategy, Open Policy, Chinese elites, China’s security policy

A Theoretical Puzzle

Questioning the Realist and Liberal Frameworks

Globalization, by definition a process of intensification and acceleration of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of human activities—economic, social, technological, cultural, and even political—is shaping the way Chinese leaders today view national security. Since the late 1970s with Deng Xiaoping's decision to abandon ideologically-guided policies, and to open society to the outside world, we have seen tremendous changes in China. These changes have included a rapidly growing economy and accelerated integration into the world market. China's consistent growth in international trade since the 1970s has made it one of the leading exporters in the world today, ranking fourth in 2003.

But China's security views, which are reinforced by its entry into the world economy, are a subject of contention. Some see globalization as leading to the eventual "taming" of China, and predict China will become a responsible member of the global society, one that proactively engages in and accepts the prevailing rules and norms of the U.S.-centric post-cold war liberal order of interdependence. Many other analysts, by contrast, see China as an inevitable challenger, only biding its time to build up the power to undermine the United States and its global empire.

The dispute reflects prevailing concepts in international relations theories. What China looks like, and suggestions as to how China will act in the future, depend critically on the concepts and theories that frame the way it is viewed by others. The two contending images of China, as either a threat to or a responsible member of the newly emerging world order, in fact parallel the rival traditions of Liberalism and Realism in international relations theories.

A Realist interpretation suggests that a country's foreign-policy behavior is solely determined by distribution of material capabilities in the anarchic international system.¹ This interpretation emphasizes China's military establishment and the role of the

military in the making of security strategy. As William Tow states, "since the PRC's inception, its foreign policy has been most influenced by the balance-of-power, state-centric approach to international politics and security. The Chinese have waged a protracted struggle against what they have long regarded to be efforts by both the US and the Soviet Union to force China into geopolitical submission."² Thomas Christensen argues that Chinese leaders formulate long-term grand strategies in response to shifts in the international balance of power, and they utilize short-term conflicts with foreign countries to mobilize domestic support for their grand strategies.³ A Realist interpretation of national security leads scholars to emphasize China's military establishment or the role of the military in security policymaking, for military forces are still considered the most useful tool to maximize state power. In this view, the military threat from other countries and the strategic relations between China and the other great powers in East Asia are determining factors in shaping China's security considerations. Scholars often see analyses of grand strategy, military capabilities, and power configurations in the international system as the orthodox approach to China's security while underestimating the effects of non-political or economic factors. Those who have observed the relationship between China's military security and its remarkable economic performance simply take the economic performance as a prerequisite to achieving the security goals of the state.⁴

Liberal theorists, in contrast, advocate free trade and free markets in part because they believe trade will enhance interdependence among states, thus contributing to international peace and reducing the possibility of military conflicts. Following Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, who have focused on the con-

1. Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

2. William T. Tow, "China and the International Strategic System," in Thomas Robinson and David Shambaugh, eds., *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon, 1994), p. 120.

3. Thomas Christensen, *Useful Adversaries: Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization, and Sino-American Conflict, 1947-1958* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), p. 7.

4. Denny Roy, "Hegemon on the Horizon: China's Threat to East Asian Security," *International Security*, vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer, 1994), p. 165; Aaron Friedberg, "Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia," *International Security*, vol. 18, No. 3 (Winter, 1993/4), pp. 16-17.

nections between the international economic order and the declining attractiveness of the use of force, some scholars argue that economic ties will integrate China into a global web of economic interdependence, which will encourage China to become a responsible actor in international affairs.⁵ As long as the existing economic order provides an ideal context for China to maximize its economic interest at low cost, they predict China will be less likely to take an aggressive policy toward its neighbors in the future. As Gerald Segal puts it, “The more China is tied to the world economy . . . the more difficult it is for China to view the world in simply nationalistic terms.”⁶

Although Realist and Liberal scholars utilize different theories to explain China’s security policy, their arguments have one thing in common: Both tend to focus on the impact of systemic factors—either the balance-of-power principle or the harmony of economic interests among states—on China’s considerations of security. That is, China’s security strategy reflects leaders’ responses to the pressure from the external environment as well as their attempts to maximize China’s strategic interests in the international system. The chief difference between Realist and Liberal views lies in whether the primary focus of a state should be on security, or whether significant attention can also be given to economic growth and prosperity.⁷

This Realist/Liberal dichotomy is probably not adequate to understand Chinese security strategy. Moreover, observers impute their own theoretical assumptions, concepts, and propositions onto the object of analysis—China’s security policymakers—without closely analyzing the policymakers’ preferences and perceptions. Theorists trained in the tradition of Liberalism see elites who

support the policy of opening up and demonstrate a favorable position toward the outside as “Liberals,” and those upholding Realist tenets categorize those Chinese who oppose the openness and retain a negative view toward the capitalist world economy as “Realists.” Are they indeed “Liberals” and “Realists”? More importantly, do these two categories exhaust all possibilities? This article asserts that the formulation of national security in China is a far more complicated process than the Realist-Liberal dichotomy leads us to believe. Many Chinese elites who adopt a Realist-like view to interpret China’s security environment often accept certain Liberal propositions. Likewise, some among those who support China’s integration into the world economy demonstrate a nationalistic or even xenophobic sentiment toward the outside world. Still others are genuinely “internationalist.” *Table 1* examines the possible combinations of interest regarding the Open Policy (support or oppose) with levels of trust in the outside world (positive or negative).⁸ Looking at the table, are Quadrant Q1 and Q4 the only possibilities? Could China’s political elite, or some parts of it, hold views described in Q2 and Q3?

Table 1. Interests Derived from the Open Policy

		Support the Open Policy	Oppose the Open Policy
Levels of Trust in the Outside World	Positive	Q1 Liberals	Q2
	Negative	Q3	Q4 Realists

For example, “hide one’s capacities and bide one’s time” (*taoguang yanghui*) was a slogan proposed by Deng Xiaoping in

5. Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition* (Boston: Little Brown, 1977).

6. Gerald Segal, “Tying China into the International System,” *Survival*, vol. 37, No. 2 (Summer, 1995), p. 68.

7. A third view considers China’s foreign and security policy as a mixture of conflictive and cooperative forces. The former is rooted in the legacy of past Chinese greatness and Chinese feelings of victimization since the 19th century, while the latter is found in Deng Xiaoping’s talks legitimizing the Open Policy as well as the economic reforms. See Mel Gurtov and Byong-Moo Hwang, *China’s Security: the New Role of the Military* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1998), pp. 5-7.

8. The Open Policy (*kaifang zhengce*) refers to a new orientation of China’s foreign economic policy in the late 1970s, when the pragmatist leaders decided to remove political and ideological obstacles to welcome foreign investment and to decentralize foreign trade in order to obtain foreign capital, technology, and managerial skills for economic development. See: Qingguo Jia, “China’s Foreign Economic Policy,” in Yufan Hao and Guocang Huan, eds., *Chinese View of the World* (New York: Pantheon, 1989), p. 59, and John W. Garver, *Foreign Relations of the People’s Republic of China* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1993), pp. 193-94.

the early 1990s. It later became a guideline for China's foreign policy in the next decade. Literally translated as "hide brightness, nourish obscurity," the much-quoted slogan implied that China at present is still poor and weak, and must avoid being dragged into conflicts with other countries. One can hardly know if Deng's advice falls into Quadrant Q1 (Liberal) or Quadrant Q4 (Realist).

Another example is the "new security concept," a thesis first proposed by foreign minister Qian Qichen in the ASEAN Regional Forum's Support Group Meeting on Confidence Building Measures in Beijing in March 1997, and later developed into the official position toward regional security of East Asia in the late 1990s.⁹ The "new security concept" is puzzling because it retains the Realist hypothesis that the state is the primary actor in dealing security-related matters, while simultaneously accepting non-Realist views that national security should be broadened from a purely military perspective to encompass political, economic and environmental problems. Here again, the Liberal-Realist dichotomy is inadequate for understanding Chinese security policy.

A Critical Third Perspective

This article looks into the relationship between security strategy and the policy of opening up.¹⁰ In contrast to most Chinese

9. Chinese interpretation of the "new security" is illustrated by the following: "The new security concept [for China] has, first of all, an economic connotation, which attaches importance to both development and stability of a country in the globalization process. The country is required to have the ability to handle all kinds of sudden incidents, crises and troubles by skillfully practicing various economic networks, such as currency, finance, trade, investment and resource development . . . Obviously, 'security' here is a dynamic concept in a broad sense rather than a static one in a narrow sense. It refers not only to 'safety' in the military and diplomatic sciences, but also to economic and technological security, including financial, trade and investment security, the avoidance of big rises and falls, the ability to have stronger competitive methods and a grasp of information factors." Wang Yizhou, "New Security Concept in Globalization," *Beijing Review*, February 15-21, 1999, p. 7.

10. As Michael Swaine and Ashley Tellis argue, China's security has been

scholars and China watchers in the West who focus only on how China's security strategy is formulated to meet its strategic interest at the systemic level, I ask what "security" means and whose "interest" it serves in order to understand what it means to be a supporter for or an opponent of the Open Policy in China. Again, going back to *Table 1*, one will find that an elite member could support the Open Policy not because he trusts the outside world but because he sees the policy as serving his own power interests in domestic politics. It is of course possible to identify someone who favors opening up the economy while still maintaining a high level of mistrust of the outside world. That would be the case if he understands the Open Policy as a way to build up China's capacity to survive in what was perceived to be a hostile outside world, and as a way to consolidate his own domestic power position. Since questions like "security for whom?" are constantly ignored by mainstream security studies, critical security scholars have brought them to the forefront.¹¹

established upon fulfillment of two primary goals: preserving domestic order and well-being and deterring external threats to China's territory. To ancient Chinese rulers, the primary external threats to the empire were posed by nomadic tribes located along China's northern and western borders. Since the mid-19th century, China's security concerns have shifted to such imperialist powers as Great Britain, France, Russia, Japan, and Germany. The foremost concerns for the emperors became whether the country should reform itself so as to deal with the increasing pressure from the outside world and what kind of strategy was appropriate. Consequently, the debates between those who supported extensive interactions with foreign countries and those who emphasized self-strengthening and autonomy have dominated the discussions on national security for over a century. Michael D. Swaine and Ashley J. Tellis, *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy: Past, Present and Future* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corp., 2000), pp. 16-18.

11. By mainstream security studies, I mean the analyses that take military security or strategic relations between China and other great powers as primary features of China's security considerations. See Thomas J. Christensen, "China, the US-Japan Alliance, and the Security Dilemma in East Asia," *International Security*, vol. 23, No. 4 (Spring, 1999), pp. 49-80; and David Shambaugh, "China's Military Views the World: Ambivalent Security," *International Security*, vol. 24, No. 3 (Winter, 1999/2000), pp. 52-79. Critical security theorists, in contrast, argue that a "referent objective of security"—whether state or individual—and the values being protected should be the focus of security studies. See David A.

Critical theorists understand the central features of the modern society by tracing its historical and social roots. In terms of the nature of international relations, as Richard Devetak argues, "Critical theory views the prevailing order of social and political relations as historical production which must be explained. . . . Critical *international* theory takes the global configuration of power relations as its object and asks how that configuration came about, what costs it brings with it, and what other possibilities remain imminent in history."¹² By taking capitalist economy as the dynamic force stimulating technological advances and production power in human society, Robert Cox believes that the process of mass production is essential to the concept of national security. "A modern industrial state could only sustain its world-power position to the extent that it could counter the Communist Manifesto's appeal for the workers of the world to unite, binding them through loyalty and interest to the state."¹³ In a similar vein, David Goldfischer traces economics-security linkages to E. H. Carr's historical realism in which politics is always driven by "privileged groups" that have the ultimate power to decide what interest or value they want to protect. Because the territorial state has demonstrated itself to be the most efficient institution to preserve power and interest, privileged groups in a society will view control over the state apparatus as their highest objective. Eventually, the right to define national security is dominated by those who control the state, and national security is simply the privileged groups' plot to expand or preserve their interests by force or the threat of using force. In an era of globalization, Goldfischer concludes that "what is worth studying is whether privileged groups who once regarded their material interests as dependent on a cohesive state, may now see their pursuit of wealth as consistent with the destruction of the social base of state power and

cohesion."¹⁴

From a critical perspective, the increasing emphasis on the economic aspects of security and national interest by Chinese leaders today is the consequence of their attempts to protect their power and interests from other challengers during integration into the world economy. Security strategy often serves as a tool as well. It legitimizes the elite's insistence on economic reforms and consolidates their judgments of the external environment. Economic reform successfully fulfills the need of the masses to pursue their own economic interests, linking those interests with the interests of the elites. China's security strategy in the globalization age—retaining the legitimate rule of the communist regime while promoting a policy of integration into the world economy—reflects the critical perspective that economic forces will shape the interests of elites with power and privileges, as well as the policies they make. It also demonstrates the strong links between economic reforms and the formulation of security strategy, and offers an explanation as to why Chinese leaders are so enthusiastic about integrating the country into the world capitalist economy while remaining so suspicious of the effects of globalization.

This article assumes that the increasing emphasis of Chinese elites on the economic aspect of security in the 1990s is closely related to the Open Policy, and that the purpose of emphasizing a peaceful external environment by Chinese leaders is to *legitimize* the Open Policy domestically. In the following three sections, I will first identify the elite groups involved in the security policy-making process and then explain how their perspectives differ in terms of each independent variable. The next section will develop *Table 1* into a two-dimensional continuum and analyze Q1, Q3, and Q4, which represent different sets of elite security strategy preferences. The final section will discuss the implications of this new model for China's security strategy. The analysis is based on a review of Chinese strategic literature between 1992 and 2001 and interviews with Chinese scholars, strategic analysts, and governmental officials conducted in Beijing between 2001 and

Baldwin, "The Concept of Security," *Review of International Studies*, No. 23 (1997), pp. 5-26; and Richard Wyn Johns, "Message in a Bottle? Theory and Praxis in Critical Security Studies," *Contemporary Security Policy*, vol. 16, No. 3 (December, 1995), p. 309.

12. Richard Devetak, "Critical Theory," in Scott Burchill and Andrew Linklater, eds., *Theories of International Relations* (New York: St. Martins, 1996), p. 151.
13. Robert W. Cox and Timothy J. Sinclair, *Approaches to World Order* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 280.

14. David Goldfischer, "Resurrecting E. H. Carr: A Historical Realist Approach for the Globalisation Era," *Review of International Studies*, vol. 28, No. 4 (2002), pp. 697-717.

2002.¹⁵ (A detailed description of the research design is available from the author.)

Searching for the Elites in Security-related Fields

According to the *Blackwell Dictionary of Political Science*, elites are “groups who in some way are superior to the rest of the community. The superiority may rest upon social status, intellectual brilliance, the possession of great wealth, or a position of superordination.”¹⁶ The term was first developed by Italian scholars Vilfredo Pareto and Gaetano Mosca, who claimed that in any society political power is dominated by people who enjoy superior intellectual, social, and economic status. In this research, I define “elites” as political leaders who perform important roles in the governance of society and selected intellectuals who have demonstrated influence on decisions made by the national government. As the study of security and foreign policy remains the most sensitive and tightly controlled area in China, only a small group of people, mainly political leaders, government officials, and researchers from universities or research institutions, are allowed to discuss and study such issues.¹⁷ Scholars have sometimes suffered from censorship and been denied access to information necessary for independent academic research.¹⁸

15. The year 1992 marks a redirection of the official ideology from political conservatism after the Tiananmen massacre back to market reform. It is believed that Deng Xiaoping played a critical role in such a policy shift. During Deng’s visit to the Shenzhen and Zhuhai special economic zones in south China in January 1992, he publicly denounced the “Left deviation” within the party as the primary impediment to China’s development. See *Beijing Review*, April 13, 1992, pp. 4-6.

16. Frank Bealey, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Political Science* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1999), p. 117.

17. Jisi Wang, “International Relations Theory and the Study of Chinese Foreign Policy: A Chinese Perspective,” in Thomas W. Robinson and David Shambaugh, eds., *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon, 1994), p. 483.

18. Yong Deng, “Conception of National Interests: Realpolitik, Liberal Dilemma, and the Possibility of Change,” in Yong Deng and Fei-ling Wang, eds., *In the Eyes of Dragon: Chinese Views the World* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), p. 48.

The Policy Community

These elites, by their positions in the political system and the way they influence foreign and security policy decisions, can be categorized into different “elite groups.” At the top of the power pyramid is a small group of senior leaders from the party, the government, and the military. The group of the central leadership (*zhongyang lingdao*) is officially called “leadership nucleus” (*lingdao hexin*), and is also known in the Chinese media as “party and state leaders” (*dang he guojia lingdaoren*). Through an examination of official documents and newspapers, we may identify certain leaders in this leadership group, including the paramount leader Deng Xiaoping, General Secretary Jiang Zemin, Premier Li Peng and Zhu Rongji (who replaced Li to become the Premier in 1998), members of the Politburo Standing Committee, and a small number of senior People’s Liberation Army (PLA) generals.¹⁹ They make up a power circle with ultimate authority to make key decisions about China’s security and foreign policy.²⁰ Compared to first-generation revolutionaries such as Deng, most members of the central leadership in the 1990s were better educated in technical fields. Most of them were modernization-minded technocrats who favored economic reforms but insisted that social stability and regime security was still China’s top priority. This means that even the highest leaders were unable to control various departments of the government and the party, and many decisions the leaders made relied on a consensus among all members in the circle rather than on the will of one person.²¹

19. In the early 1990s, Deng Xiaoping still enjoyed more power and autonomy to make decisions than other senior leaders, especially when dealing with critical foreign and strategic issues. Jiang Zemin officially inherited the power to “make ultimate decisions on critical issues” from Deng Xiaoping at the 4th Plenum of the 14th CCP Central Committee in September 1994. Yang Zhongmei, *Jiang Zemin Zhuan* (A Biography of Jiang Zemin) (Taipei, Taiwan: China Times, 1996), p. 12.

20. Lu Ning argues that the central leadership is composed of four kinds of leaders: the paramount leader, or leading nucleus, the nuclear circle, members of the Politburo Standing Committee, and other members of the Politburo, especially those who live in Beijing and those who work in the Secretariat. Lu Ning, *The Dynamics of Foreign-Policy Decisionmaking in China* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 2000), p. 76.

21. The central leadership of the CCP adopts the principle of democratic

Below the central leadership, decisions about foreign and security affairs are made by a number of high-ranking leaders from the Politburo, the State Council, and the military. These people make up a group called the Central Foreign Affairs Leading Group (CFALG, *Zhongyang Waishi Lingdao Xiaozu*). First established in 1958 by authorization of Premier Zhou Enlai, the Leading Group became the core unit within the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) dealing with foreign-policy issues. Its function was strengthened during the 1980s, when party leaders became more dependent on consensus rather than on the will of individual leaders for making decisions. The group mainly consists of members from the Standing Committee of the Politburo, but ministerial-level officials from the State Council and representatives from the PLA are also recruited into this group.²² The Foreign Affairs Office of the State Council (FAOSC, *Guowuyuan Waishi Bangongshi*) provided staff work and logistics for the Leading Group and forwarded their decisions to party and governmental institutions. The FAOSC was finally dismissed in 1998, and its work was transferred to the newly established CCP Central Foreign Affairs Office (CFAO, *Zhongyang Waishi Bangongshi*). The adjustment signifies that the CCP gradually consolidated its power in the making of foreign and security policies during the 1990s. The State Council has become a purely executive body for the decisions made by the CCP.²³

Bureaucrats from foreign affairs, economic, and trade-related departments in the State Council constitute another elite group making foreign and strategic policies. Officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) are in charge of diplomatic and political

centralism (*minzhu jizhong zhi*) as the policymaking mechanism. The principle emphasizes that all decisions have to be made on the basis of consensus among all members in the decisionmaking circle. If the leaders are deadlocked over an issue, it is up to the paramount leader to make the final call. See *ibid.*, p. 16.

22. According to Wang Chang, military leaders were not recruited into the CFALG until the 1980s. Yet the size of the military representation in the CFALG is still unclear. See Wang Chang, *Zhongguo gaoceng moulue* (The Grand Strategy of China's Top Leaders) (Shaanxi: Shaanxi Shifan Daxue Chubanshe, 2001), p. 277. Also see Yang Jiemian, *Hou lengzhan shiqi de Zhongmei guanxi* (China-U.S. Relations in the Post-Cold War Era) (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 2000), p. 108.

23. Wang Chang, *Zhongguo gaoceng moulue*, p. 278.

aspects of foreign policy while economic and trade bureaucrats—especially the Ministry of Foreign Economic and Trade Cooperation (MOFETC)—focus on maintaining and developing foreign economic and trade relations. Both bureaucratic systems are supposed to transform the guidelines and concepts made by the central leadership and the CFALG into practical policies. In other words, they often play a pivotal role in the practical aspects of foreign policy, implementation. When MFA and MOFETC officials encounter problems, they often draft a report and submit it to higher leaders. The report will list several policy choices. This is to allow the high leaders to make final decisions. As trained bureaucrats, MFA and MOFETC officials are specialized in responding to regular issues but are often unable to develop a long-term strategic perspective.²⁴ Although the influence of economic bureaucrats in security fields has been inferior to that of MFA, as China's dependence on the world economy for domestic development has intensified, the economic aspect of security has assumed the magnitude of a serious security concern. In the following sections, we will see how “economic security” was transformed from an economic issue into a strategic one, a development that enhanced the status of economic elites in the making of foreign and security policies.

The Analytical Elite

Research fellows from government-sponsored think tanks and academic professors in the fields of international relations and foreign-policy studies are often responsible for analyzing and interpreting foreign and security policies for political leaders, which makes them a distinct elite group.²⁵ Generally speaking, elites from research institutions and academics in the years under study demonstrate two distinctive characteristics. On the one

24. Interview with MFA official, January 19, 2002.

25. Some research institutions are well known to Western observers, such as the China Institute of International Studies (CIIS, *Zhongguo Guoji Wenti Yanjiusuo*) and the China Institute for Contemporary International Relations (CICIR, *Zhongguo Xiandai Guoji Guanxi Yanjiusuo*). The Chinese Academy of Social Science (CASS: *Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Yuan*) is an institution under administrative control of the State Council. Many of its institutes, such as the Institute of American Studies, have conducted research related to international economics and foreign relations.

hand, they enjoy more autonomy and independence than in previous decades. During the interviews I conducted, several scholars and strategists mentioned the positive impact of the Open Policy on the research atmosphere of the foreign and security fields, saying that the major difference between the pre-reform and the reform periods is that researchers in China today can discuss issues related to foreign relations or national security and raise views different from those of the government.²⁶ The pragmatic attitude of the current leadership offers a relatively free atmosphere for strategic analysts and scholars to conduct research and to submit reports. On the other hand, discussions on national security are still restricted to their professional areas, which makes strategic analysts and scholars more like supporters of official policies rather than independent analysts. Perhaps this is why these people generally welcome the Open Policy, but are unable to compose a viable opposition voice against major decisions on security strategy.

Chinese scholars and strategic analysts seek to influence foreign and security policies through three channels. The first is to draft policy reports to submit to the leaders at the top levels. However, because the decision-making process in China is not well institutionalized, personal relations sometimes serve as a second important channel for individual scholars to influence leaders' views on security-related issues.²⁷ A third channel for the elites from the second tier to influence foreign and security policies is to attend seminars or meetings organized by central party or bureaucratic institutions, such as MFA, to respond to events posing a challenge to the government. It also is routine for certain scholars and high-ranking officials to be invited to attend closed-door meetings, or to form a group to discuss proper responses to a crisis in foreign affairs.²⁸

The military has long been considered the sole guardian of the state. Since the establishment of the People's Republic, the PLA has fought wars in Korea, in the Taiwan Strait, on the Sino-Indian

and Sino-Soviet borders, and in Vietnam. Yet its importance goes far beyond being a force to defend against foreign invasion, or a symbol of China's national prestige. On various occasions, the PLA has served as an effective and reliable force to end domestic turmoil; the military's interventions in the Cultural Revolution in 1967 and the Tiananmen demonstrations of 1989 are two obvious examples. Although there is debate among Western scholars as to whether military leaders' influence in the political system has been rising in recent years, there is no denying that the PLA has demonstrated a unique and persistent voice in the security and strategic fields. In fact, one interviewee in China even pointed out that the military's participation in foreign and security policymaking was more institutionalized than that of individual scholars.²⁹ Unlike other elite groups, military leaders seem to be more sensitive to issues concerning state sovereignty and territorial integrity, and they are more inclined to take an assertive position on security-related issues.

Journalists can be considered another elite group, for they enjoy the privilege of receiving and distributing information related to China's foreign affairs and foreign policy. Some media such as the New China News Agency (or Xinhua News Agency, *Xinhua She*) are under direct administrative control of the State Council. Others, such as the *People's Daily (Renmin Ribao)*, are strongly affiliated with the CCP. In terms of foreign- and security-policy issues, media workers serve as a safety filter for the government by first collecting information systematically from the outside world and then transmitting it to the general public. They also serve as the "eyes and ears" of the government by summarizing and analyzing current international and domestic situations and submitting them to leaders and party cadres. In recent years, the media has developed into a forum for strategic analysts and academic scholars to discuss and debate China's security environment. Sometimes those views have been too radical to be accepted by the government.³⁰

26. Interviews with senior CIIS researcher, June 8, 2001, and with CICIR researchers, January 15, 2002.

27. Interview with a senior scholar from Renmin University, December 25, 2001, and with a CICIR research fellow, January 11, 2002.

28. Interview with a CICIR researcher, January 11, 2002.

29. Interview with a scholar from Beijing University, October 30, 2002.

30. The examples include the *Global Times (Huanqiu Shibao)*, a newspaper published by Xinhua News Agency with focus on international news, and the Great Power's Forum (*Qianguo Luntan*) on the website of the *People's Daily*.

Three Levels of Influence

Based on the above discussion, one can further divide the degree of these groups' influence into three levels. The top level is made up of the central leadership, members of the Politburo, members of CFALG, and a few senior military leaders. The high degree of concentration of political power in the Chinese Communist Party grants these leaders the ultimate authority to make decisions, but the decisions they make are often in the form of broad concepts, policy guidelines, or long-term policy objectives rather than concrete policies. There is virtually no information available which details how major decisions are made at this level. The structure and process of foreign policymaking, and the development of security by top leaders, remains one of the most well-guarded secrets in contemporary China.

High-ranking officials and cadres from central bureaucracies such as the CFAO, MFA, and MOFETC, strategic analysts from government-sponsored think tanks such as the CICIR and CIIS, strategists from the military, and scholars with close relations with party and state leaders constitute the second level of the power pyramid. The second-level elite groups have substantial authority in security policymaking because decisions made at the first level are often in the form of general concepts, policy guidelines, or long-term policy objectives. It is the second-level elite groups that transform such abstract concepts and guidelines into concrete policies with substance. In addition, because even the highest level leaders cannot control all departments and divisions of the government and the party or pay attention to every detail of the policies, the second level elite groups have a considerable amount of leeway in policy implementation.

At the third level are journalists, scholars from universities and research institutes, and lower bureaucrats from economic or trade-related departments. They cannot exert decisive power in policymaking and implementation, but their closeness to the public and distance from the core elite give them indirect but important roles in policymaking. They affect policymaking by providing input to the political system and then evaluating and distributing the output.³¹

Figure 1 demonstrates the oligarchic nature of the power distribution in China's decision-making system. The problem is that, due to the authoritarian nature of Chinese political system and lack of reliable resources, it is extremely hard for researchers to open the "black box" and investigate the formation and modification of China's security strategy at the first level. Research on China's elite can only focus on the second- and third-level elite groups. This, however, does not mean that a study of China's elite is impossible or meaningless. Detailed analyses of the second- and third-level elite groups can fill in the information gap and disclose diversity in the first-level elite groups because of the indispensable roles that these two levels of elite groups play in security policy-making. Moreover, policy debates at these two levels often reflect the hidden conflicts within the first level, and also affect the content and outcome of debates at the first level. Therefore, investigating how elites at the second and third levels perceive national-security strategy and how their views influence policy outcomes is critical to understanding China's security strategy formation. Elites selected for analysis have to meet the requirements of the second or third levels. That is, they have to demonstrate certain influence on strategic policies made by the leaders at the first level.

The following two sections analyze these elite groups' attitudes toward the Open Policy and their perceptions of the outside world. When categorizing the Chinese elite groups into "negative" and "positive" groups according to their attitudes toward the Open Policy and outside world, one needs to bear in mind three caveats. First, dividing them into two groups does not mean that China's elite have polarized dichotomous views on domestic and international issues. On the contrary, they can be placed on a spectrum, ranging from strong advocates of the economic globalization and peaceful international relationships to xenophobic opponents of the Open Policy. Second, ever since Chinese leaders redirected the official ideology back to market reforms following Deng Xiaoping's "southern tour" in 1992, it has been difficult to identify a group in the political system that challenged the legitimacy of the Open Policy. Here, the position of "opposing the Open Policy" only refers to the elites who

31. Based on interviews with scholar from Renmin University, December

25, 2001; with scholar from Peking University January 15, 2002; with MFA official, January 19, 2002.

Figure 1. Three Levels of Elite Groups with Influence on the Policymaking Process

First Level	
Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of the Politburo Standing Committee • Members of the CFALG • Senior PLA leaders 	Functions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratify and veto foreign and security policies • Formulate strategic guidelines and objectives
Second Level	
Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-ranking officials from central bureaucracies (CFAO, MFA, MOFETC, etc.) • Strategic analysts from think tanks sponsored by the government or the military • Individual scholars with close connections with party and state leaders 	Functions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transform the concepts and guidelines made by higher leaders into tactical policies or detailed plans • Supervise the implementation of foreign and security policies • Draft policy choices, new ideas or guidelines and submit them to higher leaders for decision making
Third Level	
Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium and low ranking bureaucrats at foreign, economic or trade related departments • Journalists from state-controlled media • scholars at universities and academic institutes 	Functions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect public opinion and report to the leaders • Interpret official policies and leaders' remarks • Discuss and interpret China's foreign and security policies • Express independent or unofficial views of national security

believe that China's integration into the world economy will eventually undermine China's national security and therefore demand that the policy of "opening up in all directions" should be adjusted. Third, a certain elite individual's or group's position is not fixed but can move on a continuum. This means that a supporter of economic reform may turn into an opponent later and

vice versa. For example, Chen Yun, a well-known Marxist economist who supported Deng Xiaoping against Hua Guofeng at the beginning of the economic reform, became skeptical of the direction of the reform later. He was particularly suspicious of Deng's decision to utilize foreign capital for industrialization and to build special economic zones, saying that "opening up without limit" would only benefit foreign and domestic speculators.³²

Elite Attitudes Toward the Open Policy

The objectives of China's foreign and security policy are "to maintain domestic development and stability, peace and prosperity in the surrounding regions, and a regional security order based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence."³³ At the domestic level, development and stability represent two often contending domestic policy priorities. What an elite group thinks is the most urgent domestic task determines the group's attitude toward the reform and the Open Policy, and critically influences the group's view of the best way to enhance national security.

Elite groups that support the existing Open Policy include bureaucrats at trade and economic departments, scholars in favor of economic liberalization, strategic analysts who emphasize the importance of economic development, certain party cadres, and journalists who won fame by supporting the Open Policy. Central to their rationale for the Open Policy is economic development: They believe that economic development is the top priority of China, and opening up to the outside world is the only or the best way China can achieve the goal. As the need for economic development has legitimized the status of the pro-openness camp throughout the 1990s, China's continuous and successful economic growth has been the *raison d'être* of the Open Policy. Supporters of the Open Policy also believe that maintaining a "peaceful and stable external environment" is essential to China's uninterrupted economic development. Therefore, no matter how they perceive

32. Chen Yun, *Chen Yun Wenxuan (The Selected Works of Chen Yun)* (Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe, 1995), vol. 3, p. 311.

33. PRC State Council, *White Paper on National Defense* (1998).

the outside world, pro-openness groups tend to support the foreign and security policies that enable China to continue focusing on economic growth by developing friendly relations with other countries.³⁴

Although “peace and development” has been a consensus widely shared by these pro-openness elite groups, they support the theme with different intentions. Party and government leaders believe that maintaining a peaceful relationship with the outside world is important because that is crucial to China’s economic prosperity, which will further consolidate the ruling basis of the current leadership and the pro-reform faction in general.³⁵ Reformist scholars, however, support the Open Policy believing that it will facilitate China’s transition from an authoritarian society to a pluralist one.³⁶ They realize that many neighboring and Western countries see China as a potential enemy. But they think that China’s top priority should not be competing with the other great powers; rather, it should concentrate on economic modernization, which will induce domestic sociopolitical modernization in the long run.³⁷

34. Pro-openness arguments are well illustrated in a popular book by Ma Licheng and Ling Zhujun. They detailed the process of how pro-reform leaders defeated the conservatives and placed the economic reform agendas into practice. See their *Jiaofeng: dangdai Zhongguo sanci sixiang jiefang shilu* (Exchanging Blows: A Record on Three Liberations of Thought in Contemporary China) (Beijing: Jinri Zhongguo Chubanshe, 1998).

35. In his report to the 15th CCP Party Congress in 1997, President Jiang Zemin claimed: “Opening to the outside world is a long-term basic state policy. Confronted with the globalization trend in the economic, scientific, and technological development, we should take an even more active stance in the world by improving the pattern of opening up in all directions, at all levels and in a wide range, developing an open economy, enhancing our international competitiveness, optimizing our economic structure and improving the quality of our national economy.” See James Mulvenon, ed., *China: Facts & Figures Annual/Handbook* (Gulf Breeze, Fla.: Academic International Press, 1998), vol. 23, p. 66.

36. As a famous liberal scholar responded in an interview: “The purpose of the Open Policy is to create a free, powerful, and prosperous China that poses no threat to its neighbors, and whose great-power status is recognized by other great powers of the world.” Interview at Renmin University, Beijing, December 2001.

37. There has been a good deal of discussion of Deng’s “hide one’s capaci-

An interesting fact is that military leaders do not always strongly oppose the theme of peace and development. Many military strategists recognize the fact that the post-cold war world has become highly interdependent and that China cannot avoid being integrated into the global economy. For instance, a book published by the Academy of Military Science indicates that the security of the Asia-Pacific region is decided by two forces: national power and market. The author argues, “When both forces move in the same direction, international relations will stabilize, and the security environment of the Asia-Pacific region will become more peaceful. When these forces conflict with each other, national policy is likely to swing and lead to crisis.” According to the author, the Sino-American relationship follows the rule. When market forces get the upper hand, U.S. leaders will adopt an engagement strategy toward China and the bilateral relationship will stabilize.³⁸

Contrary to the pro-openness camp, the anti-openness camp emphasizes the negative impact that continuous opening to the outside world has on China. Members of this opposition camp are conservative political leaders and party cadres, economists stressing the danger of unlimited openness, and government officials in departments that do not directly benefit from the Open Policy, including the military and departments in charge of public order and domestic security.³⁹

ties and bide one’s time” strategy in this period. See, for example, Liu Seqing, “Xitong yanjiu, shenru linghui Deng Xiaoping waijiao zhanlue gouxiang” (Systemic Analysis of Deng Xiaoping’s Strategic Thought), *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi* (Contemporary International Relations), No. 3 (1994), pp. 2-11.

38. Zhu Yangming, ed., *Yatai anchuan zhanlue lun* (On Asia-Pacific Security Strategy) (Beijing: Junshi Kexue Chubanshe, 2000), pp. 130-31.

39. The arguments of the opposition groups can be found, for example, in the writings of three scholars. Fang Ning, a professor from Beijing Normal University, claims that China cannot benefit from economic globalization because the market has always been a tool utilized by the West to contain or control China. Zhao Ying, an economist specializing in economic security studies, warns that if China continues to open up without limits, more new challenges—namely food supply and energy shortage, increase of unemployed workers, rising bad loans, and trade disputes with other countries—will soon surface to challenge the legitimacy of the government. Economist Yang Yonghua criticizes the for-

These elite groups doubt whether rapid socio-economic changes caused by the Open Policy are beneficial to Chinese society in general and the CCP in particular. Paying close attention to the widening gap between the poor and the rich, increasing layoffs, growing discontent among social losers, and deterioration of public order and social “healthiness,” the anti-openness camp believes that these problems could ultimately undermine the ruling base of the communist party by challenging its legitimacy based on equality and social stability. This sense of crisis gave rise to neo-conservatism in China. Neo-conservatives are convinced that, facing a large inflow of capital and rapid socioeconomic changes, strong and authoritarian governance is necessary to keep Chinese society stable and integrated. For example, Pan Wei, a Peking University professor, claims that China’s political reform should focus on the establishment of “rule of law” rather than democratization.⁴⁰

This anti-openness attitude does not mean that conservative elite groups underestimate the importance of economic globalization. They understand how big an influence international economy can have on China’s national security, and that is why they maintain negative attitudes toward the existing Open Policy. The Asian financial crisis of 1997 was an especially alarming learning experience to them. Conservative elite groups realized that a country with no defense against the challenges of globalization is extremely vulnerable to external economic shocks.⁴¹ Some scholars

eign investment influx because the trend will eventually shake the basis of the national economy. See Fang Ning, Wang Xiaodong, and Song Qiang, *Quanqiuhua yinying xia de Zhongguo zhilu* (China’s Path under the Shadow of Globalization) (Beijing: Zhuguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe, 1999); Zhao Ying, *Zhongguo jingji mianlin de weixian: guojia jingji anquan lun* (Threats Facing China’s Economy: On National Economic Security) (Yunnan: Yunnan Renmin Chubanshe, 1994); Yang Yonghua. “Liyong waizi he weihu guojia jingji anquan” (Utilization of Foreign Investment and Protection of National Economic Security), in Yang Yonghua et al., *Liyong Waizi Yu Weihu Guojia Jingji Anquan* (Utilization of Foreign Investment and Protection of National Economic Security) (Beijing: Zhongguo Fazhan Chubanshe, 1999), pp. 221-45.

40. Pan Wei, “Fazhi yu Zhongguo Weilai Zhengti” (Rule of Law and China’s Future Polity), *Zhanlue yu Guanli* (Strategy and Management), No. 5 (1999).

41. Some Chinese scholars argue that the impacts of the Asian financial crisis on certain countries’ national economies were no less serious than devastation caused by wars. See Yan Xuetong, “Dui Zhongguo Anquan

Table 2. Attitude Toward the Open Policy

	Oppose	Support
Elite members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservative political leaders • Economists stressing the danger of economic liberalization • Military leaders • Strategists from PLA • Officials from departments in charge of public order and domestic security • Party cadres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officials and bureaucrats from trade and economic departments • Scholars in favor of economic liberalization • Strategists in favor of the Open Policy • Party cadres • Journalists
Main propositions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Openness without limits will undermine national economic base • Economic security is essential • Domestic stability is essential to China • Political force is dominant factor in shaping world politics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace and development • Economic development is top priority • Hide one’s capabilities and bide one’s time • Market force is dominant factor in shaping world politics

attempted to warn political leaders that opening up without limit would weaken their control of the economy and could lead to the collapse of China’s national economic independence.⁴² Propositions from both sides are listed in the following table.

Huanjing de Fenxi yu Sikao” (Analysis of and Thoughts Concerning China’s Security Environment), *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi* (World Economy and Politics), No. 2 (2000), p. 9.

42. Su Jingxiang, a senior researcher at CICIR, claims that the role of states would be further strengthened as globalization intensified, for states remain the primary actors with sufficient power to protect and expand economic interests. Su Jingxiang, “Shijie jingji tixi yu shijie jingji geju” (The World Economic System and the Structure of the World Economy), *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi* (Contemporary International Relations), No. 2 (2001), pp. 4-9.

Elite Perceptions of the Outside World

China's elite involved in security policymaking can be categorized in two groups according to their views of the outside world: one with positive and the other with negative views. Members of the first group do not trust the outside world because they assume that the pursuit of power is the only way to survive in an anarchic international environment. Besides many Chinese leaders who believe that the ultimate goal of China's modernization is to build "a rich country and strong army," this view is widely shared by strategic analysts with military backgrounds, MFA officials, and young scholars.⁴³

These elite groups' negative views of the outside world are based on two different understandings of the external environment. Those who emphasize economic aspects believe that, since the end of the cold war, the essence of power politics has gradually shifted from a military race to a vicious competition over economic resources. According to this perspective, China should devote more resources and energy to technological development and economic modernization so as to compete with other great powers in the economic and technological spheres rather than concentrating on military buildups. These elite groups advocate the concept of "comprehensive security," in which the military, political, economic, and even the social aspects of security are embraced.⁴⁴

43. Interview with an MFA official, January 19, 2002; interviews with prominent international relations scholars in Beijing, December 25, 2001 and January 7, 2002.

44. Chu Shulong, "Lengzhan hou Zhongguo anquan zhanlue sixiang de fazhan" (Development of China's Strategic Thought After the Cold War), *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi* (World Economics and Politics), No. 9 (1999), p. 12. A similar view is proposed by Wang Yizhou, director of the Institute of World Economics and Politics of CASS, who conducted and supervised a series of research projects about the impact of the globalization trend on international security and on China's new security concept. Wang sees security as a dynamic concept in a broad sense: "It refers not only to 'safety' in the military and diplomatic sciences, but also to economic and technological security, including financial, trade and investment security, the avoidance of big rises and falls, and the ability to have stronger competitive methods and a grasp of information factors." See Wang Yizhou, "New Security Concept in Globalization," *Beijing Review*, February 15-21, 1999, p. 7.

On the contrary, those who emphasize strategic aspects believe that the nature of international politics has not changed despite the end of the cold war and the enhanced economic cooperation among countries. They think that the demise of the Soviet Union only gave the United States an excuse to expand its sphere of influence by making it the only superpower in the world. For example, Zhang Ruizhuang, a professor at Nankai University, utilizes Kenneth Waltz's concept of structural realism to explain the development of international politics after the end of the cold war. Criticizing supporters of the "peace and development" theme for being reluctant to acknowledge that Realism has continued to guide U.S. foreign policy since the end of the cold war, he predicts that the U.S. hegemony will become a prominent threat to China in the future.⁴⁵ China's security policy should therefore focus on establishing a favorable strategic balance *vis-à-vis* other great powers, and on expanding China's power in the Asia-Pacific region. It is military leaders and strategic analysts at PLA-sponsored think tanks who have long advocated such cautious but assertive security policy. A series of books on China's security environment were written by young PLA officers or strategists with military backgrounds in the 1990s. Those books show that, even though these elite groups often recognize the importance of market forces in defining China's national security, they still place tremendous emphasis on China's strategic relations with major powers and non-economic challenges to China's security environment.⁴⁶

Such negative views of the outside world often combine with and find justification in nationalism. Regarding international politics as a fierce competition for power among nations in which the strong dominate and exploit the weak, nationalism effectively generates hostility toward the outside world. Especially in light of China's "century of humiliation" by Western great powers,

45. See Zhang Ruizhuang, "Chonggu Zhongguo Waijiao Suo Chu Zhi Guoji Huanjing" (Rethink the International Environment in Which China's Diplomacy Finds Itself), *Zhanlue yu Guanli*, No. 4 (2001), pp. 20-30.

46. See Zhu Chenghu, Tang Yongsheng, and Pu Ning, eds., *Zouxiang Er Shi Yi Shiji de Daguo Guanxi* (Great Power Relations in the 21st Century) (Jiangsu: Jiangsu Renmin Chubanshe, 1999); Hu Fan & Li Daguang, *Daguo de Zunyan* (Sanctity of Great Powers) (Shenzhen: Haitian Chubanshe, 1999).

Chinese nationalism often goes hand in hand with anti-Western sentiments, which mostly target U.S. hegemony. It seems obvious that the rise of nationalism has aggravated anti-Western or anti-American sentiments in China's intellectual circles. A number of anti-American books and magazines have been published and have quickly become best sellers since the early 1990s. One of the most popular works is *China Can Say No*. A pioneer collection of xenophobic writings, *China Can Say No* is full of Maoist slogans such as "burn down Hollywood" or "the U.S. is forming an anti-China club." The authors denounce the United States as a "terrorist state" and "world hegemon."⁴⁷ Many young, patriotic journalists and scholars also have become well known by condemning Western imperialism and the U.S. hegemony. For example, Fang Ning, a Beijing Normal University professor, claims that Western countries have always tried to dismantle China, so China needs to revive patriotism and nationalism and prepare for future conflicts with Western imperialists and colonialists.⁴⁸ The Chinese government has never publicly supported such xenophobic views. However, nationalism has put pressure on the leadership during diplomatic crises such as the Taiwan Strait crisis in 1996, the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade by NATO air forces in 1999, and the U.S. proposal for deploying theater missile defense (TMD) systems in Asia. Despite peaceful resolutions, these crises have intensified nationalism in Chinese society.⁴⁹

Strong though they might be, such xenophobic sentiments do not dominate the Chinese elite's views of international politics. There are elite groups with positive perspectives of the outside world too, and they claim that China can seize a new opportunity in the world that has become more peaceful and interdependent than ever. These elite groups can be divided into two categories again. The first one is composed of bureaucrats at economic and

trade organizations and non-Realist scholars at universities and research institutions.⁵⁰ They believe that the internationalization of production and capital has fundamentally changed the global environment, making it impossible for individual states to adopt isolationist or antagonistic policies if they want development and modernization. In this context, China's opening up to the outside world is both inevitable and desirable, and China should continue to absorb foreign capital and technologies for economic development.⁵¹ The other sub-group is composed of party cadres and strategic analysts who think that China's external security environment has fundamentally changed since the end of the cold war. Prior to the 1980s, China's strategic thought had been about preparations and mobilization for a future world war. Deng Xiaoping abandoned this scenario in 1984 when he claimed that China should concentrate on economic development rather than war preparations.⁵²

Following Deng's declaration, a series of debates among scholars regarding how to define "the characteristic of the epoch" arose.⁵³ He Fang, a senior research fellow at the CASS and the International Affairs Research Institute of the State Council, is a representative figure who argues that "peace and development" has become the defining characteristic of the new epoch. While his writings in the early 1980s still focused on the strategic implications of the U.S.-Soviet confrontation, his research in the late 1980s turned to discuss whether "peace and development" had

47. See Song Qiang, Zhang Cangcang, and Qiao Bian, *Zhongguo keyi shuo bu* (China Can Say No) (Beijing: Zhongguo Gongshang Lianhe Chubanshe, 1996), p. 40.

48. See Fang Ning et al., *Quanqiu hua yinying xia de Zhongguo zhilu*.

49. Among the best known recent nationalistic writings with strong anti-U.S. sentiment are Hu Fan and Li Daguang, *Daguo de zunyan* (The Pride of a Great Power) (Guangzhou: Haitian Chubanshe, 1999); and Zhang Wenmu, *Zhongguo xinshiji anquan zhanlue* (China's Security Strategy in the New Century) (Shandong: Shandong Renmin Chubanshe, 2000).

50. During my interviews with Chinese scholars, I found that many of them were interested in Liberal ideas and even identified themselves as supporters of Liberalism. However, they did not want to be called liberal scholars publicly, because the term still entails a negative connotation in Chinese politics.

51. Tang Shiping, "Zai Lun Zhongguo Dazhanlue" (Reinterpreting China's Grand Strategy), *Zhanlue yu Guanli*, No. 4 (2001), pp. 29-37.

52. Deng Xiaoping, *Deng Xiaoping Wenxuan* (Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping), vol. 3 (Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe, 2000), p. 104.

53. He Fang, *Lun heping yu fazhan de shidai* (On the Era of Peace and Development) (Beijing: Shijie Zhishi Chubanshe, 1999); Jin Dexiang, "Zhengqu Heping yu Fazhan Rengran Shi Shijie de Zhuti" (Striving for Peace and Development is Still the World Theme), *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, No. 4 (1990), pp. 3-7; Yan Xuetong, "Shidai Bu Jueding Juti Zhanzheng Weixian" (The 'Epoch Issue' Does Not Determine the Danger of War), *Shijie Zhishi* (World Affairs), No. 20 (2000), pp. 14-17.

replaced “war and revolution” as dominant themes in depicting contemporary world politics. Lenin’s theories of “imperialism” and “proletarian revolution,” according to He, “has become obsolete because the situation he described sixty or seventy years ago no longer exists. . . . Thus the identification of the present time as the period of imperialism and proletarian revolution no longer applies.”⁵⁴ Descriptions of which elites have positive and negative perceptions of the outside world, and their main propositions, are listed in *Table 3*.

Table 3. Perception of the Outside World

	Negative	Positive
Elite members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realist scholars • Military leaders • Strategists from PLA • Officials from MFA • Nationalist scholars • Conservative intellectuals • Journalists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economists • Non-realist scholars • Officials from trade and economic departments • Party cadres • Strategists from official think-tanks
Main propositions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World politics is competitive by nature • China’s strategy is to establish a favorable strategic posture • Great power competitions has shifted from military to economic sphere • Oppose US hegemony 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic interdependence • Internationalization of production • Peace and development is the theme of the contemporary world

54. He Fang, “Lun Mei-Su Zhengduo de Xin Taishi” (On the New Shape of U.S.-Soviet Relations), *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi* (World Economics and Politics), No. 11 (1983); He Fang, “Guodu shiqi de guoji xingshi” (International Relations in the Transition Period), *Guoji Maoyi* (Intertrade), No. 1 (1992), pp. 14-15; He Fang, *Lun heping yu fazhan shidai*, p. 72.

China’s Three Strategic Choices

Different Assessments of the Outside World

By combining two variables—elite attitudes toward the Open Policy and elite perceptions of the outside world—we can come up with a more sophisticated model to understand China’s security strategy. *Table 4* is a two-dimensional continuum that illustrates four possible alternative views of China’s security strategy. Among them, Q1, Q3, and Q4 represent three existing strategic perspectives of those members of China’s elite who exert direct and indirect influence on security policymaking.

Table 4. Interests Derived from the Open Policy

		Positive	Negative
Levels of Trust in the Outside World	Positive	Q1 Globalist	Q2
	Negative	Q3 Economic Nationalist	Q4 Autonomist

The “globalist” view is based on positive perceptions of the existing Open Policy and of the outside world. Elite groups with a globalist view describe the new post-cold war international environment as cooperative and interdependent, and believe that China’s security environment will be amicable as long as it is an indispensable member of the capitalist world economy. By being integrated in the world economy and maintaining peaceful relations with other countries, China will also be able to carry on economic development and social modernization, the domestic policy priority of this group. Support of a market economy and China’s eventual integration into the world economy, however, does not mean that globalists explicitly propose that China should accept Western political values and develop into a pluralist democratic society. Globalists tend to avoid discussing such sensitive political issues and their influence in policymaking is still restricted to strategic and economic areas.

Those with an “autonomist” view, contrary to “globalists,” have negative opinions both on the Open Policy and the outside

world. They emphasize that Chinese society is getting more and more vulnerable and unstable in the process of rapid economic development and opening to the capitalist world economy. The tide of globalization, in the eyes of these elite groups, poses more challenges than opportunities for China. Many of them believe that if China is unable to decelerate the pace of economic opening, rising economic dependency will increase China's political dependency on the outside world and intensified domestic disparity will exacerbate domestic discontent, even leading to the collapse of CCP rule. Some economists even deprecate China's economic achievements by arguing that China's economic growth over the past two decades has been driven not by the expansion of exports but by utilization of foreign capital. Woo Tun-oy, an economist in Hong Kong, is one of them. Refuting the Chinese mainstream view that the Open Policy has generated economic development by facilitating resource utilization and improving production efficiency, Woo concludes that there is no substantial correlation between China's growth in trade and growth in national production.⁵⁵

Even though "autonomists" believe that China has failed to benefit from the Open Policy, they advocate neither a return to central planning nor isolationism. Believing that the international environment has never been favorable to China, they propose a more cautious security strategy—"opening up with limits"—so as to survive in a hostile world and maintain national autonomy.⁵⁶ They want China to adjust the policy of "opening up without limits" because the international environment has never been favorable to China. With fears of a recurrence of the Asian financial crisis, elites from this group have shown tremendous interest in understanding how China can avoid vulnerability to disruptions in international economics while continuing economic growth. What they emphasize is economic security, a term defined in

China as the capacity of a country to defend its economy against the disruptions and threats from international environment.⁵⁷

The "economic nationalist" view reveals an interesting combination of perspectives regarding the two variables. This strategy supports the current leadership's claim that China should continue opening up to the outside world because it benefits from intensive economic relations with other countries. The ultimate goal of China's opening up is to enhance the country's strength and to transform the country into a great power. From this perspective, economic nationalism is different from mercantilism, a practice of European countries from the 16th to the 18th centuries that promoted governmental regulation of the national economy for the purpose of augmenting state power at the expense of rival powers.

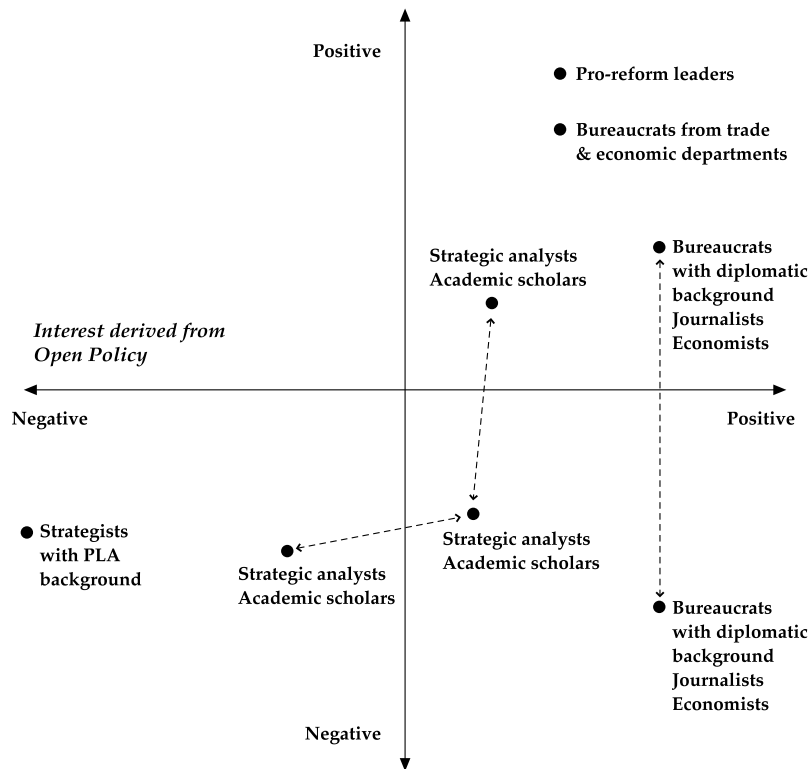
Economic nationalists are also different from the "autonomists" because they support the current leadership's claim that extensive economic relationship with other countries benefits China and that China should continue opening up to the outside world. However, they also differentiate themselves from globalists in the sense that they believe that the ultimate goal of China's Open Policy is to enhance the country's strength and to transform the country into a great power. Even though they recognize that China cannot isolate itself from the increasingly interdependent world, economic nationalists are also aware of the negative effects of globalization. In the eyes of economic nationalists, the post-cold war world still is a realm of "survival of the fittest," where the major competition occurs in the economic rather than the military sphere. From this perspective, China should focus its resources on promoting economic development and expanding its share in the world market so as to win the competition. In fact, quite a few elites examined or interviewed in the research retain a negative view of the outside world while supporting China's continued opening up. "Build prosperity under the shadow of insecurity" thus becomes the reason why the domestic-external linkage is the most salient feature in analyzing the connections between national security and globalization.

55. See Woo Tun-Oy, "Opening Up to the Outside World: Myth and Reality," *Hong Kong Journal of Social Sciences* (July 1995), p. 129. Similar arguments can be found in articles by Zhu Wenhui, such as "Zhongguo Chukou Daixiang Zhanlue de Misi" (The Puzzle of China's Export-Oriented Developmental Strategy), *Zhanlue yu Guanli*, No. 5 (1998), pp. 59-69.

56. Zhang Youwen and Zhu Jianming, *Jingji anquan: jinrong quanqiuhua de tiaozhan* (Economic Security: the Challenges to Financial Globalization) (Shanghai: Shanghai Shehui Kexue Chubanshe, 1999).

57. Zhao Ying, "Jingji Anquan: Shangsheng zhong de Zongyao Anquan Wenti" (Economic Security: the Rising Question for Security), in Wang Yizhou, ed., *Quanqiuhua shidai de guoji anquan* (International Security in the Age of Globalization) (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1999), pp. 128-61.

Figure 2. Levels of Trust in the Outside World



If one adds the elite groups discussed in the previous section into the table, what will it look like? *Figure 2* identifies eight elite groups: pro-reform leaders; bureaucrats from trade and economic departments; strategic analysts with military backgrounds; strategic analysts from government-affiliated think tanks; scholars from academic institutions; bureaucrats with diplomatic backgrounds; journalists; and economists.⁵⁸ These eight groups

58. This research only focuses on the economists who analyze the impact of the Open Policy on China's strategy. Debates about the success of market reforms in domestic society and China's economic performance are excluded from the research because they are not directly related to security strategy.

are chosen because they are more identifiable in the decision-making system compared to some others, such as officials from departments in charge of domestic security or PLA generals. Each of the groups can find a position in the quadrants based on the relationship between the elites' interest derived from the Open Policy and their perceptions of the outside world.

The groups falling in the upper-right quadrant present a globalist view of national security, as they are basically supportive of the economic reforms while retaining a high level of trust in the outside world. Pro-reform leaders from the nuclear circle and bureaucrats from trade and economic departments in central bureaucracies fall into this category for their favorable position toward the Open Policy. Officials from trade and economic departments in central bureaucracies present a similar position in domestic politics as their interests are greatly influenced by continuation of economic growth and development of trade and economic relations with foreign countries. They also retain a positive view of the outside world; they support the thesis that the development of world politics has been largely conditioned by the trend of peace and development since the economic reforms.

In the lower-left quadrant, one sees an autonomist view of national security. These groups, including conservative leaders and strategic analysts with military backgrounds, are less enthusiastic about economic reforms because their power bases are not directly related to the Open Policy. Their backgrounds further encourage them to develop a suspicious and even negative view of the outside world.

It is more difficult to identify the position of the other five elite groups. Strategic analysts from government-affiliated think tanks and scholars from academic institutions can be placed in the upper-right, lower-left, and lower-right quadrants. In addition to the "globalist" (upper-right) and "autonomist" (lower-left) perspectives listed above, some strategists and scholars demonstrate a favorable position toward the Open Policy but retain a low level of trust in the outside world (lower-right), a position indicated as "economic nationalist" above. They believe China should continue the policy of opening up because it will meet the country's (and perhaps their own) interests, but they also doubt that the external security environment is really favorable to China.

Bureaucrats with a diplomatic background, journalists, and economists are scattered in quadrants I and IV, meaning that they demonstrate a favorable position toward the Open Policy but hold differing degrees of trust in the outside world. Bureaucrats from the MFA and related departments in the government support the Open Policy because they believe the only way for China to improve its prestige and gain influence in the international community is to continue the strategy of extensive interactions with the outside world. The Open Policy plays a critical role in facilitating this process. Their world views, however, are conditioned by their assessment of the external security environment. Those who respond positively to changes in the outside world are supporters of the “peace and development” thesis and are convinced that China will benefit from participation in international affairs. By the end of the 1990s, these elites had developed a relatively positive strategic outlook with emphasis on the trends of globalization and multi-polarization.⁵⁹ Those with a negative world view, in contrast, are followers of Realism. They believe that the international political environment has always been competitive by nature, and the only way for a sovereign state to realize its political objective or to protect its interests is to demonstrate power. These elites are convinced that China has learned those rules through painful interactions with imperialist powers over the past two centuries. The purpose of the Open Policy is therefore to make the country more powerful so as to compete with other great powers in the future.⁶⁰ From this perspective, the Open Policy is actually a revival of the “self-

strengthening” movement in the 19th century.⁶¹

The situation also applies to journalists and economists. Both groups are beneficiaries of the Open Policy because they have enjoyed an open and free atmosphere during the reform period. Their status in the domestic political atmosphere is largely boosted by continuation of the Open Policy, but such interests do not just translate into a positive and optimistic attitude toward the external environment. While most journalists supported the “peace and development” thesis in the 1980s, an increasing number of elites in journalistic circles have become advocates of a new nationalistic sentiment in recent years. They blamed growing disorder and inequality in the society on foreign influences, and they advocated a view that Western countries, under the leadership of the United States, have conducted a new containment strategy to encircle and tame China since the end of the cold war.⁶² Nationalism is certainly a product of the Open Policy, but political leaders have been extremely careful in handling nationalist sentiment. The media thus becomes the only arena for nationalists—many of them are young journalists with an interest in strategic and security issues—to express their opinions.

The literature also indicates that some economists have developed a negative perspective on the external world, but for somewhat different reasons. These elites, who can be described as economic nationalists, are convinced that China’s participation in the world capitalist economy actually reduces the autonomy and capacities of the state because China becomes more

59. In an article published in 2000, Wang Yi, assistant to China’s foreign minister, elaborated the thesis of growing connections between globalization and multipolarization. Wang’s argument reveals an optimistic perspective in the MFA on China’s overall security environment. See Wang Yi, “Quanqihua Beijing xia de duojihua jincheng” (Process of Multipolarization in Globalization), *Guoji wenti yanjiu* (Journal of International Studies), No. 6 (2000), pp. 1-12. One interviewee confirmed the existence of such optimism among MFA officials. Interview with CIIS researcher, June 6, 2001.

60. Several interviewees confirmed that a *Realpolitik* perspective remains very popular among leaders in the MFA. Interview with MFA official, January 19, 2002, and with a professor at Beijing University who specializes in Chinese foreign policy, January 7, 2002.

61. The self-strengthening movement refers to a series of reforms conducted by Chinese official Zeng Guofan in the 1860s. The purpose was to promote national strength by learning Western skills and developing national industries so as to defend China from being conquered by Western imperialist powers.

62. Nationalists in journalism refers to a group of commentators and writers—many of them are reporters by profession—who adopt an anti-Western perspective. Many of them do not oppose economic globalization, which they consider to be the result of trade expansion and technological advances. What they oppose are the intentions of Western countries to use economic relations to control China and penetrate society with Western values. See Fang Ning, Wang Xiaodong, and Song Qiang, *Quanqihua yinying xia de Zhongguo zhilu*.

dependent on goods, capital, and technologies from other countries for domestic economic growth. Moreover, economic nationalists warn that if China continues to open up without limits, more new challenges—namely food supply and energy shortages, an increase of unemployed workers, rising bad loans, and trade disputes with other countries—will soon surface to challenge the legitimacy of the government.⁶³ In the eyes of the economic nationalists, the economic aspect of national security has developed into a crucial factor in constraining China's security policy choices.⁶⁴

Assessing Elite Views

All three strategic views have gained strength in the past decade. About half the elites contacted or interviewed can be categorized as supporters of the first strategy addressed—globalist. Most of these people are governmental officials and scholars from academic institutions. About one fifth of the elites are advocates of the autonomy strategy. These elites either have a military background or are trained researchers in government-sponsored think tanks. Although the number of autonomists is relatively small, they have been a consistent and powerful voice in China's strategic circle. Some of them are well known to the public and even to China observers in the West. Finally, the economic nationalist view is shared among certain elites in the government, various think tanks, and academic institutions.

It is still not clear which view will emerge as the preferred security strategy in the near future. Yet one can conclude that for most elites, economic factors—or “unconventional threats” to national security as claimed by Chinese leaders—have become an

important factor shaping elite considerations of China's national security. Eventually, the right to define national security or security strategy is still in the hands of certain elites whose interests and worldviews greatly influence their judgments and policy outcomes.

Shifting the focus to the topics that have been raised and debated in the period, one will find that as economic reform intensifies, the elites became more inclined to emphasize the primary objectives of China's modernization agenda, development and security. Again, eight topics are identified in this research: developmental strategy; economic statecraft;⁶⁵ characteristic of the epoch; economic security; change of world pattern;⁶⁶ new security concept and comprehensive national strength;⁶⁷ grand

63. Zhao Ying, *Daguo tianming: daguo liyi yu daguo zhanlue* (Fate of Great Powers: Interests and Strategies of Great Powers) (Beijing: Jingji Guanli Chubanshe, 2001), pp. 280-95.

64. The influence of economic nationalists on security decision-making is hard to determine. Some interviewees believed that the economic nationalist view had driven the leaders in power to pay more attention to the negative effects of the economic reforms, while other economists argued that such a view had virtually no impact on security policy. Interview with a scholar from Nankai University, December 27, 2001, and with an official from the State Council, January 20, 2002.

65. Economic statecraft means the “use of economic instruments by a government to influence the behavior of another state.” The instruments include both economic sanctions—the actions taken by one state to interfere with the economy of another state—and inducements—rewards that one state extends to another state to secure the target's compliance or alter its interests. See Jean-Marc F. Balachard, Edward D. Mansfield, and Norrin M. Ripsman, “The Political Economy of National Security: Economic Statecraft, Interdependence, and International Conflict,” *Security Studies*, vol. 9, Nos. 1 & 2 (1999-2000), pp. 1-14. Chinese elites began to introduce and analyze the topic in the late 1980s, but the theme was soon replaced by discussions of economic security in the 1990s. Qian Zongqi, “Lun duiwai jiaowang zhong jingji yu zhengzhi de guanxi” (On the Relationship Between Economics and Politics in Foreign Relations), *Jiangsu duiwai jingmao luntan* (Jiangsu Foreign Economic and Trade Relations Forum), No. 3 (1986), pp. 8-10.

66. Political leaders and strategic analysts in China often used the concept of “world pattern” (*shijie geju*) or “world strategic pattern” (*shijie zhanlue geju*) to explain the changes in international society, especially the rise and fall of great powers. The term—literally translated as “formation of world powers”—is different from the concept of the international system or world political structure. In China, the concept contains both the *structure*—the relative position among the major players in the international system—and the *process*—the interactions among its actors. Chen Xiaogong and Chen Xiaogong, “Xin geju guiji yanbian touxi” (Analysis of the Changes in the New World Pattern), *Guofang daxue xuebao* (Journal of the National Defense University), Nos. 1 & 2 (1992), pp. 47-49.

67. Huang Shuofeng, a research fellow in the Chinese Academy of Military Science (*Zhongguo Junshi Kexue Yuan*), first proposed a framework to assess China's comprehensive national strength. Huang predicted that

strategy;⁶⁸ and China-U.S. relations. In theory, all topics can be defined as either security- or development-oriented, depending on whose interests they mean to serve. For instance, the idea of the “possibility of world war” had been the focus of the strategic analysts, while the debate about “developmental strategy” attracted more economists. In practice, many of the topics entail both security and economic implications.

These topics can be further divided into three groups. The first group considers “national security” as a purely strategic subject independent of the Open Policy. Discussions and debates about characteristics of the epoch, change in the world pattern, and grand strategy are included in this category. Inheriting the conventional strategic thought that prioritized the issues of “high-politics,” the elites in this group generally highlighted the impact of military threats on national security but deliberately ignored the social and economic aspects.

The second set of topics, including comprehensive national strength and new security concept, implies certain elites’ attempts to make “national security” a new strategic guideline for China’s foreign and security policies. They believe state interests and behaviors are conditioned and shaped by the international structure, which has always been competitive by nature. National security, just like economics, should be considered as a research subject in which objective laws and indicators can be explored and established. China, like any other country in the world, has the

economic wars would soon replace military wars as the primary form of international conflicts in the future. Since the political structure of the world was transforming from bipolarity into multipolarity, in which economic and technological strength would become the decisive factor, China should formulate its own strategy to enhance comprehensive national strength. The ultimate objective of such a strategy was to protect Chinese national security and to enhance Chinese national interests. Huang Shuofeng, *Zonghe guoli lun* (On Comprehensive National Strength) (Beijing: Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe, 1992).

68. The idea of “grand strategy” (*da zhanlue* or *zongti zhanlue*) refers to an assessment of China’s future role in the international political environment. *Strategy and Management*, a journal that focuses on exploring China’s contemporary foreign relations and domestic problems, began publication in 1993 and soon developed into a forum for strategic analysts and international relations scholars to discuss and debate China’s grand strategy.

right to pursue interests, to accumulate strength, and to compete with other great powers for supremacy. Introducing the idea of national security legitimized this claim because strategic thought in China had always been heavily influenced by political ideology. By casting national security as a science, elites were able to construct a series of norms and regularities to guide China’s foreign and security policy behavior.

The third set of topics is actually an attempt to bring economic concerns, which had become extremely popular in the past two decades, into conventional security discourse. For those elites that focus on economic statecraft, economic security, and developmental strategy in the globalization era, the purpose of highlighting economic aspects of security was to reconcile the contradictions between economic interests and national security. There had always been a tendency for the elites to treat security and development as two separate fields, but as China became more integrated into the world economy and faced less of a military threat, the boundary got blurred. Political leaders attempted to integrate security concerns into economic reforms, while elites in security circles needed to construct a theory that could incorporate economic interests into conventional strategic considerations. The rise of discussions about the “economic aspects of security” and “globalization/multilateralism” was the consequence of such developments. By the end of the decade, the elites had successfully created the thesis that proposed security and economic interests as two compatible elements in China’s modernization.

What does the above information mean? First of all, it becomes apparent that security strategy is no longer a unified field, meaning no disagreement among leaders. As the process of opening up continues, elites with different backgrounds and interests develop different views about the nature of the threat to national stability, and the solutions to enhancing security. Although major policies and decisions made at the top level of the power pyramid are often considered to be reached by consensus among the leaders, elites at middle and lower levels have more freedom to express their views, and their differences often lead to a series of debates concerning the optimal attitude toward the outside world. Searching for additional disputes and cleavages among political elites in the future may be worthwhile, and such developments will definitely bear a significant potential impact on China’s secu-

rity strategy. Whether the trend of globalization encourages such diversification is another topic that deserves more attention in the studies of decision making in China.

China's security strategy in the 1990s also demonstrates a far more complicated picture than the one Realists and Liberals proposed. Realists see the relationship between China and other great powers as the determining factor in shaping China's strategic considerations. Since "balance of power" as a recurring phenomenon in international politics continues to dominate political relations between the great powers, China's rapid economic growth only enhances its strategic posture, thus making it more likely to alter the current power distributions in East Asia.⁶⁹ In contrast, those who advocate a cooperative view, originating in Liberal theories, argue that economic ties between China and rest of the world will integrate the country into a global web of economic interdependence, thus further encouraging China to become a peace-loving and responsible actor in international affairs.⁷⁰

Although the propositions of the autonomy strategy overall match the Realist version of China's future strategic intentions, such views are in fact a combination of the elites opposing the Open Policy and those who demonstrate a hostile view of the outside world. It might be too deterministic to interpret the existence of autonomy strategy as a signal of Realist predominance in China's strategic circles, for Realist propositions only constitute part of elite interpretations of the external security environment. Realism provides little or no solution to deal with the challenges posed by the new, unconventional threats to China's national security.

The globalist strategy, supported by many political elites in China, does not fully resemble a Liberal version of China. The elites who demonstrate favorable views of the Open Policy and of the outside world do so simply because such views are consistent with the leadership's stance toward the policy of opening up. Lack of discussion about the relationship between economic interdependence and international peace among the elites makes it difficult for the globalist strategy to develop into a reliable ideology

on the political scene.

We certainly cannot exclude the possibility that economic nationalism may eventually develop into the most popular strategic choice for Chinese leaders in the future. The main reason is that it meets the requirements of both the pro-reform leaders, who have emphasized the importance of continuous opening up to the success of China's modernization, and the conservative elites, who have retained a negative attitude toward globalization. Indeed, economic nationalism is becoming a buzzword in China, since elites are convinced that strengthening the power of the state is the only way to reconcile two apparently contradictory goals in the globalization age: economic prosperity and national security.

Conclusion

With growing dependence on the international economic system for domestic growth, and fears of another Asian financial crisis, many Chinese scholars and political leaders have engaged in intensive debates about how China may avoid vulnerability to the disruptions in the international economy while maintaining economic prosperity and consistent growth. Deng Xiaoping's decision to "open up to the outside world" in the late 1970s was part of this larger debate, but concerns over how to avoid over-dependence on the world economy and how to maintain stability in the process of openness remain crucial issues. This article has explored Chinese elites' assessments of the country's external security environment in the 1990s. Through a review of Chinese strategic literature in the 1990s and interviews with Chinese strategists, the article has attempted to identify the elites with power to discuss the issues concerning security policy, and then compared their interests derived from the Open Policy to their perceptions of the external security environment. The research finds that the elites have shown different degrees of support for the Open Policy, and such a difference is related positively to their career or positions in the political system. The article then suggested three strategic choices, all of which have supporters from the elite groups identified in the research.

In the meantime, Chinese elites have reached a consensus

69. Andrew Nathan and Robert Ross, *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress: China's Search for Security* (New York: Norton, 1997), p. xv.

70. Gerald Segal, "Tying China Into the International System," p. 68.

that economic competition has exceeded that of the military sphere to become a major characteristic in world politics today, and that the protection of the “right to development” has replaced the protection of “state sovereignty” as the highest objective of Chinese national security policies.⁷¹ What they disagree about is which security strategy China should pursue in order to reach the goal that all Chinese people have dreamed about for over a century: a “rich country and strong army” (fu guo qiang bing). All three strategic choices introduced here—globalist, autonomist, and economic nationalist—have found supporters in the society. This means there exist different interpretations of the relationship between security strategy and the Open Policy. The rise of economic nationalism, in particular, reveals that elites do attempt to explain why the policy of going global will eventually help China to acquire the status of a great power. Globalization thus becomes a political slogan utilized by political elites to convince the general public that economic prosperity and national security can coexist, as long as the “state” is capable of handling all kinds of sudden incidents, to maintain effective governance of society when crises occurs.

Examining the Chinese case from the perspective of critical theory, one finds that for any modern state, including today’s China, the primary objective for strengthening its security is to enhance its political and economic influence in the international system created and controlled by dominant ideologies. This can only be achieved by creating a consistent and convincing national security strategy. Domestically, security strategy becomes the instrument for powerful elites to promote social cohesion and to maintain the legitimacy of the regime. When industrial workers started challenging ruling elites’ power in late 19th-century Europe, clever leaders such as von Bismarck soon realized the need to incorporate the working class into the state’s political and military objectives. The consequence was the emergence of the Bismarckian concept of the “welfare state,” in which the working class was recruited by the ruling elites to support the goal of national power in exchange for economic needs. This is exactly what is happening in China today: Political leaders continue to promise further

reform and openness, but at the same time they use national security as an excuse to resist any substantial change in the political system. In China, the elites’ strategy of promoting domestic cohesion is further supplemented by emphasizing national pride and promising people to build a strong and prosperous China, which can only be reached by the country’s integration into the world economy.

By analyzing China’s security strategy from an elite perspective, this research goes beyond the conventional debate between Realists and Liberals about the causal relations between economic interdependence and international conflicts. It explores how China’s increased economic connections with the world economy have become an essential part of Chinese security policy. Indeed, to understand how the elites in China think and how they respond to changes in the world has always been considered a challenging task, one that has discouraged scholars from conducting empirical research on the Chinese foreign policymaking process. The research here demonstrates the possibilities for organizing and carrying out intensive field research into how the elites construct their perspectives of foreign and security policy. In conclusion, I believe Chinese foreign-policy scholars should explore the possibility that interactions between international economic forces, in the form of globalization, and domestic reactions, in the form of national-security policy, will fundamentally transform the conception of security of those holding political power in China, and may even bring some changes to domestic political structures in the future. This is perhaps a more meaningful way to analyze China’s strategic behavior under the leadership of Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao.

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71. Zhang Wenmu, “Zhongguo Guojia Anquan Zhexue” (Philosophy of Chinese National Security), in *Zhanlue yu Guanli*, No. 1 (2000), p. 31.

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